



# GUNDAM BUILDING BASICS

LUIS & CHRISTINE

<http://angelmex.net>



INTROS





[HTTP://ANGELMEX.NET](http://angelmex.net)

**COME TO OUR ADVANCED PANEL:  
12:30 PM, HERE**



# STOP BY THE GUNPLA WORKSHOP

- B-117, 4pm to 10 pm.
- Bring your model, or purchase an SD kit for \$5.
- Tools and advice available.



# WHAT IS GUNPLA?

- Model Kits (usually plastic) depicting Gundam mecha, vehicles, characters, etc.
- Building a “good looking” Gundam is relatively easy, and the sky is the limit 😊
  - Basic model could be only \$20 including tools and material, and take a couple of days to complete.
  - More detailed, elaborate models can cost up to several hundred \$ and take months to complete

# CHRISTINE'S CHIBI GUNDAM





# Christine's RX-78 Gundam



<http://angelmex.net>



# CHRISTINE'S HARUTE GUNDAM



# HIGH GRADE (HG)

- **Great starting point for beginners!**
- Affordable. \$10 to \$75
- Lots of Gundams in 1/100 and 1/144
- Good amount of detail
- Detail painting improves results, but it's not required.





# 1/100 (RE, IRON BLOODED ORPHANS)

- Somewhat more detailed than 1/100 HG
- Some contain Inner frame! (though less detailed than MG)





# SD (CHIBI)

- Affordable: \$5 to \$50
- Lots of popular and unusual Gundams
- Newer models have good amount of detail, similar to HG.
- Older models are very simple, similar to No-Grade
- Detail painting is usually required for best results
- **Newer models are a Good starting point for beginners**





# MASTER GRADE (MG)

- \$30 to \$150
- Only most popular Gundams, only 1/100
- Great amount of detail
- Moderate to high complexity
- Rarely needs detail painting
- Great canvas to apply more advanced techniques
- Can be overwhelming for a beginner.





# REAL GRADE (RG)

- Moderate Price (\$30 to \$50)
- Only in 1/144 scale (small)
- Only most popular Gundams
- EXTREMELY detailed
- Lots of small, fragile pieces
- Detail painting rarely required.
- Not recommended for beginners given the tiny, fragile pieces





# PERFECT GRADE (PG)

- Most expensive (\$100 to \$300)
- Only a few Gundams
- Most complexity
- Largest size: 1/60
- Ideal for more elaborate painting, modifications, etc.
- Not recommended for beginners due to price, complexity, size.






# NO-GRADE

- \$5 to \$20
- Lots of Gundams in 1/100 and 1/144
- Least amount of detail
- Requires lots of extra work for best results
- **Beginners may find them challenging due to the lack of detail**
- But they're still nice, poseable, easy to build...





4'



**BB / SD Se**

**Difficulty:**  
★☆☆☆☆

**Feature:**  
★☆☆☆☆

**Detail:**  
★☆☆☆☆

Contents:  
4 - 6 Runners  
Foil Stickers

5'



**High Grade**

**Difficulty:**  
★★☆☆☆

**Feature:**  
★★☆☆☆

**Detail:**  
★★☆☆☆

Contents:  
6 - 8 Runners  
Foil Stickers

5'



**Real Grade**

**Difficulty:**  
★★★★☆

**Feature:**  
★★★☆☆

**Detail:**  
★★★★☆

Contents:  
9 - 10 Runners  
Decals / Stickers

7'



**Master Gra**

**Difficulty:**  
★★★★☆

**Feature:**  
★★★★☆

**Detail:**  
★★★★☆

Contents:  
15 - 17 Runners  
Decals / Stickers

12'



**Perfect Gra**

**Difficulty:**  
★★★★★

**Feature:**  
★★★★★

**Detail:**  
★★★★★

Contents:  
22 - 24 Runners  
Decals / Stickers



# WHERE TO BUY GUNPLA?

- Best option is to buy at your local hobby store.
- Amazon. If it's marked as Prime, it's probably authentic.
- If you buy online, be very careful if the prices look too good to be true. You could end up getting one of these...



