



GUIDE 2 • STEP BY STEP

How to Apply Vinyl Wrap

The full method for wrapping a panel cleanly, with the detail that separates a professional finish from a frustrating one.

Before you start

Work warm, clean and unhurried. Ambient temperature around 18–22°C is ideal; below that, film fights you. Have your tools laid out and your panel fully prepped (see the Surface Prep guide) before you peel any backing.

The method

- 1 Final clean.** Wipe the prepped panel with isopropyl alcohol and let it flash off completely. Do not touch it afterwards with bare hands.
- 2 Measure and cut** your film with several centimetres of excess on every edge. Over-estimate — you can trim, you cannot add.
- 3 Position** the film over the panel and hold it in place with a couple of small tabs of masking tape if helpful. Peel back only part of the backing, not all of it at once.
- 4 Anchor the centre**, then work outward with overlapping squeegee strokes in a fanning motion, pushing air to the edges as you go.
- 5 Heat and conform** over curves and recesses with a heat gun on a low-to-moderate setting. Warm the film until it relaxes, stretch gently, and squeegee it into shape.
- 6 Tuck the edges**, wrapping film around panel lips where possible for a finish that will not lift. Use a microfibre over your squeegee to avoid scuffing on tight tucks.
- 7 Trim** excess with a fresh blade at a shallow angle, or use knifeless tape for blade-free lines that never touch the paint.
- 8 Post-heat** every stretched and curved area to roughly 90°C (a non-contact thermometer helps) so the film "remembers" its new shape and will not pull back over time.

Troubleshooting as you go

Bubbles

Small air bubbles can be chased to the nearest edge with firm squeegee strokes. Any that remain can be pricked with a fine pin and pressed flat — the hole is invisible once

closed.

Creases and wrinkles

Do not try to push a crease out. Lift the film back past the crease, let it relax, and re-lay it. Cast film tolerates this; forcing a crease flat sets it permanently.

Lifting edges

Edges that lift were usually under-cleaned or under-heated. Lift, re-clean with IPA, re-lay and post-heat. Wrapping film around an edge rather than ending on the face dramatically improves longevity.

THE GOLDEN RULE

Heat relaxes, heat sets. Use gentle heat to make film conform, then firmer heat to lock stretched areas in place. Skipping the post-heat is the most common reason wraps pull back at corners.