



After an incredible, decades long run, the iconic VW Beetle was replaced. The Volkswagen Golf, or Volkswagen Rabbit in the United States, is a small family car produced by the German manufacturer Volkswagen since 1974. The vehicles transverse-mounted 4-cylinder water-cooled engine and front wheel drive gave it unprecedented efficiency by comparison to contemporary American vehicles. Despite this, sales were slow until sharp increases in oil prices drove a commensurate spike in VW sales. The original Rabbit was a front-wheel drive, front-engine replacement for the air-cooled, rear-engine, rear-wheel drive Volkswagen Beetle. Historically, the Rabbit is Volkswagen's best-selling model and the world's second best-selling model, with more than 29 million built by 2012.

For the Modeler: This review covers the Revell California Wheels series kit #85-4333 VW Rabbit in 1:24 scale. This is a direct Re-release (Re-Pop) from the Revell Germany VW Golf. There have been multiple releases in different box arts over the years. Revell rates this as a Skill Level 2 for the moderate builder. There are 141 parts molded in White, Chrome, Clear and includes Vinyl tires and a full waterslide decal sheet. The Instructions are in a well laid out book format typical of the Revell style as of late. There is a nicely detailed motor and full engine bay. The chassis is also highly detailed with a good suspension. The interior is a multiple part set up with separate door panels for ease of detailing. There are two dashboards, a Left Hand and Right Hand drive, to make a foreign or US version. The body is clean and has no mold lines. The front and rear panels are separate and installed after painting. The decal sheet is very detailed with exterior badges, interior instruments, exterior moldings and stripes, and chrome work. This is a high detail kit. Overall completed dimensions are: Length: 6-1/4", Width: 2-11/16", Height: 2-1/4".

BUILDING CAVIATS: Having organization and a proper work area is important if you want to build a model properly. But even without dedicated space a place to leave your build while you work is necessary. Being able to lay out your parts organized helps the build as you are not digging for parts in the box possibly losing or damaging them. Also you really should have a place to let painted parts cure.

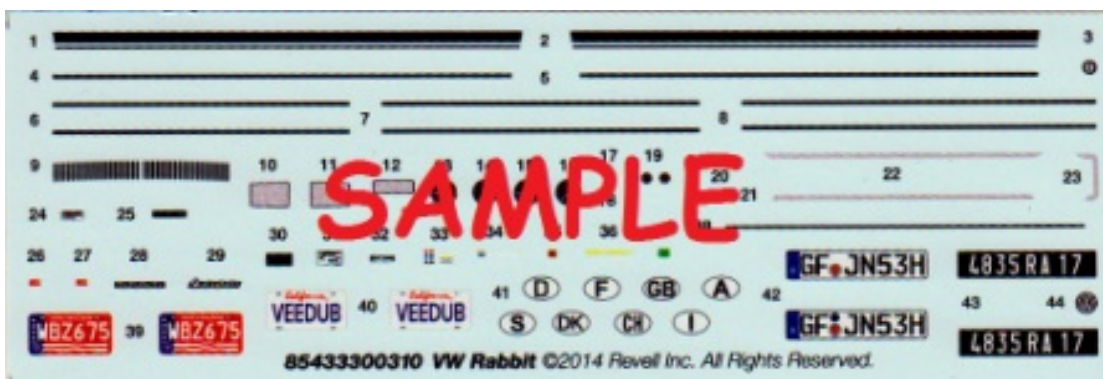
Throughout the review you will find **OPTIONAL IDEAS** that I suggest. These are completely your choice. Not doing these steps will in no way affect the build, they are just ways to offer some personal and custom touches to your builds. **OPTIONS** will be noted. One of the best parts of model building is using your imagination to create the car YOU want! Unless you are building a "Factory Stock" or a "Replica" car your choices of color and build options is completely up to you. The instruction give recommendations but you are free to substitute whatever options you want. There is no "Wrong way" to build your kit! Have fun and enjoy your hobby. Review the instruction sheet thoroughly to get familiar with the assembly sequence. Decide your color scheme in advance and your custom options so you can build accordingly.



PIC 1 This is the box art for this kit as released in the Revell California Wheels 2015 version. Unless otherwise stated I use Testors Tube Glue (Orange Tube) for assembly of the parts. Other adhesives used in the construction are Superglue and Elmer's White Glue. Paints consist of Testors Enamel or Tamiya Acrylic bottle paints and "Rattle can" spray paints. The body is finished using 1:1 automotive paint products shot with an airbrush. One of the major benefits of using automotive paint is a very fast drying time. You can get just as good results using Spray can products but they require a longer drying time. Automotive paint is **FULLY** cured in less than an hour and Clear cures in about 6 hours. Use a good quality

airbrush to paint automotive products because Lacquer Thinner will destroy the cheaper ones quickly. Assembly paint colors may vary from instructions as I use simplified colors that most model builders should have on hand. Before beginning your build soak and wash your parts with a mild detergent like DAWN to remove any mold release agents and help with paint adhesion.

Note to remember: Always follow the Manufacturer's Safety and Use Guidelines when using any of the products mentioned in the review for your own protection.

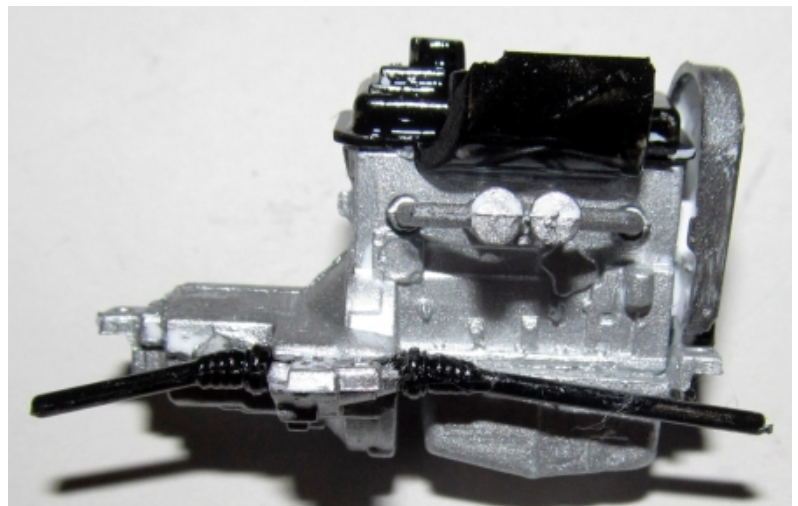
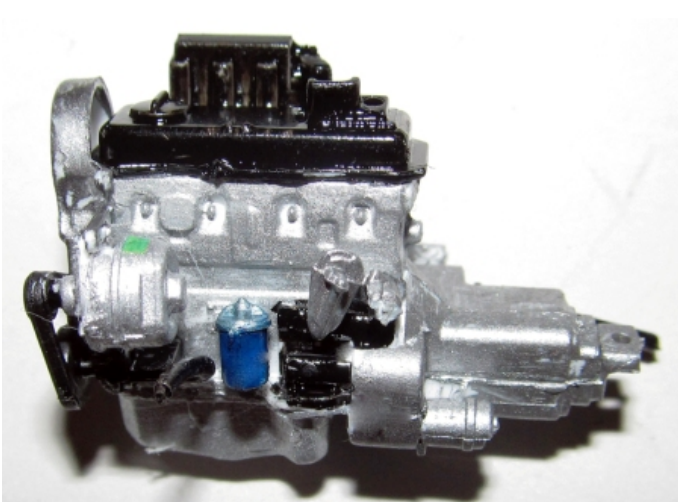
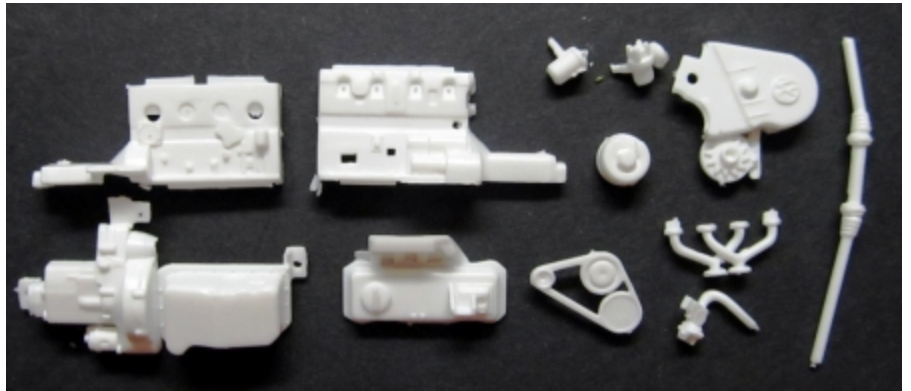


PIC 2 PIC 3 Here are the decals the kit includes. These are new decals and include different items from previous versions. They are high quality and float easily but adhere quickly. Due to the location and small size of the decals I highly recommend using setting solutions. I use Microscale Ind. as their products seem to work best with all the different brands of decals I have used.

