



TEN ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES TO ACHIEVE ABSOLUTE MASTERY OF GUNPLA

ENTRY GRADE STRIKE GUNDAM EDITION

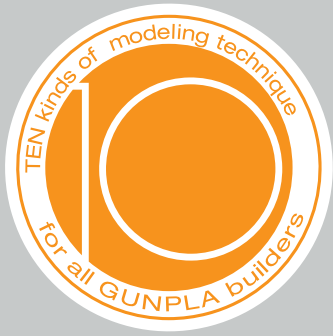
HOBBY JAPAN MOOK

10 Steps to Level Up

- 1 Recreate Deactive Mode with spray paint
- 2 Basic painting techniques using an airbrush
- 3 Partial painting with Aqueous Hobby Colors
- 4 Full painting with Aqueous Hobby Colors
- 5 Improving precision by eliminating gaps
- 6 Detailing with thorough panel line engraving
- 7 Incorporate scale model expressions into Gunpla
- 8 Recreate a series machine by mixing with an HG kit 1
- 9 Recreate a series machine by mixing with an HG kit 2
- 10 Adapting to your preferred style by changing the shape

*Spray paint or Airbrush?
Partial painting or full painting?
Detailed crafting or mixing?*

Explaining
10 different production methods
tailored to your finishing preferences!!



TEN ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES TO ACHIEVE ABSOLUTE MASTERY OF GUNPLA

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introduction

This book is a comprehensive guide to building Gunpla, specifically the "ENTRY GRADE 1/144 Strike Gundam." This next-generation Gunpla is designed for ease of assembly, making it perfect for first-time builders. The book employs a 10-step progression method to explain building techniques effectively.

Ten professional modelers, renowned contributors to the monthly magazine *Hobby Japan*, share their expertise in this book. They present ten diverse building methods tailored to different finishing preferences, encompassing variations in painting and crafting techniques. The book also provides insights into the tools and materials used.

With this single resource, you can enhance your Gunpla building skills and maximize your enjoyment of the hobby.

* This book is composed of articles published in the *Monthly Hobby Japan* from the February 2022 issue to the February 2023 issue, as well as articles from *Gundam Forward* Vol.7, with new content added.

* All prices listed in this book are inclusive of tax.

* "Plastic model" is a registered trademark owned by the Japan Plastic Model Industry Cooperative.

* The information in this book is current as of February 13, 2023.

ENTRY GRADE STRIKE GUNDAM

about the kit

The ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam is a model kit belonging to the ENTRY GRADE brand, which launched in 2020. This line of plastic model kits prioritizes ease of assembly, making it ideal for first-time Gunpla builders. ENTRY GRADE kits require no nippers, glue, paint, or stickers, ensuring a hassle-free building experience.

Following the initial release of the "RX-78-2 Gundam," the "Strike Gundam" joined the lineup as the second installment in December 2021. This kit not only maintains the brand's signature ease of assembly but also boasts significant improvements in two key areas: color separation and articulation. These advancements elevate the "Strike Gundam" beyond its predecessors, offering a more refined and enjoyable building experience.



*The image is of the standard edition package.

ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam
(Light Package Ver.)
● Manufacturer: BANDAI SPIRITS Hobby Division Creation Department ● Price: 550 yen, Released in December 2021
● 1/144, approx. 13cm ● Plastic kit

ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam
● Manufacturer: BANDAI SPIRITS Hobby Division Creation Department ● Price: 770 yen, Released in January 2022
● 1/144, approx. 13cm ● Plastic kit



The ultimate, cutting-edge standard kit

This kit features a streamlined assembly process thanks to strategically placed runners that facilitate construction. The parts are intricately designed, boasting nearly seamless joints, detailed color separation, and a range of motion that surpasses other models.



▲ On the left is the HGCE version of the Strike Gundam. The overall form closely resembles the other version, highlighting the high level of detail in the HGCE Strike Gundam. One notable feature is the improved color separation on the head. The Igelstellung and ducts are now gray, and the duct molds throughout the body are more distinct, creating a sense of depth even without painting.



◀ The kit is compatible with the Striker Pack System, featuring a 3 mm hole on the back for easy attachment. It can be customized with various packs from the existing HG series. The photo showcases it equipped with the Aile Striker from the HGCE Aile Strike Gundam.

