

TINY TIN TROOPERS

Wargaming in Smaller Scales



1/3000th Napoleonic ships



1/600th Fokker Triplane

6mm WSS Bavarian Foot battalion



Small Scale Wargaming

First of all, this isn't really a sales pitch. We aren't connected to any particular manufacturer, just gamers who like these tiny tin troopers and who would like to share our enthusiasm with others. We do however offer a painting service (see the back page).

One of the biggest problems in starting out in a smaller scale is that you don't really know what to expect.

- What are the advantages & disadvantages of each scale ?
- How detailed are they ?
- Are they easy to paint ?
- How good will they look ?
- What rules work well with them ?
- Who makes them ?
- Who's are the best for my period ?

Our displays today and the information and ideas in this little leaflet will try to answer some of these questions and show you why we think they are worth a more serious consideration than many gamers give them.

The models on display reflect both our interest and our experience. You will find a bit of Fantasy (a momentary aberration) but mostly Historicals and, I'm afraid, no Sci-Fi.



2mm figures are a bit of a joke to many people but here is some proof that they can look like an ARMY.



Scale, Style, Proportion and Detail

A good rule of thumb is to say that the smaller the scale, the less detail you can expect. To criticise 6mm because you can't see buttons on a coat is rather silly but it doesn't stop people expecting the extremes. The assumption that small scales are just 'blobs of lead' is plainly wrong, you only have to look at some samples to see that but, and this matters to some gamers, you don't get the same level of detail as you might get on 15mm, even on the very best 6mm figures.

What you will get in smaller scales is as much detail as the sculptor has decided is reasonable (and paintable) for that period and figure type. This naturally varies from range to range and most sculptors of smaller scales tend to exaggerate some of the detail or certain figure proportions so that the principal uniform or equipment details stand out, making the figure more easily recognisable once painted. Adler's 'big heads' and Baccus' bulky bodies are examples of this exaggeration in 6mm and all manufacturers make legs and weapons thicker than they should be – without that they tend to break too easily or result in numerous miscasts.

Popularity

6mm are, by a very large margin, the most popular and well supported scale. Many rules are written specifically for 6mm (many for armoured warfare and the recent Polemos series from Baccus) and there is a broad base of players using this scale, particularly for armoured warfare and Napoleonics.

10mm is growing and is probably going to be an addition to the 'established' scales very soon. Basing is much the same as for 15mm so specific rules for 10mm are unnecessary.

2mm is likely to remain a 'niche' scale. Player numbers are not as small as you might think and Irregular still sell a large number of them but you will probably need to provide both armies if you plan to play with friends.

These are some 6mm Fantasy from Irregular Miniatures.



I created about 6
HoTT armies at a
speed that even
surprised me and
for the grand total
of only £40



Figure Availability

We have decided to call anything from 10mm down 'Small Scale'. It is a bit arbitrary but ranges between 10mm and 15mm are fairly rare. This gives you the range from 2mm to 10mm (approximately 1/900th to 1/180th). I'm sure that I will have missed some manufacturers in this list, my apologies to them in advance.

2mm (1/900th)

Irregular Miniatures are the only producers of this scale (except for a small, but growing, SciFi range from GZG). They have ranges for Ancients, Renaissance, Horse & Musket, WW1/2 and post-WW2 (even small Sci-Fi and Fantasy ranges) and an extensive range of scenery.

I have to admit that I'm rather a passionate supporter of 2mm, they allow you to field troops that actually look like ARMIES and to do it in a relatively small space. Probably at their best for 18th-19th century wars but used by a surprisingly large number of gamers in all periods.

The figures come in solid blocks of between 15 and 78 foot, 5 – 15 horse and 5 or 6 separate skirmishers on one base. A range of siege engines, artillery, limbers and wagons with some elephants, chariots and even camels in the Ancient range. Detail varies but is often unexpectedly good; wheels have spokes, cavalry a kit-roll behind the saddle and infantry weapons can be distinguished on most blocks.

