

Applying pressure sensitive vinyl decals isn't difficult. Anyone can do it, but it does require some common sense, a little manual dexterity and the right techniques. The following photos and instructions will help you discover a little bit of the technique you need for a successful application.

Note: If camouflage covering is applied to vehicles with paint that is not well bonded to the surface of the vehicle, some paint may be lost when the decals are removed.



Step 1

Wash and dry the vehicle thoroughly. The cleaner the vehicle is, the better the Camo decals will adhere. After washing, wipe the entire vehicle down with isopropyl alcohol or wax and silicone remover. Remember ... the more attention you pay to the cleanup and preparation, the more successful your application will be and the longer the decals will stay adhered. Decals will not stick well to rust or to flaking paint.



Step 2

Leaving the paper release liner on the decal, position the first panel, holding it in place with small pieces of masking tape on each edge. Position the panel leaving the maximum amount of excess material to trim off. In other words, if you're covering a 2' area with a 5' piece of material, try to save the entire 3' excess. Note: It's always best to begin applying graphics at the rear of the vehicle, moving toward the front with subsequent panels. Using the approach, panel overlap will occur from front to rear, helping to eliminate the effects of wind against the seams.



STEP 3

Apply a masking tape "hinge" across the entire width at the top of the decal, half on the decal, half on the vehicle (2" wide tape works best for this). Using this hinge, lift the bottom of the decal and remove the paper release liner. (In lieu of a tape hinge, fold back 2"-3" of the paper liner and rub it in place by hand.) Let the decal drop against the vehicle. Don't worry... the decal is produced using 3M's Comply™ Performance adhesive system, so it won't stick until you want it to stick.



Step 4

Slip a protective sleeve over the squeegee and squeegee the decal in place, beginning in the center at the top of the decal. Your squeegee strokes should be smooth and firm, moving from the center out, alternating left and right. Try holding the squeegee angled approximately 10° to 20° toward the open or un-squeegeed area. Do not angle the squeegee toward an area that has already been squeegeed, because this will trap air and create bubbles and wrinkles. Until the squeegee has pushed the decal firmly against the surface, you can lift the decal away from the surface to reposition it, if necessary.



Step 5

When approaching vehicle body contours and moldings, squeegee strokes made perpendicular to the contour are more effective. Squeegee the decal into a crease or body line as show at left. Do not squeegee the decal on both sides of a concave contour and then attempt to stretch it into the contour. The idea is to apply the decal while minimizing stretching the material. Once you've passed the contours, revert to the normal side-to-side squeegee patterns.



STEP 6

When you reach the end of a section, trim the excess material with a sharp knife. Save the excess for patching any troublesome areas you may encounter later. Or use it to cover your thermos bottle.

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Relief Cuts

Compound contours present the greatest challenge to decal application, but following a few easy steps will make it much more successful. Apply as much of the decal as possible to the flat surface(s) approaching the compound contour area. When you can no longer squeegee the decal without creating wrinkles or creases, it's time for a relief cut. Relief cuts are the best way to apply decals to compound curves.



A

In (A), a horizontal cut was made to expose the Head lamp and it's trim.



B

Then the decal was wrapped around the front of the vehicle and the diagonal relief cut was made



C

Then the decal was wrapped around the front of the vehicle and the diagonal relief cut was made



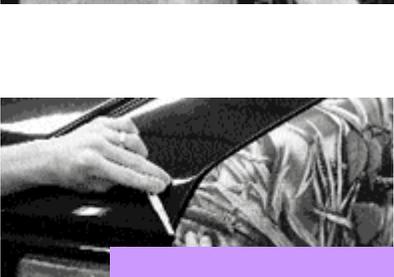
D

D) The triangular shape created by the relief cut was applied to the front of the vehicle.



E

(E) Then the rest of the panel was applied over the first piece



F

(F) and the decal was trimmed along the line of the fender.