# 00-FIGHTER! ATTACK!



- Bootleg Gundams:
  - Lots of leftover plastic in the mold
  - Bad fit
  - Pieces are not molded in all colors
  - Transparent pieces are low quality (if included)
  - Markings are low quality (if included)
- Stay away from these 😊





# BUILD PROCESS

- This panel is focused on maximizing **FUN** and achieving **GREAT LOOKS** on your first few Gundam kits, while minimizing price, time and effort.
- Achieving a Perfect Finish is a secondary goal. We'll focus on perfection on the Advance panel
- The main skills you need discipline, patience and organization skills.
- These are just general ideas to get started, feel free to try new things, experiment. That's what makes this hobby so much fun.





## SOME TERMS:

- Typical Gundam scales are:
  - **1/100** (medium size, up to 8 inches)
  - **1/144** (smaller size, up to 5 inches)
- **Matte and Flat** paint are technically not the same, but I'll use the term Matte to refer to both.
- **Pearl Paint** is shiny paint with some sparkle effects.
- **Xacto knife** can also be called **hobby knife**.
- **Detail Painting** is when a different sections of a single part are painted in different colors.



# BASIC TOOLS

- Shear Flush Cutter (\$10)
- Xacto Knife (\$5)
- Spray Paints (\$8 each). Make sure it's for PLASTIC, not for Polycarbonate or Metal
- Painter's Mask (\$10)







# SAFETY FIRST

- If you're a kid, ask your parents for help handling a xacto knife ☺ or stick to using just a shear flush cutter.
- If you're an adult, be careful handling a xacto knife ☺
- Spray Paint in extremely well ventilated areas, ideally outdoors.
  - Wear a Painter's mask and goggles.
  - Wear latex gloves.
- When airbrushing, avoid lacquer and enamel paints. Try to use acrylics only\*
  - Some people prefer the look and feel of lacquers or enamels. We prefer safety ☺



# WHAT'S IN THE GUNDAM BOX?

- Ready to Start?
- But wait... What's in the Gundam box?





# WHAT'S IN THE GUNDAM BOX?

- Instructions booklet
- Bags of pieces
- Markings (stickers)
- Sometimes there are additional pieces or tools, like screws or rubber bands.





# WHAT'S IN THE GUNDAM BOX?

- Most pieces are molded in color.
- The Higher the Grade, the more color separation you'll find (less extra painting required)
- Each pieces' branch have a Letter
- Each piece has a number.
- In the instructions the pieces will be shown by the branch and piece number. Examples:
  - A4
  - B7
  - C11





# BASIC TIPS

- Pay attention to the instructions
- Many pieces look similar. Use the instructions to tell them apart
- Follow the substeps in the order shown





# CUTTING OUT PIECES

1. Using the flush cutter, cut a little bit away from the piece
2. Once the piece is out, cut the remainder of plastic using the flush cutter

Going for a better look:

1. Finish cleaning up the piece with the xacto knife.





# GOING FOR THE PERFECT LOOK

1. Use sandpaper to completely clean out the piece.
2. Fill any scratches or damage to the piece with putty, wait for it to dry and sand out the excess.
3. Add a coat of primer, wait for it to dry.
4. Look for imperfections, I found, repeat from 1.
5. Requires painting. **We'll talk more about using putty and sandpaper in the Advanced panel**





