

Surface Preparation

Proper cleaning and preparation of a surface prior to decal application is critical to the success of the decal. The following cleaning and surface preparation conditions must be followed immediately prior to application. Failure to adhere to these requirements can cause adhesion loss and therefore reduce the durability and performance of the decal.

Surfaces to which the material will be applied must be smooth, non-porous and thoroughly cleaned from dust, grease, or and contamination. Freshly painted or lacquered surfaces should be allowed to stand for a least three weeks to complete curing. The compatibility of selected paints and lacquers should be tested by the end-user prior to use.

- **General Surface Cleaning and Preparation**

The surface to which decals are applied must be completely clean, smooth and dry prior to application. Remove all dirt and grime with a commercial detergent solution and water. Household dishwashing soap works fine. If grease, oil, wax, etc., are present, the surface must be scrubbed with a solvent wipe. Although you can install decals after cleaning the surface with dishwashing soap we recommend using Denatured Alcohol because it will completely clean the surface. It helps remove residues that could be left from the soap and water solution. Also if you use car cleaning products such as car wax, Rain-X, or similar products these could possibly affect the application process of your decals. Denatured Alcohol can remove these and other residues from the surface before applying vinyl decals. it can be purchased at most of the hardware or paint stores and is relatively inexpensive. Always follow the instructions on the label. If it will be used on a painted surface make sure the instruction say it can be used for that purpose (or fiberglass if it's a boat) and test in an inconspicuous area. Finally dry wipe the surface completely using a clean, soft, lint-free cloth.

- **Temperature and Weather Conditions**

The optimum temperature range for vinyl decal adhesion is 60 to 80 degrees F. The air and surfaces should always be above 40 degrees F. Very high humidity may affect the application process. Try to work in a covered area that will help keep dirt from landing on your surface and vinyl decal. Do not install decal under cold temperature (below 40 degrees F) or on cold surface. Vinyl adhesive is less tackier and shrink when cold and often will cause the decal to tear apart on surface and transfer tape (pre-mask) when lifted. Install vinyl decal in area with proper temperature control is preferred in winter.

Tools Needed

1. Small cutting knife or scissor - used to separate the line if needed.
2. Plastic squeegee (credit card will work fine) - used to smooth out and flatten the vinyl decal
3. Sewing pin. Changes are you'll get bubbles in your installation job. This happens with 90% of vinyl installations. Use the pin to prick any bubbles to release trapped air under the graphic.
4. Masking tape - used to hold the decal to the surfaces during installation and to insure the decal is level.

Installation Steps

Lay the vinyl decal face down on a flat work area. Using a squeegee, credit card or any flat items, firmly rub graphic area starting from the center and moving out toward the edges. This is to insure that the decal is attached completely to the transfer tape.

1. Lay the graphic face down on a flat work area. Using a squeegee, credit card, or any flat item, firmly rub graphic area starting from the center and moving out toward the edges. This is to insure that the decal is attached to the "PREMASK".

Apply a single horizontal strip of 2" masking tape to the top of the graphic. The strip should be split between the graphic and the surface with 1" on each side (as shown). This strip will be used as a hinge that will insure the graphic does not move during the application process.



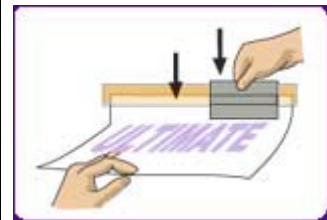
2. Hold the bottom edge of the hinged graphic away from the surface and remove the "LINER" to reveal the sticky backing of the vinyl.

CAUTION: Do not let the exposed graphic fall onto the surface. The back of the graphic is very tacky and will tightly adhere to the surface. If the placement is not correct, removing the graphic for re-placement will be very difficult or impossible without causing damage to the vinyl.

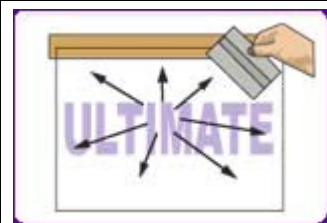


3. While still holding the hinged graphic away from the surface. Use the squeegee and go from top to bottom, begin to merge the graphic to the surface.

Notes: Work from top to bottom. Do not let the entire graphic fall onto the surface. If lines or creases develop, lift and re-place the graphic.



4. Once the graphic is in proper position and lying perfectly flat on the surface. Go from the center working outward, use firm strokes with the squeegee to insure the elements adhere to the surface.



5. Gently remove the "PRE-MASK". Be careful not to pull the graphic up with the "PRE-MASK" paper.