2mm are not 'difficult' to paint but they are 'different'. To get the best out of them you need to keep reminding yourself that you are painting an ARMY, not individual figures and adjust your techniques accordingly. Bright colours and high contrast are essential, suggested detail is enough and good basing really makes them 'live'.

3mm (1/700th-1/600th)

A relatively recent addition, originally produced (by Peter Pig) to go with a 1/600th ACW naval range, but now with other manufacturers producing WW1 to modern ranges and some Sci-Fi. Ranges are still growing and the quality of some of the WW2 & Modern vehicles (particularly those by Oddzial Osmy) is astounding. Ground Zero Games carry a range of Sci-Fi figures & vehicles designed by Gerny - very cute and well designed.

5/6mm (1/300th-1/285th)

The original 'small scale'. You can get pretty much anything that you want for the major conflicts throughout time and many of the smaller ones plus a selection of Fantasy and Sci-Fi. Fairly well established as a mainstream scale for armoured warfare and Napoleonic (with a number of manufacturers for each) there are large ranges of WW2 to Modern, Ancients, Renaissance and 18th & 19th century figures with a smaller choice in Medieval, Fantasy and Sci-Fi.

One point to consider with this scale is that many ranges are not really compatible with others as each manufacturer has their own ideas as to what 6mm means (from about 5.5mm Heroics & Ros to 8mm Adlers) and how they should be modelled. Generally it is best to stick with one manufacturer for a period though WW2 & Modern vehicle ranges tend to be a little less variable. 6mm armies can be impressive without having to be superbly painted (though some ranges are more detailed than the uninitiated would expect) and are mostly fairly easy and quick to paint for the wargames table. With a little practice you can produce large units in hours rather than days and the 'mass effect' has to be seen to be believed.

Painting techniques for 6mm vary a great deal and there are tutorials and examples to be found on the 'net but, considering their popularity, not in most Wargaming magazines, which is a great pity. I suppose they assume that they are not photogenic and can't be bothered to try a few articles to gauge readers' responses.

10mm (1/200th-1/180th)

Someone once described this scale as "... having all the problems of 6mm without any of its advantages.". In our limited experience this does seem to have a germ of truth in it. They were not as easy to paint as 6mm but lacked the detail, variety and animation of 15mm.

Although there are a few manufacturers I find that ranges are limited in many periods, more so than 6mm. In 6mm the smaller size allows relatively simple substitution of a similar type but in 10mm the differences are often too great. Possibly this will change as manufacturers continue to build and expand ranges, 10mm is, after all, a fairly recent introduction.

I think 10mm will appeal most to 25/28mm gamers who want to downscale. They have enough detail to allow differentiation between units quite easily but are small enough to achieve the 'mass effect' of 6mm on a larger table. As noted above, the only limitation may be the lack of completeness in many ranges.



A 10mm T34 in the snow.

If 15 or 20mm is a bit too rich for your wallet then 10mm can be a good alternative for those that find 6mm micro-armour a bit fiddly.

Naval

Most naval miniatures are 'small scale' but with 1/600th & 1/1200th being considered as 'normal' then anything smaller counts as 'small'.

1/6000th

A 500ft battleship is only 25mm long so you can fight naval actions from WW1 & WW2 on a table rather than on the local church hall floor. The only manufacturer (Figurehead) produces a comprehensive range from WW1 onwards and the models, though limited in fine detail (obviously), are crisply cast and recognisable.

1/4800th

A small range of WW2 ships from CinC is all I could find at this scale.

1/3600th

As far as I know the only range available in this scale is Ancient galleys from Outpost Wargame Services. A small range of 6 types that come in packs of 25 at a very reasonable price. These are quite well detailed with clear oar banks and towers on the largest type. The scale is more like 1/3000th and the size difference between the types is exaggerated for easier recognition.

