

## Notes on Building the 1/72 Airfix Lightning F2A



1. As with all previous Lightning kits some thought needs to be applied before starting. Whichever finish is chosen, build, paint, decal and finish the fuselage without any u/c legs, wings, tails, aerals or fins to simplify masking. Do the same with the wings and then progressively build up the completed model. Despite various comments below, this kit makes a satisfying build, produces an excellent model and is first class value for money. The stash is growing!

2. The kit ejection seat is reasonable for a closed cockpit, but does not represent a MB 4BS seat. An Aeroclub EJ 002 seat (which adds a bit more weight) is a better option. The seat can be left out until the end.

3. Airfix recommends 4g in the nose; 5g was used on this model which proved to be more than enough. However, getting this in the radar bullet and body can be fun and rolled lead strip (1/8<sup>th</sup> wide) proved to be the best solution. Small lead shot (liquid gravity) may work, but it is doubtful if 4g would fit in the bullet - your choice!

4. Follow the build instructions up to Section 12, but double check the fit of the intake duct and jet pipe assemblies BEFORE trying to cement the second fuselage half in place. Despite this kit being made to modern close tolerances, it is necessary to flat sand ½ mm off the inner face of part B21 to eliminate a gap between the fuselage ends and the jet pipe surround. **MORE IMPORTANT**, it is necessary to sand ½ mm of the edges of part B22 to get the front fuselage halves to close up correctly - otherwise excessive force is needed with potentially disastrous results.

5. Add the belly tank front halves and airbrakes (if closed), the relevant cannon ports, the hook and part B26. Also add parts D3 and D4. Don't add

anything else to the fuselage to simplify painting. Mask the fuselage at the wing mounting positions to aid adhesion by cutting masks for each wing mounting edge and then place this mask on the opposite side of the fuselage. Mask the tailplane mounting areas also.

6. Paint the fuselage to the chosen scheme, add decals and final coat. Bright finish the nose ring and jet pipe surrounds (Bare Metal foil) using a template for the nose ring produced from a right circular cone drawn to the diameters of the inner and outer edges of the ring (back to O level drawing!).

7. Make the wing pair (remember the refuelling probe holes!), but leave the u/c and doors off (instruction items 15 - 18) and remember no Lightning ever had flaps down, or airbrakes out, unless on approach or on jacks!

8. **WARNING!** No amount of cement of any type will prevent wing droop without appropriate packing in the wing boxes!

8.1 The wing boxes are too large for the tongues on the wings giving a sloppy fit and a step at the upper edge between the wing and the fuselage. On this example, the Port wing box needed 10 thou packing whilst the Stbd wing needed 15 thou, both at the bottom of the box.

8.2 Paint, decal and finish the wings, but leave the wheel wells, legs, jacks and doors unpainted until after assembly to avoid adhesion issues. Add the u/c legs and doors (note the mainwheels are handed), paint and then fit the wings.

9. Finish the build in practically any order, but it is recommended that the missile mounts are added to the fuselage without the missiles, and not as items 35 and 36 suggest, otherwise the Firestreaks will point up when they must be in line with the longitudinal centreline of the fuselage. Leave the canopy and refuelling probe till last, and avoid capillary action with liquid cement on the windscreen - it will work its way up the coaming!

10. The decals are good and react to SET & SOL, but it is questionable whether the stencils add that much for the time taken to apply. Black stencils on dark green paint do not show up.

11. This 19 Sqn model took 37 hours to create; the next one will be 92 Sqn in natural metal finish - which is likely to take longer.

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