

The photo at left gives you an idea of some of the shapes that can be made into sanding tools. A long straight sanding block helps trim a foam wing.

Photos by the Author

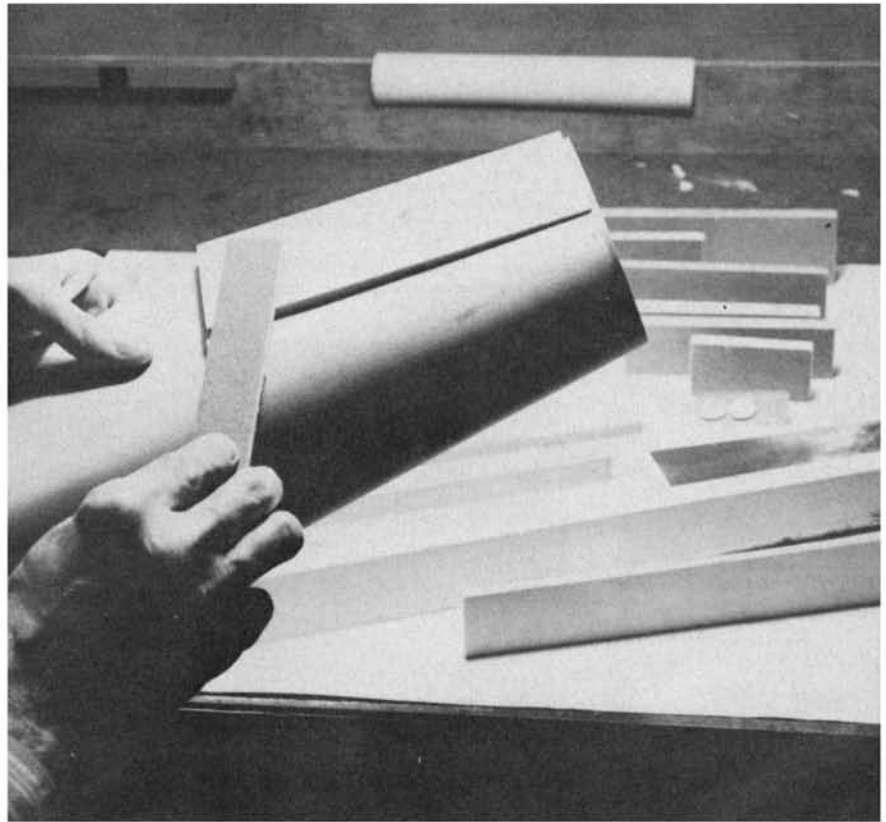
To Sand It Better!

by Phil D'Ostilio

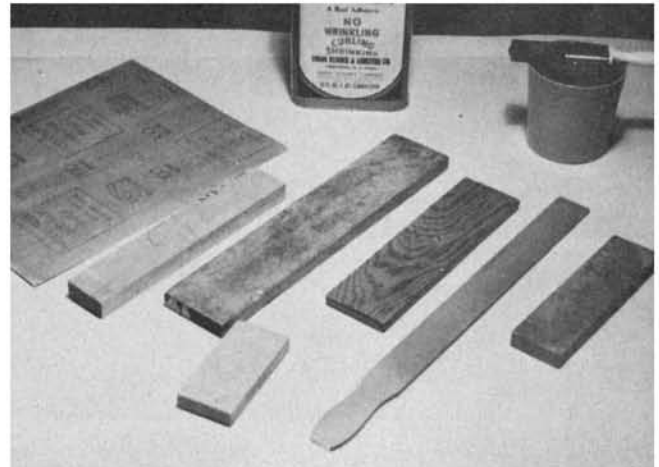
The wrong block and slipping sandpaper can gouge wood. It's a simple matter to create the perfect sanding tools.

As modeling enthusiasts we are all on the alert for ways to ease our construction efforts and to improve the final appearance of our products. Methods that will reduce time spent in construction, help in producing the correct contours, and minimize the preparatory effort for that finish task are especially welcomed.

To complete that super-competition job or achieve more than mediocre results with even a simple flying model requires the application of grit paper of proper surface roughness and elbow effort. Com-



There are any number of jobs that can make use of special shapes or just good solid flat sanding blocks like forming the cowl on this Zlin. Having a variety of sizes also makes efficient use of grit.



