

1:48 SHERMAN M4 TRACK SET

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for purchasing this detailing set. It has been designed so that you can replace the rubber chevron style tracks supplied with the Tamiya M4 tank and M10 tank destroyer kits with some of the other styles used. We have selected the major styles covering most of the vehicles that were fitted with the VVSS (Vertical Volute Spring Suspension) system. Please check your references for the particular vehicle you wish to model to select the appropriate style of track from our range. The different types were introduced during the war in response to changing production and mechanical requirements, so some types might not be appropriate for some vehicles, but this is not a hard and fast rule! Vehicles were frequently repaired and tracks replaced, so it is not unusual to find pictures of similar vehicles in the same unit with different types of track fitted.

These tracks were also used on the M3 Lee/Grant tanks, and all the various vehicles derived from the M3 and M4 chassis'. We have not yet checked for final assembly of these tracks on all the other possible kit combinations, but they should be suitable for the HobbyBoss and Bandai Shermans, M12, M30, for example.

Surplus track links were also used as additional armour on wartime AFVs, sometimes almost enveloping the vehicle. This practice was very widespread, even though it was officially frowned upon in some quarters. These track sets can be used to provide this additional armour for your models.

This detailing set is aimed at the modeller who has some experience of building and detailing plastic scale model kits. We have been as careful as we can during the design and manufacture of these parts so you should not have any extra difficulty when using these parts, but please test the fit before using any glue!

You will need adhesives suitable for resin and plastic such as fast or gel isocyanate glue.

Normal modelling tools such as craft knife, files and tweezers will all be very handy. You will also find some small wooden pegs, matchsticks for example, very useful for holding the links in place while the glue sets.

If the castings need straightening, or perhaps bending to fit a diorama base or fitting to a tank as additional armour, warm in hot water to soften the resin. Bend as required, then place in cold water to 'freeze' the new shape.

Castings should be thoroughly washed in a water/detergent mix to remove any release agent on the surface. Release agents will impair glues and paint adhesion if not removed.

PARTS LIST

11 off, 12-link sections of track
2 off, 7-link sections of track.
2 off, 4-link sections of track.
2 off, 2-link sections of track.
6 off, single links with straight teeth.
22 off, single links with angled teeth.

REFERENCES

Over 49000 M4 tanks were built, and were used by most of the Allied armies during World War 2 and subsequently. Because of this details vary from tank to tank, so for an accurate model the only way to be sure of your facts is to find a wartime photograph and make your model to match.

There are hundreds of books and magazine articles on the Sherman tank, and you should have no difficulty in locating suitable images to assist with the use of these types of tracks. Note they were used on many of the vehicles derived from the M3 and M4 chassis, so ARVs, SPGs such as the Priest and M12, also used these types of track.

In this day and age the Internet has become a wonderful resource for the researcher. A quick 'Google' search using 'M4' or 'Sherman' will turn up hundreds of potentially useful links. However, we would like to recommend www.track48.com as an excellent source of information specifically for the modeller in 1:48 scale, with plenty of reviews, hints and tips and a lively forum.

www.missing-lynx.com is another site aimed at the armour modeller, with a forum especially for 1:48 fans. Don't limit your visit to the forum though, there is plenty of valuable information elsewhere on the site.

If you can get to see a real M4, do so. Being based in the UK we have been able to view the exhibits at the Tank Museum, Bovington, Dorset, but there are many museum and war memorials around the world that feature a Sherman tank, which can be very handy as reference.

CONTACT & GUARANTEE

We want you to enjoy using these detailing parts to enhance your model M4. And of course, we would like you to buy other products from us as well! Our next major kit will be a conversion set to make a Sherman Crab Mk1.

If we have missed anything in these instructions, or you have a suggestion as to how this kit might be improved, do drop us a line. We will endeavor to incorporate these into the next production runs, as well as future kit projects.

If you have ANY problems, let us know immediately. We will always replace missing or broken parts. All of our products are backed with a money back guarantee. Provided the kit has not been started, send it back to us for a full refund.

So if there is something you don't like, TELL US!
If you loved the kit, TELL YOUR FRIENDS!

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Assemble the tank, fixing the bogies and road wheels in place. The front sprocket is assembled so it can still rotate on its poly cap collar. The rear idler will probably need its position adjusting, and so it is best to carefully saw off both idler axles from the hull casting. This will let the idler wheel 'float' into a natural position where the links line up properly, rather than leaving an unsightly gap where the links don't quite meet. The idler wheel can then be reglued to the axle mount to strengthen the assembly. You may need a small disc of plastic sheet to make up the material lost in sawing off the axle; or perhaps a liberal coating of 'mud' when finishing the model!

