



A Tom Daniel classic, the Tijuana Taxi, has been reissued by Revell in kit #85-4261 under the Monogram label. This 1/24 scale freelance hot rod made its first appearance on hobby shop shelves in 1969. Revell brought back the original box art which graces the standard-size Revell box

For the Modeler: My completed Tijuana Taxi had a much rougher appearance than the box art – exactly the look I was going after! With a bit of weathering and de-chroming a few parts, this Taxi looks much more like something you would find south of the border. This kit is molded in clear, orange, and chrome-plated orange plastic. Although this kit is new tooling, resulting in very little flash, it faithfully reproduces the original parts. Also included are four vinyl tires and a colorful decal sheet. Simulating wood textures, applying washes, enhanced tie down material, stripping chrome parts, engine wiring, using weathering powders and pencils, color scheme selections, locating pin modifications, instruction errors, scratch building a headlight bar, and adhesive selection are all disclosed in the Step-by-Step review.

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Figure 1 This is the reissued box art for the kit.

According to the instructions, the original tooling mysteriously disappeared. The sprues in this boxing come from newly-tooled are virtually flash-free and only a few ejector needed to be cleaned up. Unfortunately, the somewhat sloppy compared to today's – it appears that Revell's new tooling is very the original parts. These sprues are molded in orange, and chrome-plated orange plastic. Also included are four a small decal sheet (shown in Figure 2), and a set of retro instructions appear to be a reproduction of the originals). Notably missing from sheet is the "TAXI" lettering shown on the letter board of the box art – the sheet is very small, but it is what I used on my model.