1/3000th

Ranges from Renaissance to Modern are available from at least one manufacturer with some periods being produced by more than one. WW1 & WW2 and ACW are all well served with Renaissance, early steam, pre-Dreadnought and Sail era ships only available from one or two producers. The leader as far as variety is concerned is Navwar but other producers do have better quality models (e.g. WTJ's new pre-dreadnought range), though often at considerably greater cost. Painting these needs a steady hand rather than any artistic skill and the better models are quite detailed enough to produce stunning results with care, even the older models are quite adequate for wargaming use and a basic paint job can be achieved with surprising speed.



A couple of vessels from Navwar's extensive range of pre-dreadnoughts. There are better models (and better paint jobs) slowly coming onto the market but these make quite serviceable gaming models and paint up quite quickly.

1/2400th

At half the size of the 'standard' 1/1200th ranges these offer an excellent compromise between size and detail. The main manufacturer (Figurehead) produce a good range from late Renaissance to early steam and these are very well detailed models that paint up to give impressive fleets.

The Hallmark Napoleonic I have didn't prove to be that easy to paint because the details are so good and sharp that I wanted to paint them all and my technique isn't quite up to it yet. They are pricey, particularly since they went across to the US, but very good models.

1/2000th

The only range that I know of in this scale is the Napoleonic naval one from Valiant. Very similar in size to 1/2400th.

Some Manufacturers

Heroics & Ros / Navwar

1/300th figure ranges from Ancient to Sci-Fi & a large range of military vehicles

1/3000th ships from Renaissance to Modern

Irregular Miniatures

2mm the sole manufacturer of this scale, Ancients to Modern, Fantasy & Sci-Fi

6mm a large range from Ancient to Modern, Fantasy & Sci-Fi, both figures and AFV's plus terrain items and buildings. A very comprehensive range including periods not covered by other manufacturers.

10mm Ancients to ACW

Baccus

6mm Ancients to Franco-Prussian War plus a few Fantasy
Peter has recently introduced Colonial and SciFi ranges

GHQ (US based but has UK suppliers)

1/285th figures and AFV's WWI to Modern

10mm ACW and Napoleonic

1/2400th WWI – Modern ships

Rapier (from Newline Designs)

6mm A recently introduced range of Ancients
Well proportioned and easy to paint

C in C (US based, can't find any UK suppliers)

- 6mm WW2 to Sci-Fi, mostly vehicles plus a small range of infantry.
- 1/2400th WW1, WW2 & Modern ships
- 1/4800th A small range of WW2 ships

Skytrex

- 1/3000th WW1 to Modern ships (Davco) plus Liners and Merchantmen, and aircraft.
- 6mm AFV's from WW2 to Modern
- 10mm (actually 1/200th) WW2 to Modern

Pendracken

- 10mm Ancients to WW2 plus Fantasy & Sci-Fi

Kallistra

- 10mm Mostly Fantasy plus some Medievals

Magister Militum (was Chariot Minatures)

- 10mm Ancients to WW2
- 6mm Mainforce figures, WW2 to modern. Also a GHQ stockist.

Scotia

- 6mm WW1 to Sci-Fi, figures and vehicles

Adler

- 6mm Seven Years War to WW2 plus Sci-Fi

Panzerschiffe (US)

- 1/2400th ACW, Spanish-American War, WW1 & WW2 ships

Old Glory (US with UK supplier)

- 10mm Biblicals to Zulu War figures

Tumbling Dice

- 1/2400th Anglo-Dutch Wars, Napoleonic, Early Steam and ACW ships
- 1/600th WW1, WW2 & Modern aircraft & a small range of figures & vehicles

Valiant Enterprises (US)

- 1/2000th Napoleonic ships

Outpost Wargame Services

- 1/3600th A small range of Ancient galleys

Timecast

- 6mm & 10mm buildings

Oddzial Osmy

- 3mm(1/600th) WW2 & Modern figures, AFV's and aircraft

Contact Details

Baccus

www.baccus6mm.com/
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Irregular Miniatures

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Kallistra

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Navwar

www.navwar.co.uk/nav/
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Painting Small Scale Models

First of all let me say that these are just some general thoughts and ideas, some from our own experience, and others from the tales and tribulations of other devotees of Tiny Tin Troopers. They are mostly aimed at the uninitiated and we don't expect every experienced painter to agree with us. Once you get started you will develop your own style and techniques, there are very few (if any) 'Golden Rules' of painting and, as they say rules were made to be broken.