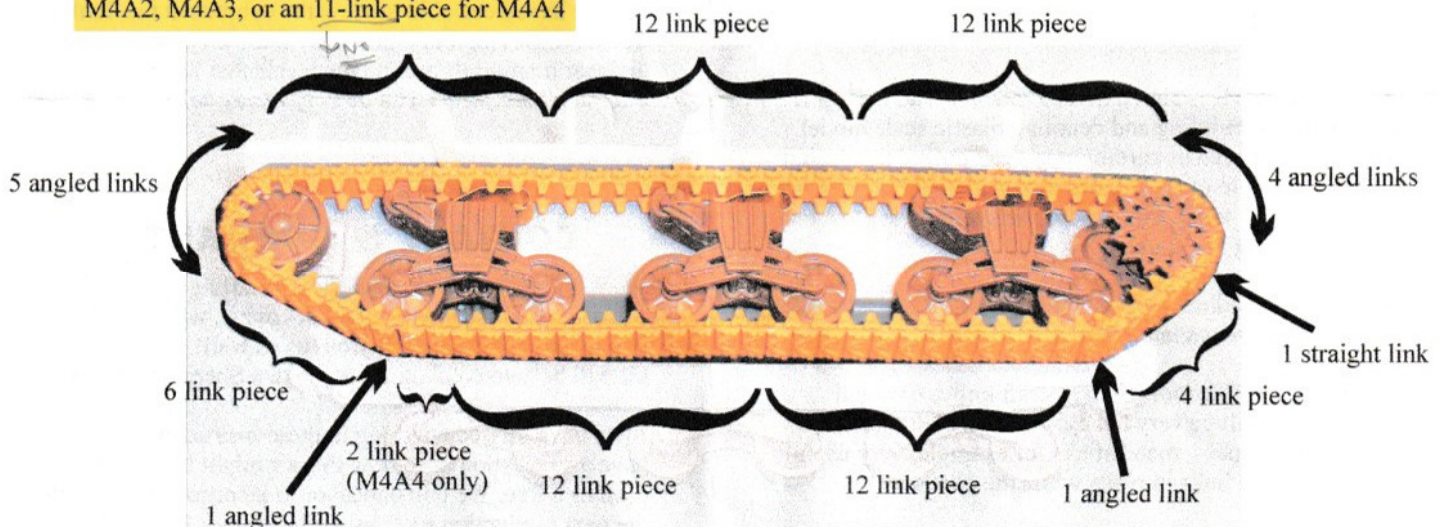
Refer to the photo below for locations of the castings. Make sure you have the track pattern running in the correct direction! Also, you will need to remove the location pin on the top of the roller of the front bogies. If you need to straighten any of the castings before assembly, dip it into very hot (not boiling!) water, lay on a flat surface against a straight edge; a steel rule, for example. You may find glueing the top and bottom runs of tracks together makes for easier assembly; you can make sure they are straight more easily than when they are on the model. Some modellers prefer to assemble the tracks as separate items so they can be painted before being glued finally onto the model. In this case, be careful handling the tracks as they will be quite fragile.

The pictures show a set of T62 style tracks being assembled to the Fighting 48th Sherman M4A4 hull, which is slightly longer than the standard Tamiya kit, and also has the hull sponson floors moulded on, but otherwise assembly is very similar on the Tamiya hull. You will need to trim away some of the links from one of the castings provided for the top run. This is best done at the 'bare link' end of the casting rather than the 'teeth' end. Just score and bend gently to break off the link to be removed, and then trim away any remnants of the teeth to restore the 'bare link', so it will locate into the teeth of the next casting. For an M4A4, you will need to remove 1 link, making an 11-link piece. For a standard hull, the top and bottom runs of links will both be two links LESS than shown in the photograph, so trim away 3 links, making a 9-link piece for the top run, and omit the 2-link piece from the bottom run of track. Tracks with Extended End Connectors the links are 'handed', so be sure to assemble them on the correct side of the tank.

A good tip from Konrad Schreier of www.track48.com, is to use the drive sprockets as a jig when glueing the idler links together. Just make sure you don't get any glue on the teeth! Once the glue has set, pop the sprockets apart and the links will stay together, perfectly aligned, so you can then fix them to the idler. Many thanks for that tip, Konrad!

You can read Konrad's review of these tracks at <http://www.track48.com/shop/xnews.php?newsid=459>

Trim a 12-link piece to make a 9-link piece for M4, M4A1, M4A2, M4A3, or an 11-link piece for M4A4



This picture shows the rear idler axle sawn off the hull, and the idler, with its 5 links already in place. You may need to adjust the final positions of the other track pieces to get everything aligned, but this is the easiest way of ensuring the links all join without any gaps. The idler can then be glued to the rear axle bracket to complete the assembly. You may wish to do this after painting the track, hull, wheels and bogies. Note the wooden wedges used to hold the track in place while the glue sets. These are trimmed matchsticks.

Don't forget to check our web site and web shop at www.fighting48th.com or www.fighting48th-shop.com for the latest releases and other products.