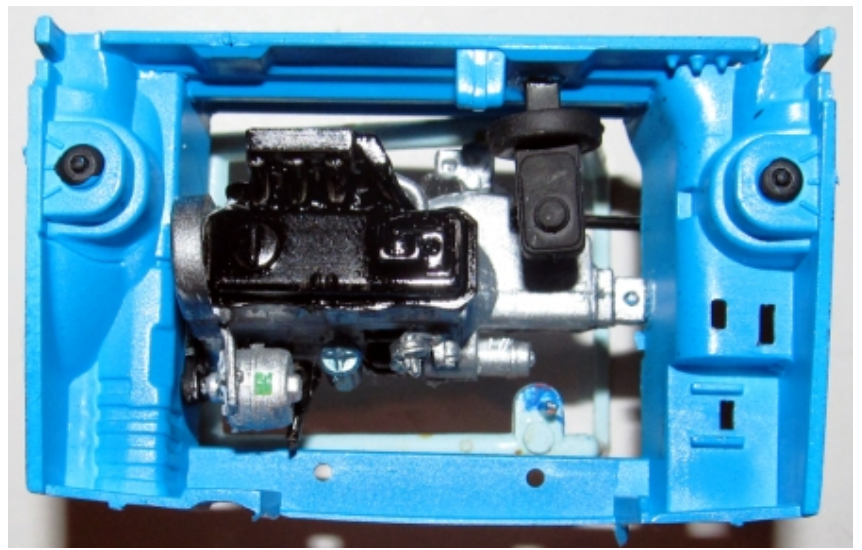
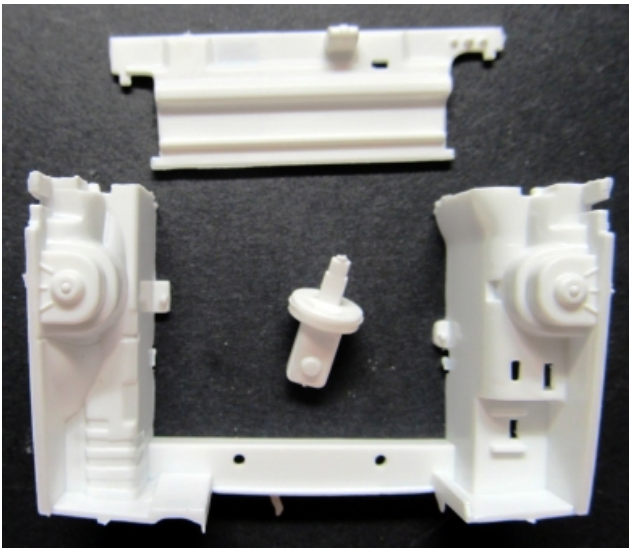


PIC 4 PIC 5 **OPTIONAL IDEA:** License Plates: I decided to do custom license plates and personalize this kit a little. You can go to <http://www.acme.com/licensemaker/> and create any custom plate you want for any State. Also, you can search photos online for designer license plates. You can save the photo and resize it to fit a model. Just print it on photo paper and you have a plate of your own. To print your plate for 1/25 or 1/24 scale kit, open your photo program and crop the plate so you just have the plate only. Re-size the image size to make the Width .5 inches and make sure **CONSTRAIN PROPORTIONS** is on. Use 300 DPI for a crisp print. Save that and Print it on White Photo paper printing on High Quality Print Setting. You now have a proper sized plate to glue on your car.

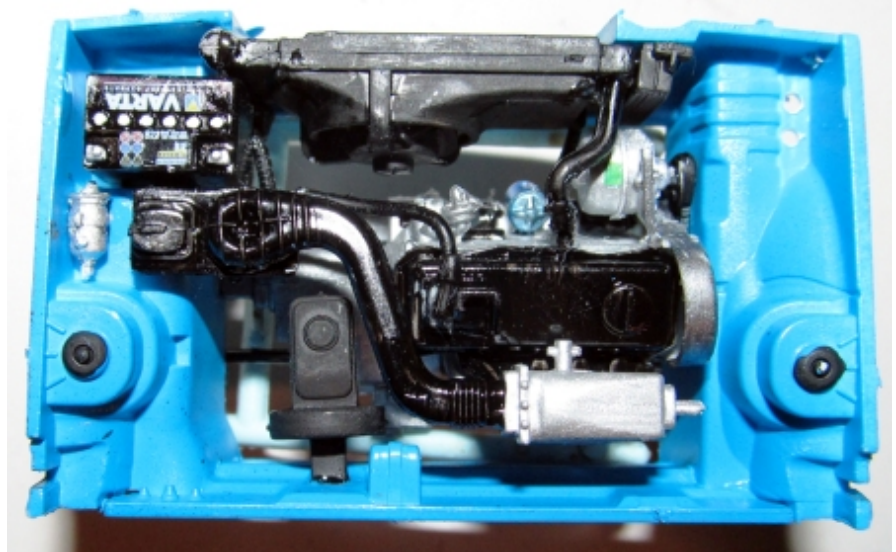
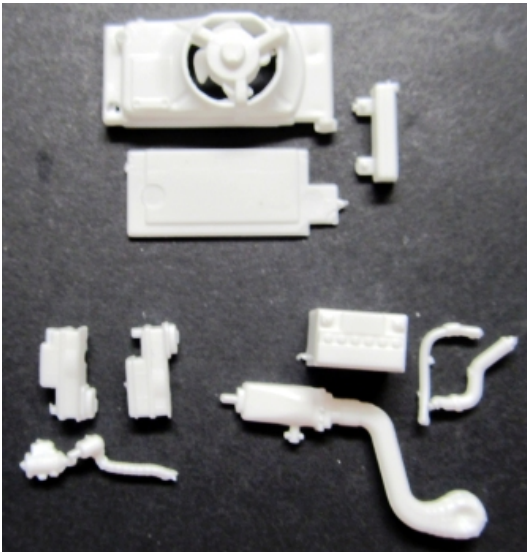
PIC 6 Paint the motor parts to prepare for assembly. Some parts will be assembled before paint. Assemble the block halves. Attach the alternator to the front cover. Paint the motor Block Aluminum. The transmission is Steel. The oil pan is Aluminum with the remaining transmission half Steel. The starter is attached to both the block and oil pan parts and it is Black. The axle is Flat Black. The valve cover is Black. The front cover is Gunmetal and the alternator Aluminum. The exhaust manifold is Steel. The belt is Flat Black. The coolant pump is Black. The oil filter is Blue. The distributor is Steel and Black. DECAL 37 is on the alternator and DECAL 36 on the belt.



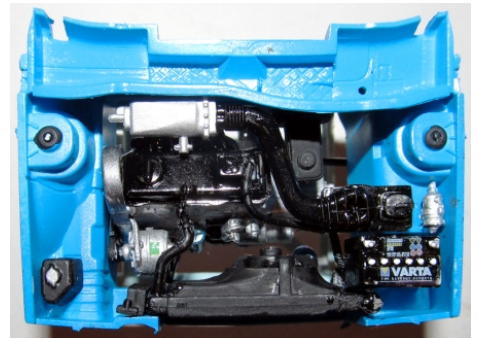
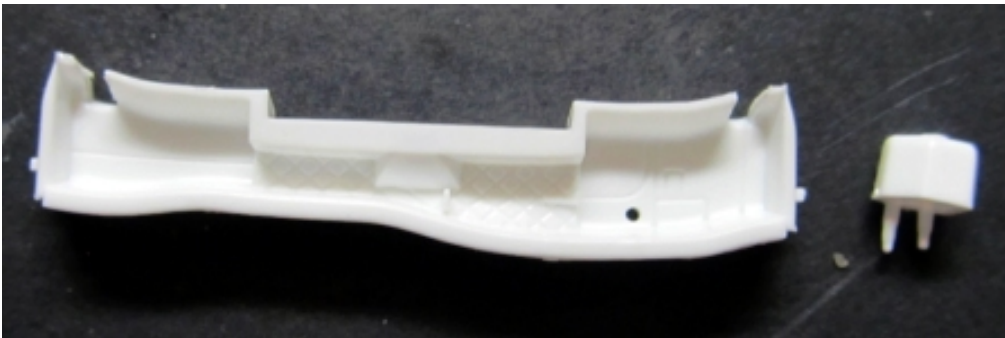
PIC 7 PIC 8 Attach the driveshaft into the oil pan and install that on the motor. Add the valve cover. Add the front cover. Install the exhaust manifold, distributor, oil filter and coolant pump. Install the belt. DECAL 37 goes on the alternator and DECAL 36 on the belt.



