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promotional products

Vinyl Installation Guide and Tips

Method #1. Horizontal Hinge

Tools Needed:

Squeegee; Grease Pencil (white or blue only!); 2" & 1/4" Masking Tape

Prepare your surface and vinyl as outlined on back cover prior to employing this technique

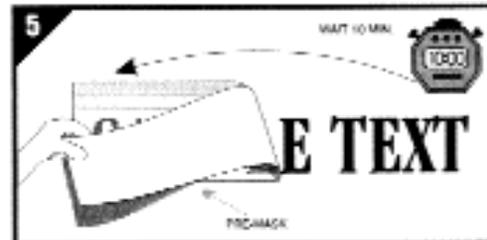
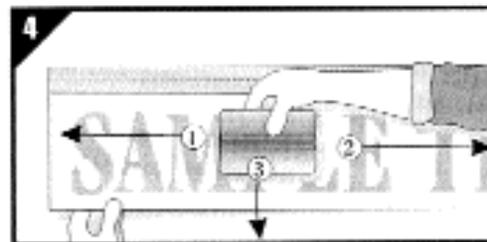
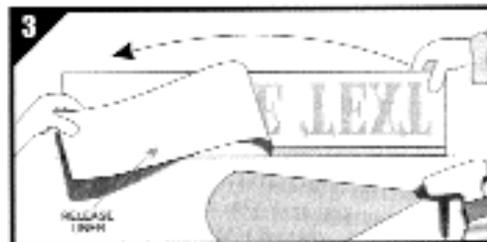
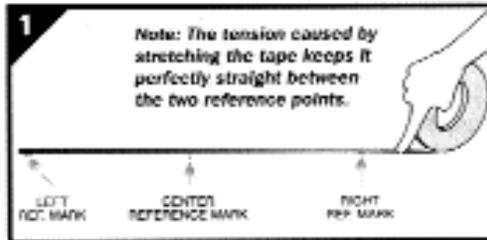
1. With your grease pencil, mark the center and edge points along the baseline of your image area. Then mark your baseline with a strip of 1/4" masking tape (on smaller jobs, simply draw the baseline with your grease pencil).

2. Apply a strip of 2" masking tape across the top of your prepared vinyl (see page 4 for proper pre-application), leaving 1" of overhang. Now align the reference points on your vinyl with those on the substrate and press the overhanging tape to create a hinge. You can now remove the tape marking your baseline and clean any remaining tape residue or grease pencil marks.

3. Hinge your image upward until it lays flat against the substrate above and remove the release liner (backing paper). Then spray a thin coating of application fluid to the surface below. (application fluid is not required on small size jobs and optional on big sizes).

4. Let the material hinge back down holding it away from the surface with one hand. With your opposite hand, squeegee the image in continuous, firm strokes. Start with one stroke to the left, then right and finally down the middle.

5. Wait at least 10 minutes, then slowly peel away the pre-mask (application tape) at a 180 degree angle from the surface starting in the upper right-hand corner and slowly pulling down and left. If the pre-mask does not release easily, spraying the outside with application fluid will help release it from the vinyl lettering or graphics.



Method #2. Sliced Horizontal Hinge

Tools needed:

Squeegee; Grease Pencil (white or blue only!); 2" & 1/4" Masking Tape; Tape Measure

Prepare your surface and vinyl as outlined on back cover prior to employing this technique

1. With your grease pencil, mark the center and edge points along the baseline of your image area. Then mark your baseline with a strip of 1/4" masking tape (on smaller jobs, simply draw the baseline with your grease pencil).
2. Apply a strip of 2" masking tape across the top of your prepared vinyl (see page 4 for proper pre-application), leaving 1" of overhang. Now align the reference points on your vinyl with those on the substrate and press the overhanging tape to create a hinge. You can now remove the tape marking your baseline and clean any remaining tape residue or grease pencil.
3. With your utility knife, carefully cut between the letters or graphic elements so that each hinges independently. Cut from the bottom edge to the middle of the masking tape hinge to allow for easy removal of the release liner in sections.
4. Lift each section up (one at a time) until it lays flat against the substrate above it. Remove the backing paper, then while holding your image away from the surface with one hand, squeegee with other in continuous firm strokes. Repeat this step until all of the sections have been applied.
5. Slowly peel away the pre-mask (application tape) at a 180 degree angle from the surface starting in the upper right-hand corner and slowly pulling down and left.



