

Assembling Friulmodel Cast Metal Tracks

by Al Glew

Note of Caution: This product contains lead. Not for children under 10.

ATL-18 for Italian Medium Tanks and SP Guns of World War II

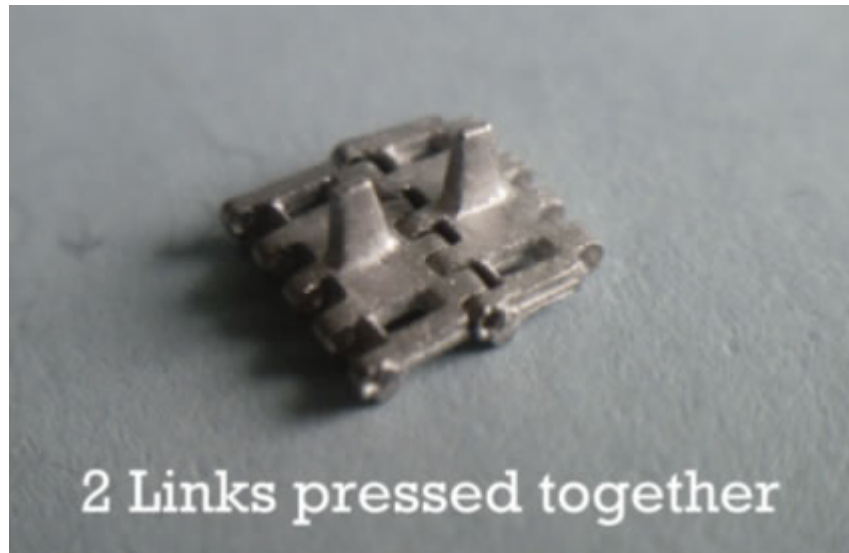


The tracks come in left and right sets in separate plastic bags. Don't mix them up. I suggest working on one side at a time. You will have nothing but headaches if you end up mixing the right and left-handed tracks.