PIC 9 PIC 10 Install the firewall. Paint the engine bay Body Color, I did mine Blue. The shock tower caps are Black. Paint the brake booster Black. Install the motor into the bay and add the brake booster in place.



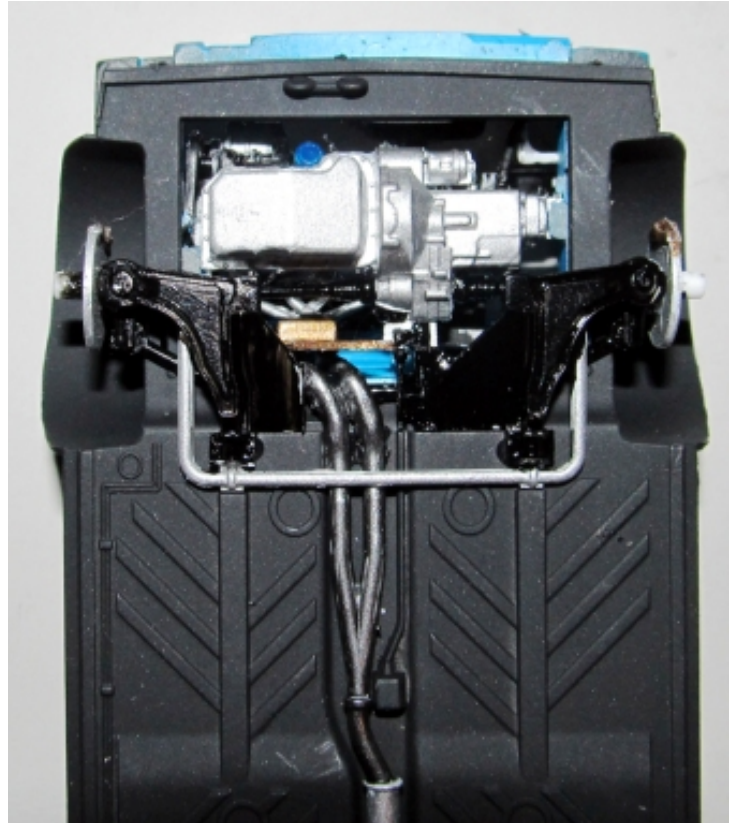
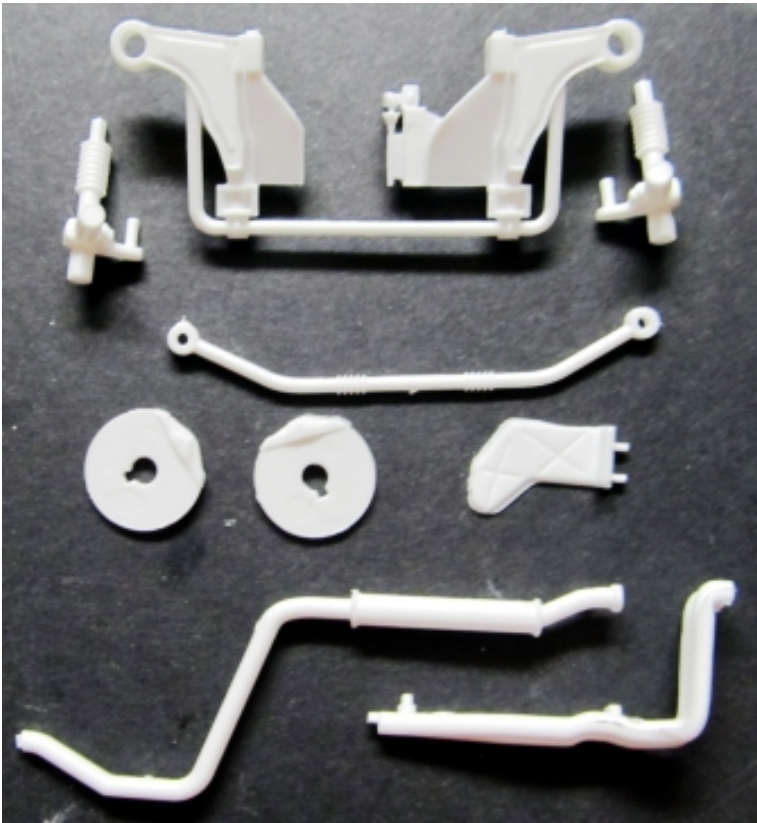
PIC 11 PIC 12 Assemble the three radiator parts and paint it Black. Add DECAL 35 to the fan and install this in the engine bay. Assemble the air flow meter and paint it Black as well as the air hose. Paint the fuel filter Aluminum. Install the fuel filter and air flow meter. Add the air hose from the motor to the meter. The battery is Black with DECALS 33 and 34. The battery posts are steel with white caps. The radiator hose and air hose are Flat Black. The air filter is Aluminum with a Black tube. Install the battery, air hose and air filter. Add the upper radiator hose.



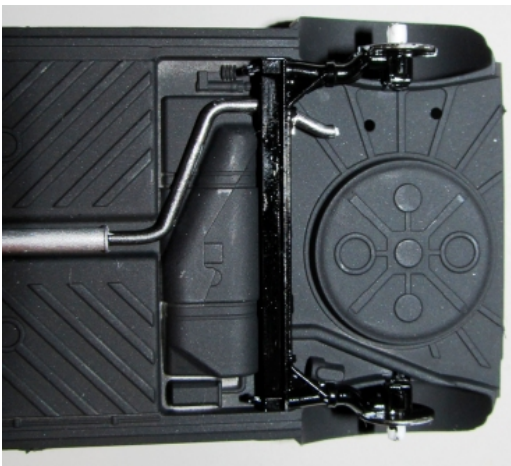
PIC 13 PIC 14 Paint the cowl Blue and the water tank Black with Aluminum cap. Install the cowl and the tank.



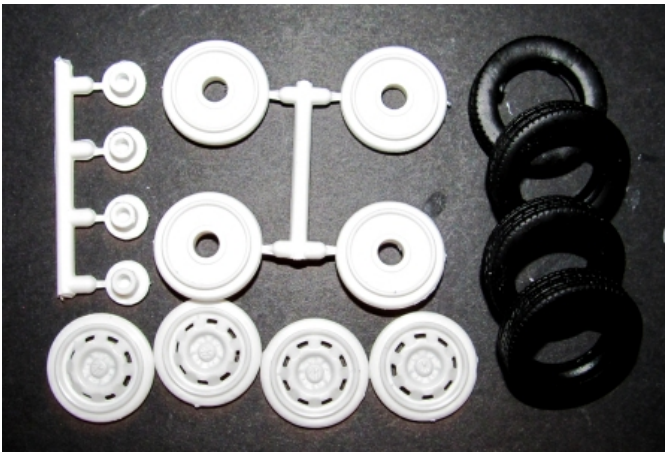
PIC 15 PIC 16 Paint the chassis Flat Black. Install the completed engine bay into place on the chassis.



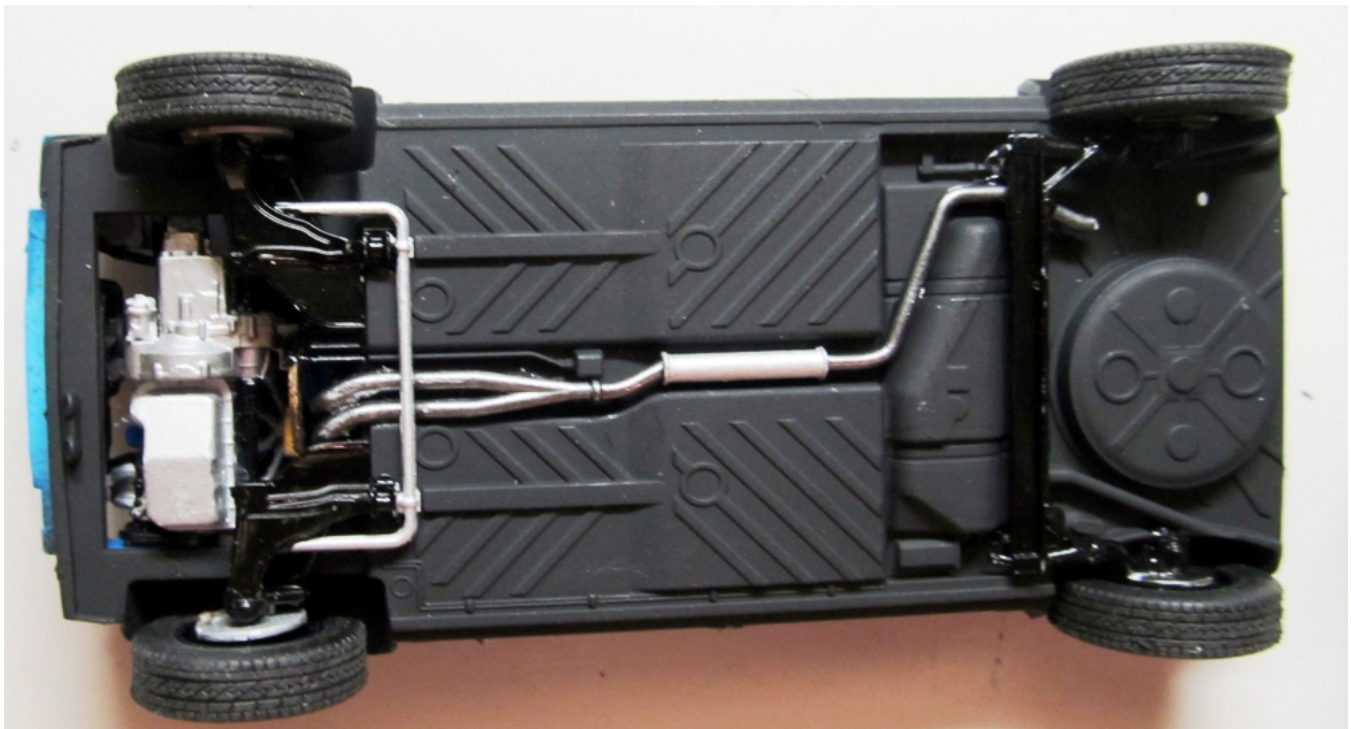
PIC 17 PIC 18 Install the front suspension and exhaust now. The exhaust is Steel with Aluminum mufflers. The heat shield is Copper. The brakes are Silver with Gold calipers. The A-frame, spindles and tie rod are Black. Attach the tie rod to the spindles and install that on to the chassis. Add the front exhaust pipe and heat shield. Add the A-frame and rear exhaust pipe.



