

Sign making on objects with the GRAFITACK 200-300 Series



Introductory remarks.

A brief preceding study will save you a lot of time and will guarantee a better end result. Always check the following points :

- What kind of surface do the vinyls need to be applied onto, and is this surface suited for self adhesive vinyls ?
- This vinyl is ideal for sign making indoors as well as outdoors on an even, smooth surface
- Check your plotter's knife pressure before cutting the complete job.

Due to its thickness, the Grafitack 200-300 series can be removed much easier than a cast film.

Make sure all necessary equipment and materials are ready at hand before starting the job.

Pay attention to your own safety and health. Take into account all safety prescriptions of the suppliers when using electric equipment and products that are necessary to complete the job successfully.

Make sure you comply with the legislation in your country. For some advertisement panels, a building licence is required.

The Preparation.

Tip 1: Always use Grafityp materials of the same kind in one job. Don't combine Graficast films with e.g. Grafitack films, applying one kind on top of the other. These films have different characteristics, which may have a negative influence on the end result.

Tip 2: Check whether certain plastic materials are suited for sign making. This can be done very easily. Clean the surface thoroughly and do the drop test. If you pour water on this surface, it shouldn't form drops. If drops appear on the surface, the material is not suited for wrapping with any material. A structured surface also means a reduced adhesion, which is not to be advised.

Cleaning.

- Vehicles need to be cleaned thoroughly at least 1 day before applying vinyls on them.
- Use a simple detergent to wash the vehicle and rinse it abundantly, or go to the car wash. Make sure that no dust, sand or mud stay behind in small cracks or indents. Use compressed air to dry all cracks and protection strips of the vehicle.
- After washing the vehicle, allow it to acclimatize for a night in the workshop.
- Make sure all wax and polishing products have been removed completely. In most cases these have not been removed completely from new vehicles. They have to be removed by means of industrial cleaning products or a silicone remover (isopropanol is not sufficient in this case)
- Avoid damage to rubber and plastic car parts when using some corrosive products.
- When everything is completely clean, the complete surface needs to be cleaned once again with isopropanol. Isopropanol removes all detergents that stayed behind on the surface.
- Other objects to be wrapped always need to be cleaned and degreased thoroughly before you start wrapping them.
- If you need to apply the vinyl on sawn panels, it is of utmost importance that the sawn edges of these panels are cleaned thoroughly. Use compressed air to do so. After all, a lot of dust creeps into these edges, which is electrostatically attracted by the vinyl and thus gets in between the vinyl and the panel.

Tip 3: Keep your material, with the application film on top of it, flat and on top of each other, making sure it is deformed as little as possible. If you need to enroll the material, make sure the material is enrolled with the application film at the outside.

The Application.

Tip 4: Make sure the workshop is dust-free, that the necessary ambient temperature has been reached, and that the job can not be complicated by direct sunlight or by a heat source. Also make sure the floor is completely clean, as the vinyl gets statically loaded during the application process, thus attracting dust very easily.

The vinyls are always applied dry.

- Run a couple of tests first. They can save you a lot of work. Apply a test strip on the body of the car, on the shop window or on the panel and check the adhesive strength.

The tools:

- Squeegee
- Cutting knife
- Heat gun
- Extension cord
- Sufficient light
- Roll of tape
- Electric current
- Meter, felt-tip, pencil ...

The preparation:

- Place the vinyl (with its backing paper) on the surface. Use paper tape or magnetic holders to do so.
- Always avoid cutting in the paintwork or on glass. This can cause scratches and later even rust marks.
- Apply some reference points where vinyl and car body meet, so you can easily place the vinyl at its exact position again.

Tip 5: In case you have to apply extremely big signs, it is often easier to cut your design in between lines or characters after you have defined their exact position.

The application of the vinyl:

- Remove the backing paper from the vinyl.
- Position the vinyl without folds against the reference points you applied earlier.
- Rub the vinyl smoothly by means of the squeegee. Make sure that the air between the object and the vinyl can always escape.
- A detailed manual on applying Grafitack can be found on our website www.grafityp.com.

The finishing.

The exact removal of the mounting film determines the quality of the end result to a large extent.

- Allow the film to adhere to its surface for as long as possible before removing the mounting film.
- Remove the mounting film under an angle of 180°. In this way, the pulling strength on the vinyl will be a lot less, and less air bubbles will be "sucked" under the vinyl.
- Small air bubbles will disappear automatically after a certain period of time. Larger air bubbles need to be punctured.

After the job has been completed.

- Leave the car in the workshop for a night, so it can get used to its new coating. Allow it to cool down in the acclimatized area slowly.

Cleaning and Maintenance.

- The car can be washed in a car wash without any problems after about three days.
- We advise you not to clean the vehicle with a high-pressure cleaner.

- Maintenance : Advertisement panels that are placed at the side of the road are exposed to water and dust day after day. You can "polish" the sign to make it extra glossy again after some time. This shall only be done with the products that are especially meant for this purpose. The old application "wax on – wax off" with polishing paste is not applicable.

Vinyl is a soft material. Therefore the cleaning and maintenance shall only be executed with non-scouring cleaning agents, without strong solvents or corrosive ingredients.

Removal of the vinyl.

The Grafitack 200-300 Series has been developed especially not to leave behind any glue residues after removing the vinyl. If you wish to remove the vinyl, we advise you to heat it with a heat gun. Pull off the vinyl under an angle of 90°. If any glue residues stay behind on the surface, they can be removed with isopropanol.

Tip 6: If any glue residues stay behind, this is often because the vinyl is too warm and the adhesive is too cold. Just wait for a moment until the heat has reached the area between the adhesive layer and the paintwork, the panel or the shop window, and things will become much easier. You will find the right balance between heating and removing the vinyl after some practice.