

## Carpet Monster

DEFEATING THE DEMON OF THE WORKSHOP



# TRUE SCALE

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## Carpet Monster

We've all heard of this beast - that eats our kits before our eyes. Our club rooms are not carpeted, but there is a grey Floor Demon that does the same thing. Perhaps it is just the hall's way of getting us to sweep it...

Parts can fall off, ping off, and be swept off by our sleeves as we work on the tables. Once they fall, they pick up energy and then discharge it as the first point of hard contact - the result is they fly in totally unpredictable ways. It makes no difference whether they are large or small, wood or plastic.

## What to do?

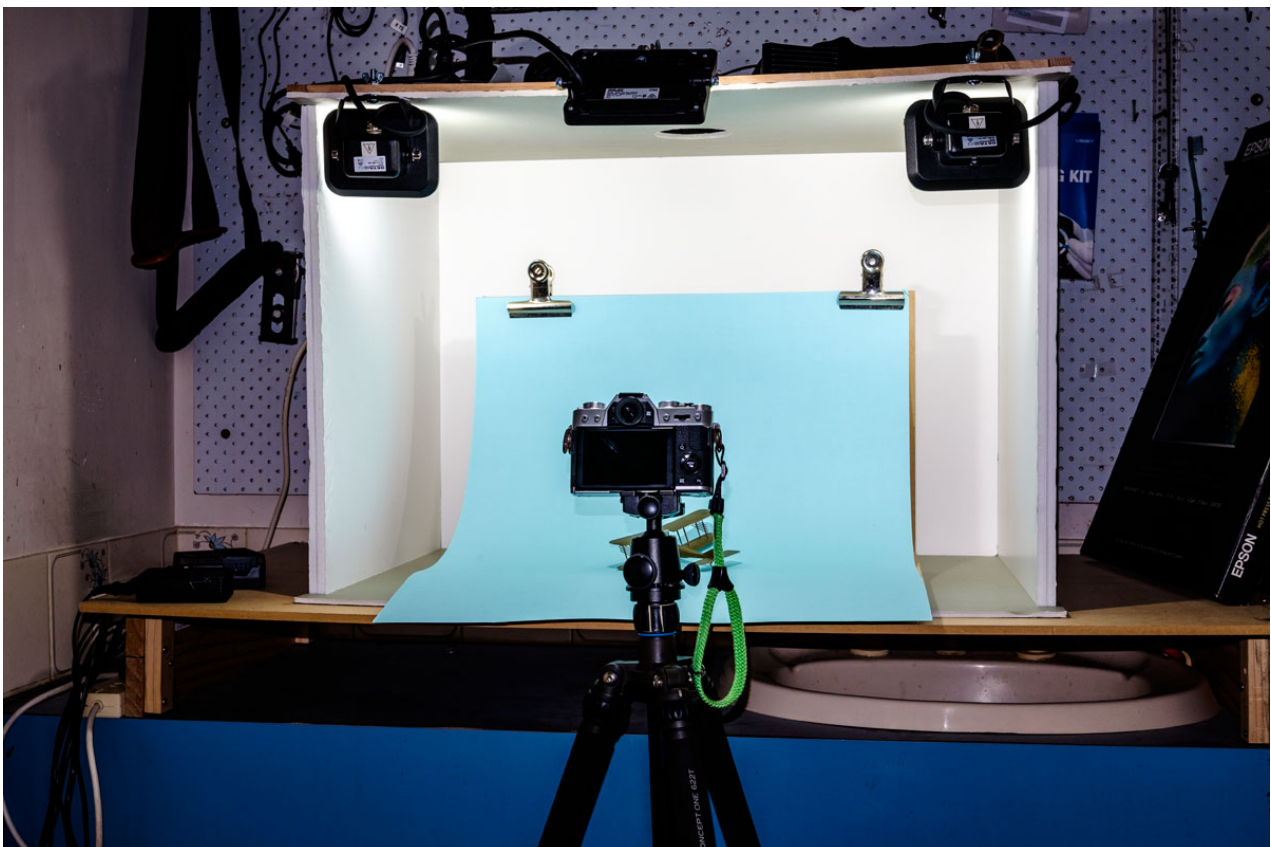
- Don't cut things off sprue unnecessarily and just pile them up. Leave them on the trees until you need them.
- Cut them gently with the minimum of force and direct the part into the kit box if possible.
- Sit with your chest or belly against the table to act as a barrier. Consider wearing a jeweller's apron around your neck and attached to the table edge. Don't clothesline yourself when you get up.
- Cut on a felt surface or a tea-towel. The parts will lose energy when they hit the cloth.
- If you do lose a part, sit and look carefully around your feet. Too many parts are stepped on in exasperation.
- If all else fails, build 1:8 scale kits...



