

USING REPLACEMENT CANOPIES

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Trimming: Start with a new blade in your modelling knife or scalpel. To separate the canopy from its base, score very gently around the ledge moulded at the bottom. Do this very lightly at first, with minimum pressure at a 45° angle. Repeat the process until the canopy pops away from the ledge. If you score too heavily at first you risk slipping and ruining the canopy. Finally, any rough edges can be cleaned up by lightly sanding with fine wet-and-dry paper. If you intend separating the canopy for display in the open position, we suggest cutting the break-lines before you cut the canopy from its base.

Gluing: Cyanoacrylate (superglue) can be used to fix the canopy to the kit. It gives a fast-setting permanent join, but fumes given off when setting can cause frosting on clear parts. Where possible, mask around the join with masking fluid or tape. PVA (white glue) is also useful as it is partly gap-filling, doesn't attack the plastic, and dries clear.

Painting: The best way to achieve crisp and convincing frame lines is by applying pre-painted strips of decal film. Paint part of a sheet of clear decal film, cut strips of the correct width with a sharp blade and a straight-edge. Decal film sticks better to a painted surface than to bare plastic, so you will have to paint an undercoat on the frame lines marked on the canopy. This technique may not be suitable for canopies with large or irregularly shaped framed areas. For these canopies we suggest you mask the clear areas with clear adhesive tape and then remove the masking after painting.

Details: Most aircraft canopies are fitted with hand-grabs, latches, locks and mirrors. Take note of these details when studying close-up photos of the cockpit area you are working on, and fabricate them from plastic card, stretched sprue or other materials. Some brass-etch manufacturers include such items in their ranges. In our endeavour to produce thin clear mouldings, it may happen that the edges of the canopy are in fact too thin for scale appearance. It is a relatively simple matter to build up the thickness from the inside using strips of adhesive cut to the width of the frames. We recommend adhesive vinyl sheet as used by signwriters and in the automotive industry for signage and striping on cars. An in-depth article on using Falcon vacform canopies can be found on the Hyper Scale modelling website, www.clubhyper.com

