

## Tip: Socks for your covering iron

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Even if you do not “build from a kit” but chose to assemble ARFs, you will find a covering iron to be a worthwhile tool for keeping the covering on your favorite airplane looking nice and just plain attached! There are at least a couple of different models available but I prefer the Coverite™ iron. This iron has a nice shape for reaching into hard to reach areas and the thermostat is in the handle, which lends itself to this tip. When using a covering iron it is easy to scratch the covering material you are working on. In order to avoid this, the manufacturer sells a sock to protect the finish of your model. It looks like this:



The only issue with these that I've found is that you go through quite a few in a short period. Aside from the tendency for the pointed portions of the iron to wear through, there is also the color that will smear onto the sock when working near the edges of the covering material. Once this happens it will often smear onto other colors of covering and can be somewhat of a mess. Though Acetone will typically clean the smeared color from your airplane, it just adds another step to the building/covering process and requires you keep on hand yet another hazardous and odious substance. Preferably you would change the sock often but this requires you have several on hand and remove and replace them frequently. This is tedious and expensive.

I had heard of folks using baby socks in this capacity and went in search of some likely candidates I thought might fix the issue. I found a variety of socks for less than \$5 at the local Dollar General store and bought a couple of likely candidates. I tried a couple different types and settled on the ones shown here:



These are 9-18mo infant size and come 5 pair to the package. They are 82% cotton, 17% Nylon and 1% Lycra. So far I've found this blend to be fairly impervious to the heat. They don't stick to the iron and by rolling the crew portion of the sock you can tension the material up sufficiently on the iron to keep it from moving around on the iron. These particular socks are thin enough

that they don't appear to insulate the iron too much (it appears I'm losing maybe 25 degrees compared to what the indicator is set for). All in all, it ends up fitting fairly nicely.