Easy covering and setting dihedral with film

For setting dihedral later add tips with balsa cement.

IMPORTANT stick tips in with PVA, before adding tips

balsa frame (you collect is set over time)

Very soft brush
Slightly textured mounting card from Hobbycraft makes handling the film a LOT easier...

paper which stops film sticking to frame

measure length required for frame

GENTLY brush film to get reasonably flat you can blow it before brushing, but be careful not to blow even a small amount of tip which will mark the film

Some people crinkle the film first, but it is uncertain whether this is aerodynamically better. It might prevent the film pulling off the wingtail under load.

I brush it carefully into a small ball

and GENTLY roll it in my fingers.

Crinkled film flattened ready to go on frame

Lay the balsa frame on newspaper and spray the top lightly.

I use this adhesive. It is better than most others because it has a very thin spray and doesn't soak into the wood. You get a much lighter covering

Prop the frame & film (I use two CDs)

Lay the frame sticky side down very carefully on to the film be very careful not to move the film in the process.

If you have a disaster, you can use a small tile brush and some lighter fuel to reposition or remove the film
If it goes well, cut the spare film and save it for other parts (such as prop blades, or fins)

I steam the film on the frame quickly on both sides this heats the plastic which can make the wingtail outline 'jump' onto the film, rather than getting it placed just where you want it.

I place the outline on NEW newspaper and spray ONE PASS from about 18 inches away. Don't be tempted to add more to make sure. Adhesive is heavy.

If the outline sticks to paper accidently, don't pull it off. Brush lighter fuel onto the paper and it comes off.

Place the outline on the film, this is the bit where you need to do it carefully. The outline will stick instantly where it touches. If you get it wrong, remove with lighter fuel

let the ball evaporate and try again be careful that the outline isn't sticking to your fingers when you place it on the frame.

Cut the film away at top and bottom TWO cuts per corner of the blade.

Sum frame over and GENTLY dab (don't rub) the film around the outline to ensure adhesion

Some people use heat for cutting film. I never mastered it.
If you are careful, the covering is very easy, much easier than covering with tissue. Once you have collected the adhesive, brushes, etc., you have them for many models.

You only have to make a frame once and you have it for future models I have a collection.... You don’t have to make a jig, but it makes life easier.

The MOST important thing is when you are making the wing/tail outline. Using PVA at the inside of the tip rib joints will allow you to use thinners to melt the joint to set the dihedral. You can add a tiny blob of cement to strengthen the joint once the dihedral is set, but don’t overdo it.. glue is really heavy! Avoid cyano, it is really heavy and won’t allow any adjustments later..

Hope this helps - Tom Tomlinson