Method #3. Vertical End Hinge

Tools needed:

Squeegee, grease pencil (white or blue only!), 2" & 1/4" masking tape, tape measure

Prepare your surface and vinyl as outlined on back cover prior to employing this technique

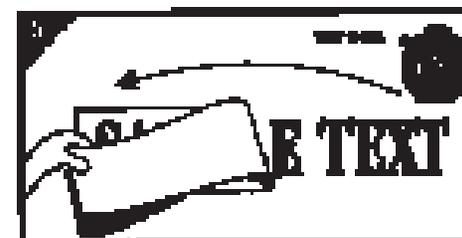
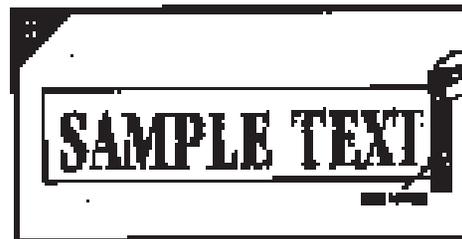
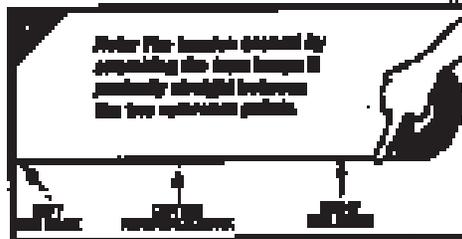
1. With your grease pencil, mark the center and edge points along the baseline of your image area. Then mark your baseline with a strip of 1/4" masking tape (on smaller jobs, simply draw the baseline with your grease pencil).

2. Align the reference points on your vinyl with those on the substrate and secure your image in place with small pieces of masking tape. You can now remove the tape marking your baseline and clean any remaining tape residue or grease pencil marks.

3. Apply a strip of 2" masking tape to one end of your image allowing for 1" of overhang, then remove the two small pieces of tape that are holding your image in place.

4. Remove the release liner using essentially the same technique as outlined in the horizontal hinge method (see page 4) and spray application fluid onto your surface. Now holding your image away from your substrate - approximately 1" above the surface - squeegee the image with continuous, firm strokes.

5. Wait at least 10 minutes, then slowly peel away the pre-mask (application tape) at a 180 degree angle from the surface starting in the upper right-hand corner and slowly pulling down and left. If the pre-mask does not release easily, spraying the outside with application fluid will help release it from the vinyl lettering or graphics.



