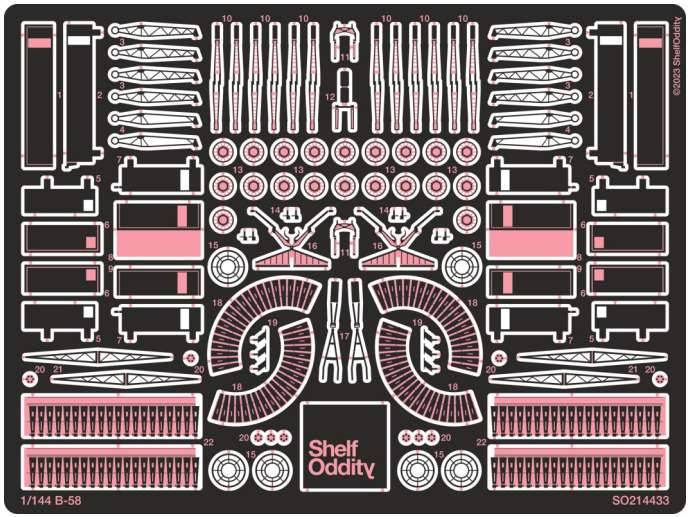
SO214433
1/144 B-58 for Academy kit

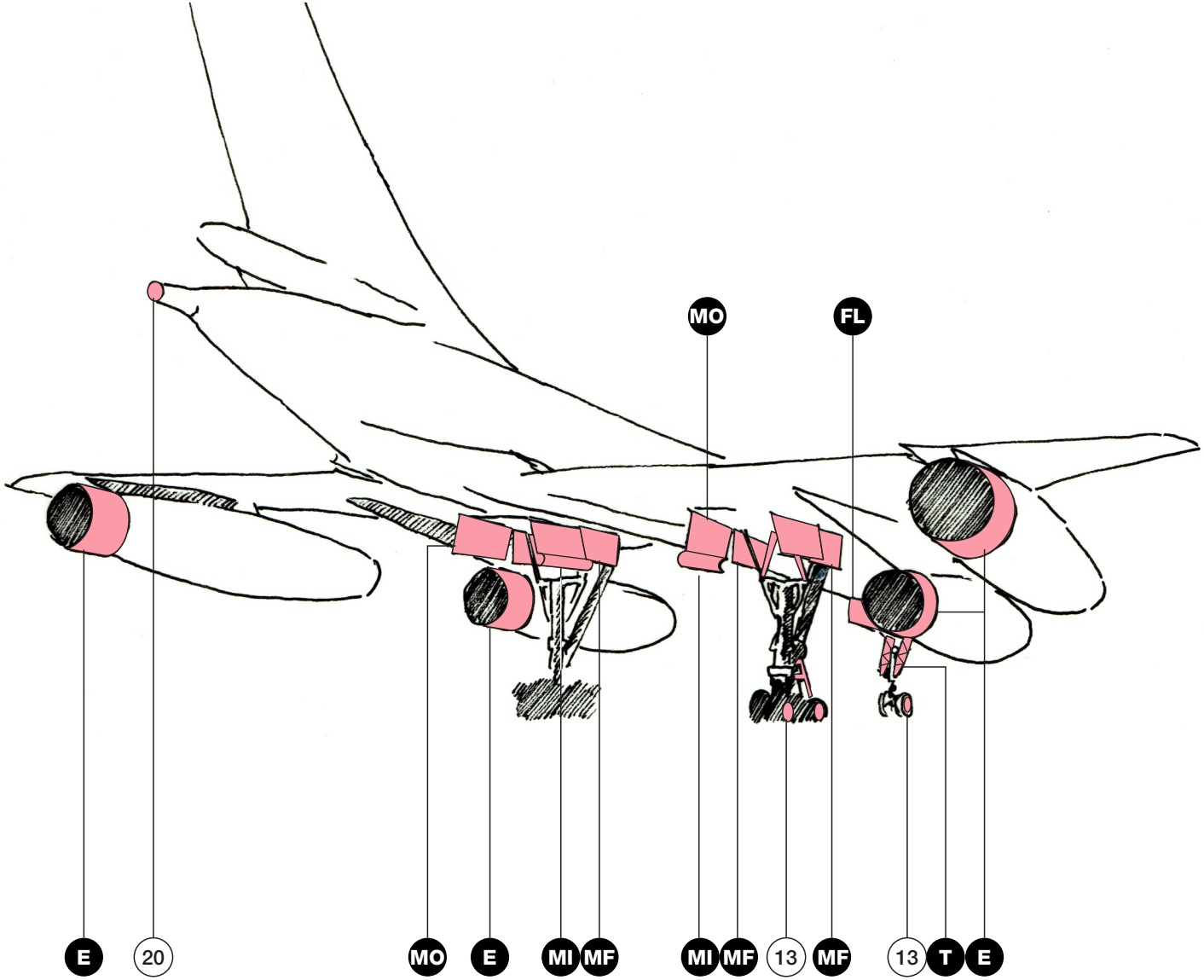
Shelf Oddity



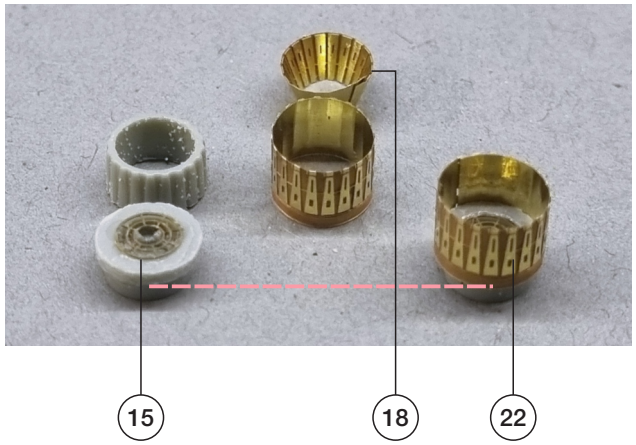
This photoetched set is dedicated to upgrade the B-58 kit brought by Academy. As usual we focus on the parts that are actually going to be visible and would make difference on finished model. In case of this Mach 2 bomber this was quite a stretch, as engineers at Convair did their level best to make the airframe as clean and clutter-free as possible.

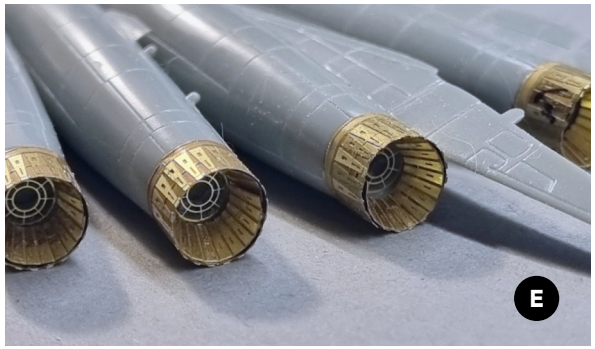
Fortunately they compensated for that while designing the undercarriage. Getting adequate clearance for the podded J79s required some complex arrangements and this is the party piece of this set. The other area the kit deserves an upgrade are the engine nozzles.

A reminder - as usual - our instructions are obviously an excellent source, but nothing beats wrapping your room in reference photos. It is a lovely aircraft after all.