# APPLYING MARKINGS

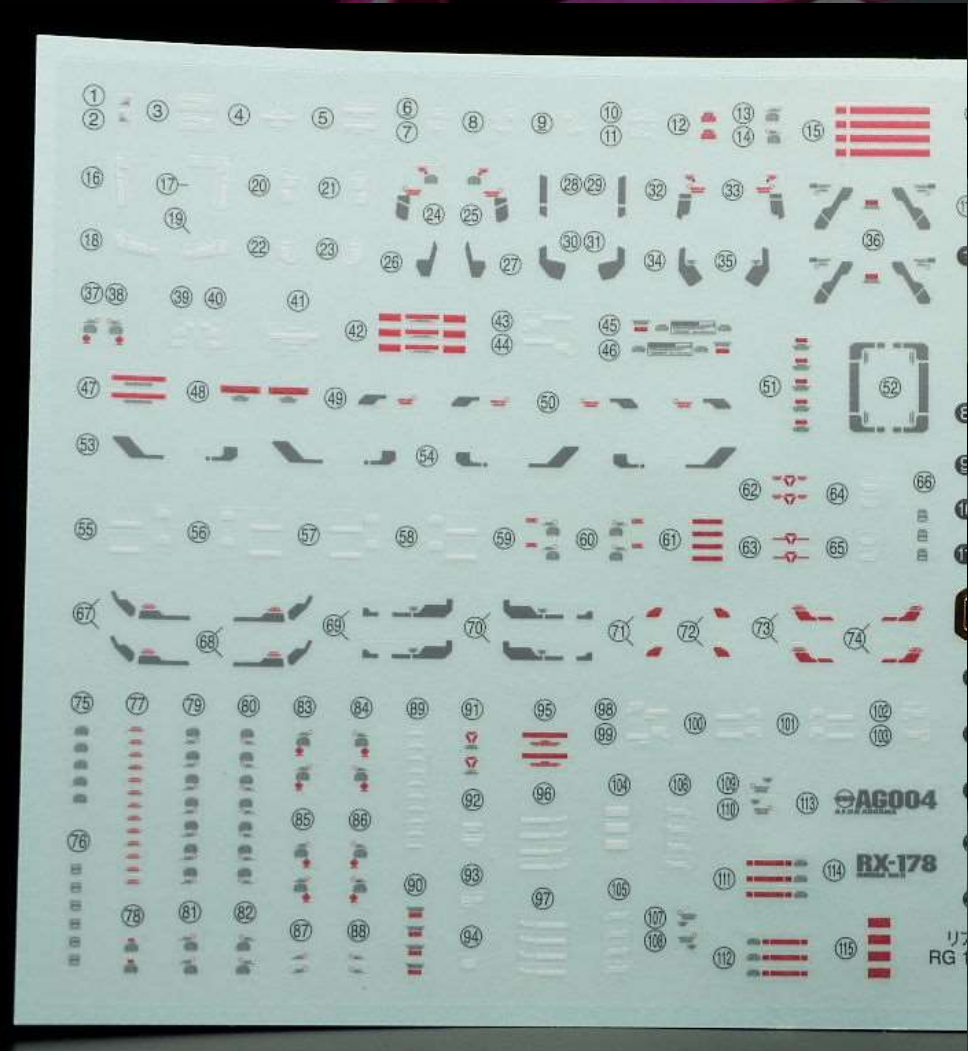
- Add lots of detail and personality
- For all marking types it's best to apply on glossy or unpainted piece.
- Don't dismiss small markings. Big fancy logos make the model stand out, but the little ones give it the WOW factor





# REGULAR STICKERS

- Just make sure the surface is clean.
- Peel off and apply. Do not apply and remove multiple times,
- The clear film stands out.
- Applying on flat pieces or simple curves is usually easy and the result is nice.
- Applying on compound curves is difficult and will likely look bad.





# GOING FOR THE PERFECT FINISH

- Most Markings on the Tallgeese model were stickers, including the big logo on the shield, which is a sphere section.
- How did I solve this problem?
  - I made my own waterslide decals!
- **Find out how in the Advanced Panel**



# METALLIC FOIL STICKERS

- Usually required for eyes, lights, etc.
- Make sure the surface where you'll apply these is clean
- Simple to apply, just peel off from the markings sheet and apply
- Usually applied at the very end of the process. **Don't clear-coat them or they will lose their natural metallic finish.**
- **Going for the Perfect Finish:**
  - Don't use the metallic stickers. Instead paint the details ☺





- One of these looks better than the other....
- What's the difference??



# PANEL LINES

- Gundam Marker

1. Apply on Gloss or unpainted plastic. Grey or brown for lighter color pieces
2. Black is OK on darker pieces. Don't apply black marker on white pieces. Stands out too much!
3. If there's any excess left outside of the panel line, wipe it away immediately.

