

Converting Orcs into Savage Orcs and Black Orcs

This article gives the methods and suggestions on how to make Savage Orcs and Black Orcs from the plastic Orc Warrior box set for Warhammer. It takes a little more effort, but the flexibility and the cost are much more favourable than buying the metal models.

With two plastic Orc Warrior boxes you can make:

- Either
1. Savage Orcs and Common Orcs (or Common Orc Big 'Uns),
 2. Savage Orcs and Black Orcs, or
 3. Common Orcs and Black Orcs

Savage Orcs

The three bodies from the boss sprue are the key to making your models as savage as possible, which is basically showing a lot of flesh. One of them is already done so you can leave that one. The other two feature a shirt covered with crude armour. With a little filing you can make it appear that they are shirtless and wearing leather armour. This gives the model a lot more flesh and more room for warpaint. File down the section where the shirt meets the neck. This is the most important bit since it is on view, and it is also the most difficult. It needs to be filed so that there is no join and the flesh extends over the shoulders to the upper back. The only other bits to file are at the bottom of the shirt and where the shirt wrinkles. You may wish to remove many or all of the spikes on the remaining armour, to make my models look different I have removed some on a few but left them on others.



Only use the semi-naked and shirt bodies for Savage Orcs because they don't wear any metal armour at all. Randomly filing bits out of the shirts makes them appear more ragged and badly made. You can even cover the shirts with greenstuff and sculpt fur clothing, although this is difficult for beginners and doesn't always look very good.

You can use any head as long as it doesn't have a helmet. If you dislike the hair then chop it off and just use the head.



The armoured legs not only have metal but are also fully covered so only use the unarmoured legs. This limits you to just the shorts and skirts, both of which show more flesh. There isn't much you can do to make these more savage though.

Weapon-wise you have the full range of options, unlike the metal models. Make the weapons cruder by filing them down to look like hewn rocks rather than metal. An easier way is to just make the weapons look badly made or old and damaged, as if the Savage Orcs stole them rather than made them themselves.

The standard can just be a spear with the end chopped off and the skull banner top glued on instead of using the normal standard bearers arms with the armour on.

Painting makes all the difference. A bit of simple warpaint will make it obvious that these are Savage Orcs. Try to paint everything to look well worn and tattered if you can, although with all the conversions it isn't strictly necessary.



A converted unit of Savage Orcs with normal metal command group



A converted Black Orc unit armed with two hand weapons.

Black Orcs

The bodies should be mainly armoured, although they won't all be. Paint the shirts as if they are entirely metal, although the one with stitching down the back is not very good for this. They end up looking like full plate. Use all spikes and shoulder pads that you can.



Use all the armoured legs and all the legs from the boss sprue (other than the mounted ones obviously). You can paint the shoes as if they are metal and it still looks okay, plus adds to the heavy armour feel.

Use only helmeted heads, including the boss sprue ones. The iron gnashers should probably be saved for the boss but don't have to be.



There is no easy option for great weapons unfortunately. A spear shaft with a sword blade stuck on the end looks okay for the most part. You could also file down the spears flat into a long sword shape. Looks very Japanese but the spears aren't all long enough to all work, and it is made a little more difficult by the fact that you have to file down the actual spear point as well as the shaft. If you can get hold of the Dwarf or Chaos great axes then use these.

Paint their skin much darker than normal Orcs. Dark Angels Green is traditional, although many prefer to use a slightly lighter version. Paint as much as you can as if it is metal.

Common Orcs

Just use what is left after making the Black Orcs or Savage Orcs. Big 'Uns should have lots of shoulder pads and spikes, much like the Black Orc conversions. The occasional model with plate armour has a good effect.

Conclusion

That's it! Make you army unique, add as many conversions as you can to make each model a talking point. Hope you enjoy this and other articles I have written.

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