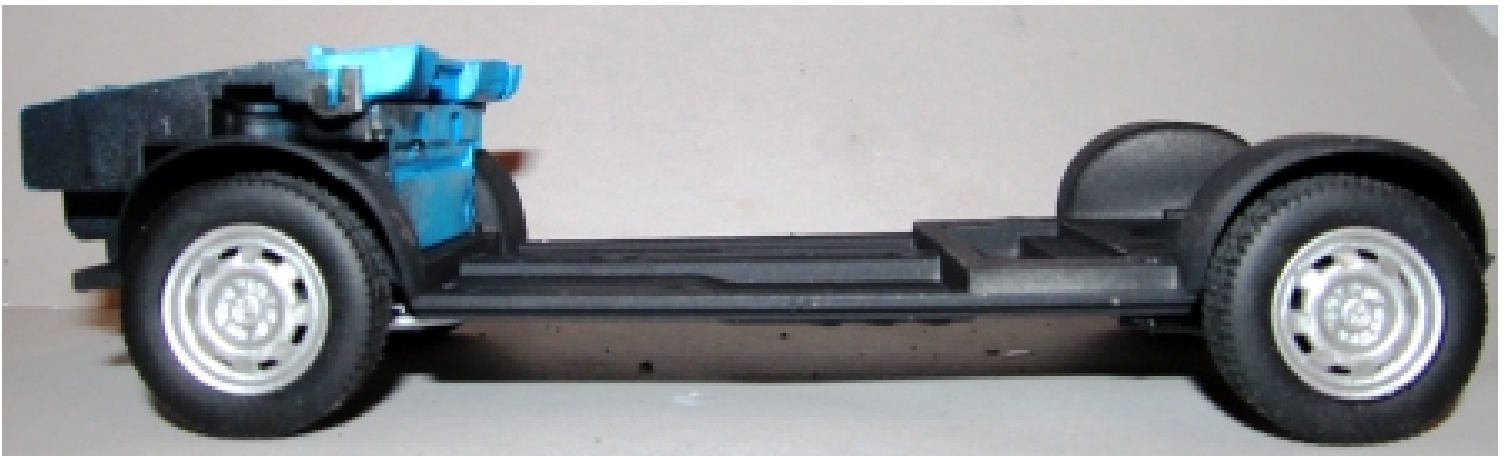
PIC 19 Paint the rear spindles and suspension Black with Silver brakes. Install the shocks and suspension in place.



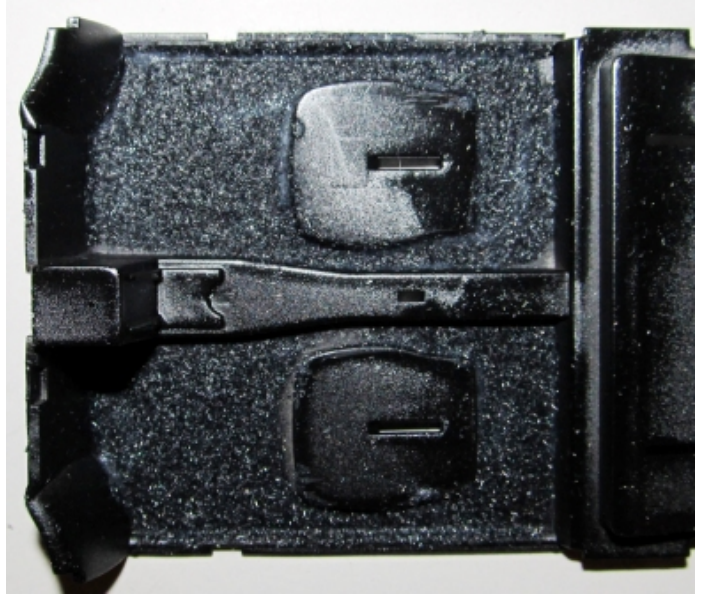
PIC 20 PIC 21 The tires are finished now. Paint the rim fronts Aluminum. The rim backs and hubs are Black. Insert the hub and sandwich it between the rim front and back. Install that into the tires. To give the tires a worn road used look press and roll the tread on a sheet of 220 grit sandpaper.



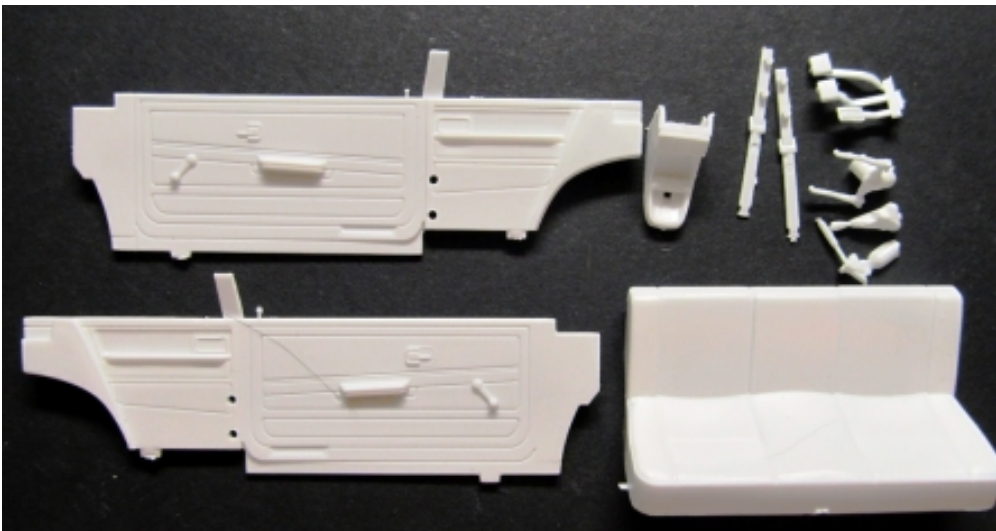
PIC 22 The tires are non-directional and do not have any markings. Install a tire on each spindle.



PIC 23 At this point the chassis is completed and can be set aside for now.



