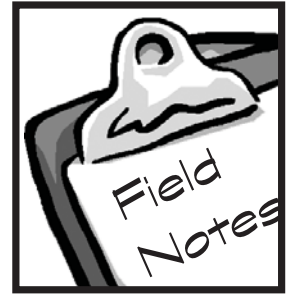


The "I Can't Believe it's not Magic" Balsa Fin Attachment Method



I sometimes have a bit of trouble convincing people that this works. Be sure to try this method on a piece of scrap balsa wood and a paper towel tube to get the "feel" of this simple but ingenious idea!

Step 1

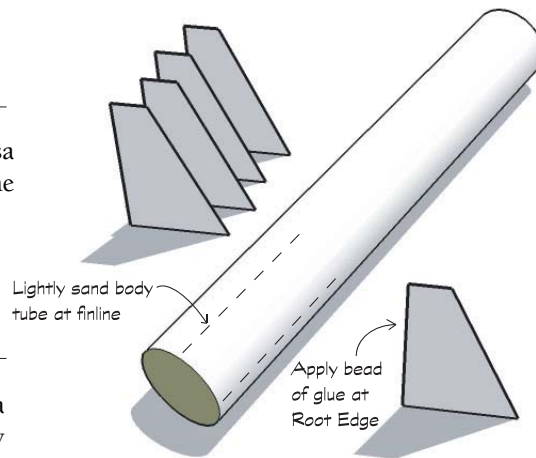
Identify the "root edges" of your balsa wood fins. This is the edge that will attach to the rocket body tube.

Step 2

Sand the root edge on all of the balsa wood fins square. You can do this by stacking all the fins together, laying a fine piece of sandpaper flat on a table and running the root edges of the balsa fins along the surface.

Step 3

Once you have sanded the root edges lightly sand the rocket body tube along each fin line. The goal is to sand away any waxy coating that might exist along each area where the balsa woods fins will attach.

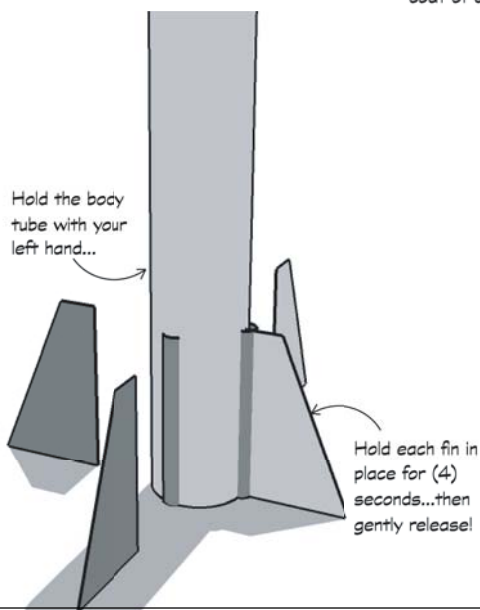
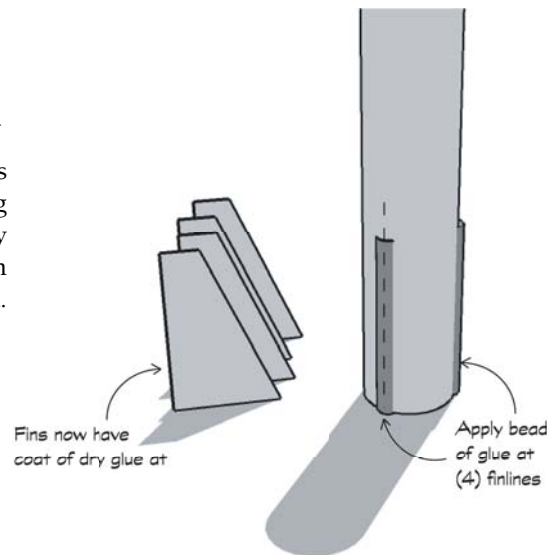


Step 4

When your sanding is finished apply a light coating of yellow glue to the root edge of each balsa wood fin. One-by-one put the fins in place on the body tube at the finlines (letting the glue make full contact). After a second or two detach each fin, place them aside and let both the fins and the body tube dry for approx. 15 mins.

Step 5

Now, apply a thin bead of glue to the root edge of the fin. *Let this glue begin to dry for approx. 1-2 mins.* Holding the rocket body tube steady in one hand, firmly place the glue-coated (wet) root edge of the first fin onto the now (dry) glued surface of the finline. Hold the fin steadily in place for approx. 4 seconds and then gently release your grip. Your fin should (magically) stick in place. Attach the other fins and set your model rocket upright so your new fins can dry!



A few comments...

A bit of explanation of just why this works always helps. It turns out that Step 4 is the really critical part - by placing each fin in place for a second or two and then detaching them to dry you are creating what carpenters commonly call a "double glue joint". By the time you reach Step 5 the bond you are creating is no longer between paper body tube and balsa but between the glue-sealed paper body tube and the glue coating the root edge itself!

When the fins have dried apply a thin bead of glue along each side of your fins at the body tube. Smooth this flat with your finger and allow to dry. The result should be fins that are attached 'rock solid"! Good luck!