## The Modeller's Mini Photo Studio



We all use images in our modelling - from the art on the front and back of the kit boxes to internet reference photos to on-line forum bragging pictures. Good ones are hard to beat, and surprisingly, good ones are easy enough to do.



If your ambition doesn't run to a full photo studio with professional lighting, consider a few easy ideas that will improve your shots:

- Officeworks and Jackson's Drawing Supplies have sheets of 5mm A2 foam-core paperboard that can be assembled into photo booths very cheaply. PVA glue and some straight pins are all you need, and the interior can be grey or white with no painting needed.
- Ditto Bunnings, if you'd like to make your photo set from MDF board and a few screws. This can be closed or have an open top. A few bulldog clips and sheets of coloured card from Officeworks means you have a mini-scoop with a droop apron.
- Bunnings sell wonderful LED panels that plug right into a regular mains socket - these can be small or large, and have metal brackets in-built. They are a constant colour temperature and run cool.



- If you want variable colour temperature there are LED panels from the internet suppliers with battery power and warm to cool adjustments. Not terribly dear.

What camera? Whichever digital one you own - even your mobile phone. If your camera can be set to run an automatic white balance and auto focus, all you need to do is put your newest model down and start shooting.

Good results come from getting down close to the model at about scale height - this is where the drop apron works so well. You'll be doing what professionals do for their product shots. Don't be too proud to check and re-check the results and re-shoot if need be at a small aperture.

Also remember that dust and dirt on your camera or phone lens will make the result shabby - keep things clean. And don't be afraid to try out the photo-editing program that probably exists on your computer right now.

A final note: Look at the small box set above with the blue paper scoop. It's a spectacular way to show up sprue trees or individual parts while building, but a wrong choice when it comes to the final model shots.

We spend a good deal of our time and patience getting precise shades and colours for our models. Oh, the number of arguments about particular hues...When we've finished something as authentically as possible, it is a shame to lose that accuracy in the reveal shot.

If you use a strongly-coloured scoop, the reflected light will wash into the shadows and distort the visual impression. For this stage, use a neutral grey or even black to make the model stand out. White ends to wash out, though it may not shift the hue. You can generally let your camera's auto white balance deal with the temperature if it doesn't have to see too much off colour light.

## Mens Shedding

Our club - The Scale Modellers Club Of Western Australia - is part of the Men's Shed organisation here in Australia. If that sounds gender specific, it isn't - we would be delighted to have women join the club and participate in the model building and other activities.

The Men's Shed network is all over the country and provides a good basis for comradeship based upon activities that are practical - rather than just social. We build scale models of darn near anything we can think of. In a lot of cases the things we build start as boxed kits, but that doesn't mean to say that plans and raw materials couldn't be the go for a scratch-built model. It's all up to the builder.

Our sessions are on Tuesday - and sometimes on Thursday. We start about 8:30 in the morning, I gather, and finish about 2:00, I believe. I live so far away that I get there by 9:00 and have to leave at 12:00 but I get my good times in the three hours, I assure you.

Is it a rough place, full of rough people? No - but you would be advised to have your wits and a sense of humour about you when you sit at the big building tables. Scale model building can be exasperating and the retired chaps I build with have learned a lot of words over the years to receive the stress...

I gather that other men's sheds are much like ours, with their own focus on practical activities. Some work in wood or metal. Some repair all sorts of things - and some do it as a charitable contribution. Good on them. I would be honoured to be invited to visit them and have them visit us to see what each shed does. They might, as we do, have cake from time to time to go with the coffee...

Note: The Men's Shed organisation is good for us - it provides public liability insurance and lends us a gravitas that helps our public image.