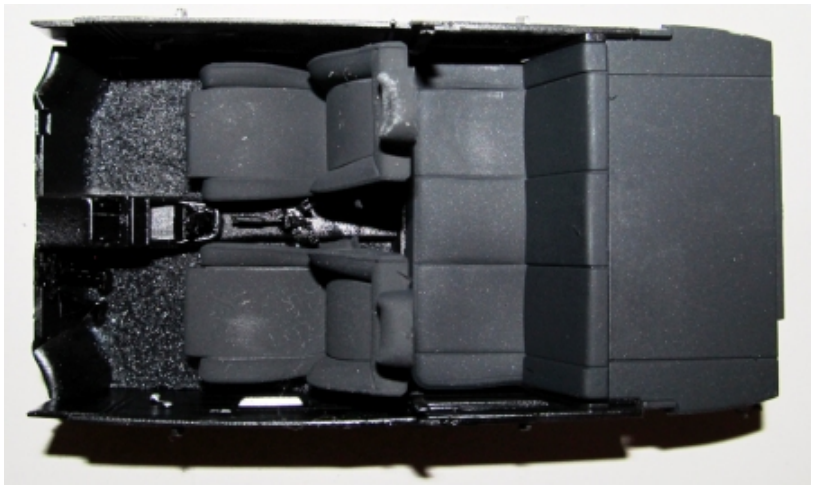
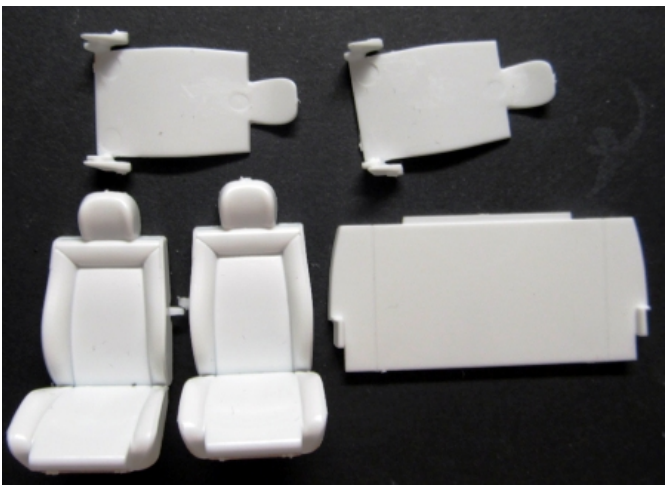
PIC 24 PIC 25 **OPTIONAL IDEA:** I decided I wanted to have carpet in this car. I will FLOCK the floor pan with CRAFT FLOCKING. It is simple to do and makes a nice add on detail. Paint the floor the color of the carpet. Using Elmer's White Glue paint a thin layer of glue on the area you want flocked ONLY. I use a fine strainer and dump the flocking into it and then shake the strainer over the glue area. Do this in a box so you can re-use the unused flocking. Cover the area densely with flocking and lightly pat it on. Shake off the loose stuff and it will be carpeted. Look online or in craft stores for CRAFT FLOCKING, it is very inexpensive and makes a really nice addition for that extra reality. This is 100% optional.



PIC 26 PIC 27 The interior is assembled now. Note there are parts to do a RIGHT or LEFT hand drive car. The center floor column and shifter vary as to each option. Attach the seat belts to the door panels and paint the panels Black with Flat Black belts and Aluminum trim and handles. The seat is Flat Black. The pedals, console, seat belt buckles and shifter are Black. The brake handle is Flat Black.



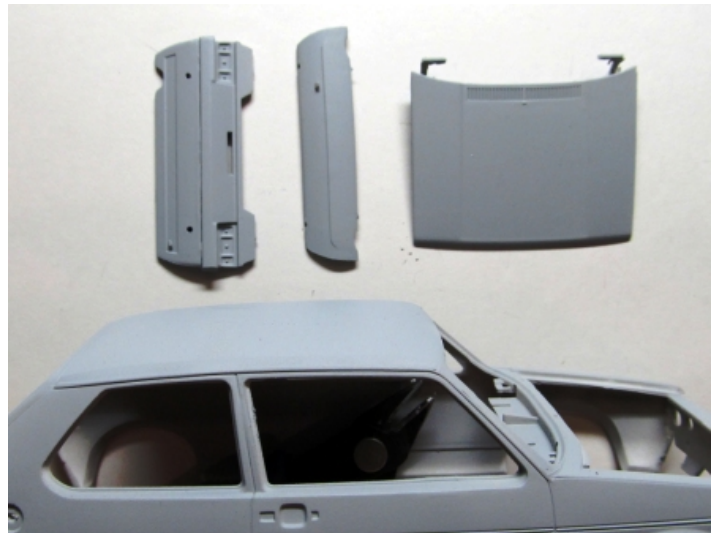
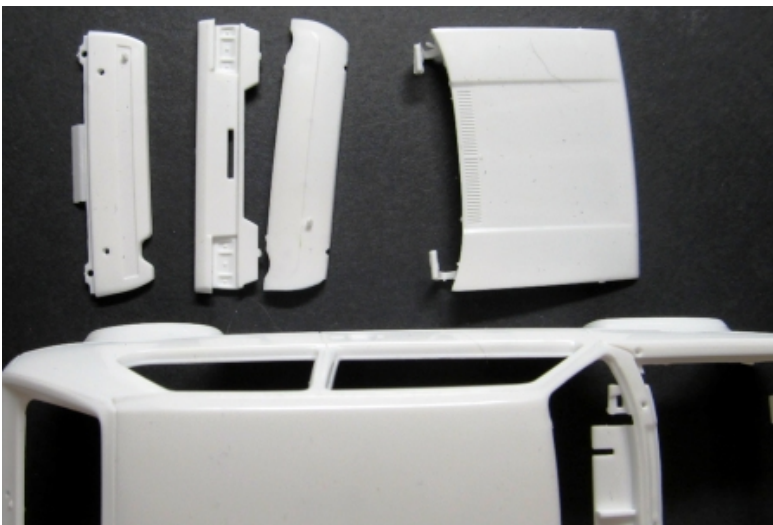
PIC 28 Install the rear seat. Install the console with DECAL 19. Add the shifter. Add the seat belt buckles, brake handle and pedals. Install the door panels.



PIC 29 PIC 30 Assemble the front seats and seat backs. Paint the seats and the rear panel Flat Black. Install the seats and panel.

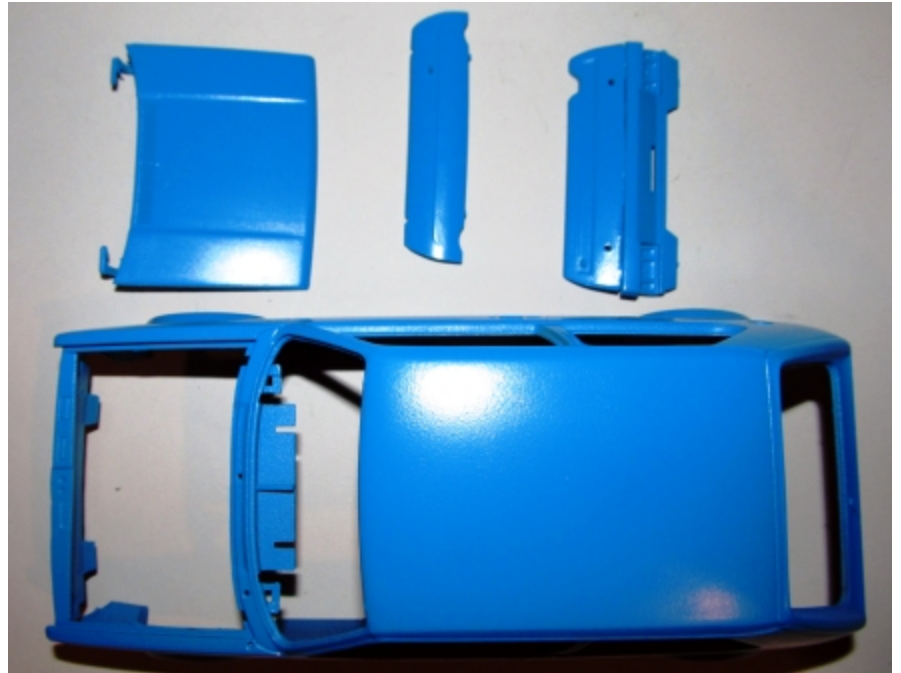


PIC 31 PIC 32 OPTIONAL IDEA: As people buy custom floor mats for their real cars why not have ones for their models? This idea is FREE to do and easy. Search the internet for car floor mats; use the pictures of the flat mat display and save it. In your photo program resize the front mat to a height of $\frac{3}{4}$ inches tall. Print them at 300 DPI on plain paper. Glue the paper to Black card stock and cut out the mat. A dab of White Glue on the floor will hold them in place. I did a search and found tons of usable images from all kind of sites.