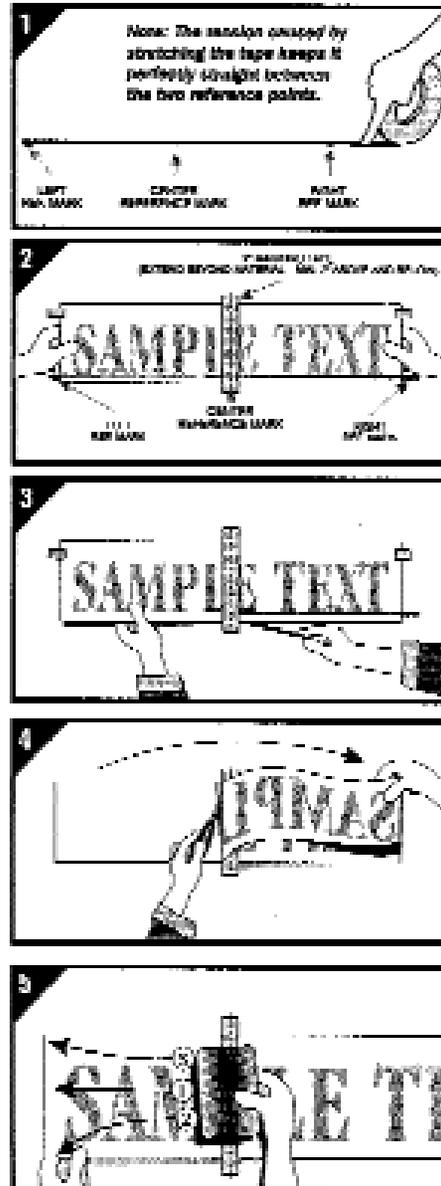
Method #4. Vertical Center Hinge

Tools needed:

Squeegee, grease pencil (white or blue only), 2" & 1/4" masking tape, tape measure

Prepare your surface and vinyl as outlined on back cover prior to employing this technique

1. With your grease pencil, mark the center and edge points along the baseline of your image area. Then mark your baseline with a strip of 1/4" masking tape.
2. Align the reference points on your vinyl with those on the substrate and secure your image in place with two small pieces of masking tape at each upper corner. Now apply a strip of 2" masking tape, vertically along the center reference mark. Be sure the tape extends at least 2" above and below your material.
3. Gently lifting the bottom edge, remove the tape marking your baseline and clean any remaining tape residue or grease pencil marks.
4. Starting on one side, remove the small strip of tape holding the corner and fold your material to the side until it lays flat against itself. Peel back the release liner, then cut it away at the hinge point. With the release liner removed, spray a light coating application fluid onto this half of your application surface.
5. While holding material away from the surface of your substrate, squeegee the image with continuous, firm strokes. Start by making one stroke across the middle of your image, then work it out to the top and bottom edges going from the middle outwards.
6. Repeat step 4 on the opposite half of your image. Please note that on the second half you will need to fold the material just past the hinge point in order to remove all the remaining release liner, once it has been peeled away from your vinyl.
7. As in step 5, squeegee the image with continuous firm strokes, beginning in middle



Method #4. Vertical Center Hinge continued

and working to the sides. Then squeegee the entire image to remove all remaining application fluid from behind your material. Wait at least 10 minutes, then slowly peel away the pre-mask (application tape) at a 180 degree angle from the surface starting in the upper right-hand corner and slowly pulling down and left. If the pre-mask does not release easily, spraying the outside with application fluid will help release it from the vinyl lettering or graphics.



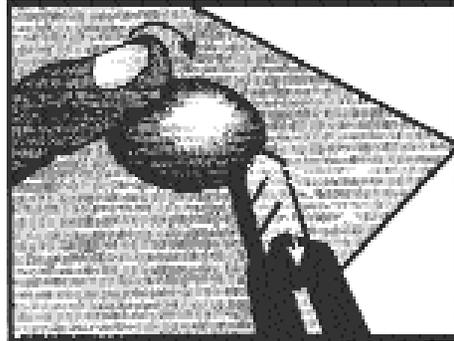
Using the Vertical Hinge Method is extremely useful when installing large images without an assistant. This method allows a person to install images up to eight feet in length by cutting the job into two four foot halves - as in the vehicle illustration below.



Removing Bubbles and Wrinkles

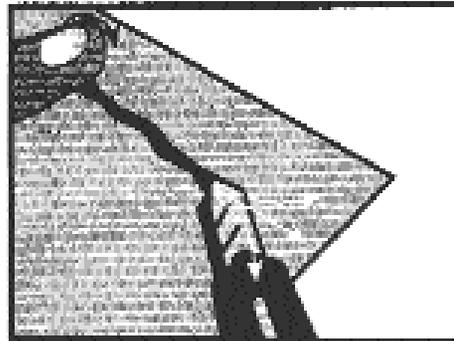
BUBBLES

If your image has tiny bubbles across the surface when you have finished your installation, most will disappear within a few days of exposure to the sun. For larger bubbles, you can make a tiny - barely visible - incision in the side of the bubble. The air can then be gently removed by rolling your finger over the bubble towards the incision. Be sure to use a razor-sharp knife or pin when slitting the bubbles to avoid gouges which can remain visible after smoothing.