## Building A Mercedes-Benz W31 G4 Touring Car



### Background

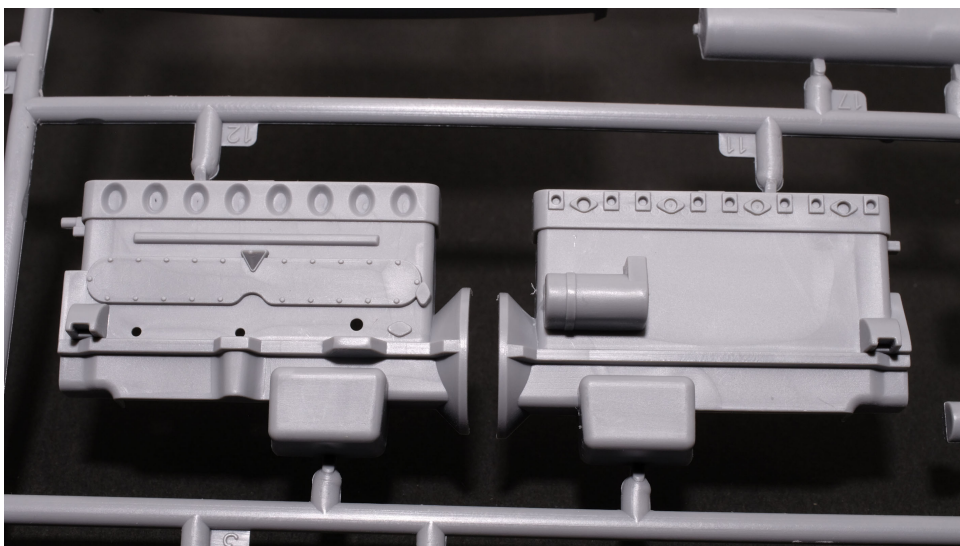
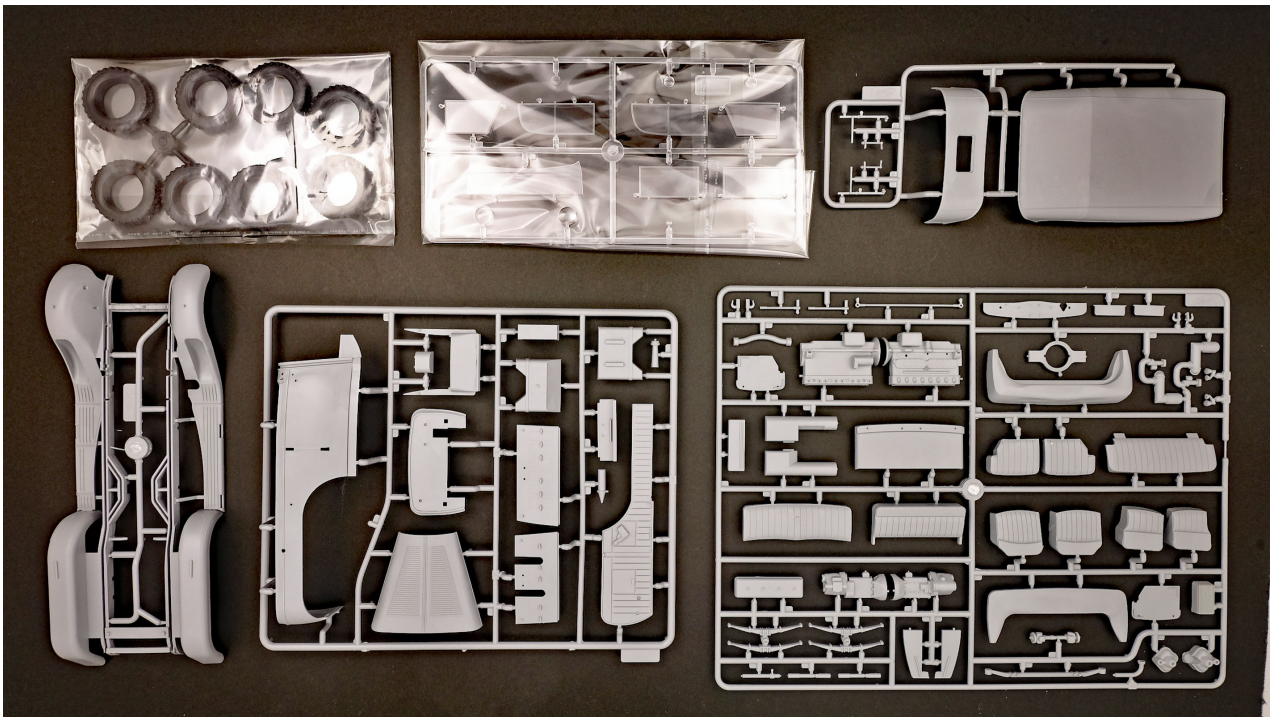
The G4 Touring car is a three-axle off-road vehicle first produced as a staff/command car for the Wehrmacht in 1934. Due to them being too expensive for general ARMY use, the cars were designed as a seven seat touring car or closed saloon for the upper echelon of the Nazi regime to use in parades and inspections.

