Crafty Time

Art tutorial by Dave Pierik
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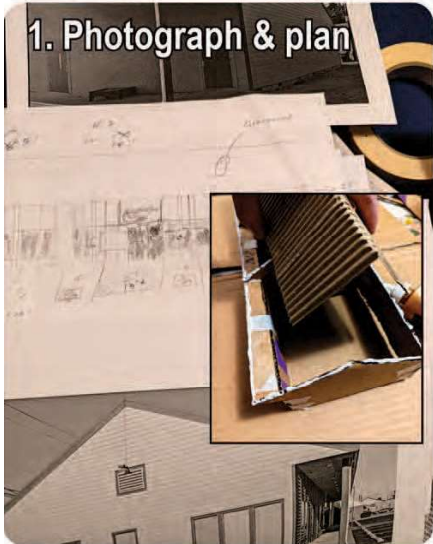dave@masoncounty.com

Nifty Thrifty - a nifty model

Working from real life is not really harder or easier compared to creating from your imagination. The process is a bit different, though. Tools: camera (or phone), graph paper, ruler, scissors, paint brushes, acrylic paint markers, masking tape. Materials: Cardboard, white glue, bamboo skewers, clear plastic, paint. Difficulty: moderate to advanced. Cost: less than $5 including paint and glue.   Time: Four to six hours or more of fun!

1. Photograph & plan

2. Paint

1. Photograph the building from all sides. Print b/w copies to study. Trace a basic outline on graph paper for proportions and measurements. The Nifty Thrifty building scales to 15" long x 5" deep including a 1" inset porch, and 4" tall at the top peak and bottom of the roof at the 2" mark. You'll need three identical side panels 5" wide at the bottom of the roof (the middle one for support). Corrugated cardboard can be peeled away for a tile or metal roof look. Cut, test-fit and glue it all together.

2. Use masking tape and/or glue with baking soda to tidy up any gaps. Once it's dry, basecoat everything in white acrylic (water soluble) paint. Once that's dry, paint the parking lot and porch poles black, the concrete sidewalks gray, and the roof blue. Leave the building white. While the paint dries, study your reference photos.

3. Building details

3. Use pencil and acrylic paint markers to match the basic shapes and colors of the windows, doors and signs. Measure, mark, cut and glue clear plastic over the top so the windows and glass doors will reflect realistically.

4. Parking lot

4. Use a ruler and a white acrylic paint marker to paint parking lot stripes and street parking indicators. Use a color printer and print handicapped parking signs for the parking lot and the porch poles. Glue Hot Wheels to the pavement.

5. Nifty model at Nifty Thrifty

5. The entire Nifty Thrifty model fits neatly in a glass terrarium that was donated to the artist by Nifty Thrifty. It's on display there, behind the counter on a shelf.

What will be the next Crafty Time tutorial? Visit www.craftytimewithdave.com to see more.