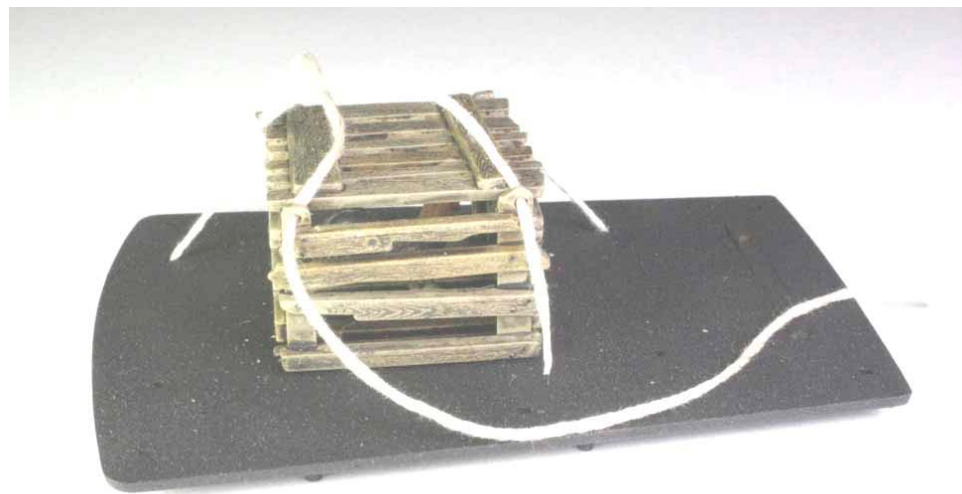
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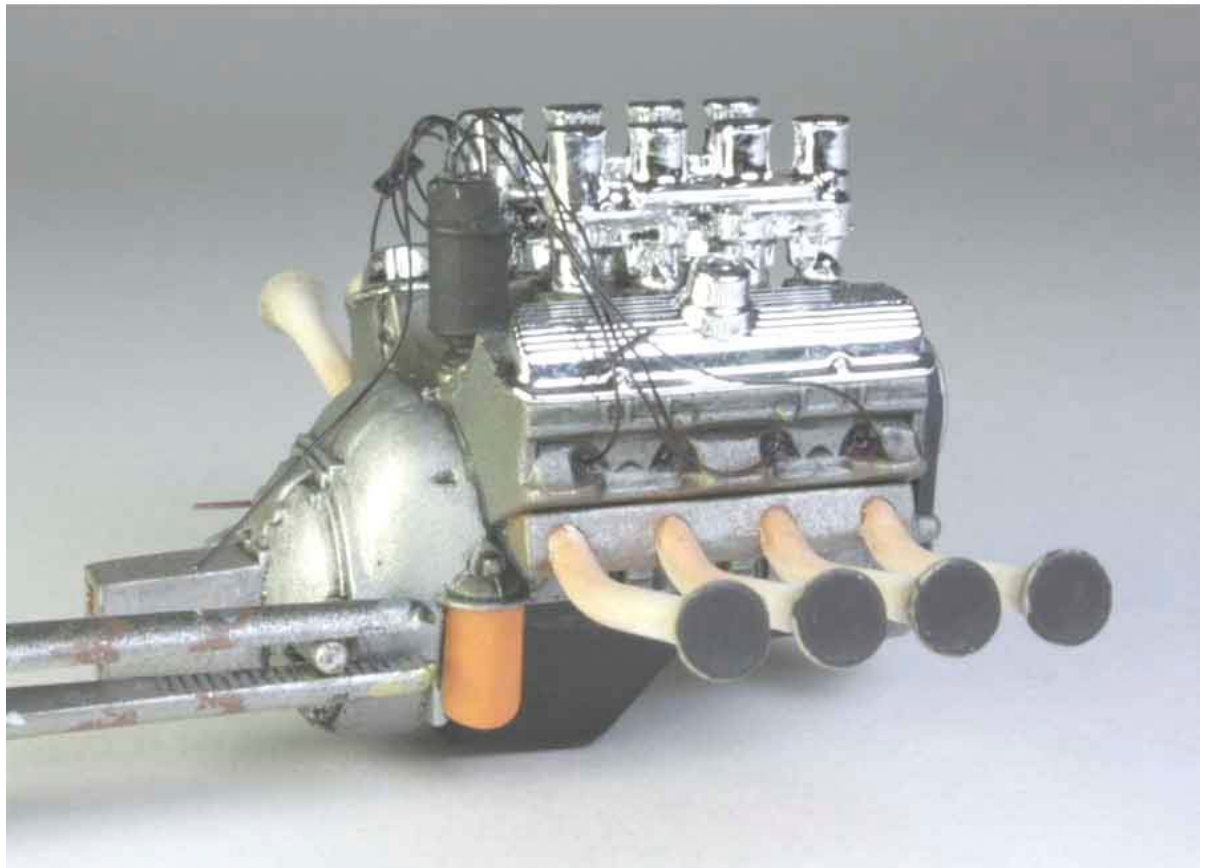
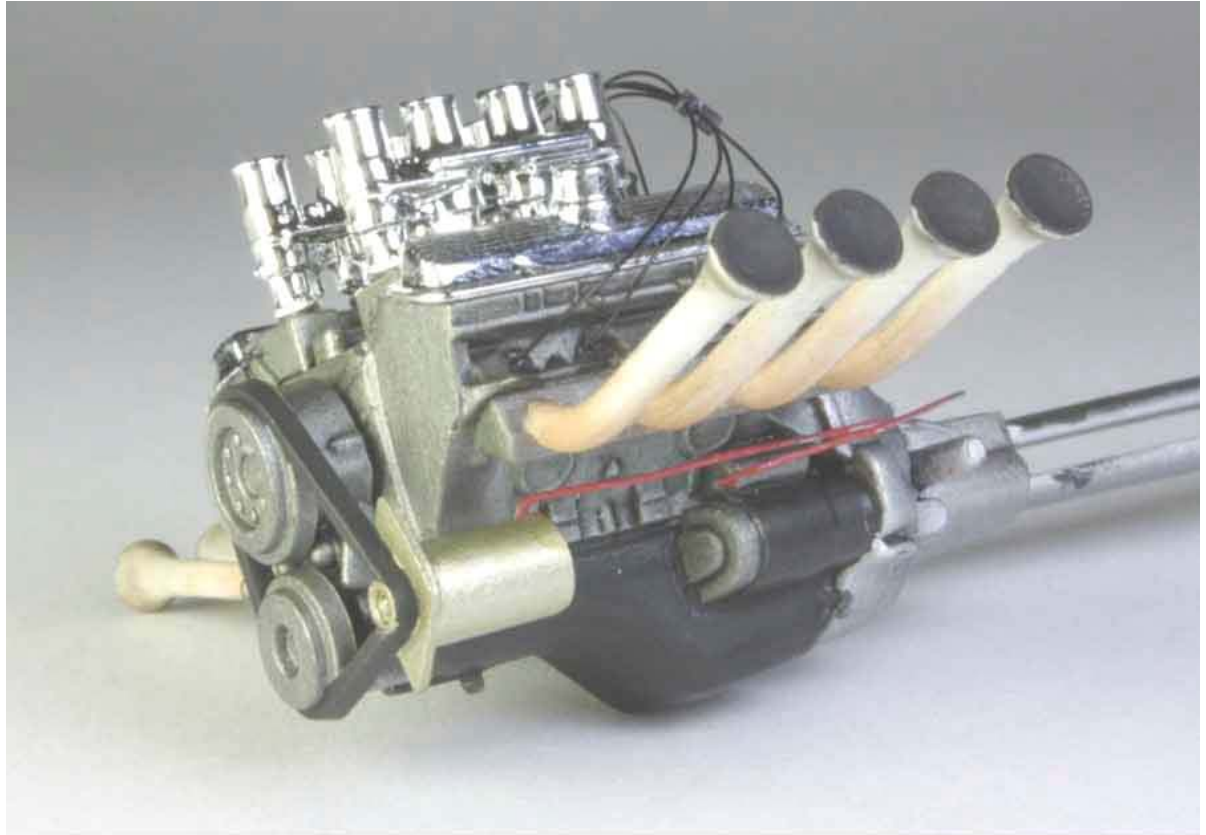
I began construction with the roof, as this is a completely separate piece from the rest of the model. My first step was to build the chicken crate (parts 55 through 59) as a subassembly, being careful not to glue it to the roof. The kit roof panel, part 68, has some texture, but I wanted to make sure a gritty tarpaper-style texture showed through any paint I applied. To do this, I used spray adhesive. To prevent the rooftop crate boards and mounting plate for the taxi sign from this texture, I covered them with masking tape and, using a fresh razor blade, trimmed the tape directly on the roof. I then applied a wet coat of spray adhesive to the roof, waited a few minutes, and shot the roof with flat black store-brand spray paint. After peeling the masking, I painted the boards using acrylic paint and washes, techniques shown in RoR Review 20100224. The finished roof, along with the progression of the above steps, is shown Figure 3.

