

CANOE & KAYAK DECAL INSTALLATION INSTRUCTIONS

The adhesive on the decal material is not as sticky as some children's stickers. It's actually not really meant to be. Sounds strange I know, but here's the reason why. The material is an outdoor sign material and is also used for industrial automotive decals. The decal adhesive "cures" over time, meaning the longer it's on the surface the better it adheres. When it's initially applied it can be removed very easily. Also a number of things can cause sticking problems... something on the surface, oily hands, cool temperatures, high humidity, and not giving the decal enough "cure" time. Always wash your hands first - this reduces the natural oils on the skin. Make sure you don't touch the adhesive area of the decal - oils in your skin are easily picked up by the decal adhesive backing thus reducing the stickiness. Decals can be used for any smooth surface application including windows, boats and cars. Not for use on textured or pebbled surfaces.



Step 1 Start with a warm, dry canoe or kayak. The surface should be in the 70 to 90 degree range. You can use a heat gun or blow dryer to warm the surface. If it's too hot the vinyl decal material may stretch and promote air bubbles.

Using a Windex type solution and a lint free rag or towel, clean the area of your canoe or kayak where you want to place the decal. If it's still not clean you might try Denatured Alcohol. If the surface has ever been waxed or has silicon film there could still be some residue the Windex doesn't cut so using Denatured Alcohol could help. Make sure to test in an inconspicuous area. Let the surface completely dry after cleaning.



Step 2 You might even want to practice using one of the provided "Kanuyak.com" decals. Position the decal. You can see the decal through the clear pre-mask material so you can align and rotate it as needed. You can tape down one edge with masking tape to keep it in place. (For large decals you could hinge it in the middle with tape and cut off half of the paper backing material, apply one side and then remove the rest of the backing and apply that side.) Peel the backing paper away and place one edge gently on the surface. Using the application squeegee, begin applying gentle pressure to the decal starting from the center and working out to the edges as you lower the decal into place. Once fully applied, squeegee the decal again with greater pressure. Work from the center to the edges.



Step 3 Let the decal set to cure and "bite" into the surface - maybe 15 to 30 minutes depending on temperature. The surface should be warm. The cooler the surface the less sticky the adhesive. With a cool surface the decal wants to stay on the pre-mask instead of the surface. If when you pull the pre-mask off and some of the decal pulls up with it, just rub it back down. At this point, maybe even use a hair dryer to warm the surface a bit if it's cool. Starting at one corner slowly peel off the clear pre-mask material. Slowly remove the pre-mask at an acute angle. Don't pull the pre-mask straight up as this will pull the decal away from the surface. Work slowly and be mindful of small sections of the decal and thin points that may start to pull away with the pre-mask, if they do, just press them back down. The decal adhesive will cure over the next few days.



Step 4 Gently wipe the surface with a clean rag or towel. Squeegee the decal again, working from the center to the edges. Any small air bubbles can be worked out to the edges or stuck with a straight pin and pushed out. Read the problem solving section below for instructions of how to handle various problems. Apply pressure to the edges of the decal with your fingers to make sure they are secure.

Solving Problems Pulling the clear pre-mask off prematurely can also leave you with unsightly bubbles. You need to wait a while before you pull it off because the adhesive needs time to "bite" into the substrate. Most of the time you will end up with some very small bubbles after installation. Small bubbles will disappear after a while.

"Blisters" (large bubbles) - The best way to avoid them is to not allow pockets of air to form as you install the decal. You can solve the problem by simply pricking a tiny hole with a very sharp needle or pin on the side of the blister. This will allow you to push down the blister and the air exits from the tiny hole. DO NOT PUSH ON blisters WITHOUT A PINHOLE, YOU WILL STRETCH THE DECAL causing a permanent wrinkle.

"Warts" - Warts are caused by specks of dirt left on the surface. The only way to solve this problem is to remove surface contaminants prior to installation. Once you have installed a decal with a speck of dirt or lint under it, you can't get it out again without destroying the decal.

Removal This is not going to be as easy as applying it—after all, it's designed to stick. After a few months the adhesive has completely cured and will probably remain on the surface after the decal vinyl has been removed. For starters you will want the surface to be warm. You can either place it in the sun or use a heat gun or blow dryer. Starting from any edge pull the decal off the surface. Have fun! Make a game out of it and see how big of a piece you can remove at one time. Finished yet? Now comes the fun part...all that sticky stuff left on the surface. Don't despair it too can be removed! Go to your local hardware or grocery store and pick up a bottle of "Goo-Gone." Apply liberally and off it comes...with some pressure and rubbing. I told you it wasn't going to be easy.