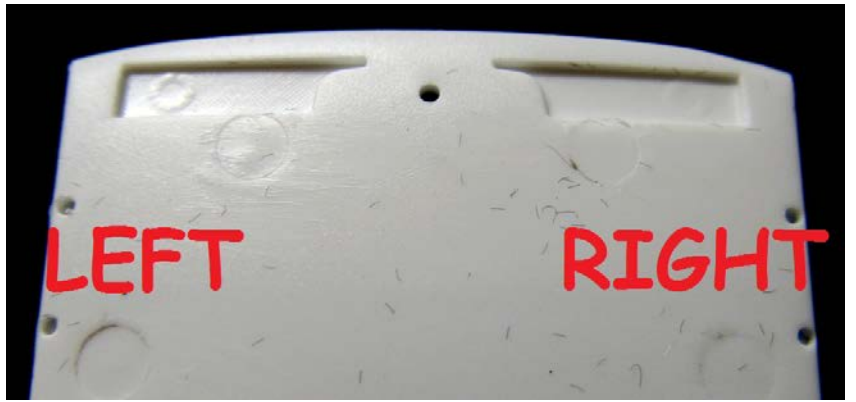
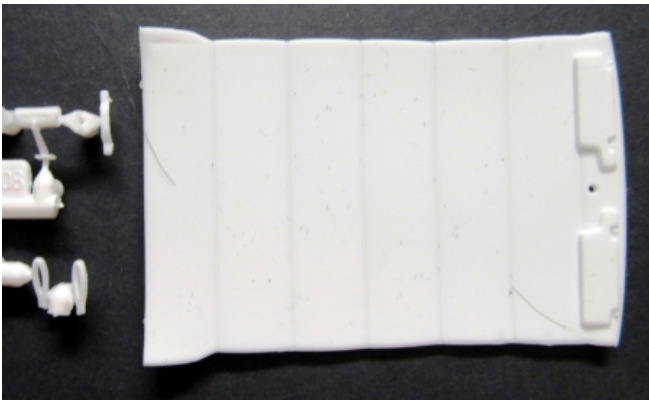
PIC 33 & 34 The body can be prepared for paint now. Assemble the rear panels prior to paint. Wet sand the whole body with 800 grit paper and rinse clean. PIC 34 Use a good quality Primer and paint the whole car inside and out with the Primer. Let that cure and wet sand with 800 grit paper again looking for any blemishes. Once the car is ready rinse clean and prepare for the base color.

PIC 35 I will use a Base Color of Chrysler Basin Street Blue (Code B3) to paint the exterior. The interior is painted Flat Black.



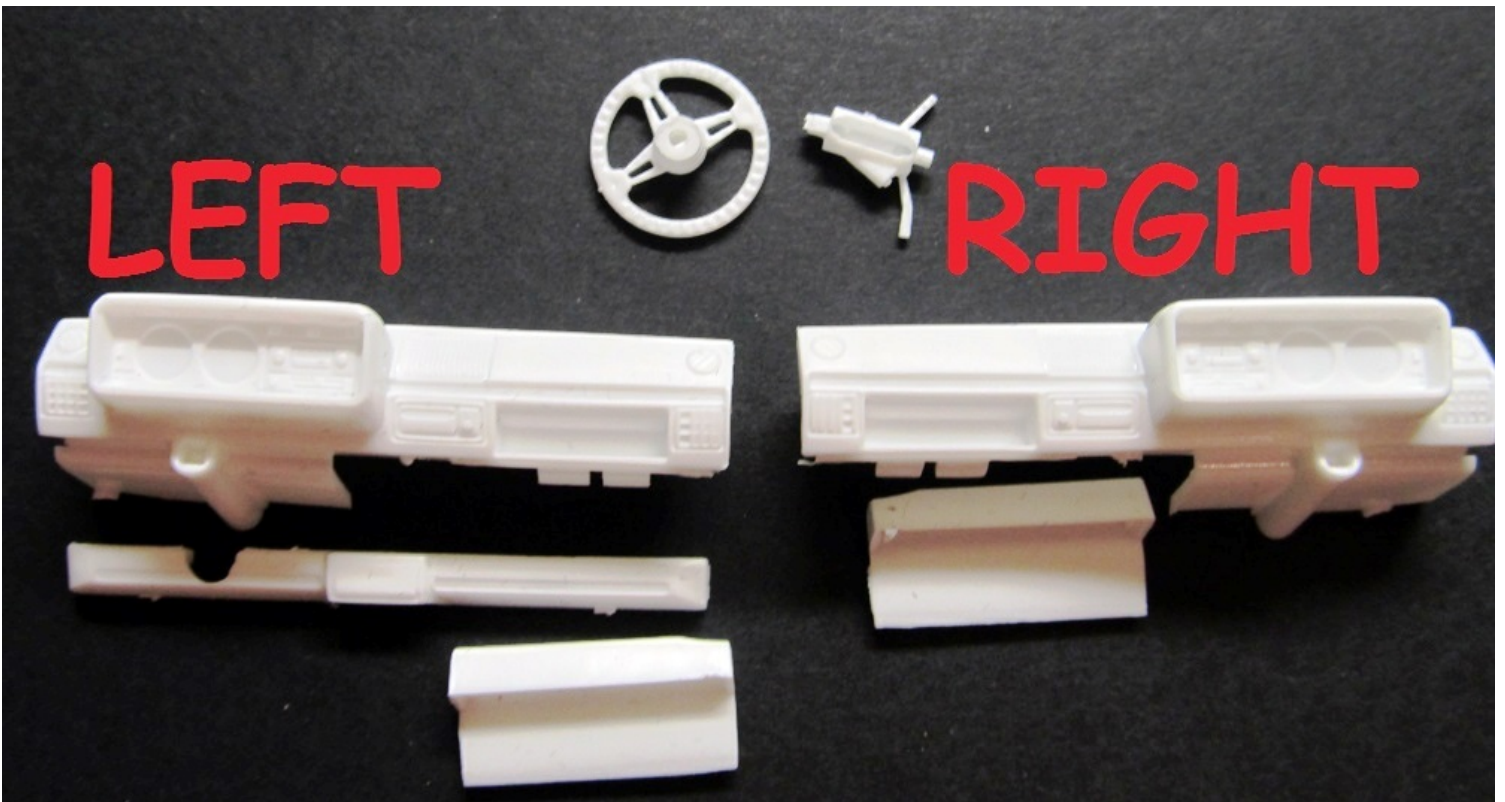
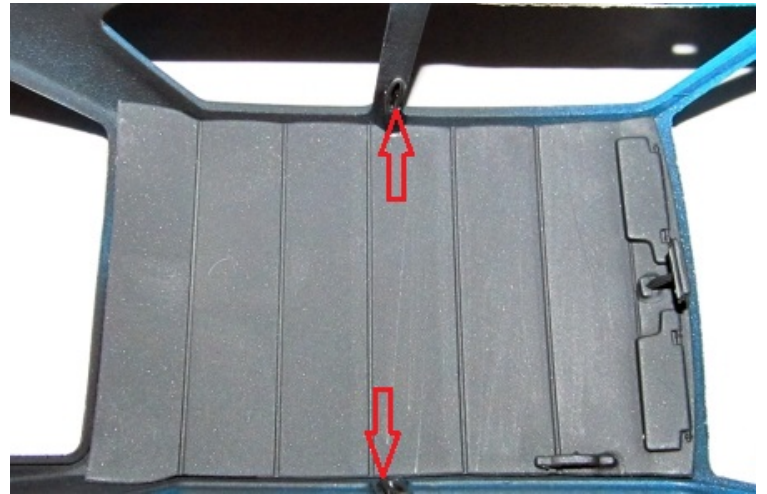
PIC 36 Body Decaling and Finishing: After you have your base coat on the car you are ready to decal it. Remember decals lay better on a GLOSS surface and will not adhere properly on a FLAT surface. If you decal a flat surface you get what is called SILVERING of the decals, or the look that they are not adhered, as air is trapped under the decal. Clean your work area good so no dust or grunge from building and sanding gets under your decals. Pick the decals you want to work with and plan out how the best way to lay them out without handling previously laid decals will be. I try either a Front to Back or Top to Bottom approach doing one side at a time then the front and rear of the car in steps giving the decals time to set and dry in

place before handling it again. Once you have a plan of action cut your first decal as close to the edge of the outermost color as possible. Once trimmed place the decal into warm water and let it get soft until it "Floats" loosely on the carrier paper. Microscale Industries has a product set called Micro-Set and Micro-Sol. The purpose is to soften the decals to help them conform to the contours of the body and lay smooth. To apply Micro Set, use a soft brush and apply Micro Set to the part where you are going to apply the decal. Next apply the decal as normal. Use a small pointed tip synthetic bristle brush and carefully position the decal. Blot the decal carefully with a Q-tip or paper towel so as not to move it and allow it to dry. For a tougher decals apply Micro-Sol with a small flat brush on to the decal. Apply with as few strokes as possible so as not to disturb the decal. As the decal dries slowly work any creases or blemishes in the decal out with a Q-tip or damp paper towel. Work slowly as not to damage the decal. A second coat of Micro-Sol can be added if needed. Now continue this process until all the decals for that area are done, wait for them to set and continue the rest of the car. Let the decals cure at least overnight before applying your clear coat.