## ガンダムマーカー

グンゼ産業から発売されている、ガンブラなどのキャラクターモデルを塗装するのに適したペンタイプのアルコール系塗料(ふでペンは水性、スミ入れ用は油性)。面塗装用のマーカータイプ(16色)のほかに、スミ入れ用の極細ペン(3色)、スミ入れ用流し込みタイプのふでペン(1色)が発売中。



スミ入れ用ペンは全4色。左からスミ入れふでペン(ブラック)、スミ入れ用(ブラック)、スミ入れ用(グレー)、スミ入れ用(ブラウン)、各200円



！ペン先は左からマーカータイプ、ふでペン、スミ入れ用。



# PANEL LINES

- Mechanical pencil
- Get a .3 mm pencil
  - Less messy, easier to clean than Gundam Marker.
  - Less color options (blue, red, lead)
  - Apply on Matte surfaces. Otherwise, the pigment won't stick.
  - Erase the excess with a pencil eraser.
- **Advanced Building Panel:** We'll talk about using highly diluted paint for even better panel lines





# SHORTCUT!

- The following build steps suggest painting the parts separately and then putting together the model
- This is fast and simple, and great for beginners

## **Going for the perfect look:**

- Assemble some sections first, glue some parts, sand seams, etc.
- We'll talk about this in the Advanced panel.



# YOUR FIRST BUILD! (SNAP IT!)

- Straight out of the box
- Only required tool is Shear Cutters (\$15)
- Optional tool: xacto knife (\$10)
- Depending on the model, you could complete it in one or 2 afternoons
- Finished product looks like a toy. A cool toy, but still, a toy 😊



# YOUR FIRST BUILD: PROCESS

1. Open the box
2. Cut and clean pieces
3. Follow Instructions to build the model.
4. Apply regular and metallic stickers
5. Optional: paint panel lines.
6. You're done!





# YOUR 2<sup>ND</sup> BUILD: TOP COATS!

Top Coat Spray adds a “painted on” look that helps your Gundam look less like a toy and more like art

Extra tools and paint:

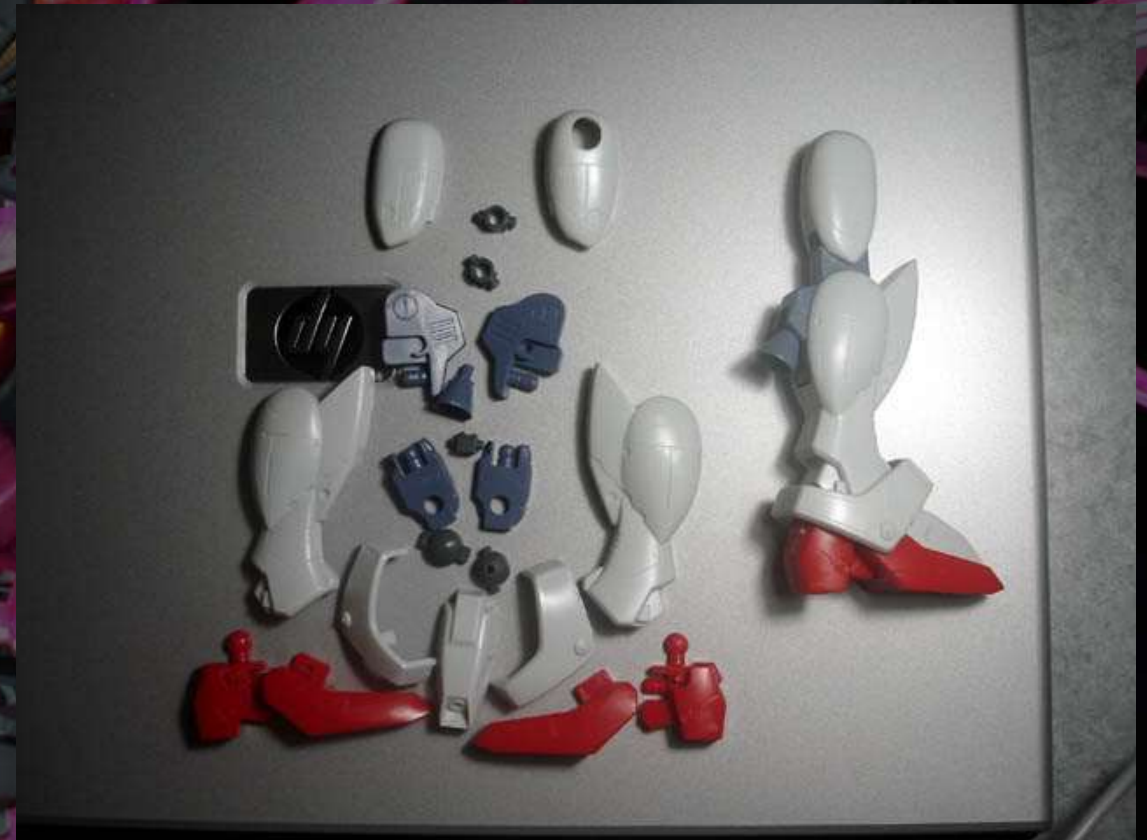
- Matte clear spray (\$8) Tamiya or Gunze-Sangyo brand
- Gloss clear spray (\$8)
- Optional: Semi-Gloss clear spray, Pearl Spray, etc.