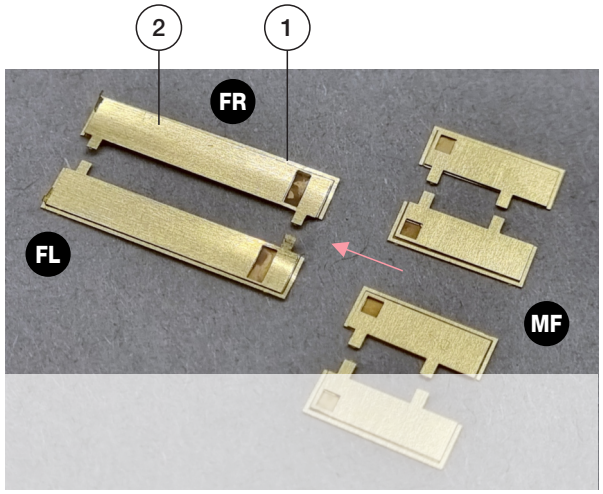


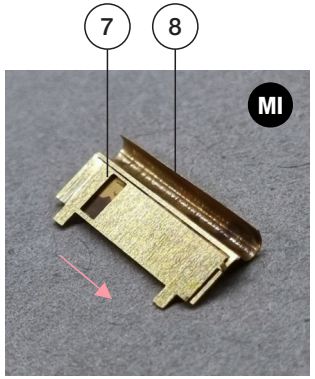
Engine nozzles are depicted in their most commonly seen state - with external petals forming cylinder and internal petals converging inwards, towards the afterburner.
Start by cutting the plastic petals off from the kit part. The grating simulating afterburner installation (15) should be centered at the remaining base. Now roll the external petals (22) on piece of soft material until you get it nice and round. Tab and recess at both ends of the cylinder should in theory help to strengthen the joint, although in reality CA joint is a bit brittle and has tendency fo fail. Slide the cylinder onto the plastic base (tiny amount of plastic may need to be removed to get a good fit) until the bottom aligns with step in the base, as indicated on the photo. Last step is to roll the internal petal (18) and let it expand inside the external shroud before applying glue into joint. Repeat four times and hopefully the new business ends of the mighty J79s will reward the effort.

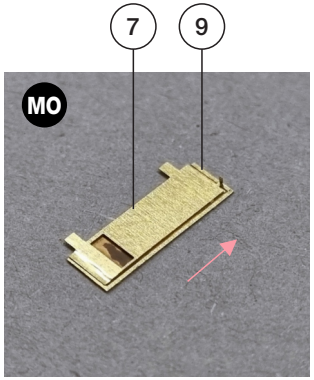




All undercarriage doors are made of two layers. Front doors (1, 2) need to be shaped into slight curve before final assembly. Extended cover of aft internal door of main u/c (8) is shaped into half-cylinder to match fairing under the wing. The result shown here was achieved by holding the flat part in a vise and rolling the half-thick leaf with help of an injection needle.
Small tab on the internal parts of front doors (2) and main gear doors (7) should be folded out to act as actuator attachment point.
Note - numbering of u/c doors does not indicate handing. Handing is actually only relevant for front gear covers (FR & FL) and inboard (MI) and outboard (MO) main gear rear door assemblies. In both cases the rectangular recesses should be pointing back.
Also note the section of (5) & (7) behind the opening is half thickness and should be squashed flat against the external leaf of the door.





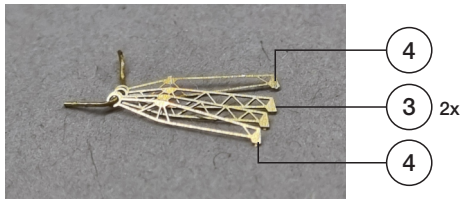


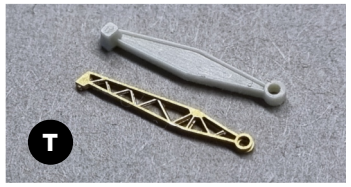
Let's focus on front gear now. First - two truss supports which are designed to replace the kit parts. Form the (T) assembly from two inner layers (4) sandwiched between external pieces (3). Threading the parts on a thin wire can help achieve positive alignment.
Fold the square bits of part (12) to double thickness, then bend the struts at approx. 135deg and attach to gear leg from the front as shown on photos. Next prepare the rear link (11) by folding it at about 90deg and attach it to the back of the strut as shown on photos.
With these small elements you might want to consider using PVA (white) glue instead of CA - this will give more time for alignments while the joint remains adequately durable and somewhat more flexible.

