

Soldering photo-etch basics

Tools Needed: Soldering iron (25 to 12 Watts)

Solder, the finer and newer the better.

Solder Flux, I prefer liquid, paste is hard for me to use in fine amounts.

Solder Wick, to clean up extra solder.

Pencil type eraser for clean-up.

Alcohol for clean-up.

Q-tips for clean-up.

0000 Steel wool, fine wet/dry sand paper, or a fiberglass pen for clean-up.

Photo-Etch bending tool, fine Jewlery pliers, assorted fine files.

Two sided tape, small vise, or other means to hold the P.E. while soldering.

If you are new to P.E., I recommend starting with the P.E. that comes with your purchased model or a small detail set such as Eduard's ZOOM sets, these add a nice touch to your build, but will not bog you down or become overhealming.

1. clean the P.E. where it is to be soldered, with Stainless, brass, or copper this is as simple as carefully rubbing it with a Q-tip soaked in alcohol, if the P.E. is tarnished, the Eraser first, followed by the Q-tip/alcohol, if the P.E. is coated with Nickel, an abrasive will need to be used to get down to the brass.
2. cut the P.E. from its frame, clean up the attachment points with a fine file, be sure not to damage the P.E.
3. fold the P.E. to the proper shape according to the instructions, a slight over bend usually helps the P.E. to attain the correct degree of fold.
4. Securing the P.E. in a vise, or with tape, then flow the Flux along the fold, clean and "Tin" the tip of the hot

soldering iron, then either placing a small piece of solder along the bend, or with a small dab of solder on the tip, run the tip along the fold. The flux should sizzle and the solder flow where the flux is located.

5. This takes practice and I recommend using spare pieces of P.E. or cut some of the fret, clean it, bend it and practice on it.
6. If you apply too much solder, either carefully clean it off with files, or wick it away with the solder wick by placing some flux on the unwanted solder, putting the wick on top of it, then press down on the wick with the hot iron, when the solder liquifies, it will be drawn up into the wick.