

# Start Your First Wargaming Army

Assembly, painting, and actually getting a game in

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Tabletop wargaming combines modeling, painting, and strategic gameplay. The hobby has a notorious 'gray tide' problem — unpainted models piling up. This guide helps you finish a small force and get it on the table.

## Choosing your first army

- Start with 500-750 points (a Combat Patrol or Starter Set box). Do not buy a full army on day one.
- Pick a faction you find visually interesting — you'll be painting these for months.
- Plastic kits assemble with plastic glue (not super glue); resin and metal need super glue (CA).

## The thin coats rule

- Thin your paints to a milk consistency. Two thin coats beats one thick coat every time.
- Prime everything before painting: grey primer is safest for beginners (shows light and shadow well).
- Base coat → wash → highlight is the standard three-step process that works for 95% of armies.
- Contrast/Shade paints in one coat can get an army table-ready fast — no shame in that.

## Basing and finishing

- A good base elevates even a mediocre paintjob. PVA glue + fine sand or texture paste.
- Varnish matte before your first game — painted models chip easily, varnish prevents heartbreak.
- The Shame Pile is universal. Every veteran has unpainted models. Finish one unit before buying more.

## Insider glossary

**Gray Tide** — An unpainted, primed-gray army. The enemy of finishing the hobby.

**Wash** — A thin, pigmented liquid that flows into recesses and adds shadow in seconds.

**Highlight** — Applying a lighter color to raised edges to simulate light hitting the surface.

**Shame Pile** — Unpainted miniatures you haven't gotten to yet. Everyone has one.

**Heresy** — Using someone else's paint scheme. Obviously acceptable.

## Starter checklist

- Starter set or Combat Patrol box
- Plastic glue + super glue
- Grey primer spray
- A base set of paints (Citadel/Vallejo/Army Painter)
- Shade/wash paint
- Basing material (sand/texture paint)
- Matte varnish

**Thin Coats. Every Time — wargaming tee at [15d0.com/shop/wargaming/](https://15d0.com/shop/wargaming/)**