

Spiralus Design



Powersport Graphics

APPLICATION GUIDE

Need help?

spiralusdesign.com

403.873.7743

Recommended tools and supplies:

1. A small razor knife (the sharper the better)
2. Squeegee (credit card also works)
3. Paper towels or soft lint free cloths
4. Source of heat (hair dryer will work)
5. Application Fluid, if applicable. Air release vinyls do not require fluid

1. CLEAN, CLEAN, CLEAN

One of the major causes of vinyl failure is that the surface was not cleaned properly to begin with. If you fail to clean your hood or body panels thoroughly at the install stage, don't be surprised if your graphics peel. We have found that Rapid Tac also works great as a cleaner and prep fluid. We recommend using a lint free rag or chamois as these types of cloths will not leave behind any material that could later cause problems for the vinyl. Please note that many household cleaners contain ammonia (such as Windex) and you should NEVER use these types of cleaners. Ammonia actually deteriorates the glue on vinyl and ultimately, your graphic will fail.

Try not to touch the hood or body panel with your bare hands. Your skin has natural oils that will repel the adhesive properties of the vinyl. Also, remove all old decals before installing new ones.

2. PLACEMENT (DO NOT peel backing off at this point)

Place the graphic on the surface and position it until it is in the intended position, then use masking tape to hold it in place. Some kits may have extra material where the graphic will be applied, this is done intentionally to allow some margin of error. Ultimately, the exact placement will depend on you, but it is important to understand that almost all kits are pre-designed with a specific location. We recommend you cut the excess vinyl after it is applied, not before. Always ensure the body panels are at least 50F/10C degrees. Proper adhesion cannot occur if the temperature is below this value.

3. INSTALLATION METHOD 1 - CREATE A 'HINGE'

There are basically two methods you can use to apply your graphic. The first is to use what we call the hinge method. Once you have your graphic in position, take masking tape and completely tape one side (ideally a flat side) of the graphic onto the panel. Remove all other pieces of tape holding the graphic and pull the graphic up off of the surface in a door like manner (*see illustration 1*) Remove the backing BEFORE applying any fluid, depending on the material provided in your kit, the application fluid is applied now to the graphic and application surface. Never worry about using too much application fluid; the Rapid Tac is your best friend in ensuring a bubble and wrinkle free final result. **If your kit comes with air release vinyl (such as 3M ControlTac), you DO NOT need to apply fluid. Air release material also has movability characteristics, this will help you to re-position the graphic if necessary. Do not use fluid with air release vinyl!**

Over...

After soaking both the graphic and body panel, lay the graphic back over and down flat. Begin to squeegee the fluid (or air) out by starting at the end with the tape (hinge) in the center of the graphic. Once you have sufficiently applied the center, begin to squeegee out the other sides moving down the graphic, always with the tape as your starting point. On more complex body lines, we highly recommend you apply some heat to soften the graphic as you are applying. **Be sure to not over heat the vinyl!** If your graphic is equipped with pre masking, it is very helpful to spray the pre mask before you remove it from the body panel. Most vinyls need approximately 24 hours to completely cure, so it is not at it's peak state just after application and pre masking can pull the vinyl away from the body panel (which could also lead to tearing). We recommend always using some heat to help the vinyl adhere to textured plastics.

INSTALLATION METHOD 2 - THE 'SECTION'

On some longer graphics, it may helpful to use the 'Section' method. This method is helpful because longer graphics, once the backing is removed, can become a liability to work with. This is especially the case on installations where you are going up and over vents or other complex body lines. Nothing is worse than having 2 pieces of the graphic stick to itself. To create a 'Section', employ the same 'hinge' technique from installation method 1, except this time place a hinge in the middle of the graphic. The idea is to leave one half of the graphic with the backing still applied and not allowing the graphic to get stuck together. Place a second line of tape behind the first line; this is where you want to pull the backing off to. Always ensure you do not get the backing wet at any stage of installation. Once the paper backing is wet, it creates a gummy residue that is nearly impossible to remove. Make sure you **cut** the backing in half; tearing it off increases your chances of getting that gummy residue should the backing accidentally get wet. Apply the application fluid in the same manner as described in method one. Place the graphic down on the body panel and re-apply the first line of tape. Squeegee the fluid out in the same manner. To apply the other side now, simply repeat the steps starting at the hinge, but going in the opposite direction. Carefully remove pre mask, being cautious of lifting vinyl. (See illustration 2)

4. WHAT ABOUT BUBBLES?

Bubbles are a fact of life when applying graphics, happens to the best of us. If you notice the odd bubble has formed on your graphic, there are a couple things to consider. Try first to squeegee the fluid out of the graphic, this is your best bet. Applying some heat may also be helpful in shrinking some trapped fluid. It is important to know that vinyl is actually porous and that in a few days it is entirely possible the bubbles will disappear. As an absolute last resort (but note, we are not fans of this) you can pop the bubbles with a very sharp poker or needle to allow the fluid or air to escape. The problem with doing this, is that you are breaking the surface of the vinyl and could potentially cause contaminants to get under the adhesive. We can't stress enough to use the poke method only as a last resort.

5. CARE OF MY SPIRALUS GRAPHIC

Because all of our graphics are laminated for extra durability, there really are no special steps you need to take to ensure long life from your graphic. If you power wash your ride, always use caution to never be at too aggressive of an angle. Any graphic with enough pressure blasting at it has the chance of lifting, so always have the water hit your panel straight on. If you enjoy giving your ride a nice wax, our vinyls can stand up to waxes and polishes. Just be cautious when buffing that you do not grab any edge of the graphic.

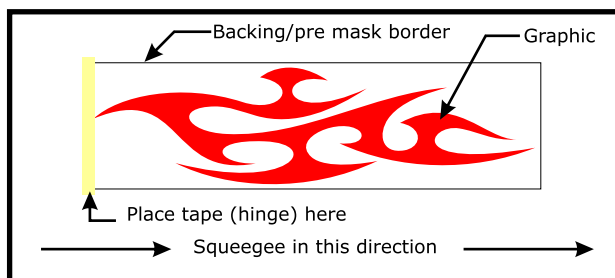


Illustration 1
The 'Hinge'

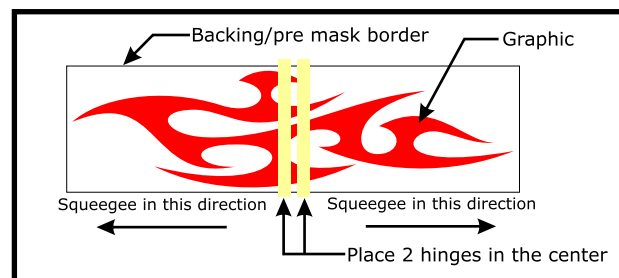


Illustration 2
The 'Section'