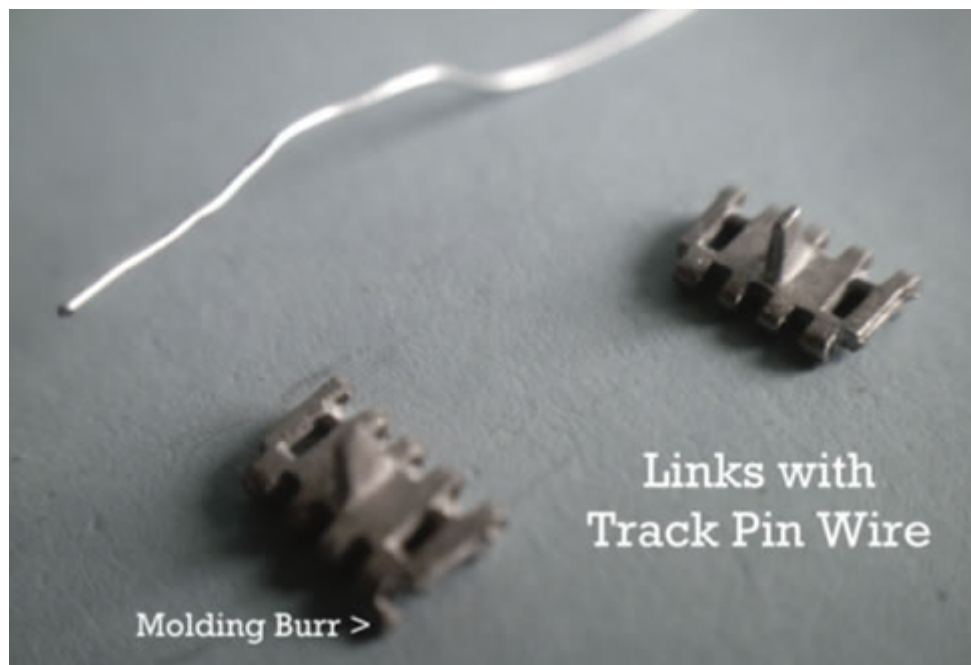


Individual Track Links

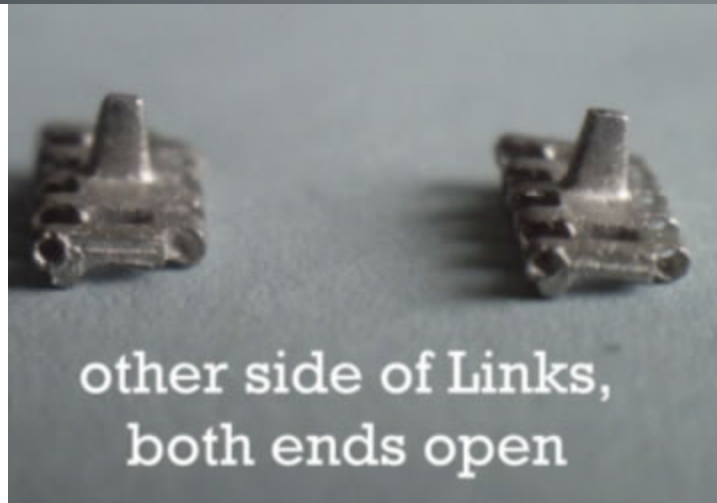
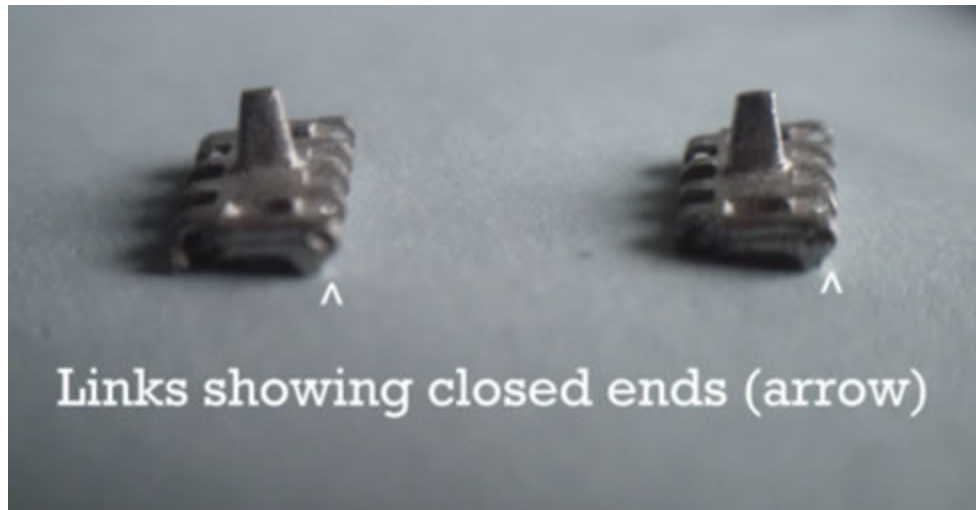
Note the burr at the upper right. Most of the links will have this, this is where the hot metal flows into the mold. You will have to trim this off on every single link or they will not fit together close enough to slip in the wire link pin. Remove the burrs from about 20 links to start with.



Fit 2 of them together and slide the wire thru all the holes until it butts up against the closed socket at the far end.