A total of 57 cars were produced, of which four are known to still exist, The four are:

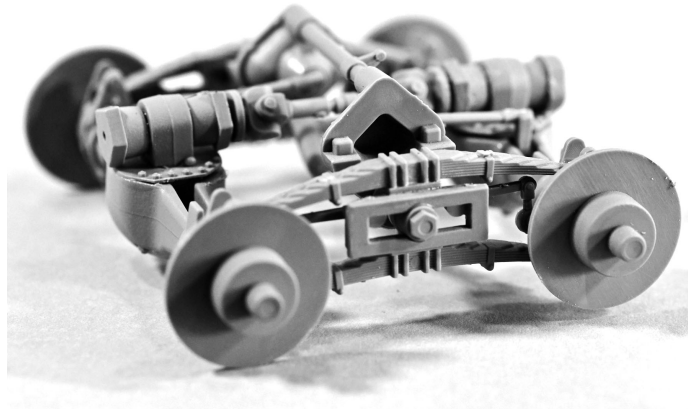
1. A G4 on display at the Sinsheim Auto & Technik Museum.
2. The car gifted to General Franco of Spain.
3. The car preserved in the Lyon Air Museum.
4. The car used in the opening credits of “ Hogan’s Heroes “ and other Hollywood films.  
It is now with the Wheatcroft Collection in the UK.

## Building The W31 G4

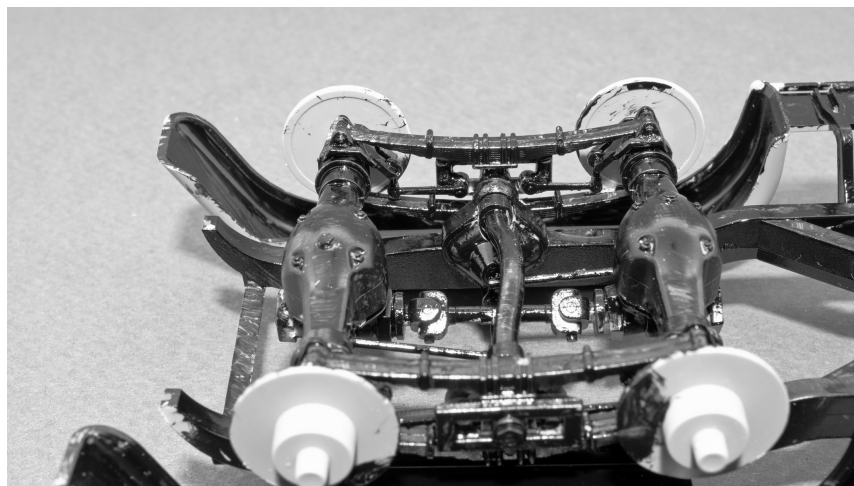
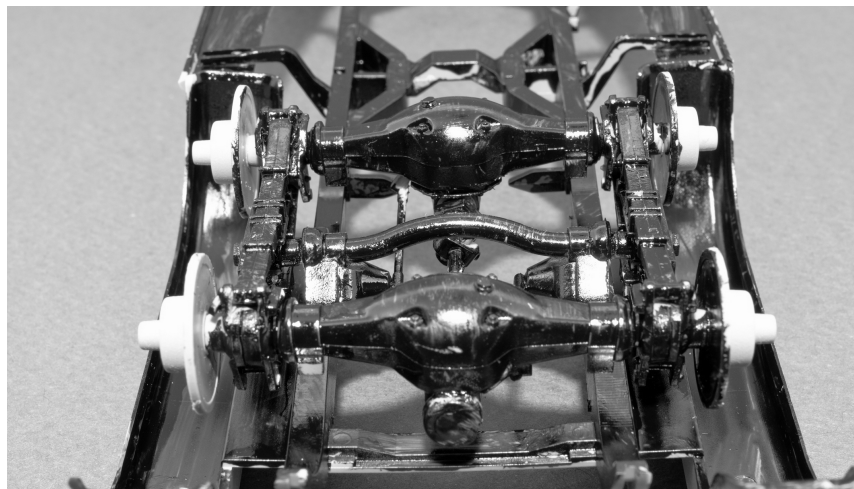
The kit I’m building the car from is an ICM 1:24 scale G4 ( kit no. 24012 ) with an open cover. As can be seen from the attached photos, the sprue trees are flash-free and the parts are well detailed - particularly the rear suspension and drive train.