# BASIC SPRAY PAINT BUILD: PROCESS

1. Cut and clean pieces
2. Plan desired finish. For example:
  1. Matte clear for neutral colors
  2. Gloss clear for primaries and bright colors
3. Pre-assemble some sections that will share same finish.
4. Apply regular stickers

(continued)





# BASIC SPRAY PAINT BUILD: PROCESS

(continued)

5. If using Gundam Marker, do it now.
6. Organize parts per desired finish, individually on toothpicks, or on tape. Leave room between pieces
7. Clear pieces won't be coated (unless you want to add some effect, like frosted glass)



# BASIC SPRAY PAINT BUILD: PROCESS

(continued)

8. Spray-paint pieces from 6 to 12 inches away, always moving your hand. One or 2 passes at most per coat.
9. Immediately after painting, cover pieces to keep dust from landing on wet paint. Let pieces dry to touch (15-20 minutes for Flat/Matte, 1 hr. for gloss).
10. Apply 1 or 2 more coats.
11. Let parts dry overnight before handling.
12. Follow instructions to complete model and optionally apply metallic stickers





# GOING FOR THE PERFECT FINISH: GLOSS PAINT

- Spray painting gloss paint is more difficult than Flat/Matte.
- Apply “wet coats” a wet coat is a thicker coat, to the point just before the paint is about to drip. This requires practice.
- Let it dry for about 1 hr. before applying another coat. Let it dry for at least 24 hr. before handling.



# EXPERIMENT! (ENDLESS WALTZ WINGZERO)

- Make it look interesting!
  - Matte finish for White body pieces
  - Semi-Gloss for Red pieces
  - Gloss for Blue and yellow.
  - Pearl for Wings





# YOUR 3<sup>RD</sup> BUILD: NOW MAKE THEM LOOK METAL!

- Metallic tones will make your inner frames look more mechanical and your weapons heavier and more menacing.
- You'll need some metallic spray paints:
  - **Gunmetal**
  - **Silver**
  - Aluminum
  - Gold
  - Metallic Grey
  - Metallic black
  - Copper



# METALLIC SPRAY BUILD: PROCESS

1. Plan which parts will have metallic finish:
  1. Inner frame
  2. Weapons
  3. Yellow (turn them gold!)
2. Organize the pieces:
  1. Parts that will have a metallic finish.
  2. Parts that will only be clear-coated
3. Follow Top Coat process for all pieces that won't be metallic





# METALLIC SPRAY BUILD: PROCESS

(continued)

4. Prime rest of the parts. Let them dry at least a few hours.
5. Spray paint metallic paint.
6. Let parts dry overnight
7. Apply markings
8. **Don't clear-coat metallic parts. This removes the metallic effect**
9. Follow the instructions to complete the model





# EXPERIMENT!

- RX-79 (Master Grade)
- White, blue and red: Flat Top Coat.
- Metallic Grey for inner frame.
- Gunmetal for guns
- Metallic black for tip of the guns
- Aluminum for interior of backpack
- Bronze/copper for afterburners
- Gold for yellow pieces
- We'll talk about improving metallic finish in the Advanced Panel ☺





# GOING FOR THE PERFECT FINISH: METALLIC

- Some metallic paints require a gloss black primer. These paints give the more realistic metallic finish, but require the most work:
- Spray paint a wet coat of Tamiya gloss black. Make sure you get an even finish.
- Let it dry overnight
- Spray paint a wet coat of metallic paint
- Let it dry overnight





