

## The Dual Action, Internal Mix Airbrush

The dual action (D/A), internal mix airbrush is the type most used by professionals. It differs greatly in its trigger mechanism and style from the single action (S/A) airbrush. In the S/A brush, you simply depress the trigger for a pre-set amount of paint; whereas with the D/A brush, you depress the trigger for air and then draw it back for paint. This enables you to change the width of line and the amount of paint sprayed without having to stop and readjust the airbrush.

The width of spray is determined by the distance between the airbrush and the work surface in conjunction with the amount of paint being sprayed. A small amount of paint sprayed very close to the surface results in a fine line. Hold the airbrush further from the surface and draw back further on the trigger to achieve a broader line or spray.

The D/A trigger is spring loaded so that when released, it automatically returns to a shut-off position. Most D/A airbrushes are equipped with a trigger pre-set. This, in essence, turns the D/A airbrush into an S/A brush. The ability to pre-set the spray allows you to conveniently spray a consistent line without concern. Depending on the manufacturer, there may be interchangeable head assemblies and needles that fit a specific airbrush.

D/A internal mix airbrushes are available in three different configurations: gravity feed, side feed and bottom feed. Preference for one style over another depends upon the application.

The gravity feed style has a color cup permanently attached to the top of the airbrush. This cup varies in size from one manufacturer to another. The side feed style has a color cup that plugs into either the right or left side, depending on which hand the painter uses. Color cups are available in various sizes and can be swiveled to let you work at any angle with no spillage of paint. The bottom feed style is adaptable to jars or color cups, both available in different sizes, thus allowing you to work with either small or large amounts of paint. Sometimes the position of the jar may prevent you from getting close to the work surface; and because of the angle at which the jar or color cup is situated, it may be difficult to spray straight down without paint dripping onto artwork.

Cleaning of the D/A internal mix brush is the same as with all other airbrushes. The handle must be taken off to remove the needle to wipe clean, and you should flush the airbrush with cleaner from where the paint enters the color reservoir to where it is sprayed out (paint tip). Never immerse the airbrush in solvent, as it will gum up the internal workings.

Internal mix airbrushes cost more than external mix and D/A airbrushes cost more than S/A. However, the D/A internal mix airbrush is the most sophisticated and versatile. And once you learn to use it, you will be comfortable with any style of airbrush.