Another change I made to the roof was to substitute natural-colored needlepoint floss for the rope stays (part 60) in Step 5.

This is shown in Figure 4.

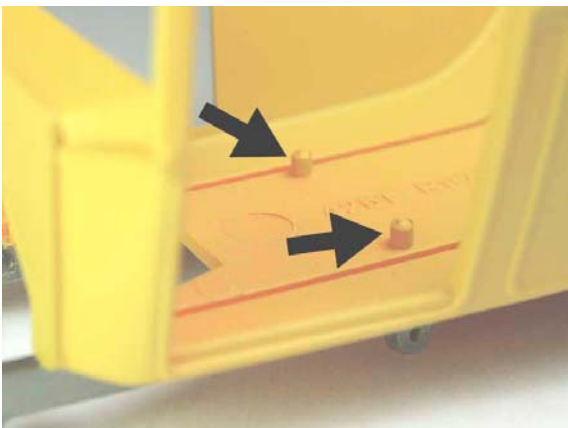


Returning to the instruction order, I turned my attention to the V-8 power plant covered in Step 1. I wanted to give my Tijuana Taxi a less flashy appearance, so I chose to de-chrome the magneto (part 5) and water pump housing (part 7). I also painted the engine block with Tamiya XF-56 Metallic Gray and detail painted a few other items, such as the oil filter. After wiring the engine with 32 gauge black wire, I added the exhausts (parts 9 and 10), which I painted white. To complete and further tone down the engine, I painted the tops of the carburetor stacks and ends of the exhausts black, gave the block a wash of black acrylic, and added black and rust powders to the exhausts. The finished engine is shown in Figure 5.

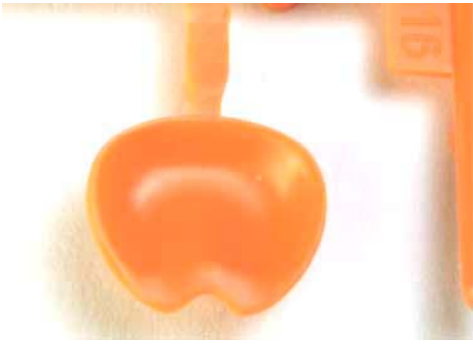




I then moved onto the body. This kit features a one-piece frame and body unit, greatly simplifying construction. The box art shows an orange car – given the orange color of the plastic, Monogram must intend for most modelers to paint their Tijuana Taxis orange. However, I figured a taxi would look better in yellow, so I chose to paint mine Polly Scale UP Armour Yellow. This paint covered the kit parts okay, but should modelers choose a color such as white, they may have problems with the orange plastic. To finish off this body/frame unit, I painted the frame using Tamiya XF-56, and applied the Tijuana Taxi and “No. 3” decals over a coat of Future. To tone down the decals, I lightly brushed some additional Armour Yellow over them, as shown in Figure 6. To complete the weathered look of the body, I used AIM Products powders, sealing them with a clear acrylic flat.

