

How to Apply Your Custom Vinyl Graphics

Note: we are not responsible for materials damaged during applications not performed by SIGNWAVE. PLEASE read all the instructions carefully.

Make sure you NEVER get the waxy backing paper wet! Only the transfer tape and vinyl decal may get wet. Wet backing paper will ruin your decals.

Temperature Requirements:

Surface temperature should be between 10 and 30 degrees Celsius before attempting the installation. As a general rule, if the surface is hot to the touch, it is over 30 degrees. Adhesive becomes brittle when it gets too cold and gummy when it gets too hot. Applications outside the recommended range of 10 to 30 degrees reduce the adhesives ability to perform.

Surface Preparation:

Freshly painted surfaces must be dried a minimum of 30 days prior to the application of decals, depending on the paint (give us a call if you must apply sooner than 30 days).

All surfaces are contaminated to some extent. To ensure good adhesion to any surface, it is critical that you follow these recommended procedures.

- Wash and rinse any area with liquid dish detergent and warm water. Then dry the surface with a clean, lint free towel or cloth.
- Finish up the cleaning process by wiping down the entire area with Isopropyl Alcohol (rubbing alcohol). If the surface is painted, test the alcohol in an inconspicuous area first.
- To avoid re-contamination during the final cleaning step, wipe the surface in just one direction, using a clean, lint free towel or cloth. You are now ready to apply the vinyl.



Wet or Dry Application:

Dry: Although quicker, applying vinyl graphics dry does not allow for any mistakes. Once the vinyl touches the surface, there is no removal without damage. (Die-cut letters under 3cm tall and thin graphics are too risky to wet apply and should be applied dry). If you decide to use the dry method, skip steps A-D below that call for the soapy water solution.

Wet: Applying vinyl graphics with application spray allows you the opportunity to remove and reposition vinyl as needed for up to several minutes. It takes a little more time, but there is less chance of ruining the decal.

Application Procedures:

A: Use a water-soluble pencil to draw guidelines and centre lines of the vinyl. Find the centre of the vinyl and make a mark at the point of the transfer tape.



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B: For wet application, fill a spray bottle with a mixture of water and 3 drops of a liquid dish detergent.



C: Before applying, rest the vinyl face down on a flat surface and squeegee across the backing paper. (This helps make the vinyl adhere to the tape rather than the backing paper). Then with the lettering still face down, peel the backing paper away from the vinyl, which will remain adhered to the transfer tape.



D: Lightly spray the exposed sticky side of the lettering with the soapy water solution. (If the letters are smaller than 3cm in height, do not use the spray; it could cause misalignment) Very small letters should be applied dry.



E: Place the lettering and transfer tape onto the surface, using any guideline you have made to help align the decal. Do not excessively stretch the vinyl during application; pull it only as taught, as necessary.



F: Squeegee the lettering by starting in the centre and using straight up and down motion, working your way to each left and right edge. You should overlap your strokes to prevent air and water from getting trapped under the lettering.



G: WAIT ONE HOUR: If applied wet, leave the application tape attached to the lettering and let it dry about an hour.



H: Remove the application tape: Pull slowly, back onto itself at a 180-degree angle. This will minimize the chance of pulling lettering up with the tape.



TIP: If the lettering is pulling up with the tape, either heavily soak the application tape with the soapy water solution or wait an additional 15 minutes and try again. Bubbles should be punctured with a pin. Do not slit the vinyl to release air, this could cause a spread or gap.