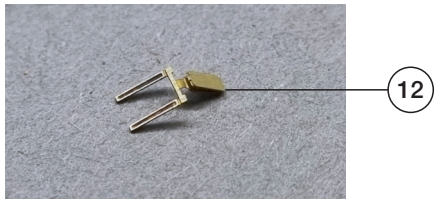
There are of course some more struts / links which take part in the criss-cross mess conceived at Convair. These however are round cross section and would not look good represented by flat etching. Brass tubes and refe-
-rence photos seem like best options.

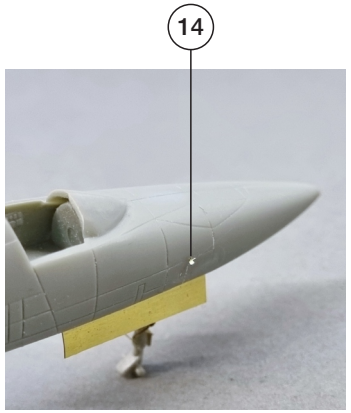
The set contains resin domes of two sizes that should help depicting landing lights mounted on the front gear struts. Concious of under-the-table tendencies displayed by those tiny parts we supply spares.

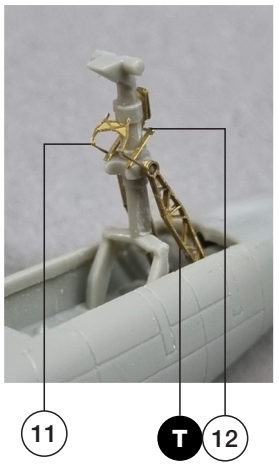
The final parts in this area are angle of attack vanes on both sides of the nose. Note - these are not universally present on all machines - consult your resources.

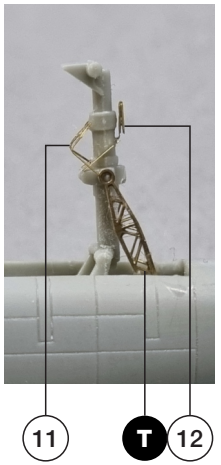


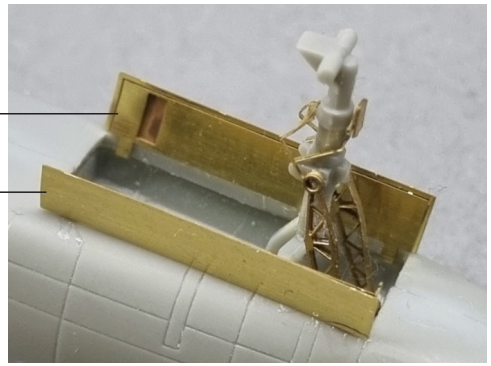


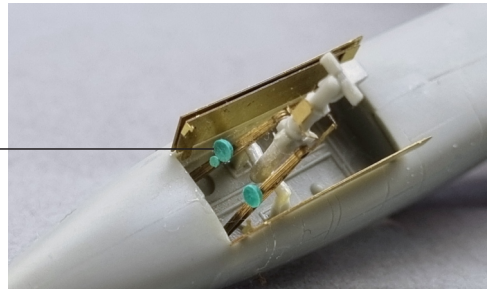












Both front and main undercarriage wheels on B-58 look very similar and less baloony than depicted in the kit. Replacement (13) corrects the tire-to-hub proportion for all wheels.

Main gear mechanism enhancements look complex and convoluted but are actually relatively simple additions to kit parts.
V-shaped lateral reinforcement truss (21) goes inside the strut frame at its base.
Longitudinal links (10) are fixed via flat tabs to the wheel well ceiling and simply lean over the gear strut frame.
Oleo link (17) is best first fixed to bottom surface of kit part and next folded in such way that the forked end is embracing the lower section of the strut.
Gear door actuating scisor arms (16) are fixed to the back of the ridge inside the wheel well and provide additional support for the (MI) & (MO) doors.

Brass tubes and photographic evidence - mentioned on previous page - still apply.