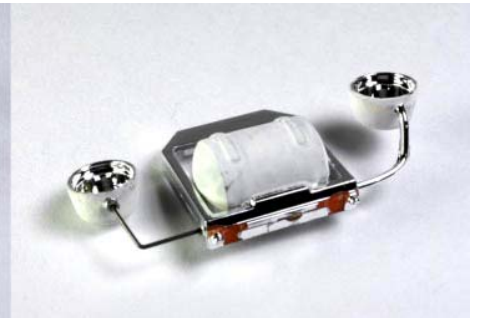


Work on the interior included painting the floorboards and firewall, again using the wood painting technique. In test fitting the floorboard, part 15, I discovered that two pins inside of the body (shown in Figure 7) needed to be trimmed by about 1/16” for this part to fit properly.

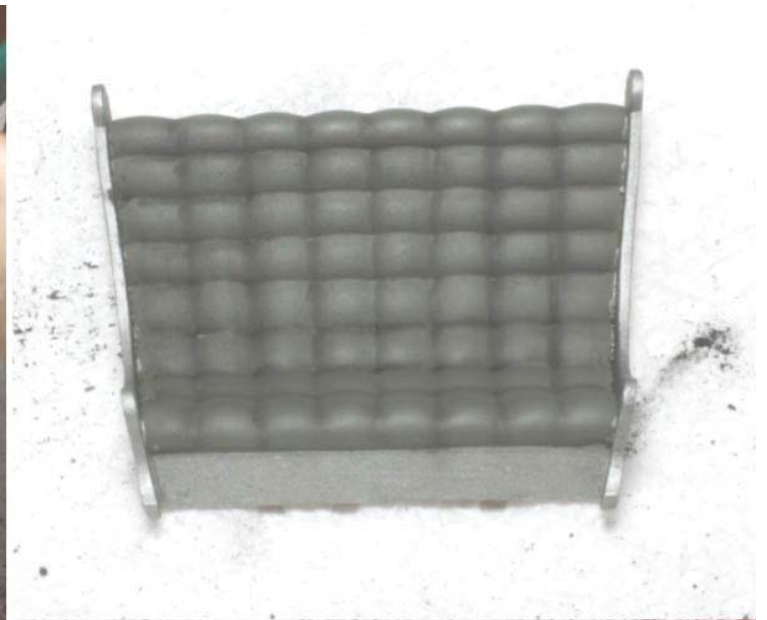
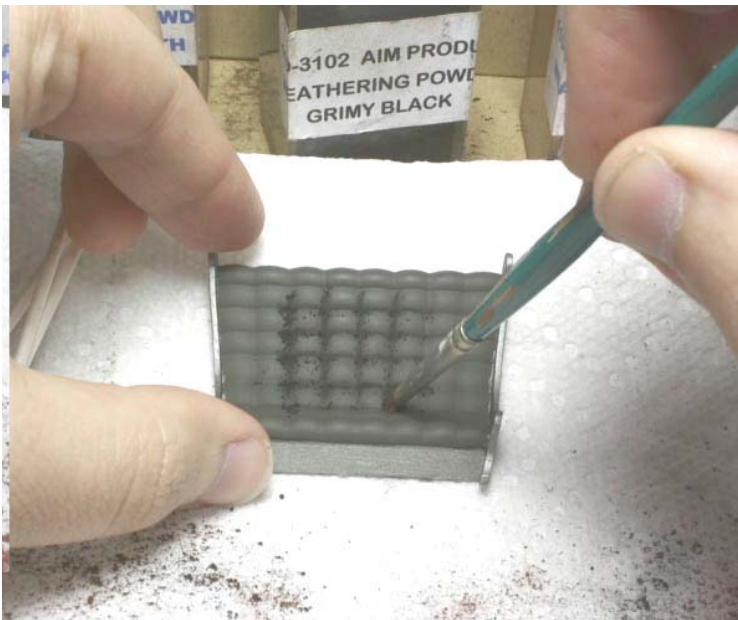


also decided that the seat, part 16, did not look quite right. Most tractor seats I've seen have some sort of cast-in pattern, typically ornate bars, latticework, and/or lettering. Knowing that this was all but impossible to replicate, I found a few examples that had simple circular hole patterns cast in. This was easily mimicked using a #50 drill, creating holes as shown in Figure 8. I also decided that this seat could have come from a "red" tractor, painted it as such, and added some weathering using a silver PrismaColor pencil. I then assembled the rest of the interior per the instructions. Note that the gas pedal (part 13) and shifter (part 14) should be swapped – I did not do this on mine, so it'd be a bit of a stretch for the driver to "hit the gas" in my car!