On the STRIKE GUNDAM

The Strike Gundam is a prototype mobile suit (MS) developed by the Atlantic Federation, a member of the Earth Alliance, in collaboration with Morgenröte Inc. of the Orb Union. As one of the initial GAT-X series units, its most notable feature is the Striker Pack System, which enables equipment changes to adapt to various battle scenarios. This system gained recognition due to the impressive achievements of Kira Yamato, a Coordinator pilot. The Strike Gundam's versatility has led to the development of several variant units. This page will introduce some of the famous variants of both the Strike Gundam and the Striker Packs.

GAT-X105 Strike Gundam



Deactivate mode

◀ The GAT-X series utilizes a special metal armor called "Phase Shift Armor (PS Armor)," capable of undergoing phase transition when activated by a specific voltage. While it requires a certain amount of energy, it can nullify physical impacts, such as live ammunition and real swords, making it virtually impervious to the weapons employed by ZAPT's mass-produced MS GINN. The PS Armor becomes active when electrified, and when deactivated, it assumes a gray-based coloration.



▲ This is the final development among the five initial GAT-X series. The frame is based on the X-100 series, but to enhance its versatility, it has been designed to closely mimic human body structure. As fixed armaments, it features a head-mounted 75 mm anti-aircraft automatic Vulcan gun system (Igelstellung) and an anti-armor combat knife known as the "Armor Schneider."

GAT-X105+AQM/E-X01 Aile Strike Gundam



AT-X105+AQM/E-X02 Sword Strike Gundam



GAT-X105+AQM/E-X03 Launcher Strike Gundam



AT-X105+AQM/E-YM1 Perfect Strike Gundam



GAT-X105+E-M1 Strike Gundam + I.W.S.P.



GAT-01A1+AQM/E-X04 105 Dagger + Gunbarrel



MBF-02 Strike Rouge



MBF-02+EW454F Strike Rouge Ootori Pack



GAT-X105+AQM/E-X09S Strike Noir Gundam



ORB-01 Akatsuki Oowashi Pack



ORB-01 Akatsuki Shiranui Pack



▲ The "I.W.S.P." is a Striker Pack featured in the side story *Gundam SEED MSV* and debuted in the first installment of the series published in *Monthly Hobby Japan*. Developed by P.M.P. Corporation, it aimed to combine the mobility of the Aile, the melee combat prowess of the Sword, and the firepower of the Launcher into a single unit. Its adoption was hindered by the increased power consumption caused by the weight of its armaments and electronic systems.

STEP 1

[Transform your Gunpla with different painting methods]

Recreate Deactive Mode with spray paint

SAMPLE

- PRODUCTION POINTS**
- Spray paint while parts are still on the runner
 - Recreate Deactive Mode

For those who want a full paint job but are intimidated by airbrushing, spray can painting is a great option. It may not be perfect for intricate details or artistic expression, but it's excellent for covering large areas quickly and achieving a smoother finish than brush painting. In this guide, we'll show you how to create the Deactive Mode using a simple spray can paint job while the parts are still attached to the runners.

BANDAI SPIRITS 1/144 scale plastic kit "ENTRY GRADE" Strike Gundam (Light Package ver.) modified

GAT-X105 Strike Gundam (Deactive Mode)

Composition and text by Teppei Hayashi

Teppei Hayashi
He is a seasoned staff editor at Hobby Japan, renowned for his exceptional modeling skills. He specializes in the "How to" pages and has a deep understanding of various model genres.

Tools and Materials used



Spray paint cans for plastic models
▲ They are primarily lacquer-based paints, with the exception of recent water-based surfacers. The lacquer paint films are durable and dry rapidly, allowing for efficient coverage of large areas. Due to their organic solvent content and strong odor, spray cans should be used in well-ventilated spaces. It is also advisable to wear a mask to minimize inhalation of fumes.



Gundam Marker Real Touch Marker
▲ Ideal for panel lining. The water-based ink ensures compatibility with spray-painted lacquer coatings. Its convenient pen format makes it user-friendly, catering to both novice and experienced modelers.



Pigma, Prockey
▲ A water-based drawing pen. The fine tips, ranging from 0.02 mm to 0.03 mm, make it ideal for panel lining, and filling ducts or slits. Its water-based formula ensures compatibility with lacquer-based paint films, and any excess can be easily removed with a mild kitchen detergent.



