Chapter 1. Using Sanding Shims

Here are some tips for sanding and contouring your Intarsia to look more realistic and save some time.

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I would make sanding shims for the wings, ears, body, legs, and the bone. Make sure the material for the shims is flat and has a smooth surface for taping.

Cut "Sanding Shims" close to the size of the parts you want to sand as a unit. Your projects will have a consistent contour which will make it look more realistic.
Apply the tape to the back of the parts (when possible). This makes it easier to see the individual parts to ensure there is enough tape to hold the parts down.

Tape the body section next. This is a fast way to get the basic shape of the dog’s body. Sand the neck area down and the sides of the body. Then take the parts off to add more definition to the fur.
Tape the ears next. When placing the shim on the back - keep the shim within the edge of parts. It's great to be able to re-assemble the sections while sanding.
How To Tape Multiple Raising Shims

When you have multiple raising shims it is important to place them correctly under the sections. Put tape on all the shims (including the sanding shim). Look at the parts that need to attach to help with tape placement. Reassemble the sections that are already taped to help with the placement of the raising shims.
It’s helpful to put the raising shim on top of the parts to determine which pieces get placed first/next. Above the 1st shim is on top of the parts, I put the rest of the parts on the sanding shim. *Do not press the parts down too much, just lightly, in case you need to adjust some parts.* I accidentally got clear double sided tape.

Peel the tape and put the first shim in place. Note the 2nd shim is placed on top of the remaining face pieces. Put all the exposed parts on top of the 1st shim.
Peel the tape and put the second shim in place. As you place the parts make sure there is enough tape to hold the parts in place.

Peel the tape and put the third shim in place. Put the parts in place. Then put the final shim and remaining sections in place. If needed adjust the parts to get as close a fit as possible. Then firmly press all the parts.
All of the parts are taped down. Note I cut some scrap wood to fill in for the pink dog toy. This will make it easier to sand the arm without having the sander get caught in the gap.

Stay Tuned for Chapter 2 - Sanding

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