

[How to Apply and Seal IOD Décor Transfers \(Updated 2/16/2019 with latest IOD Recommendations!\)](#)

Join the [Iron Orchid Designs Creative Tribe Facebook Group](https://www.facebook.com/groups/IODcreativetribe/) at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IODcreativetribe/> for shared projects and ideas, recommendations and suggestions, and the latest tips and techniques! *Colored text with underlines are clickable links if viewing in PDF.*

DISCLAIMER: This is a guide to help, and does not cover every possible application solution for every surface type, brand and paint type, various sealers, as well the surface prep of your intended piece. Therefore, due to these and other variables, The Painted Heirloom is *not* responsible for failed applications of IOD Transfers. If you are unsure your IOD Transfer will properly adhere to your piece, please use the [Contact Form](#), or join the Iron Orchid Designs Creative Tribe Facebook Group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IODcreativetribe/> for the latest recommendations. There's always other stockists and members there to help!

[Our IOD Décor Transfers™](#), and our new [IOD Paintable Décor Transfers](#), are designed in scale and motif to be appropriate for decor. Use them to add a unique touch to your furniture projects, wall art or accessories. Pressure sensitive, you apply them by rubbing them onto the surface. Ensure a long-lasting result by sealing with a quality sealer. We've made many of our new Décor Transfers™ "buildable," by adding opacity, (so that they look good when they overlap) and making the designs themselves more versatile, so that they work visually, when used in combination. Since the designs are more opaque than previous versions, they will show up well against dark colors as well as light. See our IOD [Tutorial page](#) for more information about Stamps, Transfers, and Moulds!

IOD Décor Transfers are a little delicate, need a little extra care, but are so worth it. With a little instruction, they are easy to use and add instant style to your projects. (Make sure to check out our new [White Transfers](#) for a beautiful design on your deeper richer colors!)

How to apply IOD Décor Transfer Guide. Start by reading the instructions on the IOD Transfer Tube! ☺

There are many fabulous paint and coating brands designed for furniture and décor use that it's *not possible* to address or formulate specifically for all of them when it comes to IOD Décor Transfer application. Don't let this short list scare you from trying an awesome IOD Décor Transfer. These instructions are written in attempt to cover "all bases" for "all paint types."

Quick list of tips. (read on if you have more questions):

1. **DO** allow paint & sealer to completely dry before applying transfer – 72 hours minimum.
2. **Do NOT** apply transfer on top of any wax.
3. **DO** apply a liquid sealer, as a base, to a piece that has been painted without a built-in topcoat, such as chalk-paint, prior to transfer application.
4. After applying transfer, **DO** a thorough burnishing with a clean dry soft cloth and in circular motion with increasing pressure.
5. **DO** seal the applied transfer with a liquid sealer, preferably the same sealer as in step 3.



Expanded Instructions. Below is an expanded detailed explanation of the steps above. We find these tips helpful to ensure a good bond and maximize compatibility on your projects.

General transfer tips. Do not store IOD Décor Transfer in extreme temperatures or humid conditions, which can affect adhesion. Keep your transfer with its backing sheet until you are ready to apply. Keep free of dust or debris, which will interfere with adhesion. Do not allow the adhesive side of transfer to touch anything prior to application. When handling the transfer, avoid letting the adhesive side touch itself (don't do in a windy environment).

PAINT DRY TIME. Dry time vs. Cure Time. **Dry time** is the recommended length of time between coats of product, often called recoat time. **Cure time** is the length of time recommended before subjecting your finished project to daily use. The generally accepted average **curing times for water-based products is 21 days**, and 30 days for oil-based products - based on a recommended 70 degrees F (21 degrees C) and 70% humidity. You can use a piece lightly after about 7 days, but be cautious as the finish will still be curing for another 2 to 3 weeks. *Different paints will have different drying and curing times, and temperature and humidity affect BOTH drying and curing.* Cooler temperatures (think inside or winter outside) and high humidity levels (outside, summer) can prolong a paint's drying time. You can tell if a water-based product is dry by touching it - if it is cool to the touch, it's NOT dry. If you can sand a water-based topcoat to a powder, it IS dry. There are two ways to tell if it is an oil-based product is dry - if it is no longer tacky and it doesn't smell, it is dry.

Allow Adequate Drying Time. Prior to IOD Décor Transfer application, **IOD recommends a drying time of at least 24 hours, with a fan on low to create air movement and hasten any residual moisture and gas evaporation.** I recommend a minimum of 72 hours. Generally, the longer the better. I can't stress this enough. Think about this – you're applying a paper-like material on top of a painted surface, that was once wet, containing water, other moistures, and possibly Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs are organic chemicals that have a *high vapor pressure* at ordinary room temperature. Their high vapor pressure results from a low boiling point, which causes large numbers of molecules to evaporate and enter the surrounding air.) Because the moisture, gases, vapors, and VOCs will want to evaporate from your piece, they, for the most part, should be absent from your piece before applying the transfer.

WAX then TRANSFER = BAD! Never EVER apply an IOD Transfer to a piece that has been finished with any type of wax. It is recommended you remove the wax completely, per wax manufacturer instructions, before applying the transfer.

PREPARATION – APPLY A BASE SEAL or NOT? NOTE: The Iron Orchid Designs company strongly recommends applying a base sealer, to every paint type, prior to applying their IOD Decor Transfers to any painted surface. Regardless of paint type, you should seek out and follow the guidelines of your paint retailer or manufacturer. I tested different top-coats, and results are on my website.

