

1/8 SCALE FIGURE

This is one method I've used to produce a scale figure; this method is definitely better for larger scales such as 1/8. The patterns are for a 6' male figure. A 5'4" female could be done by copying the patterns at 89%. I recommend balsa wood be used for ease of carving later; but technically, any wood could be used.

If you do use balsa, a single 2x3x6" block will do the whole thing with a little leftover if you follow the block-cutting diagram and schedule. Every piece can be labeled on the block (somewhere). **DO THIS.** Sand each small block (only lightly) on the cut sides by holding the sandpaper down on the worksurface and pushing the block across it. Apply rubber cement to the back of the pattern sheet and two sides of each block and let dry. After cutting each pattern, fold it (backward) face-to-face. Place the fold along one corner, press, and unfold the pattern onto the adjoining side.

After cutting one side, use clear tape, e.g. Scotch Magic Tape, to hold everything back together. While cutting the second side, apply tape if necessary (in case you cut through the tape on side 1). Label the part immediately after removing it from the block.

The figure is ideally put together in its final location, beginning with torso and one upper leg. Hold them securely or pin them in place and apply some CA. The foot and lower leg of the same side can be pinned (to pivot) together and these four pieces put back in, positioned and tacked with CA. Now take out what you have and securely fix all joints (hip, knee, ankle) with thin CA. Now try some shaping on what you have, from about mid-torso to the foot. Mostly this just means rounding things off but don't be afraid to use yourself as a model. Next, glue the other upper and lower leg together at the knee, but shape it as much as possible before gluing it (in location) at the hip at which time you can also put on the other foot.

Before beginning with the arms, you should have the hands, so make them now. I recommend using polymer clay and these steps: Trace either style (fingers or mitten) twice on either tracing or other very thin paper. Roll out the polymer clay – a piece about the size of a marble – so it is thick (1/4") at one end and thin (3/32) at the other end and about an inch long. The thick end will be the wrist. Place the tracing on the clay and, using a FINE needle, perforate the lines into the clay where you will now have a dotted outline of the hand. Use the same needle to cut out the hand. Separate the fingers last, from the tips inward.

Now you can pin one arm together at the elbow, CA the hand to the wrist, and, with the figure in position, pin the arm to it at the shoulder. Pose the arm

and hand correctly and fix the elbow with CA. Do this with both arms, take them off and bake them 15-20 minutes at 275°. Shape the arms (except shoulders) before putting them on the torso (in location) permanently.

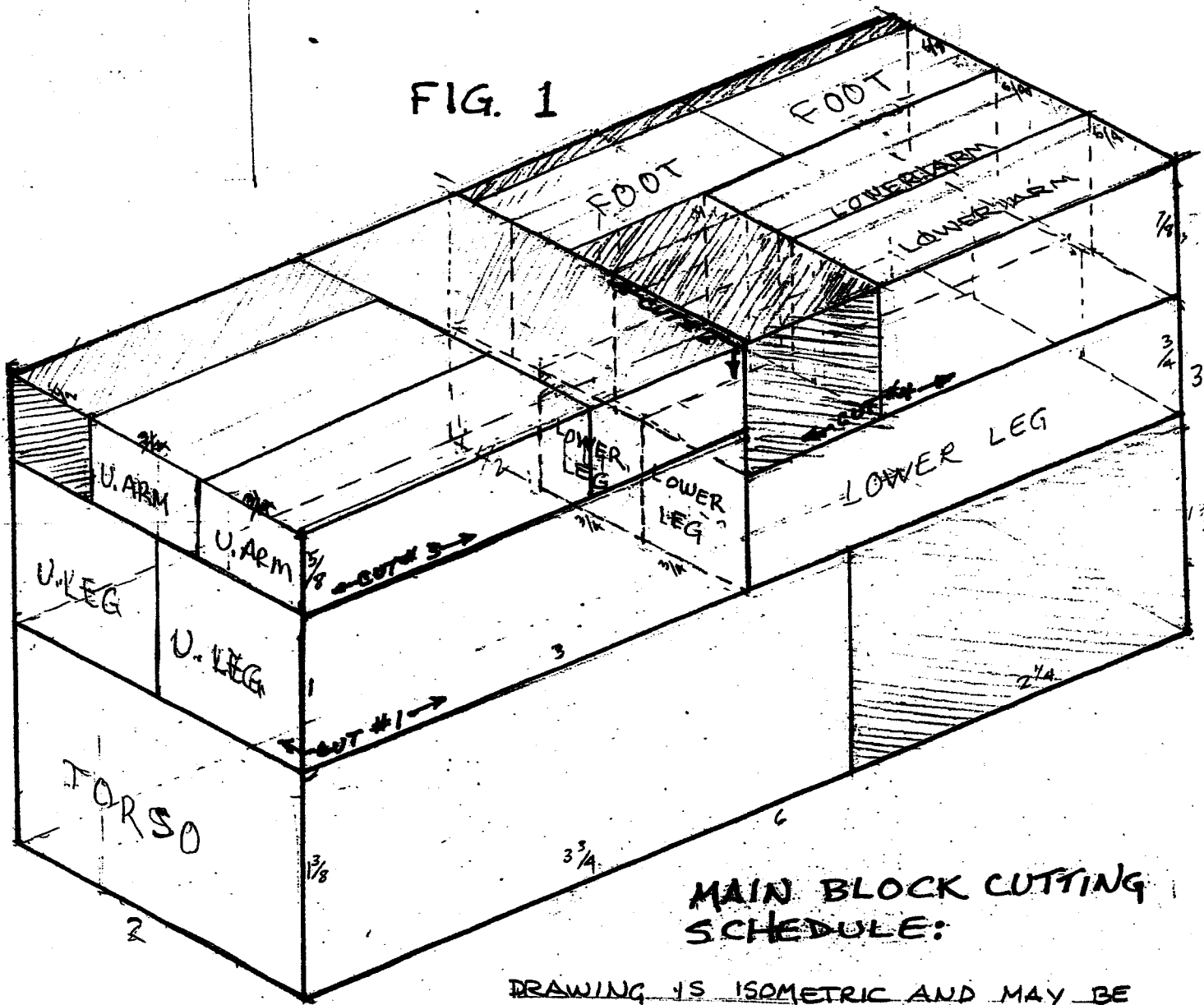
Now you will need a head. For this figure, about 1 1/8" high is o.k. I have a 1/8 scale pilot's head (with shoulders) which I purchased. I could just cut the torso off at about 11/16 down from the top and mount the whole thing. What I do though, is make an impression of the face in clay – the modeling type – and pour resin into it. When hard, lacquer thinner and a stiff brush clean off whatever clay comes out with the face. I sand the back nice and flat and CA the face to a block of wood – something harder than balsa is appropriate here – a little larger than the face. I then carve the block down with a coarse 1/2" sanding drum in my Dremel so the shape flows with the resin face. Remember, the human head is basically egg-shaped, the smallest end of the egg being the chin. Save the ears – if you're doing them – till very last. When you glue the head on, make sure the neck looks the right length and have the head turned slightly – it looks more life-like that way. You should now have a complete figure which is at least roughly shaped.

