



This simple guide will help you when applying your vinyl graphics. However, the key to success is to ensure that you *don't rush!!!*

Vinyl graphic application is recommended in temperatures of between 16°C to 26°C. If possible, apply graphics indoors to help control temperatures as well as reduce the amount of wind and dust you have to contend with. The room and surface temperature can greatly impact your application. A higher temperature will make the film softer and more pliable, but also makes the adhesive more aggressive and "grabby" which certainly isn't helpful and can lead to pre-tack and increased stretching if you try to reposition the film. Lower temperatures will make the film more rigid and brittle and reduce the tack of the adhesive. Applying in either of these extremes can make your application more difficult. The guide below can be applied to most types of vinyl graphics applications, including vehicles, sign boards, or any prepared surface. We have shown photos of a stripe being applied to a car but you can apply this technique to just about anything.

You will need:

- Suitable cleaning fluids (IPA - Isopropyl alcohol or methylated spirit works best) and lint-free cloths
- Tape measure / ruler
- Sharp craft knife
- Masking tape
- Suitable applicator / squeegee
- Water sprayer / atomiser

### IMPORTANT!

If your graphics have arrived in a tube, gently remove them from the tube as soon as possible and lay them out flat, somewhere dry and warm for at least 24 hours. Then give them a VERY GENTLE squeegee to remove any creases. This will also ensure that the graphics have fully adhered to the application paper prior to fitting. Don't use too much pressure as this will worsen any creases. If the creases are still present, they can be removed at the fitting stage (this is the best method to remove any creasing). As the graphic is fitted, it should be kept under tension and this tension will completely remove any creases whilst being squeegeed.

**Step 1: Ensure the surface is clean.** It is vital that all surfaces are clean and free from grease, wax, dust and dirt etc.. There are many cleaning solutions available which will do the job. The best procedure is to clean with a detergent followed by a light clean with a methylated spirit, or IPA (Isopropyl Alcohol) to remove any wax or tar. Don't forget to thoroughly clean the rears of the door edges and other panels where the stripe will be trimmed later. **Always check the solvent won't harm the surface before applying in any great quantity.**

**Step 2:** Use masking tape to hold the graphic in position while you measure, and adjust the position of the graphic until it is straight and square. Measure the actual graphic and not the application paper / pre-mask as this may not be cut exactly square!! Run a line of masking tape along the middle of the graphic to create a "hinge".



**Step 3:** Place a small piece of masking tape at one end of the graphic as a reference for the fitting position.



**Step 4:** Flip the graphic using the masking tape hinge so that it is face down on the surface and slowly peel the backing sheet away from the graphic at one corner to hold it temporarily in position.



**Step 5:** Slowly peel the backing sheet away from the graphic up to the "hinge" position.



**Step 6:** Using scissors, a craft knife or paper slitter cut the backing sheet away.



**Step 7:** Using your water sprayer, spray a light mist of water over the stripe or area where the stripe is to be applied.



**Step 8:** Keeping the graphic taught, line it up with the masking tape reference fitted in step 3.



**Step 9:** Squeegee the graphic into place to expel any water or air that maybe trapped behind the graphic.



**Step 10:** Place a small piece of masking tape at the other end of the graphic as a reference for the fitting position.



**Step 11:** Slowly peel off the remaining backing sheet and be careful to keep hold of the loose graphic so as to not touch anything with it. Using your water sprayer, spray a light mist of water over the stripe or area where the stripe is to be applied.



**Step 12:** Keeping the graphic taut, line it up with the masking tape reference fitted in step 10.



**Step 13:** Squeegee the graphic into place to expel any water or air that maybe trapped behind the graphic.



**Step 14:** Remove the application paper by pulling it back on itself at a 180° angle. Using this method to remove the application paper will reduce the chances of pulling the graphic back up and possibly causing air bubbles or edge lifting.



**Step 15:** Spraying the application paper with water may also aid in its removal. Once you have removed the application paper, you may wish to go back and re-squeegee the graphic. Be careful not to scratch it.



**Step 16:** Dry-off any excess water and let stand until completely dry. Then, using your craft knife carefully trim off any stripe that is not required.



**Step 17:** Trimming the stripe at 45° at the areas where the doors and other panels meet will allow for some wrap-around and provide a nice clean finish.



**Step 18:** Squeegee the ends of the graphic into place.



**Stand back and enjoy your masterpiece!**



#### **Common problems:**

##### **Vinyl won't stick to the surface**

Is the surface properly clean? Is it dust-free, free from grease, oil or waxy residues? Is it too warm or too cold? Is it wet? Is it a suitable surface (for example, bare untreated wood or concrete are not suitable surfaces)? If you are sure that the conditions are good for vinyl application but it still won't stick, ask us for further advice.

##### **Despite my best efforts I get lots of air bubbles.**

You generally can't squeegee the bubbles out once the vinyl is stuck down and dry. However it is possible to pin-prick the offending bubbles and carefully push the air out of the pin hole. If you have applied the graphics using water then most if not all of the bubbles will eventually evaporate away.

##### **The vinyl won't stick to the application paper - it stays on the backing sheet.**

If you try to remove the backing sheet, but the graphics stay firmly on the backing sheet instead of sticking to the application paper, then you should follow a couple of procedures. Firstly, lay the graphics flat and firmly squeegee the graphics to ensure the application paper has a good adhesive grip on the vinyl. Then you should turn the graphic over so that it is face down and slowly peel the backing paper off at a 180° angle, using your other hand to apply pressure against the vinyl to help it onto the application paper.

##### **The vinyl has stuck hard to the backing sheet and rips when I try to remove it.**

This may happen if the backing sheet becomes wet or has been cut a little too deeply. Make sure you keep the backing sheet dry during the application. It is particularly important to ensure the surface is dry after cleaning. Another good tip is to remove the backing from the graphic and not the other way round - ie lay the graphic face down and peel off the backing.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to get in touch:-

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