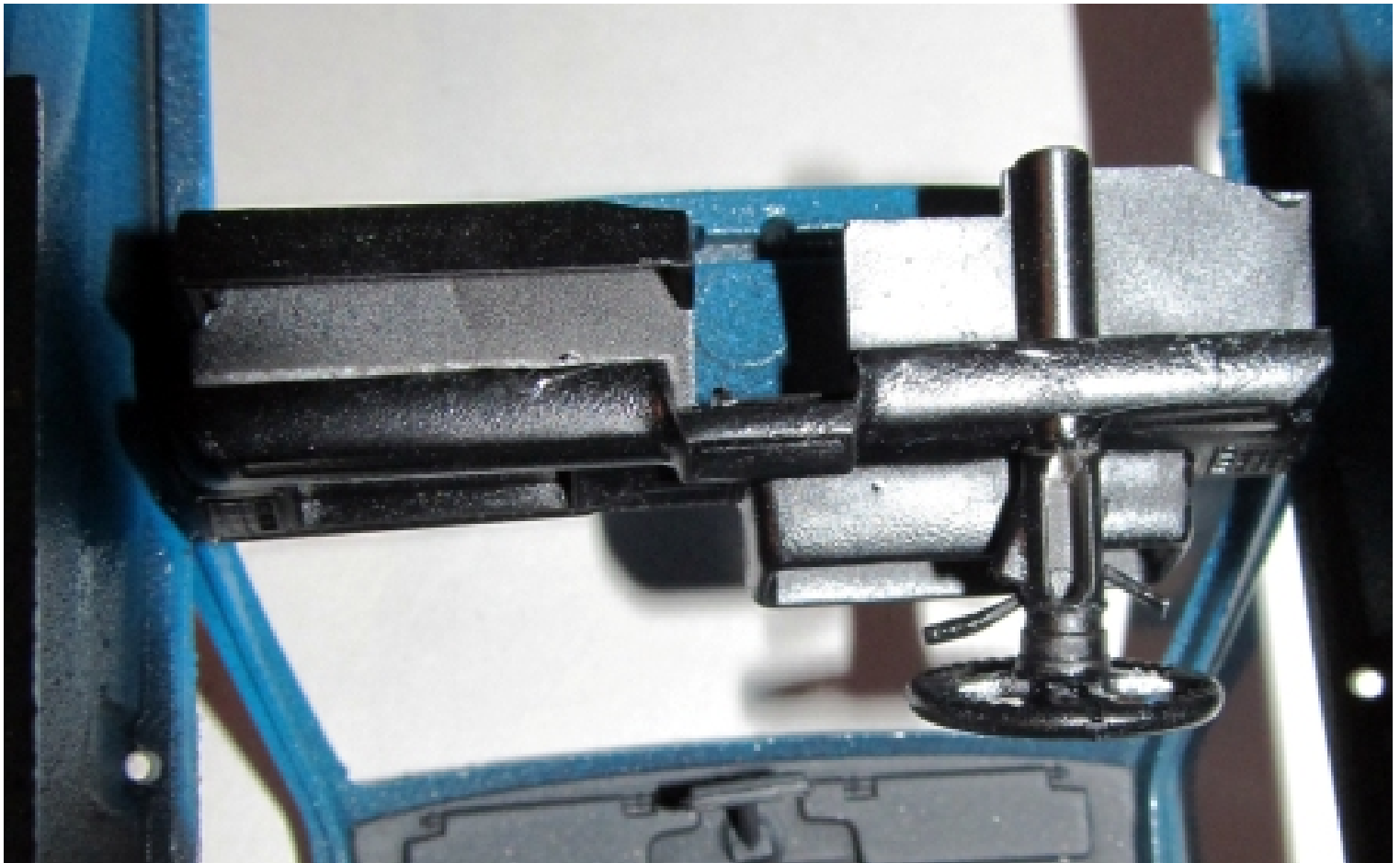
PIC 37 PIC 38 The headliner is installed. Note there is a grab handle on the Driver Side. Open the proper holes dependent on your drive choice. Install the handle and mirror. Paint this unit Flat Black. DECAL 12 is the mirror face.

PIC 39 Install the headliner into the interior of the body. Add the grab handles to the B pillars.



PIC 40 The dash is detailed now. Choose LEFT or RIGHT hand drive and use the parts for that assembly.

PIC 41 For LEFT attach the front panel and lower storage box. Paint the unit Black. The steering wheel and column are Black. The spokes on the wheel are Silver. DECALS 13, 14, 17, 24, 25, 26, 27 are dash instrument panel decals. DECAL 18 is the horn button. Install the column and steering wheel on the dash.



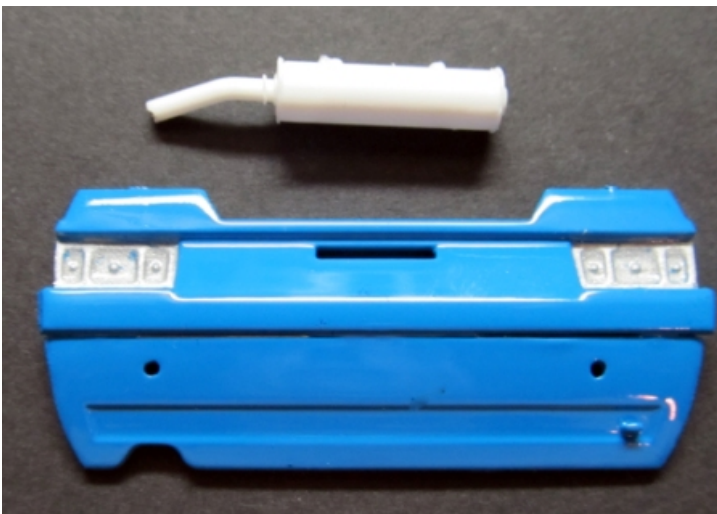
PIC 42 Install the dash into the interior of the body.



PIC 43 Install the interior into the chassis pan



PIC 44 Shoehorn the whole unit into the body. Line up the dash, wheel wells and engine bay and it will tightly slide into place without the need for glue.



PIC 45 PIC 46 Paint the muffler Aluminum and the pipe Steel. Insert the back body panel into place in the body and add the muffler to the chassis. The rear panel should be flush in place on the body.



PIC 51 PIC 52 The front end is installed next. Note the US or EUROPEAN bumper choices. Also there is a spoiler that was optional and not seen on the US version. Paint the US bumper Black and Bare Metal Foil it. The tag holder is Black and installed on the bumper. The back side of the running lights are Silver and installed in the bumper. Add the plate with Elmer's Glue. The grille is painted Black with the outer edge Chrome. Install the VW badge and add DECAL 44 to the badge. Install the headlight lenses with Elmer's Glue. The spoiler is Black if you use it. Install the spoiler to the front pan. Drill out the holes in the pan for the bumper you chose to use. Install the pan and grille, add the bumper to the pan.



PIC 53 PIC 54 All of the windows will be installed next. **OPTIONAL:** Window tint is a popular addition to most cars. Finding a reliable and easy way to tint the Clear styrene for a model can be difficult. Alclad II has made the process much easier! They sell a product called Transparent Smoke. This is shot through your airbrush to apply. Prepare the windows by cleaning them thoroughly and masking the outside off. Spray one or two light coats



(Or more for darker tint) on the inside of the window. It dries quickly and leaves a see through tinting on the window that has no bubbles or blemishes.