# READY TO PAINT EVERYTHING?

- Prime and Paint for the fanciest looking Gundams!
- What you need:
  - Spray Paint for each model color (\$8 each)
- Plan the desired finish:
  - Grunt mecha probably needs Matte/Flat tones, some metal
  - Something like Destiny Gundam probably needs pearl/high-gloss finish
  - It's really up to you ☺





# FULL SPRAY PAINT BUILD: PROCESS

1. Plan which parts will be matte, glossy, pearl, metallic, etc.
2. Organize pieces:
  1. Parts that will only need clear-coat
  2. Parts that will be metallic
  3. Parts that will have a full paint job
3. Spray Paint clear-coat and metallic pieces as described before.

(continued)



# FULL SPRAY PAINT BUILD: PROCESS

(continued)

4. Prime parts about to be painted.
5. Spray paint the pieces that will get the full paint job.
6. All pieces that will get stickers **MUST** have glossy finish. Apply a gloss coat if needed.
7. Apply regular stickers
8. After applying the stickers, apply corresponding clear coat for desired finish.
9. Apply metallic markings
10. Remember not to coat metallic pieces.





- Full Paint Job:
- Metallic backpack
- Gloss orange and Red
- Matte white
- Gundam Marker panel lines



# METALLIC PLATED PARTS

- Be careful when cutting out from the sprues
- If the plated gets damaged, you can hide the damage with a metallic Gundam marker or a touch of metallic paint
- **Don't clear coat.**







# FULL PROCESS

1. Cut pieces
2. Clean pieces
3. Pre-assemble sections of the same color/finish.
4. Organize pieces depending on planned paint job.
5. Set pieces on toothpicks or tape.
6. Apply Color
7. Apply Clear Gloss coat if needed.
8. If marking panels with Gundam marker, do it now.
9. Apply regular stickers
10. Apply clear coats for desired finish (No more painting after this)
11. Mark remaining panels with pencil
12. Apply metallic stickers (eyes, lights, etc)
13. Follow instructions to complete assembly.



# DISPLAYING YOUR MODEL

- Most stand on their own, and are easy to set in an action pose.
- Some MG include display base (Destiny Full burst, Strike Freedom, Nu Ver. Ka)
- Plenty of options for action bases for both 1/144 and 1/100 scales
- **Perfect finish:** Paint your display base!





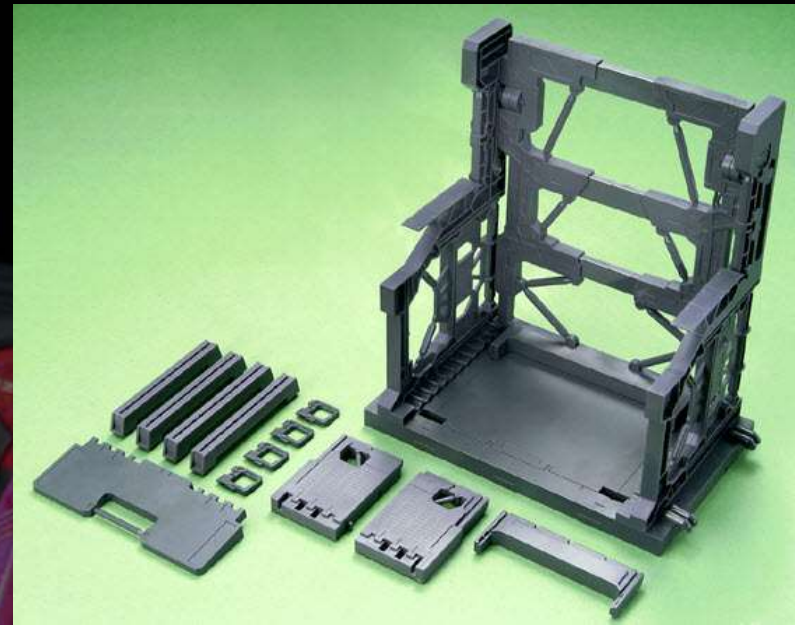
# RAID YOUR LOCAL CRAFT STORE!