Applying to Glass. If you are applying an IOD Transfer to glass or a mirror, a base coat nor top sealer is required or recommended. The Transfer will adhere to glass very well without the need of a sealer. Further, a sealer will only cloud your glass or mirror. *Again, do not use a base or top coat sealer on glass.*

Applying the base sealer. If you are applying a base sealer prior to IOD Décor Transfer application, always make sure that the paint has had time to dry thoroughly before applying a base sealer coat, and then allow that sealer coat to dry thoroughly before applying the transfer.

I have used the following water-based sealers with very good results. You [can view the results are on my website:](#)

1. [Tough Coat Matte Wipe-on Poly](#) by Fusion Mineral Paint (also in Glossy)
2. [High Performance Satin](#) by General Finishes
3. [Polycrylic](#) by Minwax



IOD frequently uses **General Finishes Exterior 450 Flat.** It's important to note that IOD Transfers were designed to be used inside. They have also recommended General Finishes Flat Out Flat, but I would **not** recommend Flat Out Flat as a “base,” as it contains wax, which is a resist.

Fusion Mineral Paint. Because [Fusion Mineral Paint](#) has a *built-in topcoat*, it is less porous, so it generally does not require a liquid sealer prior to applying the transfer, provided you allow adequate drying time of 72 hours minimum, 7 days recommended. This time, as mentioned above, can fluctuate based on the ambient conditions. If you would feel more comfortable applying a sealer to Fusion Mineral Paint before the transfer, you can use [Fusion's Tough Coat Wipe-on Poly \(Matte or Glossy\)](#) for lighter colors, or [Fusion's Stain & Finishing Oil All-in-One](#) in **Natural** for darker colors. [Fusion's Tough Coat](#) is a quality matte sealer, but can cause streaking on darker colors. If you choose to use on darker colors, which I have, just ensure the paint has had adequate time to dry, and apply the Tough Coat in a thin and even coat.

Chalk-Paint & Paints without built-in topcoat. When using chalk paints and mineral type paints without a “built-in topcoat,” sealing with a liquid topcoat over the paint can increase the bond of transfer to surface. It reduces the porosity of the surface and increases adhesion of transfer. **IOD has found that General Finishes 450, a water based liquid topcoat, has a high compatibility with other brands, and is a great option.** You should check with your paint manufacturer for sealer compatibility.

APPLICATION OF TRANSFER. Remember to starting with a clean, dry, matte surface. Appropriate prep of a piece prior to painting is always recommended. If you have sanded the paint, make certain there is no residual dust. Any residue that is left behind can possibly cause contamination and adhesion problems between paint and substrate, as well as transfer and paint. All of these things will interfere with adhesion.

Carefully remove the transfer from its white backing. Slowly and carefully lower the transfer onto your intended surface, making sure that it does not touch until the placement is correct. Use small pieces of low tack tape to hold it in place. Using the provided tool, start at one end of the transfer and rub firmly to adhere the image to the surface. Do this until the entire image is transferred. If any parts aren't transferred when you lift, simply lay it back down and rub more on that portion.

Burnishing. This step is really important! After the transfer is down securely, with a clean dry hand, smooth down any bits that aren't flatly adhered, such as all edges and wrinkles down, then do a thorough burnishing by taking a clean dry soft cloth, and in circular motion with increasing pressure, buff until the transfer is really adhered down well.

FINISHING & SEALING. Final Sealing. Ensure a long-lasting result by sealing with a quality sealer. IOD recommend sealing with a water based (or not harsh solvent based) sealer (waxes created for chalk type paints also work well if they don't contain harsh solvents). Generally, if you used a sealer prior to applying the transfer, you should use that same sealer to finish your project. **When applying sealer coats, remember “thin to win.” Applying thin coats is preferable to thick coats.** If you did not use a base sealer before applying the transfer, you may finish light use projects with wax such as Fusion's Hemp Beeswax. For heavy use projects (drawers, table tops) you can use [Fusion's Tough Coat Wipe-on Poly \(Matte or Glossy\)](#) (for lighter colors), Minwax Polycrylic, Zinsser's SealCoat, or [Fusion's NATURAL Stain & Finishing Oil All-in-One](#) (for darker colors).

REPAIR TRANSFER PEELING. Once in a while, a transfer may peel from the piece. With the high number of variables involved (type of paint, sealer, surface condition, weather, application, etc.) there is room for the occasional failure to occur. If this happens, it can usually be repaired by using something to gently, every so delicately re-adhere the peeled bits down. Contact the stockist whom you purchased from and together we can help fix the peels, and adjust for the next project.

CONCLUSION. I truly believe the IOD Transfers that have been reported to fail, were due to lack of proper preparation of their intended piece. They either did not prepare their piece properly before painting, or, used a chalk paint and didn't apply a sealer, or they applied the transfer too early after painting. I have had no IOD Decor Transfer failures. **Remember, it is IOD's Official position that a base sealer should be applied prior using an IOD Transfer on any painted surface - regardless of past successes to the contrary.** If you are unsure about anything at all, stop! Contact me, or watch videos on the Iron Orchid Designs Creative Tribe at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/IODcreativetribe/> and YouTube. Hope this has helped! ~Vonda Youngkin from The Painted Heirloom – <https://www.PaintedHeirloom.com>