

eXtruded PolyStyren foam
(XPS foam)
for prop making

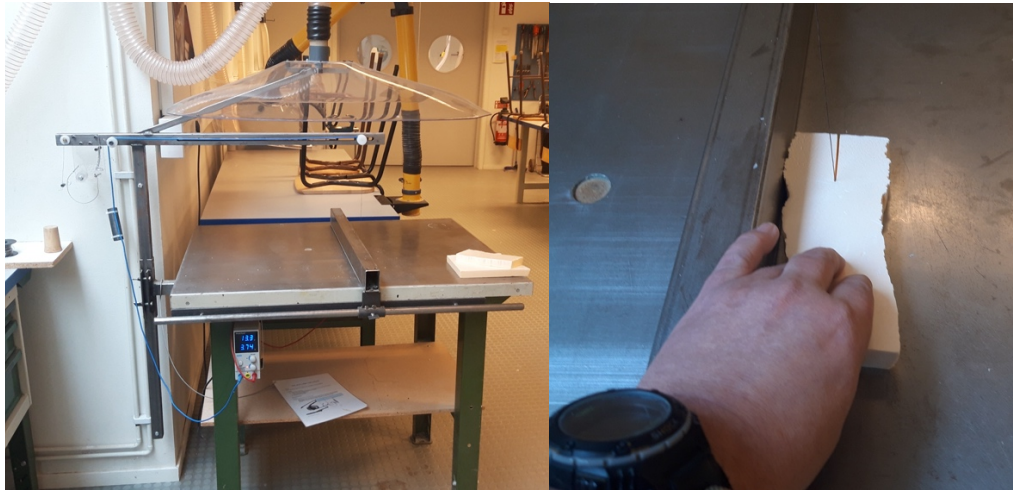


XPS foam is an (often orange or purple) type of Styrofoam that is more homogenous than the white type that we recognize from packaging, but equally light and simple to shape. It should not be confused with the harder foam materials that are being used in milling machines. XPS foam is available from the materials sold by the workshop.

The material has become popular over the last few years as a base for diorama work and scenery for table top gaming. It can also be used for creating quick model studies or props for videos or user scenarios.



Further inside the wood shop are two rooms called assembly rooms. In the room furthest in you can find a hotwire table. It is a table with a power source feeding electricity through a taut metal wire to make it hot enough to slice through XPS foam. Remember to connect a ventilation hose to the funnel at the top to receive fumes while cutting. And of course, turn off the power source when done.



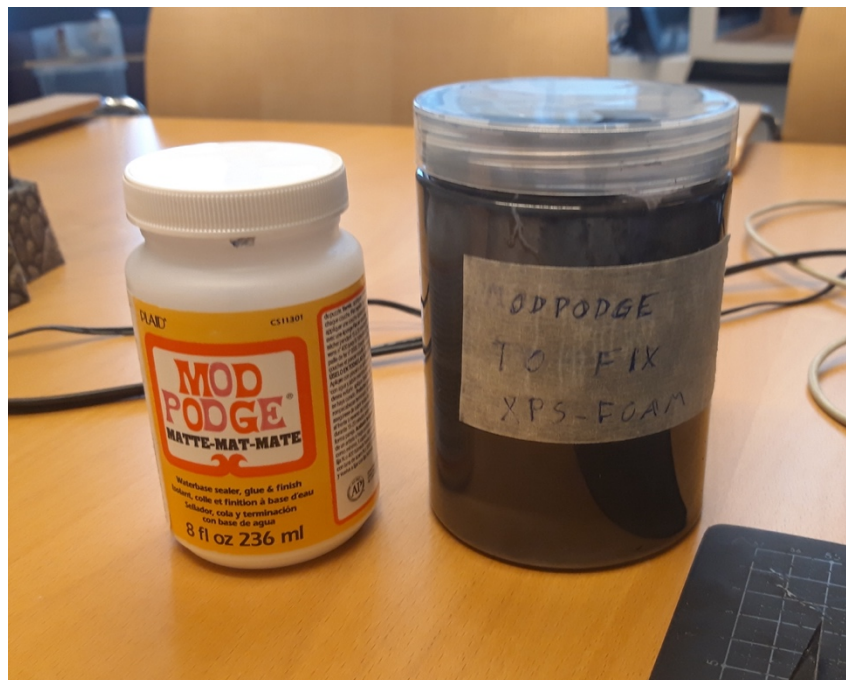
Using the guide ruler on the table you can make fairly straight cuts, but for shaping the pieces it is also useful to use the hand tools you find in the same room.



