

Divco Milk Truck

One of the most distinctive trucks of the 1950s was the Divco milk delivery truck, which the operator could drive while standing. American Heritage's 1:43 model is nicely detailed and available in a number of different corporate liveries, including Borden's (Figure 38). It is a good candidate for a fairly easy conversion. Among 'Streets chassis the sedan has wheels closest to the Divco's tire size, so the sedan chassis will be used this conversion.

Step 1: Close all six doors of the Divco and use masking tape to firmly attach them to the body, pressing the tape firmly against outer door surfaces and on the body around the doorways—otherwise the doors will fall loose upon removing the interior for the body as the truck is disassembled. Once this is done disassemble the diecast model (Figure 39).

Step 2: Test a WBB sedan to make sure it runs well. Remove its body from chassis and remove the interior from the chassis. Body, bumpers and both parts of the interior are not needed. Adjust wheelbase to the shortest possible.

Step 3: The chassis is trimmed 1/16th inch straight across the back and 3/16inch across the front, as shown in Figure 40. Again, a band-saw is recommended to make clean fast cuts.



Figure 38: American Heritage 1:43 diecast model of a Divco Borden's Milk Truck.

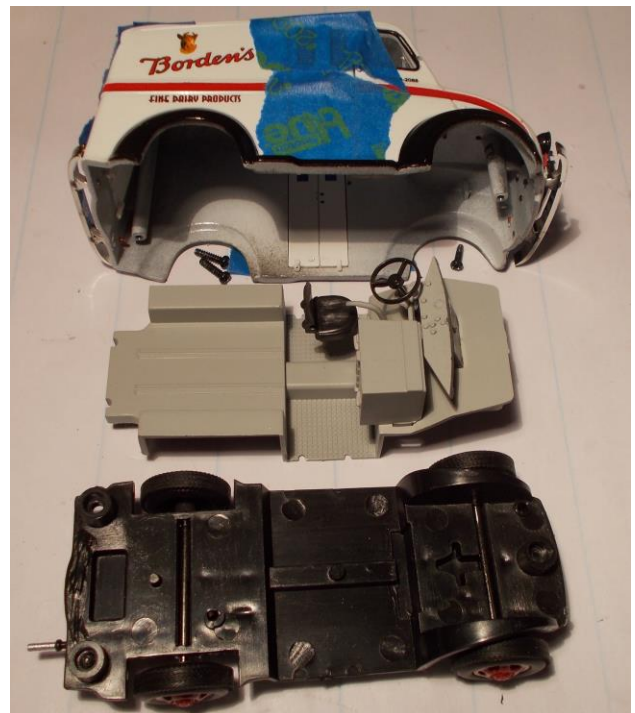


Figure 39: Divco truck disassembled, with doors taped beforehand so they don't come loose from their mounting when the interior is removed from the body.

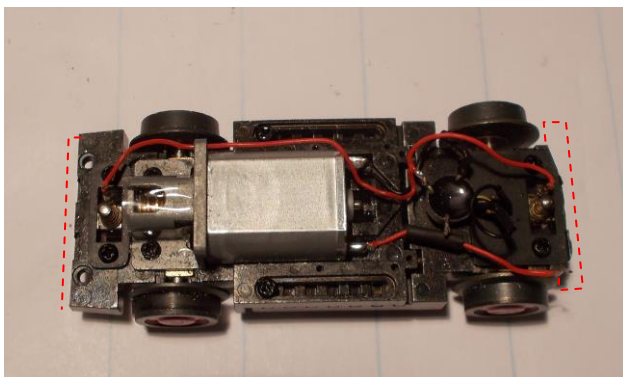


Figure 40: Chassis is trimmed at the ends. Red lines indicate original extent of chassis.



Figure 41: Four mounting-positioning towers were made from Repair Putty. Gorilla tape has been used to fasten doors somewhat better during modification (the 'Streets chassis will secure them firmly in place once inserted in body). Dashboard is just taped in place.

Step 4: As discussed earlier in this chapter, the repair putty to be used in Step 5 leaves an invisible film on fingers that will mar glossy surfaces. Cover the entire outside of the diecast model with blue painter's tape to prevent damage to paint and logos.

Step 5: Mounting-positioning posts for the 'Streets chassis are made using Loctite Repair Putty as shown in Figure 41. The two in the corners at the rear must clear the rear center pickup assembly at the center and the rear wheels in front of them, but are otherwise easy to make. These are made to a height about 1/8 inch above the original tower height

The two narrow positioning posts at the front must bracket the front pickup assembly without interfering with it, and are made to merely position the chassis at the right height: the front will be fastened using a method covered later. They are made to same height as at the rear.

Step 6: Wait ten minutes. Scrub hands well with warm water and plenty of soap to remove epoxy film from hands and fingers.



Figure 42: New dashboard is made of cardboard marked with ballpoint pen. Divco model's steering wheel is attached.

Step 7: The masking tape is removed from the body.

Step 8: Trial fit the body. Trim posts, etc., to alleviate any clearance issues (there were none with the posts shown in Figure 41 and chassis shown in Figure 40). With the chassis in place drill through the mounting holes at the rear to position the mounting holes correctly. Drill them about ¼ inch deep.

Step 9: Paint the wheels red, to match the original wheels on the Divco model.

Step 10: Mount body on chassis, screwing it down at the rear with the original WBB screws. At the front use repair putty to fashion two hold-down tabs (Figure 43).

The conversion is complete.

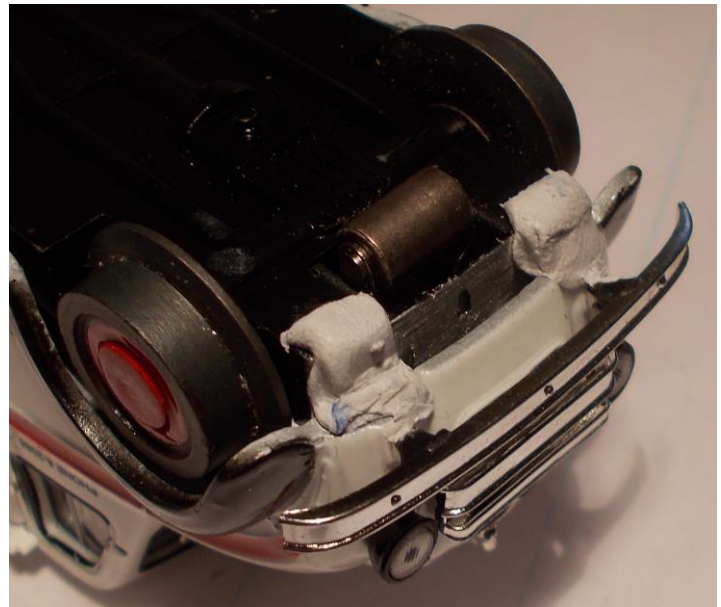


Figure 43: Once the chassis is mounted and the screws in the rear are screwed down, repair putty is used at the front to make these two small hook-tabs that will hold the front in place.



Figure 44: Divco truck looks good, and natural, cruising Main Street on this 1950s layout. The author added a driver figure, barely visible in this photo.