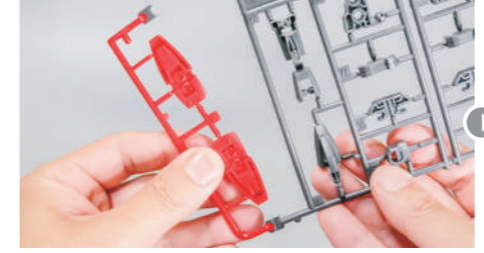
Melamine sponge
▲ This versatile cleaning sponge, commonly found in dollar stores, is ideal for removing excess paint after panel lining. It can also effectively eliminate minor blemishes on matte surfaces without compromising the paint layer.



Metallic tape
▲ These metallic tapes, often found in dollar stores, can be used to add detail to models like the ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam, which lacks included stickers. They come in various types and can be used to replicate MS sensors. A small collection of metallic stickers can be quite versatile and long-lasting.

① Runner painting process

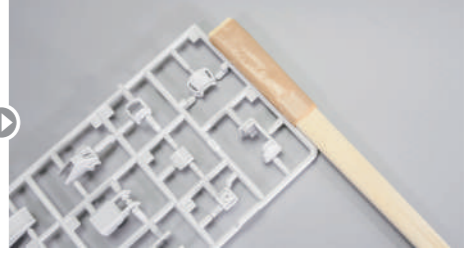
Runner painting can be simplified with a bit of creativity.



▲ The ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam features multi-colored runners. To maintain this color differentiation when spray painting, it's recommended to separate the runners by color before applying paint. These can be easily snapped off by hand.



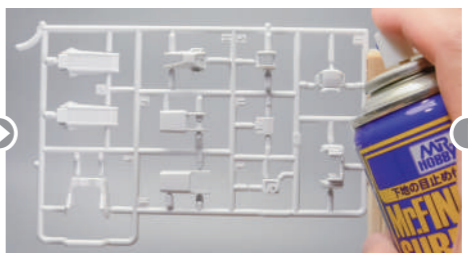
▲ Divide the white runner into four sections. The benefit of runner painting is the ability to paint multiple parts simultaneously. However, large runners can increase the risk of overspray or missed areas. For optimal results, it's advisable to divide runners into manageable sections that are convenient to paint.



▲ When using a spray can to paint runners, a handle is essential. Dropping a runner while painting can be inconvenient and require a lot of effort to fix. To prevent this from happening, wrap a sturdy piece of cloth tape around a chopstick and attach it securely to the runner for extra support.



▲ Before using a spray can, vigorously shake it to ensure the paint is well-mixed. Metallic colors, especially, have heavier particles that can settle easily. Shaking the can approximately 100 times will help ensure an even paint mixture.

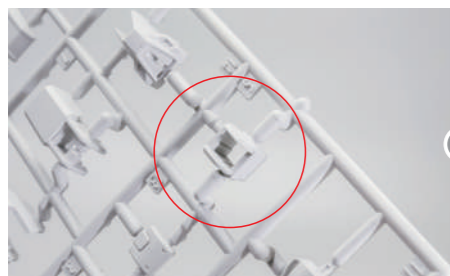


▲ Applying a large amount of paint at once can result in thick coats, paint runs, or pooling. To avoid these issues, spray the paint in short bursts, using a quick wrist flick motion. After applying a thin layer, allow it to dry before repeating the process. This technique promotes a smooth finish.

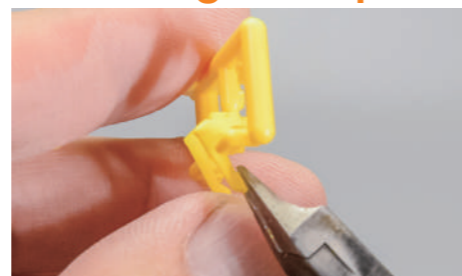


▲ Begin by painting the backside, where dust or paint splatters will have minimal effect on the overall appearance. This will allow you to practice before tackling the more visible areas.