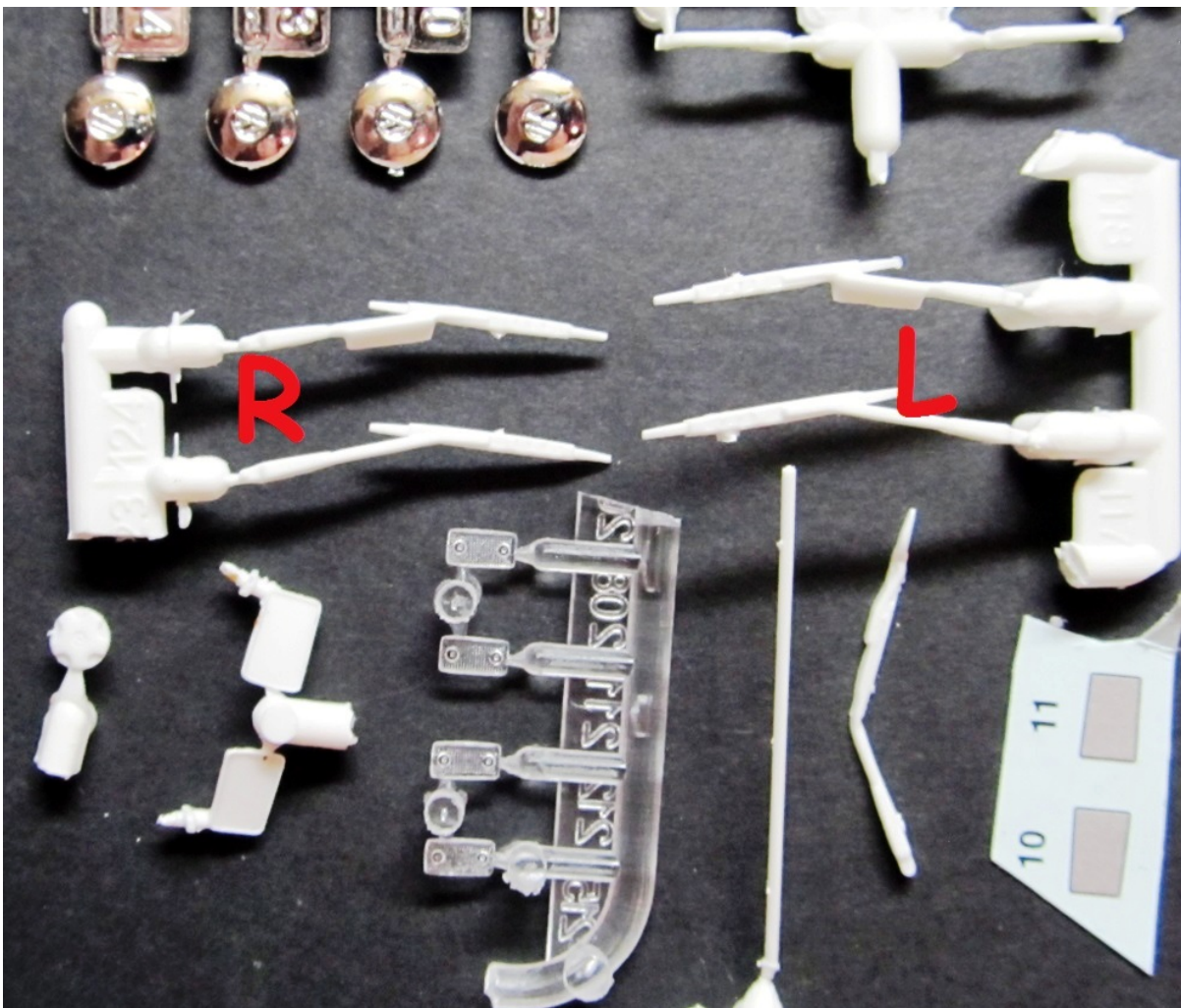


PIC 55 PIC 56 **OPTIONAL:** Prior to assembly I want to give the glass a thinner crisper look. I will dip the parts into Pledge Floor Care. When applied to both side of a piece of clear polystyrene, it will make glass appear thinner and clearer. It will help to hide minor scratches also. Simply pour some Pledge into a

small container and dip your clear glass into it. This will self-level and make the part clearer! After you dip the part, be sure to place a cover over the parts to prevent dust from collecting on it. Place the parts on a sheet of paper towel to cure, the paper towel will draw out the excess Pledge and “Wick” it off the parts so it does not accumulate at the edges leaving an unwanted build up. Use a Black Sharpie to draw along the window moldings to make the rubber seals. Install the glass with Elmer’s Glue.



PIC 57 **OPTIONAL:** As I like removable hoods I cut the tabs off of the hood hinges.

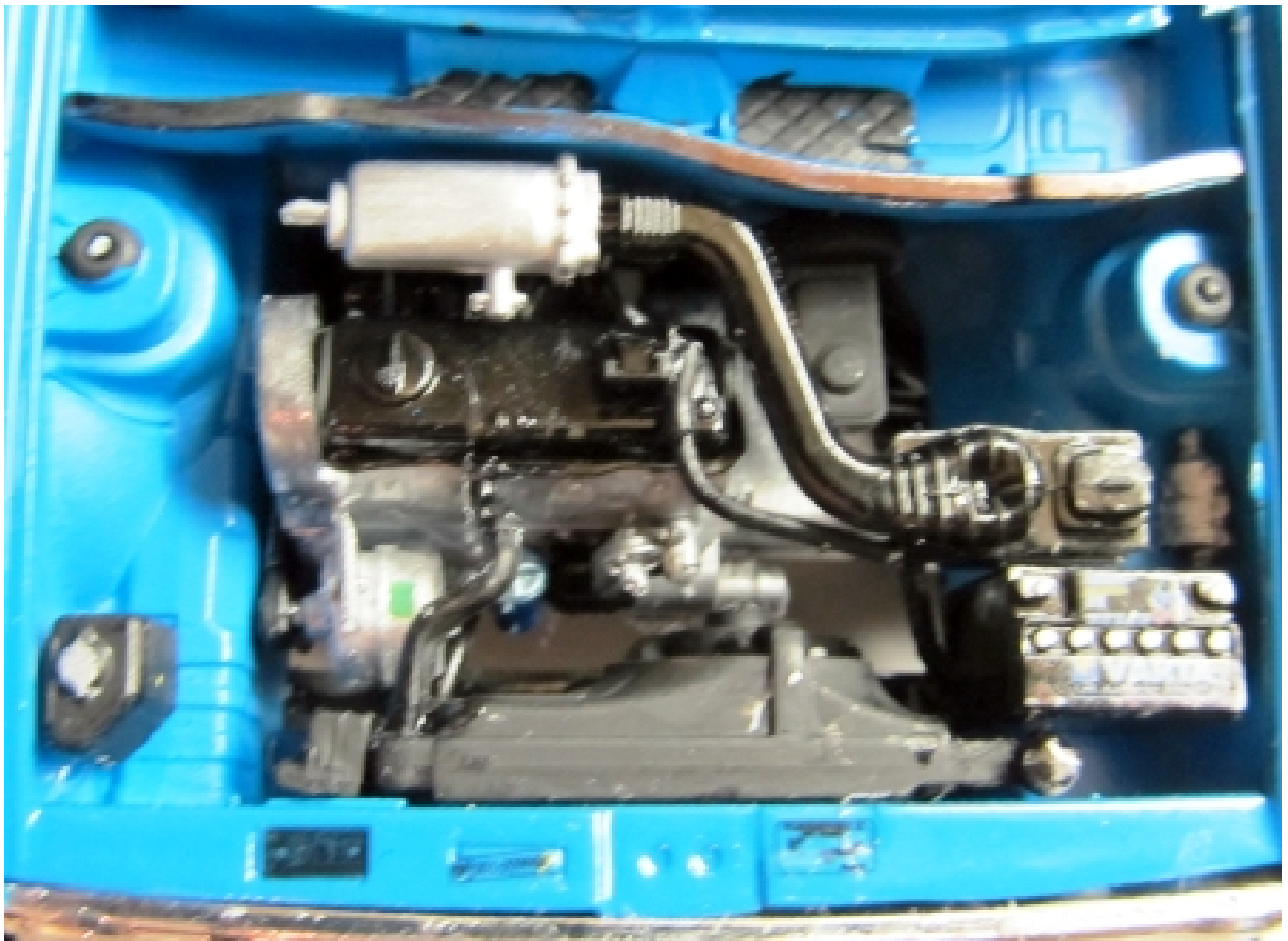


PIC 58 Final parts assemblies are painted and installed. The wipers are LEFT or RIGHT Drive. Paint the wipers, gas cap, mirrors, door handles and antenna Black. The radio antenna appears to be a little thick for the scale so you may want to replace it with a smaller diameter rod. DECALS 10 & 11 are mirror faces. Install the hubcaps. Add the wipers, gas cap, door handles, mirrors and antenna. The clear parts get painted Stop Light Red and Turn Signal Yellow for side markers.

Note in references online the Rabbit was available either WITH or WITHOUT the side markers. Add the markers, yellow in front and Red in rear. There are no positive attachment points and you have to guess location based on references of your choice.



PIC 59 PIC 60 The front and rear finished photos.



PIC 61 The engine bay is completed.

PIC 62 Depending on how you built your car there will be excess parts. Here is what I have left.



OVERALL IMPRESSIONS: This is a great build. Fit and finish is tight and looks good. The engine is nicely detailed and once finished creates a nice engine bay with good details. The interior is nicely detailed and the choice of Left or Right drive is a neat addition. The chassis is simple but no more so than the real car. The suspension is basic but looks good in the completed build. The body fit is great! Quite often, kits that have front and rear panels that assembled after painting and construction, have fit issues. These are tight and fit is excellent. There were no mold lines and no flash on this kit, molding is crisp and looks sharp. The decals were very complete. You get all the badges, side moldings under hood and interior details. Other than the side stripe all decals are for a Stock build. The instructions are clear and concise and if you follow them you have no issues in construction. The Rabbit was not a highly luxurious vehicle and was more on the economic side. This kit represents the real car quite well. With solid construction, easy to follow directions and a great fit and finish you can build a beautiful shelf model. With time and a little extra effort a Contest Quality build is not hard. I was very happy with this build and on a scale of 1 to 10 I give this a 9.5.

