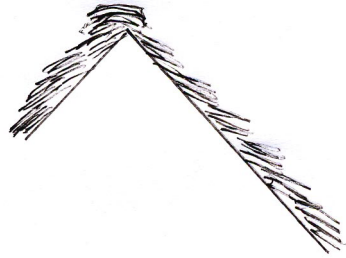


Plumber's Hemp

Plumber's hemp is ideal for creating authentic looking thatch in models of scale 1/24 or smaller.

Cut bundles of appropriate length (3-6 centimetres). Spread glue (PVA) and spread hemp layer by layer from the gutter up, adding a new line of glue for each layer, making sure all the hemp is glued. At the ridge lay longer lengths of hemp over the ridge, building up to an appropriate thickness.

Add liggers from cotton soaked in glue and peg them down with small pieces of bent wire. For larger scales such as 1/24, thicker material may be required for the liggers and it may be necessary to sew them on with cotton passing through holes in the roof.



When the glue has thoroughly dried trim the thatch using a small pair of scissors cutting up the roof to avoid introducing straight lines.

Paint the thatch with a thin solution of enamel paint and white spirit. The paint should soak into the fibres without clogging. Be careful that the paint does not run down the sides of the building.

Other uses for plumber's hemp include cornfields, reeds and the bases for small bushes and flowers on small scale models.

To create cornfields and reeds, cut bundles of hemp and glue them on end into a fairly thick layer of PVA glue - tease the bundle apart to thin out the corn/reeds. When the glue has thoroughly dried use a metal comb to remove loose fibres and straighten the fibres up. Trim with scissors to length and colour with enamel paints or acrylics, using very thin washes, brushed or sprayed on.



The bases for bushes and flowers are made by taking a small tuft of hemp and applying a little glue to the bottom of the tuft. Twist the fibres at the bottom to form a stiff stalk, which will be inserted into a hole in the ground when the bush is installed. Spread the fibres out at the top, spray with matt varnish and sprinkle green sponge scatter material onto the fibres.