The rear suspension is particularly well detailed, and as such, careful attention has to be paid to the construction drawings.



Failure to do this will inevitably lead to misaligned components; hence the rear axles will not sit correctly on the chassis. The instructions pertaining to the rear axles are fairly detailed but need to be scrutinised closely. I found this part of the build slightly confusing.

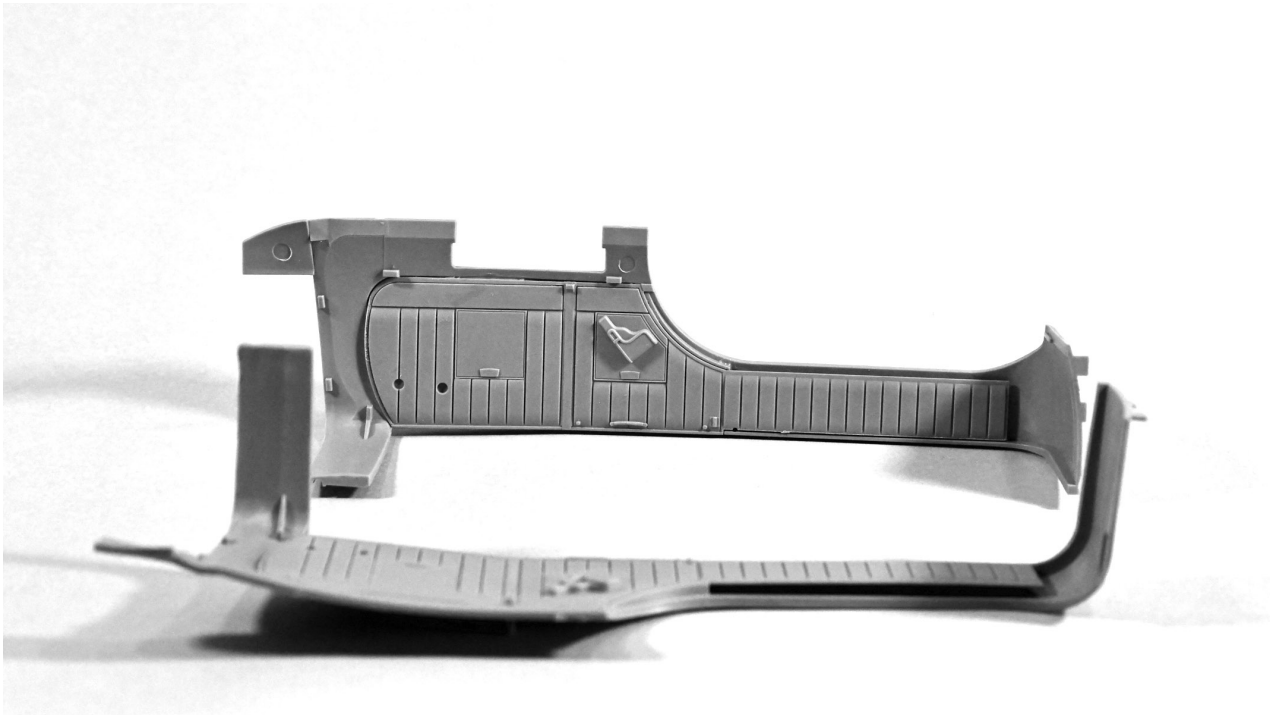




I assembled all the major components in preparation for the painting process - some of the items are best painted prior to assembly.



Previous issues of this kit have included chromed parts - e.g. headlights and radiator grille. However this release only provides grey plastic, hence the use of a Molotow pen will be required.



The box art details the G4 as an open cover kit - however there are parts provided for a “hooded “ car if desired. The tonneau cover is nicely detailed - however it has a slight warp which will require to be manipulated with a bit of heat to straighten it.

Next issue of TRUE SCALE will see more painting and assembly - stay tuned.