Basic materials for making sanding blocks include various grades of grit paper in sheets or strips, rubber base adhesive, brush, knives and cleaner.
FLYING MODELS



promising in this stage of the project results in a finished product that simply defeats the objective.

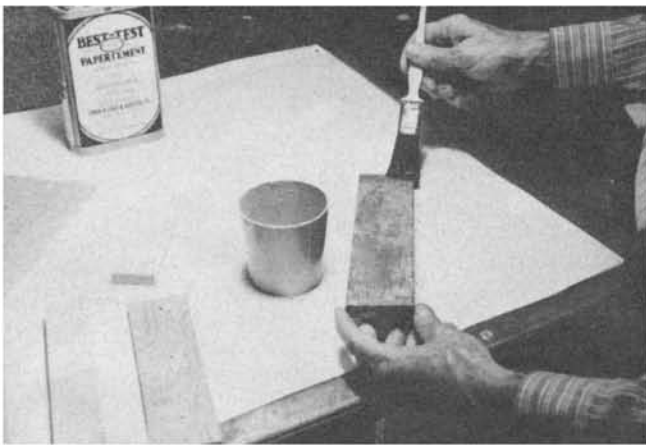
In this pictorial sequence a construction technique is described which will make the preparation of an assortment of various sanding aids that will make tasks of construction and final preparation for the finish a good deal easier. The method is extremely simple; few basic tools and various sized blocks are necessary which are probably already in your shop inventory. There are no limits to the imagination in the fabrication of these special, inexpensive tools.

After you have tried the technique, you will experience no difficulty in developing just the right sanding tool for that particular application.

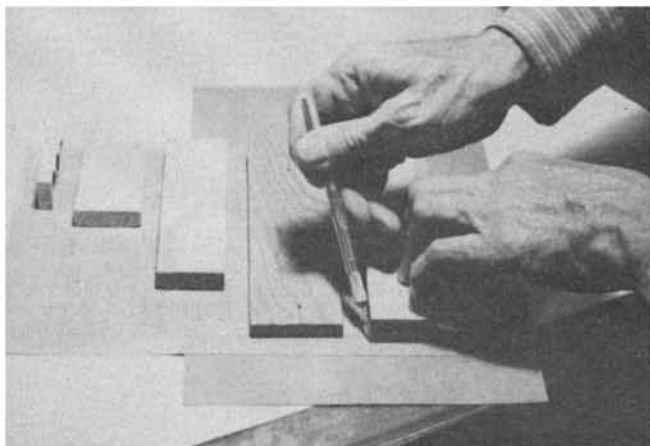
Start with perhaps simple flat-surfaced wooden blocks to acquire the experience. Later, you can use the technique with metal strips, curved surfaces and plastic surfaces. In time, you will accumulate an array of special, handy, easy to use, sanding aids that will inspire you to improve your construction and finish techniques.

Finally, when the grit surface has been worn to the condition that makes it ineffective, simply peel off the worn surface and as much of the paper backing as possible and re-use the block, metal strip or plastic surface. That's it!

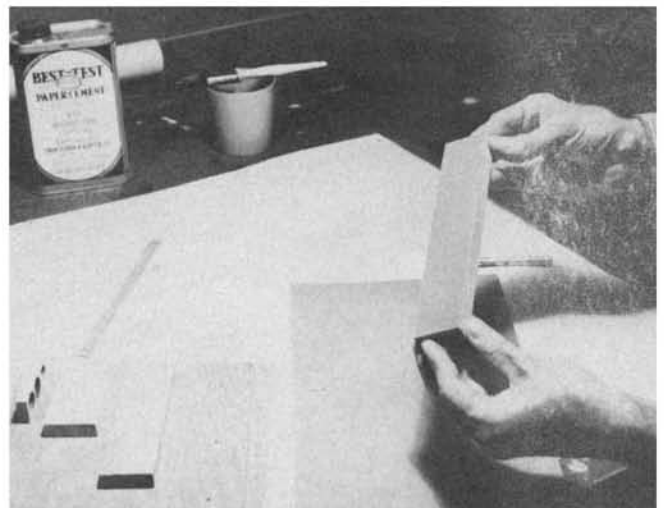
Start out by coating the back of the grit paper. We used Best Test Rubber Cement which is available at most art supply stores. Covering the work table with wax paper keeps the whole job neat.