② Painting each part



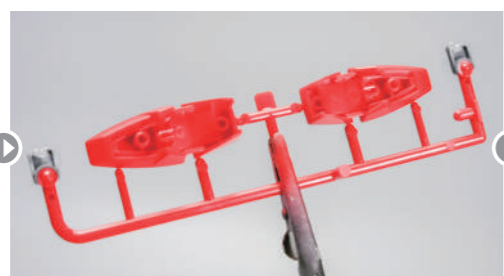
▲ Tall parts, like the upper arm in the photo, can be difficult to paint evenly due to surrounding runners. For these parts, consider cutting them from the runners and painting them separately. While runner-attached painting is convenient, it's not mandatory. Choose the method that best suits your preferences and workflow.



▲ The antenna tip features an excess part known as a "flag," intended to meet safety regulations. For aesthetic purposes, it's advisable to remove it before painting. You can use nippers to cut it away and then smooth the surface with a modeling knife.



▲ The antenna is painted. You can either remove the flag and repaint the area, or remove the flag beforehand for a cleaner finish. Choose the method that you prefer.



▲ The red color on parts like the shoes are painted using Mr. Color Spray Kure Naval Arsenal standard red. While red is highly saturated and can be influenced by the underlying surface, gray-based paints offer high opacity, allowing the red to appear vibrant without requiring a special undercoat. However, applying red may take longer than other colors. For a clean finish, it's recommended to apply multiple thin coats, allowing each to dry before applying the next.



▲ The blue chest is painted with Tamiya spray paint German Gray. The gray of the chest can vary in appearance depending on the scene. For this build, a lighter shade was chosen to replicate the scene in which it reflects the surrounding flames from the first episode of the anime. If a darker tone is preferred, Mr. Color spray German Gray is a suitable option.



▲ In Deactive mode, the main color is light gray, which I replicated with Mr. Finishing Surface 1500 Gray. This primer provides exceptional coverage and dries rapidly, creating a durable paint film that resists peeling, even with rough handling, and delivers a smooth, satin gray finish.



▲ The joint color remains unchanged even in the Deactive mode. This time I decided to keep the mold color to simplify the process. Leaving the joints unpainted can significantly reduce the workload, while also highlighting the contrast between the mold color of the plastic and the painted areas.

③ Cutting out the parts



▲ We'll remove the painted parts from the runner. ENTRY GRADE uses a touch gate system that allows for manual removal without nippers. Let's continue to remove the painted parts by hand. Minor paint damage can be touched up later. Nub marks may leave slight protrusions that can be easily trimmed and smoothed with a modeling knife at the end.



④ Retouching nub marks



▲ The nub marks are visible in the mold color, which doesn't look good. Let's touch them up. First, spray some paint into a paper cup. To avoid paint splatter, spray onto the inside wall of the cup rather than the bottom.



▲ I'll touch up the paint. For small areas like nub marks, applying paint directly to a toothpick and dabbing it on the spot is often faster than using a brush.



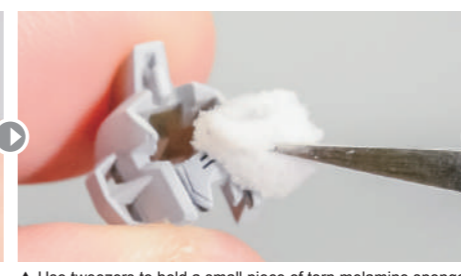
▲ To accentuate the kit's intricate details, we'll apply panel lining. For this, we'll use the Gundam Marker Real Touch Marker, known for its easy removal and ability to achieve a clean finish even when applied over matte or semi-gloss paints.



▲ We'll use Real Touch Gray 2 to fill in the details. Don't worry about paint overflow; focus on carefully flowing the paint into the recesses of the panel lines.



▲ Before the paint dries, gently wipe away some of the excess with your finger. The paint might spread slightly and dry unevenly, but that's okay. Allow the Real Touch Marker paint to dry as is.

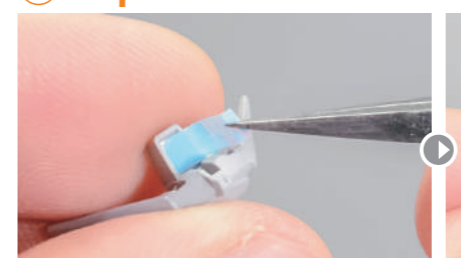


▲ Use tweezers to hold a small piece of torn melamine sponge and gently rub it on the protruding part. This technique allows you to selectively remove excess Real Touch Marker paint without affecting the underlying coating. The idea is similar to using a sponge to clean dirt.