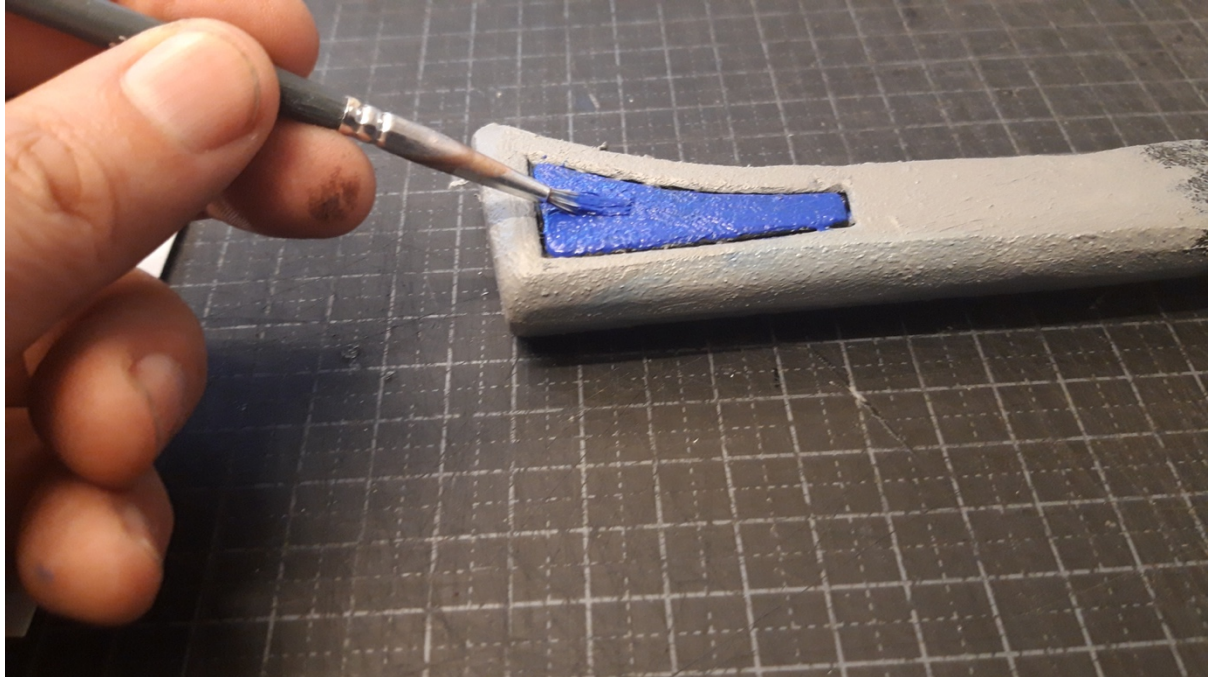
For finer details you can use knives and other poking tools. Even a pencil can do! You can easily create a prop in parts and glue them together with wood glue. Avoid CA glue since it will just melt the XPS foam and generate nasty fumes.



If the prop you're making is going to be handled roughly or you're making delicate details, you might need to strengthen the material somewhat. The hobby standard is to add a coat of Mod podge, a mix of glue and varnish mostly used for decoupage. Since this is generally done before painting the creation, the hobby people have killed two birds with one stone by generally mixing Mod podge with black paint, making it both a base coat of paint and supporting the foam. Both are available in the interaction lab.



At the end it's just a question of if you want any colors. Acrylic paints work fine, if you protected your work with Mod podge you can even use spray paints. Unprotected XPS foam will potentially melt from spray paint due to alcohol in the paint.



XPS foam, a quick and easy material for rough shapes. An option for making shapes. More detailed instructions can be found on the youtube-list: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLSrIGfVibMhJlq1rzP9YeHTDgaVLeDJbF>