

Decal Application Guide



Application Guide Outline

- 1 Application Temperature
- 1 Surface Preparation and Types
- 2 Wetting Solution Mixture
- 2 Application Tools for Dry and Wet application
- 2 Dry Application Method
- 3 Wet Application Method
- 3 Post Application Dwell
- 3 Wetting Solution/ Adhesive Interaction

Application Temperature

- The surface and accompanying ambient area should be 40°F or above for dry application and not below 60°F for wet application.
- Note application temperature listed in the product bulletin of film used either pressure sensitive or static cling.

Surface Preparation

- The application surface must be clean and free of any dirt, grease, oil, wax, dust, gum or foreign matter.
- Household and/or available commercial cleansers or cleaning solvents can be used to remove contaminants from the application surface.
- After cleaning, the surface should be rinsed with clean, warm water and dried with a clean, lint free soft cloth.

Surface Types

■ METAL and PAINTED METAL:

- Some metal and painted metal surfaces may require preparation by pre-wiping with solvents. Consult the manufacturer for recommended cleaning solvents.

■ SIGN GRADE WOOD/MDO:

- Wood surfaces should be sign grade and buffed with solvent saturated steel wool.
- Wipe clean and allowed to air dry for at least 8 hours.
- Hardwood surfaces should clean, primed, and painted prior to decal application and had two weeks of dwell time to cure/ dry properly.

■ PLASTIC and SYNTHETIC LSE SURFACES

- All plastic surfaces should be carefully tested for adhesive compatibility. Wiping solvents such as mineral spirits or isopropyl alcohol are used for pre-wiping plastics. Check with the plastic manufacture for their solvent recommendation.

■ Glass

- Clean the glass surface thoroughly with non-ammonia based cleaner followed by isopropyl alcohol (IPA, rubbing Alcohol).
- Dry surface with dry, lint –free towel or cloth.
- The flashing of the IPA may cool the surface quickly and cause possible condensation. Allow the surface to dwell for 10minutes before applying decal.

Decal Application Guide



General Formulations Inc. Application Tips:

- If the application requires a seam, General Formulations recommends having no more than a 1/8" overlap.
- Never cut or release air bubbles with a knife or razor blade. This may allow moisture into the adhesive side of the film creating a future area for delamination or hazing of the adhesive.
- If using an application tape to hold decal in place while applying, be sure to use a lower tack tape. When removing, always peel slowly at a 180° angle.
- Be sure to make any alternations with placement before the product is applied with a squeegee. This increases bond and makes repositioning difficult.
- After wet application method, gently wipe excess water or solution from film surface and edges of decal with a dry, absorbent lint-free cloth.

Wetting Solution Mixture

- Add 2 Tablespoons of liquid household detergent and 4 Tablespoons of isopropyl alcohol to 1 gallon of cold water.
- Non-Ammonia based window cleaner

Application Tools

● Dry:

- Squeegee, stiff cardboard, or clean cloth
- Pin or needle
- Proper cleaning supplies

● Wet:

- Squeegee.
- Sponge or Spray bottle.
- Wetting solution or non-ammonia window cleaner
- Clean cloth
- Pin or needle
- Proper cleaning supplies

Dry Application Method

- Clean and dry the application surface.
- Mark the desired decal position
- Align and apply decal by starting at the top of the decal. To assist positioning, fold down the first inch of the release liner at the top of the decal.
- Apply the adhesive coated side at the top of the decal to the application surface. Gradually remove release liner and squeegee decal as you go.
- If air bubbles occur puncture with a pin or needle and smooth down with squeegee.

Decal Application Guide



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Wet Application Method

- Clean and dry the application surface.
- Mark the desired decal position
- Spray or use sponge to wet application surface with a wetting solution.
- Remove release liner from decal. If decal is large, place the decal face down on a flat surface to remove liner. Spray or sponge wetting solution onto the decal.
- Position decal onto the moistened surface.
- Apply the adhesive coated side at the top of the decal to the application surface. Gradually remove release liner and squeegee decal as you go.
- Work from the center of the decal to the outside edges using steady pressure. Squeegee slides easier if you moisten the decal surface first.
- If air bubbles occur puncture with a pin or needle and smooth down with squeegee.

Post Application Dwell

- Most pressure sensitive adhesives require 24-48 hours to develop complete adhesion to application surface Clean and dry the application surface.
- To provide maximum decal durability, edge sealing is recommended.
- The edge sealant is normally composed of an overprint clear ink or varnish with a similar chemical formulation to that of the ink used to print the decal.

Wetting Solution/Adhesive Interaction

- Using a wetting solution with emulsion adhesives will cause adhesive to become milky or hazy. This is caused by water mixing into the adhesive of the film. This normally clears up in 24-48 hours under normal conditions.
- Be sure all excess wetting solution is removed from adhesive side of film and edges to ensure maximum bond over time.