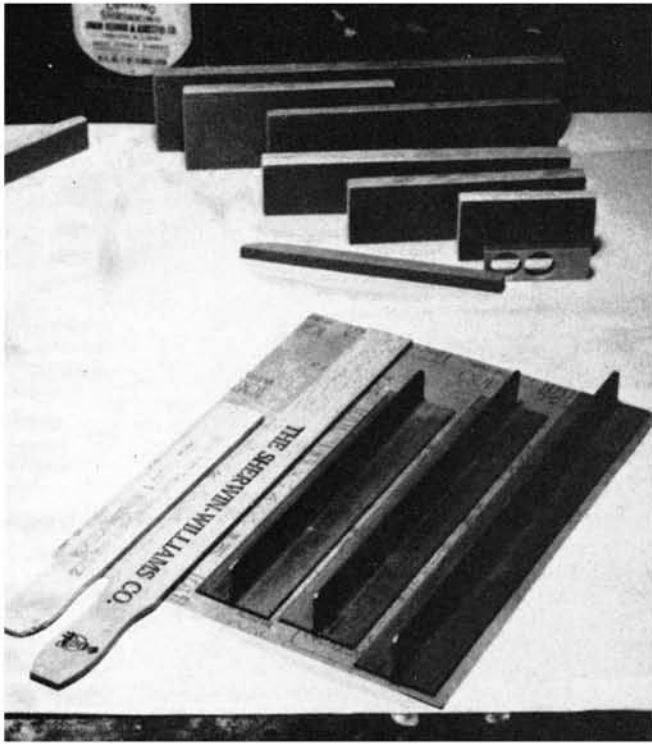


Apply the rubber base adhesive to the wood block (above) and to the back of the grit paper. Position and press the block in place (right).



Use many blocks on each sheet of grit. Cut out with a blade or knife as shown above, and you will have a neat and flat sanding block (right).

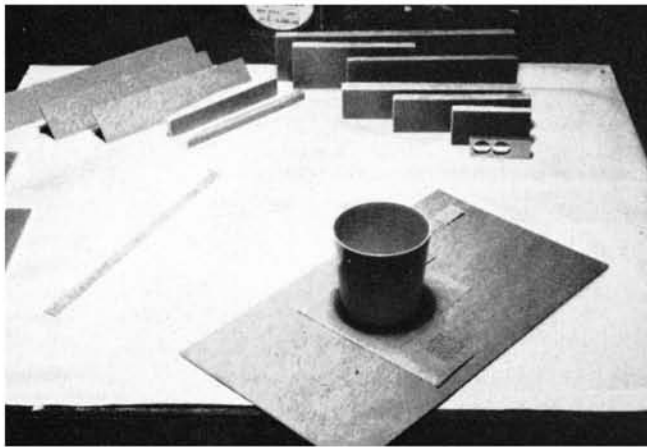




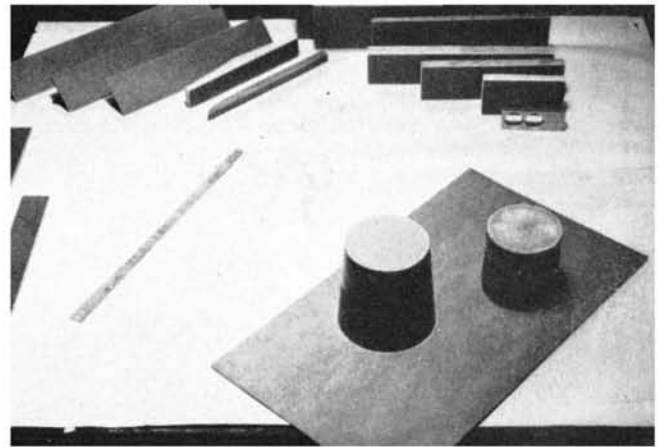
Metal shapes like "T" stock work very well, but be sure surface is free of oil. Paint stir paddles even give you a sanding block with a handle.



For fine trimming of the excess grit paper around one of your sanding blocks, use another sanding block. Trim across the grit as shown.



For preparing and finishing wheel wells in foam wings for retracts, use an appropriate sized plastic cup as the basis for a sanding block.



Put the grit paper on the bottom of the cup and then wrap a strip of grit around the sides. A tapered cup is ideal for this type of application.



Use the cup to sand clean wheel wells with both the sides and bottom smooth enough to finish with a coat of epoxy resin. No need for balsa.
FLYING MODELS



The job is now done and you have a variety of sanding blocks. Remember to clean the brush for next time. We used Bestine to clean out cement