The kit tires feature tread on the front tires and slicks for the rear. I made mine more realistic by sanding the surfaces with an emery board (shown in Figure 9). These tools are very inexpensive (they're typically found in the beauty department in most stores) and their rough texture makes them perfect for this application.



I ran into some trouble with part 33, the grille/gas tank/headlight assembly. While cleaning up the sprue attachment points, I bent the left headlight arm. Eventually, the brittle, fragile plastic broke, so I fabricated a replacement out of 0.015" steel rod. These steps are shown in Figure 10. To make this change symmetrical, I cut off and replaced the right arm as well.



To complete the interior, I added depth to the olive-painted seats using AIM Products weathering powders. I worked Grimy Black powder into the creases of the seat using an old brush, blew off the remaining powder, and softened the edges using a cotton swab. The results of this are shown in Figure 11.



To continue the toned-down look, I decided to strip the chrome from several of the exposed suspension pieces. The rear end (part 46), front axle (part 36), and wheel backs (part 40) were among the many parts I stripped. This chrome was very stubborn, and required several alternating baths in 91% isopropyl and bleach to remove it. More caustic chemicals may work more quickly, but I stuck with what I had on hand. After painting the axles with RustOleum matte nickel, I assembled the suspension per the instructions. The wheel backs and running boards (parts 42 and 43) were painted with red oxide flecked with black and silver, replicating rusted parts. I also painted the exterior faces of the wheels flat black to make the 5-spoke rims stand out more. Continuing the toned-down trend, I painted the spokes of the wheels with Floquil white and detailed the hubs and lug nuts with black paint.



A few remaining details had to be painted. The rear trunk, parts 64 and 65, got a coat of flat black, followed up with heavy brushstrokes of raw umber craft acrylic, simulating leather. I then detail painted the straps black and hardware brass, as shown in Figure 12.

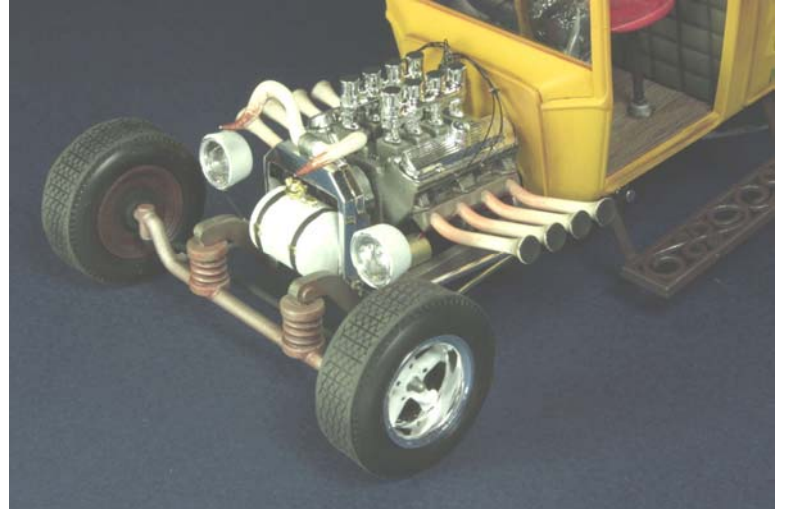


I also detail painted one of the three chickens included in this kit as shown in Figure 13, based on reference pictures I found on the internet. My chicken was inserted in the rooftop crate. A chicken with wings spread is included, along with a base, to depict a bird flying away from your car. I chose not to complete these parts.

Most assembly went smoothly using only solvent-based cements. However, the rear fenders (parts 49 and 50), the trunk, the roof, and the rear license plate (part 67) required epoxy to adequately bond to the model.



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Assembly Time: I spent about 14 hours building this kit.

**Pros:** Reissue of rare and popular kit; new tooling flash-free

**Cons:** Molded in orange plastic; somewhat loose parts fit; fragile chrome-plated pieces