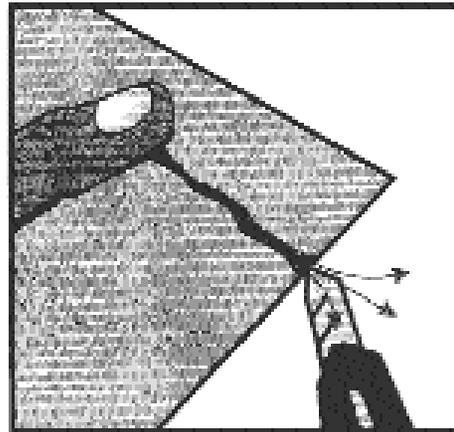
WRINKLES - Interior

You can repair most interior wrinkles in the same way you would a bubble, since they both are essentially trapped air. Cut a small incision and slowly roll your fingertip towards the opening. If a "crease" develops (the adhesive backing is stuck to itself), applying warm air will loosen the material allowing it to be smoothed out with your finger or squeegee. Note: when applying heat, be gentle (low setting on a hair dryer; if using a heat gun be very cautious).



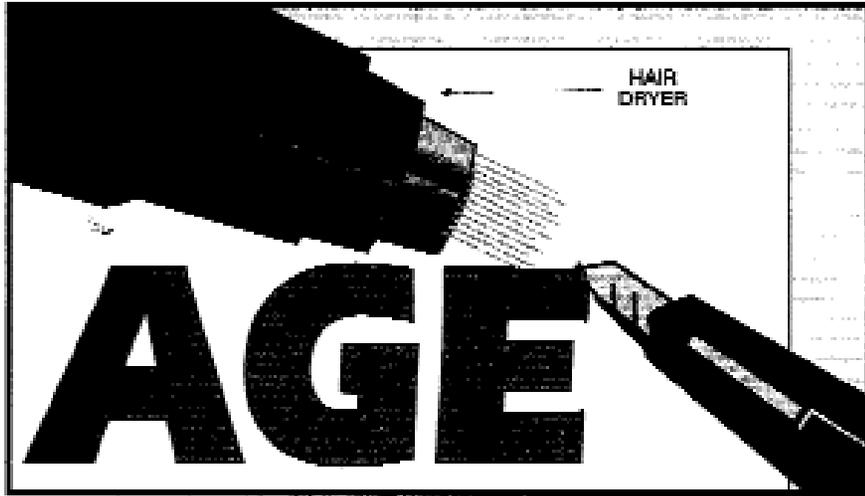
WRINKLES - Edges

Wrinkles which extend to the edge of your vinyl can often be removed by gently lifting the edge to allow an air passage, then smooth with your fingertip. If a "crease" remains, applying warm air to as described above.



Note: these techniques won't solve every problem. If creases or other imperfections remain visible, it is best to replace the affected letter or graphic element.