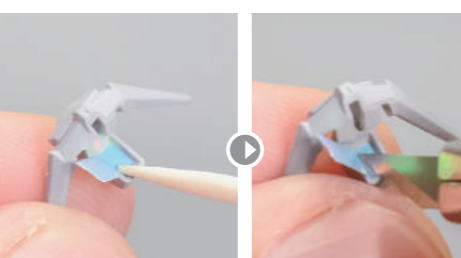


▲ The kit is now complete with panel lining. This method avoids the use of solvents or cotton swabs and is ideal for matte or semi-gloss paints. The water-based paint won't harm the plastic. For cleaning, consider using a melamine sponge.

⑤ Reproduction of detailed color For areas that cannot be painted with a spray can, use non-paint materials.



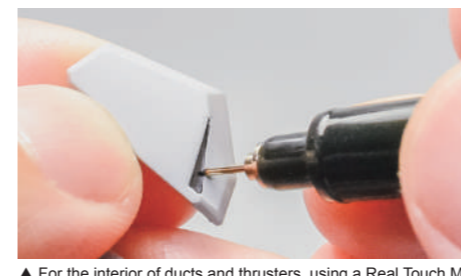
▲ Let's use metallic stickers from a dollar store to represent the top sensor. It might be challenging to cut them perfectly at first, so start by cutting them to approximately the desired width and apply them without worrying about precision.



▲ After applying the sticker, use a toothpick to firmly press it into the details. Then, carefully cut away any excess parts with a modeling knife. A dull blade can result in uneven cuts, so it's recommended to use a new blade for this task.



▲ I applied a sticker to the sensor. While getting a light blue hue on gray can be challenging, using a sticker allows for a simpler representation without worrying about the base color. The twin eye part has an excellent mold color, so I used it as is.



▲ For the interior of ducts and thrusters, using a Real Touch Marker can lead to uneven application. Ultra-fine water-based markers like Pockey or Pigma are more suitable for filling these areas. Tips of 0.03 mm or smaller allow for precise work. Any excess can be removed with a melamine sponge. If stubborn residue remains, a cotton swab dipped in mild kitchen detergent can effectively clean it without harming the underlying lacquer-based paint.



▲ When assembling spray-painted parts that were still on the runner, you may encounter areas where the paint thickness hinders assembly. Forcing the parts together can lead to damage or improper fit. To prevent these issues, use a modeling knife to carefully scrape away excess paint from the dowels or pins.

Let's try full painting using spray cans

The ENTRY GRADE Strike Gundam (Deactive Mode) has been fully painted with spray paint, excluding the frame. While full painting might seem intimidating, it can be achieved with ease by employing creative techniques and utilizing the right tools and materials. With experience in full spray painting, you're well-prepared to take on more advanced projects.



▲ The kit features a light package, which includes the Armor Schneider. Like the joint parts, it remains unpainted.

► Deactive Mode is the state before the Phase Shift Armor is activated, characterized by a predominantly gray color. Throughout the series, the Gundam often enters this mode due to energy depletion during battles. However, the most iconic scene is undoubtedly the activation sequence in the Heliopolis MS factory during episode 1.

■ Gray tones are ideal for novice painters!

When envisioning the Gundams from *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED*, the Deactive Mode likely comes to mind. This pre-activation state showcases a cool gray color reminiscent of modern fighter jets. Additionally, gray is one of the most beginner-friendly colors. Its high opacity prevents it from becoming overly thick, even when using spray cans, making it perfect for those new to spray painting.

■ Create your own Deactive Mode

The debut episode's image of the gray Strike rising from the flames, standing up followed by Mitsushii Kotono declaring "Resurrect on the battlefield! Gundam!" in the trailer for the next episode was incredibly exciting. It's a scene that marks the beginning of a new Gundam era. Inspired by this, I chose a lighter gray to

reflect the flames in my build. However, personal perceptions of Deactive Mode vary widely. Even within the anime, the color can change from scene to scene. Some prefer the blue-tinged variation seen in previous merchandise. With a variety of grays available, feel free to experiment and create your own unique Deactive Mode.



