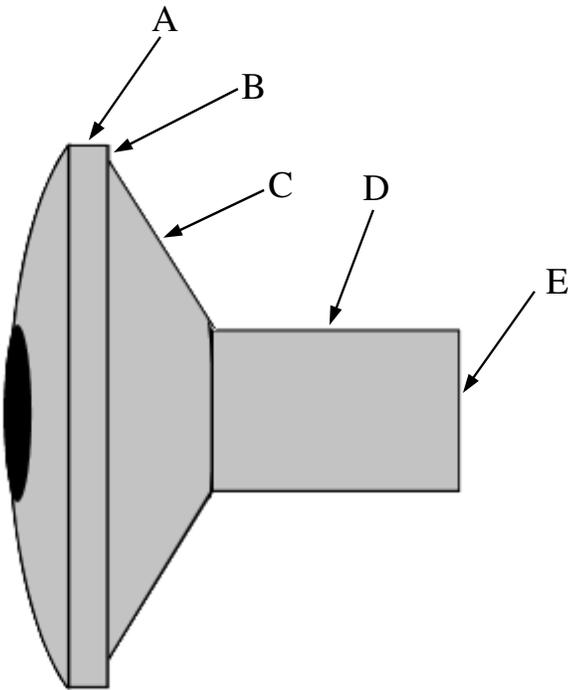


# Painting and Gluing Irises

## Painting the Irises

There are a few steps in finishing, painting and gluing in the injection molded irises. First, look around the edge of the rim (A), and look for a rough spot that's about 1/4" wide. This is a little artifact left over from the injection molding process. Take some medium sandpaper and sand this area lightly, being careful not to hit the front of the iris. Then go over the same spot with some fine sandpaper. Be careful not to sand too much and make a 'flat' spot.

Next look at the back of the iris stem (E), and see if there are any large blobs of paint sticking out on that back side. If so, sand off the excess with medium grit sandpaper. Don't worry about sanding off some of the black paint on the back of the iris stem. That will be taken care of in a step below.



Then take a look at the back of the ridge (B) around the iris. The manufacturer of the irises paints a little bit of paint on the back of this ridge, but it is usually not done very well, and for the best look of the iris, needs to be repainted with acrylic paint. For the blue or green irises, we find that navy blue works best. For the amber irises, we like using burnt umber (a very dark brown). Use a fine tip paint brush to paint with.

For bright colors (bright blue, bright green or bright brown), just leave the back area of the iris (C) as is, unpainted. For deeper color, you can paint this area. For deep blue or deep green, we have found pearl blue acrylic paint to work nicely. For deep brown, burnt sienna works well.

For in between deep and bright colors, instead of painting the the back area of the iris (C), you can paint the inside of the eyeball (prior to gluing the iris in) that corresponds to that area. Since the injection

molded iris is transparent, the paint that you apply to the inside area of the eyeball will show through some and affect the final look of the iris after it is glued into the eyeball. For a fairly intense color of blue, we like to use a brilliant ultramarine (blue). For a nice shade of brown, paint this area inside the eyeball with burnt sienna. Some of the these colorings are subtle, but nice.

Look at the iris from the front and see how the pupil (black circle in center of iris) looks. If it looks too light or you see transparent areas, you will need to paint the iris stem with black paint. Use black acrylic paint and paint for the most part the entire side (D) and back (E) of stem. **Important:** Be very careful when painting not to get black paint on the back area of the iris (C). It is best to paint the stem within an 1/16" or so, of this back area of the iris.

## Gluing Irises into the Eyeballs

Five minute epoxy works well for gluing in the irises. If you have gone with bright colors and have not painted the back area of the iris (C), you will need to use extra care when applying the five minute epoxy. If you get epoxy on the back area of the iris (C), or on that part of the eyeball, it won't look as nice. Mix

up a small amount of five minute epoxy. Better to mix a little more than you need than to have to mix up more while trying to glue the irises in place. Apply five minute epoxy with a flat toothpick or something that size. Carefully apply it only to the stem hole inside the eyeball. The size of a 'pea' or less is about all that is needed. As you insert the iris in place, make sure that some of the epoxy gets onto the iris stem.

For the deep color irises, where you have painted the back area of the iris with acrylic paint, you do not have to be as careful. If you get some five minute epoxy on the back area of the iris, it won't hurt anything as it won't be seen.

Let the five minute epoxy dry for an hour or so. It is also possible to use epoxy putty (Apoxie Sculpt, Magic Sculpt, or some type of epoxy putty from a hardware store) to glue in the irises. The basic cautions above still apply, but it is surely easier to control epoxy putty than the liquid five minute epoxy. If you use epoxy putty, read the manufacturer's instructions to see how long before it is fully set up (sometimes overnight is best).

You can hand buff iris a little with an old T-shirt to try to bring up the shine on the iris a little bit. You could also use a buffing wheel with a Dremel Moto Tool, but you have to exercise a fair amount of caution and go slowly, as it is very easy to burn or even melt the iris if it gets too hot. Not good! If you have access to a regular size buffing wheel, that works really well, however, again, don't over do it!