Removing Vinyl

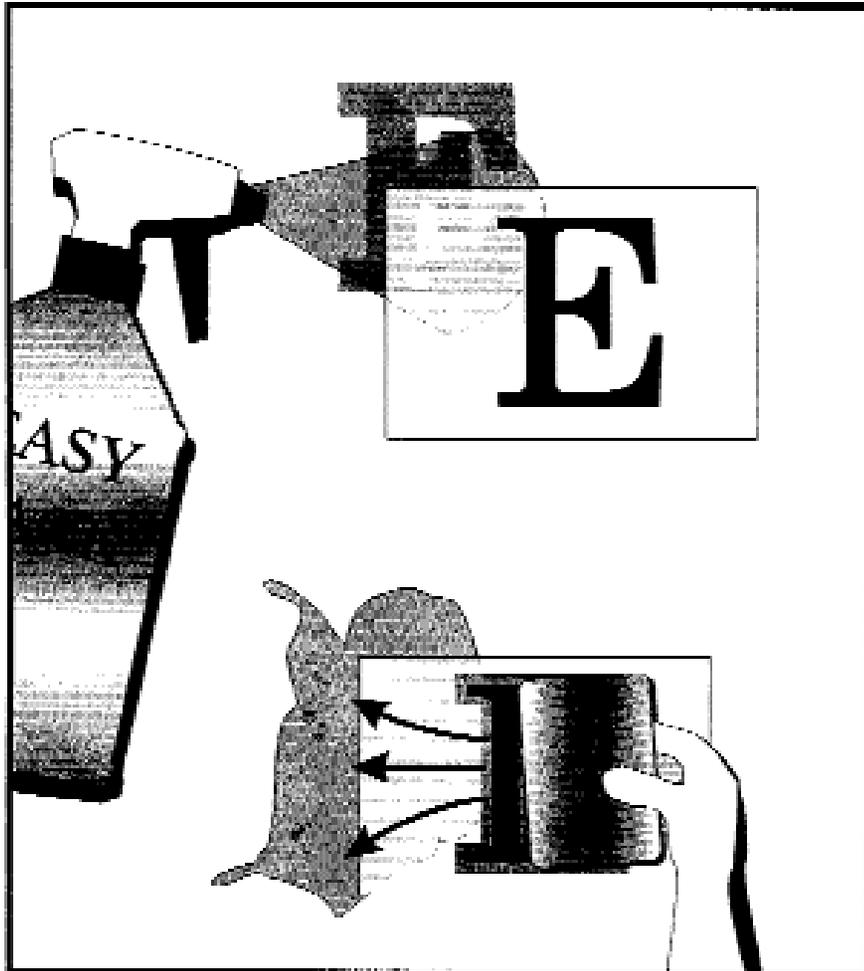


VINYL REMOVAL WITH A HAIR DRYER

Vinyl graphics are easily removed within the material's recommended life-span (3 to 5 years for intermediate vinyl, 5 to 7 years for premium). Simply apply a small amount of heat to the area to be removed, such that the surface is warm to the touch. Peel the corner back with a knife or tweezers until it is possible to grasp the material in your fingers. Then slowly pull at a 90 degree angle; applying small amounts of heat if necessary. When you are finished removing the desired image, wipe down the surface with an adhesive remover recommended for vinyl. Be sure and test a small area to insure no damage to your finish.

Other methods for removing vinyl include special wheels that attach to a drill that can take the vinyl off without damaging the paint. These special wheels are available from Gogogear.com.

Wet Application



Wet application is very helpful when dealing with large pieces. Special application fluid is available from Gogogear.com for \$3 per bottle.

1. Spray application fluid onto surface are where you intend to apply your image.
2. Position your Image, then firmly squeegee all remaining application fluid from under the image working from the center outward; begin lightly, then repeat with increasing pressure until no fluid remains. Wait ten minutes, then slowly remove the transfer tape.

Wet Application provides lubrication when tight registration is needed, or when applying multiple colors of vinyl to create special effects. This is also a valuable technique when first learning to apply vinyl, because it is so forgiving.

BEFORE INSTALLATION READ THIS

Surfaces

Vinyl can be applied to most properly prepared non-porous surfaces. It does not adhere well to latex painted surfaces or materials with large pores such as brick, stucco, or unpainted wood. Be sure to test your surface first prior to application.

Preparation

Be sure to clean all surfaces properly before installing vinyl. Make sure all oxidation, dirt and other contaminants are removed.

Temperature

The optimal temperature for vinyl application is between 16-27 degrees C (60-80 F). When the temperature is below 16 preheating will promote better adhesion. When the temperature is above 27, the vinyl adhesive becomes aggressive and prone to bubbling.

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