At this point, you will need to fill in spaces at the joints and perhaps do a little sculpting of your own. Remember, this is not rocket science. People come all sizes and shapes. Don't be afraid to be a little creative. I find two materials helpful here: spackle and polymer clay. With polymer clay, I can fill joints and add weight, or hair, or shoes, or clothing. I can shape it with fingers or tools and smooth it with a wet finger now or carve and sand it after baking.

Once I've got the figure looking pretty much like I want it, I use a wet brush scrubbed around in spackle to put on an easily sanded coating for the rough spots.

Clothing: Through the years, I can't remember ever having the luxury of using a figure as I got it – it always involves changing the type or amount of clothing. For the smaller (1/12, 1/16) figures, it almost always meant carving stuff away, but sometimes, I've used fabric, cloth tape, craft foam, metal and electrical tape. You also, of course, have the polymer clay at your disposal. Rolled really thin, it gives a great fabric look. But be inventive with whatever you use. I have gone so far as to actually make a shirt (using a glue called **unique stitch**) by taking a shirt of my own and observing the actual shapes of the pieces with which it was made. But that's a tad obsessive – much can be done with much simpler means.

FIG. 1

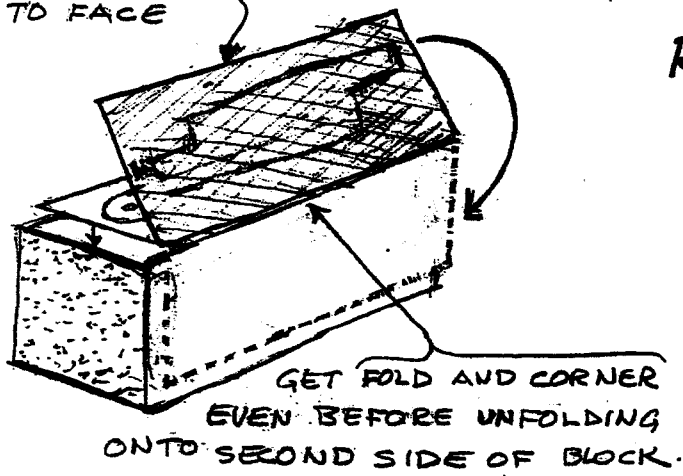


MAIN BLOCK CUTTING SCHEDULE:

DRAWING IS ISOMETRIC AND MAY BE MEASURED ANYWHERE. SOME BLOCKS MAY BE LARGER THAN SPECIFIED ON THE PATTERN SHEET.

MOUNTING PATTERNS:

FOLDED BACKWARD, FACE TO FACE



RESIN HEAD: USE SOMETHING (FACE)



HARDER THAN Balsa; PINE, CEDAR, BASSWOOD ETC.

BLOCK SIZES:

TORSO: (1) $2'' \times 1\frac{3}{8}'' \times 3\frac{3}{4}''$ L.

UPPER LEG: (2) $1'' \times 1'' \times 3''$ L.

LOWER LEG: (2) $\frac{3}{4}'' \times \frac{3}{4}'' \times 3''$ L.

UPPER & LOWER ARMS (4)
 $\frac{1}{2}'' \times \frac{3}{4}'' \times 2''$ L.

FEET: (2) $\frac{3}{4}'' \times \frac{5}{8}'' \times 1\frac{1}{2}''$ L.

