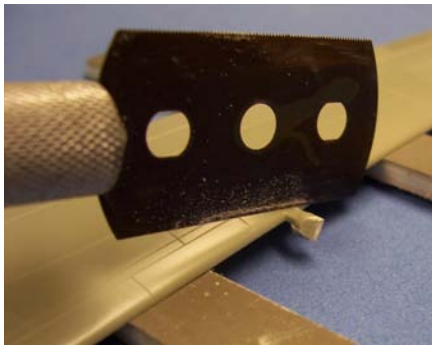


Plastic Model Building Tips *from Hawkeye's Hobbies LLC*

How to remove parts from sprue trees

Every **plastic modeler** has their own method of removing parts from sprue trees, from twisting them free to surgically severing them. Some use nail clippers, knife blades, nippers, scissors or saws. All accomplish the task, but some methods cause damage, creating more work to prepare the part for installation. Some are downright dangerous, an accident waiting to happen. Here is a short illustration of the method I use to accomplish the task safely and cleanly.

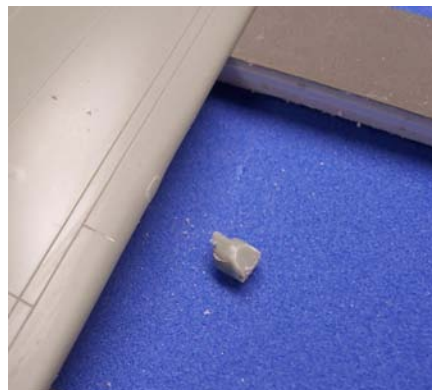
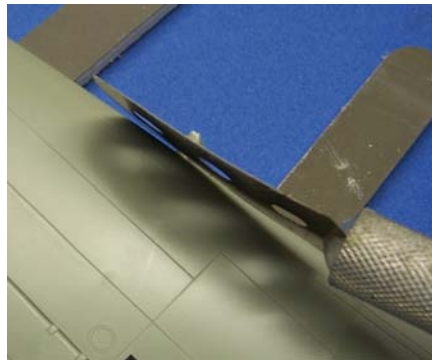
The first thing I do is use a nipper to separate the part along with a section of the sprue from the tree. This might seem like more work, but it's cheap insurance to keep from damaging even the most delicate of parts. If you saw the part off directly, the saw blade can bind between the part and the sprue. The micro **razor saw** don't react well to this and you could potentially damage the part and break your blade.



Once the part is free from the tree I begin removing the sprue tags. Don't be tempted to use the nippers; they have a tendency to tear at the part. Plastic does splinter from the compression between the nippers jaws.

Support the part off the bench. This keeps the saw from binding. Here I use two polishing sticks to lift the part off the bench. This is just like cutting a board or log with a saw. If the end doesn't have a means to ease the pressure on the blade it will cause the blade to bind up.

Orient the saw so you are cutting parallel and away from the part. Rigid blade (right) Flexible blade (left). I prefer the flexible blade; it affords better control and less chance of cutting into the part itself. With either, you can use your fingertips to act as a guide to maintain the correct angle of the **razor saw**. It only takes a few slow passes to remove the nub.



Nub removed. With the nub removed you can now use a fine sanding stick to remove the nub's residue. Follow that up with a polishing stick and you have a cleanly removed part!

Hope this helps. Happy Modeling!

Gerald

It's not the workbench that makes the model; it is the modeler at the workbench.