

HELPING A “NEWBIE” GET STARTED

by George White

I came back into this hobby after a 55 year layout during which I led a “normal” life encompassing three careers. Now that I’m back doing the fun stuff (model building), I have found myself answering questions of others about how they could get started in the model airplane game. Most folks will want to go directly to the friendly hobby shop and buy a nice RC model and go fly it. The vast majority of those, of course, will crash the model and return to golf, fishing or playing with the PlaystationIII.

Then there are those who want to learn, or relearn (which was my case) how to build stick and tissue models, and of course we hope that will be for free flight. The idea that a model can fly without wires or radio is often greeted with incredulity, but once you’ve got them convinced you haven’t lost your mind, you’d like to help them get started.

Many years ago, Mike Meyers of the Southern California Ignition Flyers produced a list of things he recommended a person acquire to get started building stick and tissue models. I’ve reworked his list, expanded it and sorted it further to soften the sticker shock of getting started. It’s likely that any newbie will already have many of the items on the list. I’ve also added a few recommended beginner’s models. Hopefully our readers will critique these lists and perhaps help produce better ones. I’m assuming that a “newbie” should always start with a simple rubber powered free flight model before expanding into gas or electric.

GETTING THAT VERY FIRST MODEL KIT BUILT AND INTO THE AIR — ABSOLUTE BASICS:

Most folks will already have several of these items, so the total cost may be considerably lower than shown.	Est. Cost
Building Board: Recommend a 2’X4’ Armstrong Ceiling Tile. (If Lowes or Home Depot won’t sell a single tile, try a lighting contractor or supply house.)	3.50
Rubber Cutting Board to prevent ruining razor blades (ensure that it is a dark green in color and not light green, the latter is designed for seamstresses and won’t last)	20.00
Thumbtacks for attaching plans	1.50
Reynolds Parchment Paper for covering plans (Grocery Store/wife’s pantry)	5.00
No. 16 and No. 20 T pins (Fabric Store)	3.50
Rocket City Pin Clamps (www.rockytopmodels.com)	3.50
Single edge razor blades (from hardware store)	5.00
Small Sharp Scissors	10.00
Yard Stick	2.00
“Preval” Sprayer (from almost any auto parts store)	12.00
Sandpaper in various grades 100-600	10.00
DUCO model cement (WalMart Paint section)	1.00
UHU Brand (purple) Glue Stick (Hobby Shop or Michaels)	1.00
Small Bottle of Nitrate Dope (local Hobby Shop or http://www.darehobby.com/accessories/dopethinners.htm)	8.00
Nitrate Dope Thinner	6.00
1/4 pound Super Sport Rubber (Superior Props inferno1934@yahoo.com or Penn Valley Hobby Center http://www.pennvalleyhobbycenter.com/rubber/supplies/rubber.htm)	<u>10.00</u>
Absolute Basic Building Kit	\$102.00

GETTING THAT FIRST MODEL TRIMMED AND FLYING AT THE FIELD:

Borrow a friend’s winding stooge, winder and lots of advice!!

AFTER THAT FIRST MODEL, BUILD BETTER ONES WITH LESS FRUSTRATION WITH THE FOLLOWING:

Add them as you find the need, but these will help you build much better models.

Box of Extra Keen Single Edge Razor Blades (Campbell’s Custom Kits 765-389-1749)	15.00
Small Square (Item 82147 from Micro Mark 800-225-1066)	10.00
Master Airscrew Balsa Stripper (Google and order on line or at local hobby shop)	10.00
Protractor, 45° triangle and 60° triangle (Hobby Lobby)	15.00
Small Miter Box & Saw (MicroMark item 22114)	20.00
Needle files (hobby shop or hardware store)	10.00
Circle Cutter (OLFA brand — from hobby store)	10.00
Narrow tips for cement tubes (almost any hobby store)	5.00
6” Dial Caliper (Harbor Freight)	18.00
Digital Scale Measuring in .001 grams (Harbor Freight)	15.00
Exacto No. 5 handle with razor saw blade, No. 11 blades, No.2 blades and No 26 blades	15.00
Metal Straight Edge with cork backing (Helix brand at office supply store)	10.00
Round Nose and Needle Nose Pliers (www.peck-polymers.com/store or local hardware store)	20.00
Diagonal Cutting Pliers	20.00

Electricians (regular) pliers	10.00
Drill Bit Set 1/16-3/8 in 64th (Harbor Freight www.harborfreight.com)	13.00
Small Hand Drill (if you can't afford a bench drill press)	15.00
Clothes Pins	3.00
Good camel hair dope brushes	<u>10.00</u>
Basic Building Tool Investment	\$244.00

BASIC REFERENCE MATERIAL

Rubber Powerd Model Airplanes by Don Ross New \$15.00, Used on Amazon.com for	\$4.00
Making Scale Model Airplanes Fly by William F. McCombs (From Susan Cramer, 1925 Clark Trail, Grand Prairie, TX 75052	\$24.95

BASIC TOOLS FOR THE FIELD BOX:

A winding stooge (Make your own or buy one from Peck Polymers)	30.00
Motor Winder (www.gizmogeezer.com)	130.00
Blast Tubes (thin wall tubing from Lowes or golf ball retrieval tubing from WalMart	20.00

EASY-TO-BUILD KIT MODELS WHICH FLY WELL:

Souper 30 (Campbell's Custom Kits)	35.00
Pacific Ace (Penn Valley Hobby Center)	30.00
Sig Tiger (Penn Valley Hobby Center)	30.00