

Graphic Installation and Care



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Storage or Delayed Installation:

Climate-controlled storage is important. Age and temperature extremes degrade the adhesive and can dramatically reduce its effectiveness.

*****Product should be used within the recommended storage life of two years. In addition, product should be stored in an environment between 60 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit.**

Temperature Recommendations:

Surface temperature should be between 50 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit before attempting the installation. As a general rule, if the surface is hot to the touch it's over 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Adhesive becomes brittle when it gets too cold and gummy when it gets too hot. Applications outside the recommended range of 50 to 90 degrees Fahrenheit reduce the adhesives' ability to perform.

Preparation & Cleaning Procedures

******An Important Note about Cleaning. Please Read.******

Vehicle Graphics: Due to an increased usage of silicone based additives in automotive paint that traditionally contained only solvents or oil derivatives, the pressure-sensitive graphics industry is facing adhesion challenges. The result of these changes is the need for increased awareness towards surface preparation and application methods.

New Boats: To reduce the amount of solvents in some of the newer "heavy solids" paint and clear coat products, silicone-based additives are used as flow agents. As the solvents evaporate during the curing process, silicone particles migrate to the surface, leaving a silicone residue. In fiberglass manufacturing, mold release agents may also leave a silicone residue.

All Surfaces: Traditional surface preparation for graphics application has consisted of chemical washing. Most cleaners contain a hydroxyl compound (acetone, alcohol) or a petroleum base (kerosene, zylene) solvent. These solvents work by dissolving oil-based impurities that are on the surface. Silicone, however, does not dissolve. Removal of silicones occurs through emulsification (suspension of small globules within the liquid, like oil in water). Soap and water will generally outperform solvent for silicone emulsification. However, an extra wash process costs applicator time and it may not always be necessary.

The application process noted herein, when followed, will effectively prepare the surface to bond with the adhesive. We recommend this process for all striping and graphics.

******FAILURE TO FOLLOW INSTRUCTIONS UNDERLINED MAY RESULT IN ADHESION FAILURE.******

Cleaning Procedures:

All surfaces are contaminated to some degree. To ensure good adhesion to any surface, it is critical that you follow these recommended procedures in decontaminating and preparing the surface prior to any vinyl product installation. A clean, lint free towel or cloth must be used between each of the cleaning steps to prevent cross-contamination.

- Remove heavy road grime or tar using Denatured Alcohol.
- **When a silicone substance or residue is suspected, wash and rinse the contaminated area with liquid dish detergent and warm water.** Dry the surface with a clean, lint free towel or cloth.
- **After the detergent wash simply finish the process by wiping down the entire area with Denatured Alcohol.** Again use a clean, lint-free towel or cloth.

Installation Guidelines

Application Procedures:

- **Do not excessively stretch the vinyl during the application. This is the main cause of end lift. Pull the vinyl only as taut as necessary to keep a straight line.**
- **Because vinyl is a pressure-sensitive product, a squeegee must be used for all installations.**
 - **Apply graphics using a squeegee. After the application tape/premask are removed, squeegee a second time, focusing mainly on the edges and tips.** You may want to use a protective sleeve, such as a soft folded paper towel, on the squeegee to avoid damage to the paint and/or vinyl surface.
 - **Vinyl Graphics can be laid down initially using your thumb. However, a squeegee must be used on all cut ends including surface breaks as well as the ends of the graphic.**
- **When removing the application tape/premask, always pull it slowly, back onto itself, at a 180-degree angle.** Bubbles should be punctured using a sharp air release tool. Do not slit the vinyl to release the air. If the vinyl is slit it will spread or gap.
- The cutting or trimming of any graphic should be done using a very sharp knife and very little pressure. Any openings, such as doors, should be trimmed back away from edges at least 1/8 of an inch. Do not wrap the vinyl around door edges.

Removal Guidelines

Using a hair dryer or a heat gun, heat the vinyl until it becomes soft and pliable. Lift a corner and pull up while maintaining heat on that area. Use a solvent to remove any remaining adhesive. Acetone works well for this, but only if you are familiar with it and feel comfortable using it. Adhesive removers are available at most hardware stores. The longer the vinyl has been on, the harder it will be to remove. The graphic will be destroyed in the removal process and cannot be re-used.

****We will provide you the Application Squeegee****

*****Feel free to call us if you have any questions and thank you for your order!*****

Illustrated Dry Installation Procedures



Step 1

Clean the surface with Denatured Alcohol will help remove any contamination and enhance the adhesion process.



Step 2

Put a piece of masking tape on each end of your vinyl transfer in the area where you plan to apply it and anchor each end to the application surface with masking tape. Make sure that the graphic is positioned where you want it. Re-check your measurements and step back to check for visual center and alignment. Make adjustments as needed.



Step 3

Locate the center vertical line that we made on your vinyl transfer and place a vertical length of masking tape to secure the vinyl transfer and create a center hinge as shown in the illustration. This step allows you to apply half of the vinyl transfer at a time.



Step 4

Remove the masking tape anchor from one end of your vinyl transfer and SLOWLY peel the release liner away towards the center masking hinge. Be careful not to touch the adhesive side of the vinyl transfer. Use scissors to cut away the excess release liner and discard.



Step 5

Hold your vinyl transfer by the premask, careful not to touch the vinyl adhesive to the application surface until you are ready to squeegee. Beginning at the center hinge, make easy overlapping, pushing strokes with your squeegee. Remove the center hinge tape and slowly peel the remaining release liner away. Squeeze the other half of the vinyl transfer, working from the center to the edges.



Step 6

To remove the premask, peel SLOWLY at a sharp (180°) angle. If the vinyl appears to be lifting, gently push the premask in the opposite direction from which you were pulling and re-squeeze that area. If after removing the premask, air bubbles are apparent, puncture the vinyl with a pin or needle (DO NOT USE a knife or razor blade) and squeegee out the air towards the puncture.

Wet Installation Procedures

Complete Steps 1 and 2 above. With a pencil, draw horizontal and vertical lines on application surface that correspond with the lines on the premask to mark your area. Remove the graphic from application surface. Remove Release Liner (Backing Paper) from graphic. Spray a light mist of application solution (1/2 teaspoon liquid dish detergent to a gallon of warm water) onto your application surface as well as the graphic (without the Release Liner). This will delay the adhesive activation between the bonding surface and vinyl transfer, resulting in a bubble-free, wrinkle-free application. Position the graphic matching the lines you've drawn with those on the decal. With light overlapping strokes, squeegee the graphic flat. Dry the entire area with a towel. Re-squeeze the graphic beginning at the center line, make easy overlapping, pushing strokes with your squeegee pushing all water out from under the vinyl.

CAUTION: Wet application may delay the immediate removal of the premask. A waiting period of up to 60 minutes may be necessary. Re-squeeze the graphic once more after it is dry with firm pressure. Complete Step 6 above to finish the installation.