

## **The Repair Shop**

In the UK there is a BBC television programme called 'The Repair Shop'. People bring in old and damaged objects that have special meaning to them. A team of craftspeople restore the objects for them. The man who is the electronics expert is a fellow flying club member. Being the BBC there is no hint of commercialism. Money is never mentioned though some of the objects must be very valuable. Every item is given equal importance and the owners pay nothing. There are emotional moments when the owners come to collect their objects but that is not why I mention it.

We are shown how the repairs are done. Watching the techniques and tools used by the experts is fascinating and educational. Three have been of particular value to me for building and repairing model aircraft.

### **Piercing saw**

Jewellery, watches and mechanical toys often feature on the programme. For very fine cutting work they often use a piercing saw. This is a kind of hand jigsaw but using very fine blades. They can be bought online, with many blades of different sizes, for about £15 (\$20).



### **Touching up paint**

Repairs frequently require cracks and dents to be filled, often with an epoxy paste. After filling, the final step is to paint the filler to match the surrounding surfaces. The restorer does outstanding work with the repairs being either invisible or nearly so. On the most delicate work the technique she uses is to apply tiny spots of paint often of slightly varying colours. She uses brushes with very fine tips, some having only a few bristles. It is painstaking work but the technique could be helpful for scale modellers to make their scale models look realistically distressed rather than new from the factory.

Whilst on the subject of disguise I loved a recent news item about an Australian Navy ship that 'disappeared shortly after being sent to be camouflaged'.

### **Tools for filling**

For filling on my models I usually use a paste, made from EzeKote with microballoons, that I spread on with strips of thin ply. The filler can be sanded, but it is soft and weak. On the Repair Shop they use steel spatulas of various sizes and shapes so they can fill without needing to sand later. I bought myself a set of twelve on eBay, as shown in the picture, for £8 (\$11). They are called things like 'Wax Carver Set', 'Clay Soap Carver' and 'Sculpting Tools'. I guess the wax name comes from the lost wax casting technique used by jewellers amongst others. They can easily be cleaned of epoxy using methylated spirit (alcohol).



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Last edit 9 October 2021