Brushes - Painting small figures can be hard on brushes but I still advise you to get quality sable brushes, the best you can afford. Synthetics loose their point very quickly but sables don't (if treated right). Block in main colours with a larger, older brush and reserve your expensive ones for the details.

Paint - I use acrylics, mostly Vallejo plus a few craft paints for bases and such but any good quality acrylic will do provide it has good coverage. You can get away with layering paints in 15mm and above but it isn't a good technique in smaller scales - you want a paint that covers first time.

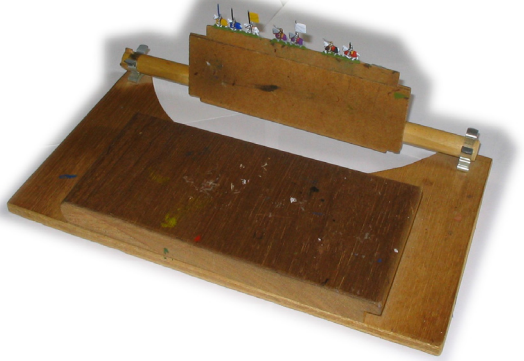
Preparation - Cleaning and priming your models before painting is probably more important the smaller the size. File bases flat, remove flash, straighten spears and bayonets then a good wash in hot water with a little detergent is essential (I actually soak mine in vinegar before washing, but that is frowned on by some). Priming is also important but quite contentious - should you use white, black, grey or the base uniform colour ? Should you brush or spray. Personally I use a darkish grey spray but do sometimes overpaint that with a thinned black wash to bring out the detail and fill voids.

Baccus 6mm War of the Spanish Succession British Horse



Mounting Figures - This, to me, is a 'must do'. Handling single strips of figures is just too fiddly and prone to accident. I mount on the edge of 2mm MDF but ice-lolly sticks seem to be a common alternative.

I made myself a painting aid to hold the strips (see photo) , the holder at the back allows the strip to move laterally and pivots on two clips so I can get the figure at any angle to paint it. This allows me to use both hands to keep the brush steady. I found that it increased productivity enormously.



Painting - There are some very good guides to technique available on the web, Baccus' website has a good illustrated one, but I have found that trying to stick to a particular order of painting works less well than taking each figure as it comes and seeing what works best for the first few. Be prepared to experiment and don't be worried if you have to bin the first attempt or two.

Go for colours that are brighter and lighter than you would use on larger figures and try to get more contrast between colours, even where it may not be entirely accurate. You need that in smaller scales.

Details can often be quite adequately 'suggested' by a dot of paint, don't try to overdo the level of detail. It is better to paint only the essential details and do them clearly than to try to show everything and end up with a confused mess.

Highlighting and shading is possible on both 6mm and 10mm but it needs to be done with restraint and it will add considerably to the painting time. I always wash over my figures with a thinned black or dark brown wash (I usually use cheap tube acrylics for this), this sinks into the crevices and throws the rest of the figure into high relief.

Don't be put off too much by disappointing results on the first few that you do. I still have the first 6mm that I did (some WW2 samples) and I keep them to remind me how far I have come.

Have a try at some Tiny Tin Troopers - you won't regret it.

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O.W.C.H.
(Ormskirk Wargamers & Cultural Historians)
our motto is
"Pretentious comes as standard, outrageous costs extra"

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