

FM WORKSHOP PRESENTS:

HOW TO CONVERT A TIE FIGHTER TO A PROTO-TYPE VERSION FROM THE UPCOMING STAR WARS MOVIE "THE FORCE AWAKENS"!



Welcome to another FM Workshop. In this tutorial we'll take a standard FFG Star Wars X-Wing Miniatures "TIE Fighter" and convert it and paint it to look like the Proto-type one from the upcoming Star Wars movie "The Force Awakens". This was a great project and fairly easy to do if you take your time with it.

CAUTION: Please note anytime you're working with plastic take care and work slow when cutting, filing, and drilling with it to ensure you do not damage the model and above all else you do not hurt yourself.

STEP #1 Cut both Wing Panels off the Wing Attachment Pylons ends by using a hobby saw or hack saw blade. Take your time and drag the blade towards you until you get a groove for the blade then continue to cut them off. You can also use a hobby knife to get a groove going. Go slow and take your time so you end up with a nice smooth cut on both sides.



STEP#2 We'll use a jewelry bead to bulk out the ends of the Wing Attachment Pylons. Use the flat side of a hobby file and file the front and back ends of the Wing Attachment Pylons. Just file a little at a time until you can get the beads to fit over them and that they are flush with the ends as much as possible. These seemed to just snap on like they were made for this conversion.



STEP#3 Next I will drill the holes for the new “Laser Cannons” starting with the right one I will drill that one out directly and will put a brass rod in it’s place. When drilling, drill up from the bottom first slightly to make a notch for the drill bit to catch see **Fig.A**. Then drill normally from the front down, see **Fig.B**. This makes it easier for the drill bit to catch on the round hull of the TIE Fighter. I used a Pin Vise and drill bit for this part not a Dremel.



STEP#4 In this next step I had a happy mistake creating the hole for the pin on the front. I used a heated up needle to make the hole for where the needle was going to go. This caused the plastic to pop out a bit which worked out great. So holding a needle with a pair of needle nose pliers heat it up and use it to make the top hole. This may take two or three times rinse and repeat. I also drilled it out a bit too. **Fig. A** Heating the needle tip. **Fig. B** creating the hole with the heated needle. **Fig. C** The finished hole with flashing that needs to be trimmed off a bit around the outside. **If you're under 18 get your parents to assist you or simply use your drill bits.** **Fig. D** Sample of the pins used. **Fig. E** Test fitting the pin cut down to size. Also you can see the happy mistake that the heat caused the plastic to pop out a bit forming a spot that looks like it's made for the pin to fit exactly there.



Continue to Step #5 ...

STEP#5 Drill the final hole for the new Laser Cannon just below the pin hole I just made above it on the left side of the hull (your right). But do not drill out the old Laser Cannon this time, leave it. Repeat the drilling process in **Step #3** for this hole too. **Fig. A** Drilling the final hole on the front. **Fig. B** You can see the pin above and the new hole below it.



STEP#6 Next I will drill the holes for the antennas that go on the top right Wing Attachment Pylon closet to the hull. **Fig. A** Drilling the holes. **Fig. B** See the first hole at the center next to the hull, the second one will be behind it. **Fig. C** Test fitting the antennas (pins). The back antenna will be taller than the front antenna.



STEP#7 Cut all pins and brass rods down to size and glue them in place. Now we have the new Laser Cannons, Targeting Sensors, and Antennas. One tip is test fit and test fit again while you work until you're completely happy with the design, height, length or whatever, as long as you're happy with it, then glue it all in place.

Fig. A Right view of new hardware installed. **Fig. B** Rear view of Antennas.



STEP#8 Drill the holes at the center of the Wing Panels.



STEP#9 Glue the beads onto the inside of the Wing Panels, making sure they're at the center. I like to use **Zap-A-Gap CA+ Glue from Pacer**.



FINISHED CONVERSION: The final conversion assembled, painted, and side-by-side an original TIE Fighter versus the new Proto-type TIE Fighter painted in the Star Wars The Force Awakens movie theme colors.



Additional pics of the final project... "May the Force Awaken within you."



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