Blackbox Airbus Paint Kits Tutorial

Firstly you must prepare your paint package. Please ensure it can use Photoshop style "layers"

Stage 1:

Let's assume you are creating an A320 Livery with CFM Engines, so Firstly you need to open the file

320-Templated.psd (ALL PAINTING IS DONE IN THIS FILE)

You should now see the following groups of layers

1) GUIDES
2) OVERLAID DETAILS
3) DIRT
4) LINES
5) SHADING
6) LIVERY
7) BUMP
8) REGISTRATIONS
9) LAYER 1

You can see from these that each group contains at least one transparent layer with the corresponding details for that group. You may leave these layers visible when painting if you prefer but I personally would Turn OFF All layers apart from GUIDES and LAYER 1.

Now you will see a Plain off white layer for the background (LAYER 1) this is set to appear white in FSX so you do not paint on this layer, it is simply the background of your livery.

IF the livery is a solid colour that is Not white (such as German wings etc.) Then Create another base layer in this location and flood fill it for the correct shade.

If you expand the "GUIDES" GROUP you will see further sub-groups called

1) A320
2) IAE
3) CFM
4) GENERIC

You can ignore the generic layer unless you have alignment issues, we will come to this later
So, As we have decided this is an A320 CFM Livery we need to make VISIBLE The A320 and CFM Groups while making the IAE and GENERIC Groups Invisible.

This will give you the correct guideline wireframe for your chosen paint. Once correctly selected you can collapse the group again..

TEXT AND LOGO DETAIL

Now create a new layer again and add your Text (Airline name) To one side of the fuselage

When you are happy with the size and alignment, Cop y the layer and paste to the opposite side

Do the same with any Logo, N-Number, National Flags etc. to complete your livery.

NOTE – Feel free to make any other layer visible during the process to assist in aligning stripes and text etc. but be careful NOT TO PAINT to these layers.. Paint ONLY in your "my livery" Group.

Once you are Happy that the livery is complete, select ALL layers within your "my livery" Group and Merge them together into a single layer ..

This layer should now contain All paint (Apart from base colour!) Logo's, Text, Engines and Winglets. In fact EVERYTHING you have just painted yourself including the alignment marks.

You have now Finished the Livery Template so Save it and don't forget to make a backup Just In Case something goes wrong later!

You do need to keep the file open so do not close the Template just yet.

APPLYING THE PAINT TO FSX TEXTURE SHEET

Now you need to apply this new livery to the FSX Texture sheet so open up the file A320-CFM-HD

Here you will see a similar set of layers to the template, But now they are aligned for use in FSX as the texture sheet.

We have to copy and paste the correct sections from the TEMPLATE SHEET, to The A320-CFM-HD sheet as follows.

1) Make invisible all layers apart from REGISTRATION LINES and BASE WHITE & GUIDES
2) Open the Group "LIVERY PAINT" and create a new group called "MY LIVERY" Or whatever you chose to call it .
3) Check you have the correct (CFM) Engine guides selected from the Guides group

Now we are ready to transfer the new "Templated" livery onto our texture sheet so switch back to the Template.psd and ensure that your NEW LIVERY Layer is the one selected.

COPYING THE TEMPLATE TO YOUR TEXTURE SHEET

Ok , Now we must select the various areas of your livery and transfer them to the texture sheet ..

So Starting on our Template (but with both files still open)

1) Using the lasso tool, firstly select the area around the Left Rear fuselage section on the template, making sure you also select the alignment crosses.
2) Copy this selection and paste as a NEW LAYER in the file A320-CFM-HD.psd
3) If the layer is not in the new livery group, firstly move it there
4) Align your cross marks with those on the base layer of the Texture sheet
5) Repeat this for the Left FWD Fuselage , and all other sections of the fuselage
6) Now do the same with the engine texture areas, transferring these and aligning them with the correct area on the texture sheet.
7) Finally transfer the wing box and winglets from template to texture.

This completes the "Diffuse" part of the livery, you must now make any required edits to the Alpha channel of the texture A320-CFM-HD.psd, I won't go to deeply into this as most painters know what to do here but I MUST Mention the BLACK semi-circle area just in front of the RIGHT FIN (on the BlackBox sample livery This area has the letter "BBS" drawn here.

THIS AREA MUST REMAIN BLACK AT ALL TIMES UNLESS YOUR LIVERY HAS TEXT CENTRALLY ABOVE THE WINDSCREEN (see BlackBox livery in FSX)

If you DO need text here, draw it onto the livery in this position and then make the Alpha channel for the TEXT AREA ONLY Pure White, the remaining unpainted area remains BLACK.

This is to allow this MDL part to be totally transparent in FSX but still have any design placed on it remain visible. Note WHITE AREAS ON ALPHA will remain visible in FSX, BLACK AREAS will remain INVISIBLE.

The only other areas of concern on the texture sheet are the Nose gear doors.. you can see these from example and guides, and finally the shaded areas to the bottom left of the sheet

The left most one is to shade areas of the Wing box that appear in "livery colour" Rather than white

The two Lower central ones are for the Engine Strakes (small wings) these should be the same colour as your engines.

That's about it…. Save the file A320-CFM-HD, convert to DDS and send to your texture folder, once you have made the required CFG Entries this new livery should appear ..