

SNAPSHOT

MODEL REALISTIC VINES FOR YOUR SCENE OR DIORAMA

PART 2 in a four-part series, let's tackle making vines. You'll need a leaf-punch tool, construction paper, and micro roots (available from a number of sources) to model the vine. As always, find reference photos to help or go outside and find a living vine as an example.

By Robert Raver



1 First, you'll need leaves for your vines. A leaf punch like this one from RP Toolz allows you to make scale leaves quickly. I wanted broad leaves for my scene, so that's the type of punch I chose. Make a bunch of leaves from construction paper of the appropriate color for your scene.



2 This particular punch provides four different sizes at one time, which is great for quickly producing a bunch of leaves. Yes, technically, these are lime leaves, but the important thing is to have leaves that are believable — oak or maple leaves would look inappropriate on a vine.



3 Place your punched leaves in a container that can be sealed with a lid. This will prevent you from accidentally blowing them away with an airbrush or sweeping them off your work surface. Just like real leaves, they will escape otherwise, and you'll be picking them up all over. Yes, I did just that!



4 For my vine, I used the smallest leaves from the punch. Crease the middle of each leaf with a sculpting tool or other tool that has a straight edge but isn't so sharp it will cut the leaf in half.



5 Then bend the tip and stem ends of the leaf with tweezers to achieve a more naturally curved shape. Does it take a while? Yes, but the finished model will be worth the time and effort.



6 Separate the micro-root clump into individual strands and glue your vines in place — I like Gorilla Super Glue Gel. Add your individual leaves in groups based on references — pairs, in this case. Lastly, paint your vines and leaves appropriate for your season and setting. **FSM**