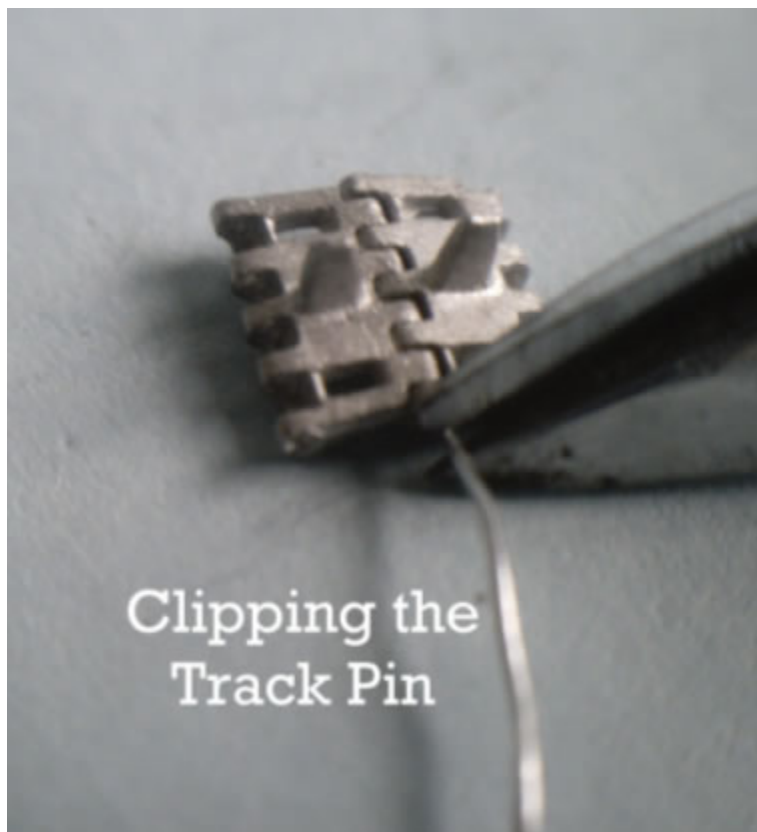
As you can see in the pictures, the wire is somewhat soft and flexible. In my infinite wisdom, I decided a stiff wire would work better. After all, are not the track pins on real tacks stiff? Well, I was wrong. The stiff wire was harder to handle and much more difficult to clip. However, the stiff wire later proved excellent as a superglue applicator.



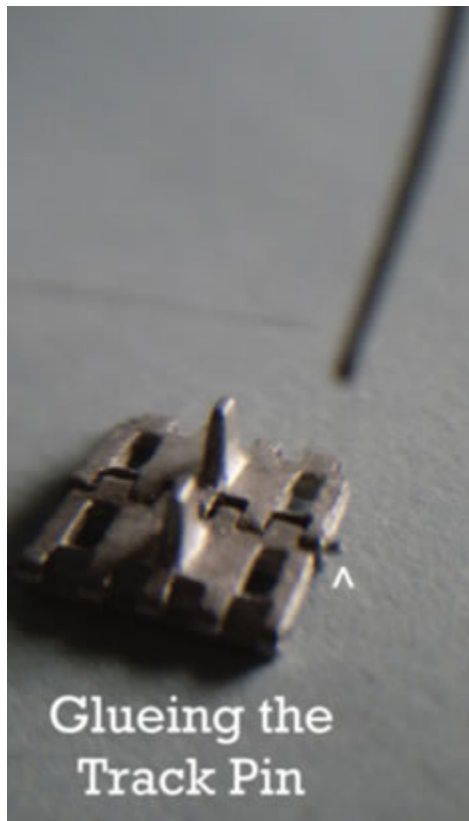
I did not cut the wire into short lengths as recommended in the instructions. I felt this was wasteful and also the coil made a nice handle. Do not worry too much about how straight the wire is. It will straighten out when you shove it thru all the holes in the links, and a little bend will actually help hold the links and link pins together until you get some superglue on them.



Trim the wire as close as you can to the edge of the track link. I used a small pair of scissors.



Using your favorite applicator, put the tiniest drop of superglue you can manage onto the end of the wire and the outside edge of the track link around the hole.



Keep going until you have about a dozen links together. Now take a breather and look at your handiwork. Pick it up and wiggle it around. Compare its flexibility to the vinyl tracks that came with your kit or a set of individual link styrene or resin tracks. This should give you the incentive to keep going.

Questions or comments to blackhawk1939@yahoo.com
Mention Friulmodel Cast Metal Tracks in the subject line