▼ Compared to the straight build (left), the addition of panel lining and simple painting of ducts and thruster interiors significantly enhances the definition of each part, resulting in a more immersive finish. The Deactive Mode offers a noticeably different aesthetic, and the chosen colors, known for their high opacity, are also recommended for painting practice.



Straight build

Custom build



Straight build

Custom build



STEP 2

[Transform your Gunpla with different painting methods]

Basic painting techniques using an airbrush

- PRODUCTION POINTS**
- Full painting with an airbrush
 - Transplant Grand Slam from the Bikkura Tamago collaboration item

Once you've mastered spray can painting, airbrushing is the next logical step. Thanks to advancements in tools and materials, creating models, including painting, is now easier than ever. This guide will walk you through the basics of airbrush painting, from pre-painting preparation to post-painting maintenance. Even if you've been hesitant about using an airbrush, it's definitely worth giving it a try

BANDAI SPIRITS 1/144 Scale Plastic Kit "ENTRY GRADE" Strike Gundam + Bandai 1/144 Scale Plastic Kit Bikkura Tamago Dramatic Bath Series ENTRY GRADE 1/144 Strike Gundam (Grand Slam Equipment) & mini Gunpla Mobile Goon (Brown) / Mobile Zono (Green)

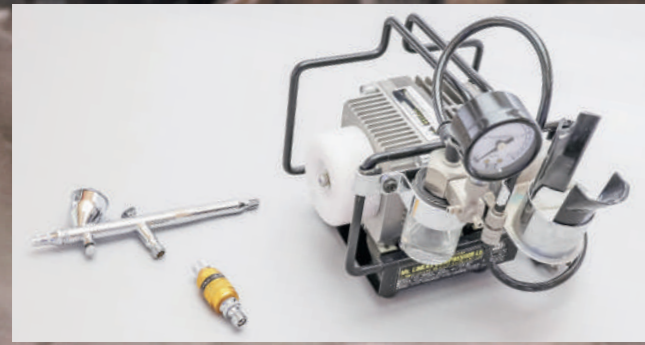
GAT-X105 Strike Gundam (Grand Slam Equipment)

Composition and text by Kazuhiko Aikawa

Bikkura Tamago Dramatic Bath Series ENTRY GRADE 1/144 Strike Gundam (Grand Slam Equipment) & mini Gunpla Mobile Goon (Brown)/Mobile Zono (Green)
 ● Manufacturer: BANDAI Life Department
 ● 1540 yen, released in July 2022 ● 1/144 approx. 13 cm (Strike Gundam), approx. 3 cm (Goon/Zono) ● Plastic kit

Kazuhiko Aikawa
 Skilled modeler renowned for his meticulous attention to detail and rapid production. He specializes in reviewing the latest kits.

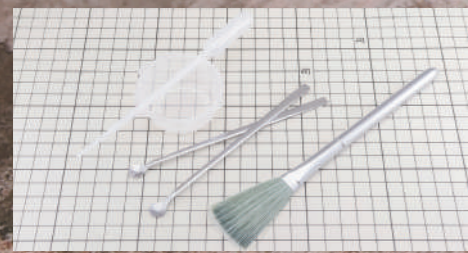
Tools and Materials used:



Airbrush system
 ▲ Mr. Linear Compressor L5 with Pressure Gauge Regulator II Set (GSI Creos), Procon BOY WA Platinum 0.3 Ver.2 Double Action (GSI Creos), Mr. Drain & Dust Catcher Light (GSI Creos)



Paint
 ▶ Mr. Color Thinner (Extra Large) (GSI Creos), Various Mr. Color (GSI Creos)



Painting tools
 ▲ Mr. Pouring Spout Measuring Cup (GSI Creos), Mr. Mix II (Color Mixing Measuring Set) (GSI Creos), Model Cleaning Brush (Anti-Static Type) (Tamiya)



Masking tape
 ▲ Various types of masking tape (Tamiya), various types of micron masking tape (Eyes Project)



Airbrush maintenance tools
 ▲ Kimwipe Wiper M-150, Mr. Tool Cleaner Kai (GSI Creos), Mr. Airbrush Maintenance Set (GSI Creos)