- Lots of craft products that can easily be used as display bases:
  - Distressed wood plaques
  - Wooden photo frames
  - Notes holders
  - Thin wire



# GUNDAM BUILDER PARTS

- More weapon options
- More expressive hands
- Nice extra accessories like fuel tanks, more detailed afterburners, etc.
- Add-ons for dioramas (Gundam cage, sniper rifle)
- Same quality as newer Gundam models, usually fit very easily on any modern models
- Usually \$5 to \$10.





# GUNDAM LED KITS

- Some newer MG and PG are already designed to hold one or more LED units for the eyes, GN drives, psycho frames, etc.
- These are usually super easy to install and remove to replace batteries.
- It's a nice touch, though difficult to notice unless the room lights are dim.









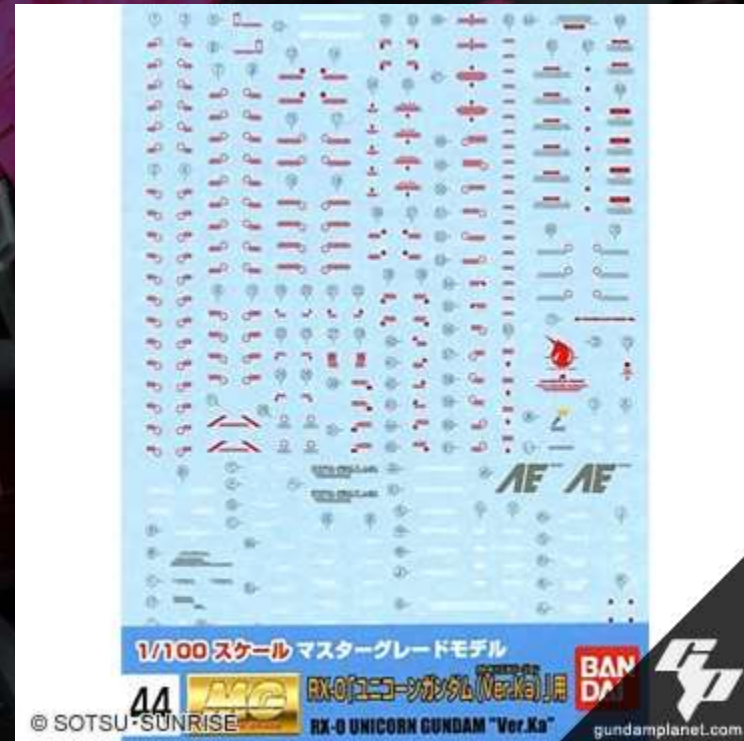
# OTHER MARKINGS: DRY TRANSFERS

- Usually included in Master Grade and above
- Great finish 😊
- Easy to break 😞
- **Advanced Panel:** We'll talk about these in detail.



# OTHER MARKINGS: WATER SLIDE DECALS

- Water slide
  - BEST finish 😊
  - Most work ☹️
  - Usually sold separately from the models
- We'll talk about them in more detail in the Advanced Panel, including making custom decals. 😊





# IMPROVING YOUR SKILLS

- Get together with other builders
- Find a model building Club
  - Sleeves
  - WA
  - IPMS Seattle
  - Northwest Modelers
  - Galaxy Hobbies club
  - Vanpla (Vancouver, BC)
- Go online
- Go to the Sleeves workshop!
- **Come to the Advanced Gundam Building Panel ☺**





# ADVANCED PANEL PREVIEW

- Advanced markings and decals
- Advanced paint jobs
- Airbrushing
- Weathering
- Battle Damage
- Dioramas
- Contests!
- **TIME: Right after this panel!**









# ANSWER A QUESTION, GET A GUNDAM!

- Prizes provided by by Sean's Anime
  - [www.seansanime.com](http://www.seansanime.com)
  - Located in the Exhibitor's room





# RESOURCES:

- <http://angelmex.net>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/OregonGunpla/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/WashingtonGunpla/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Vanpla/>
- <http://ipms-seattle.org/>
- <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/northwestscalemodelers/info>
- <http://galaxyhobby.com/science-fiction-model-club/>



Q & A

- <http://angelmex.net>
- Gundams at Kumoricon