

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR VEHICLE GRAPHICS

Care for your vehicle graphics like you would any fine paint finish. Using high quality products designed specifically for car care and these cleaning and maintenance procedures will help keep your vehicle graphics looking their best.

The Do's

The following practices will help maintain the life and quality of the vinyl film:

- Wash applied vinyl graphics with a blend of clean water and a mild car wash or detergent
- Test any cleaning solution on a small section of the vinyl graphic before using.
- Always read the warning labels on car care products for proper safety instructions.
- Once you've washed the vehicle with the soapy water blend, rinse it with clean water.
- Either let the vehicle air dry or use a microfiber cloth.

The Don'ts

Indications of vinyl failure can include loss of gloss level, fading, embrittling, cracking, chipping, or peeling around graphic edges. The following practices will result in deterioration of the vinyl film:

- Do not allow fuels to stay in contact with the vinyl for extended periods of time. Clean all spills as soon as possible.
- Do not use automated car washes, truck washes using caustic cleaners, or pressure washers to clean your vehicle.
- Do not apply carnauba-based wax over vinyl graphics.
- Do not apply any type of wax or polish to matte or carbon fiber finished vinyls.
- Do not use mechanical brush washing.

Wash Regularly

- Wash whenever the car appears dirty. Contaminants allowed to remain on the graphic may be more difficult to remove during cleaning.
- Rinse off as much dirt and grit as possible with a spray of water.
- See "Difficult Contaminants" below, for spot cleaning bird droppings, tar, etc.
- Use a wet, non-abrasive detergent and a soft, clean cloth or sponge.
- Rinse thoroughly with clean water. To reduce water spotting, immediately use a silicone squeegee to remove water and finish with a clean microfiber cloth.

Automated Car Washes

Brush-type car washes are **not** recommended as they can abrade the film and cause edges to lift or chip, as well as dulling the film's appearance. Brushless car washes are acceptable if absolutely necessary.

Pressure Washing

Although hand washing is the preferred cleaning method, pressure washing may be used under these conditions:

- Ensure the water pressure is kept below 2000 psi (14 MPa).
- Keep water temperature below 80 °C.
- Use a spray nozzle with a 40 degree wide angle spray pattern.
- Keep the nozzle at least 300 mm away from and perpendicular (at 90 degrees) to the graphic.

Important Note:

Holding the nozzle of a pressure washer at an angle to graphic may lift the edges of the film.

Difficult Contaminants

Soften difficult contaminants such as bug splatter, bird droppings, tree sap and similar contaminants by soaking them for several minutes with very hot, soapy water. Rinse thoroughly and dry. If further cleaning is needed, test one of these products in an inconspicuous area to ensure no damage to the graphics: Meguiar's Gold Class Bug and Tar Remover or 3M Citrus Base Cleaner. Isopropyl alcohol (IPA) (two parts IPA to 1 part water) or denatured alcohol may also help. Spot clean the contaminants. Do not use rough scrubbing or abrasive tools, which will scratch the film. Wash and rinse off all residue immediately.

Fuel Spills

Wipe off immediately to avoid degrading the vinyl and adhesive. Then wash, rinse and dry as soon as possible.

Wax

Most standard graphic films and over-laminates can be waxed with a high quality car wax. Before use, test and approve in an inconspicuous area. Do not use any abrasive polishes or cutting compounds or use carnauba-based wax products.

Important Note:

For carbon fiber and brushed metal films, or matte or textured films, we do not recommend any wax product. We also do not recommend waxes when gloss laminate has been used, such as on digitally printed graphics.

Store Indoors or Under Cover Whenever Possible

Vinyl graphics (just like paint) are degraded by prolonged exposure to sun and atmospheric pollutants, particularly on the horizontal surfaces such as hood, trunk lid and roof. Whenever possible, store in a garage or at least in a shaded area during the day. At night protect the car from dew or rain, which may contain acidic pollutants (a common problem in many large metropolitan areas). When a garage is not available, consider using a cloth car cover at night. If your graphics start to discolor or turn brown (which is caused by acidic pollution), immediately remove the graphics from the vehicle to avoid staining the underlying paint.