

HOW TO INSTALL VINYL GRAPHICS

Installation Process:

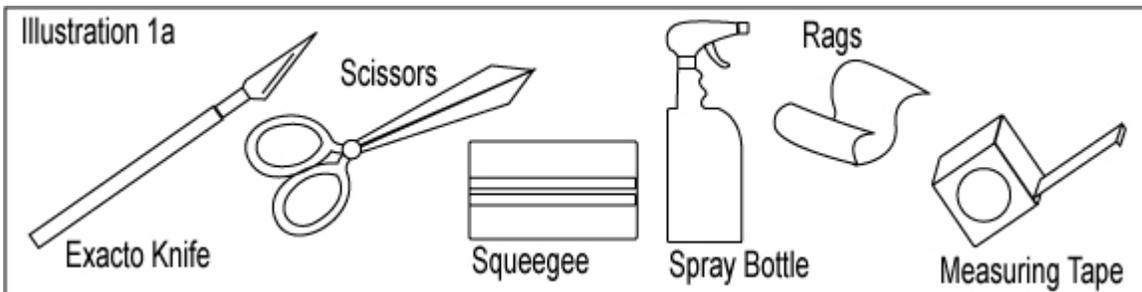
Lost Souls Tattoo is in no way liable for any procedure you may choose to do and that may be offered on this page/file.

To install your product when you receive it in the mail or in person and choose to install it yourself; carefully remove it from the box or packaging that it came in.

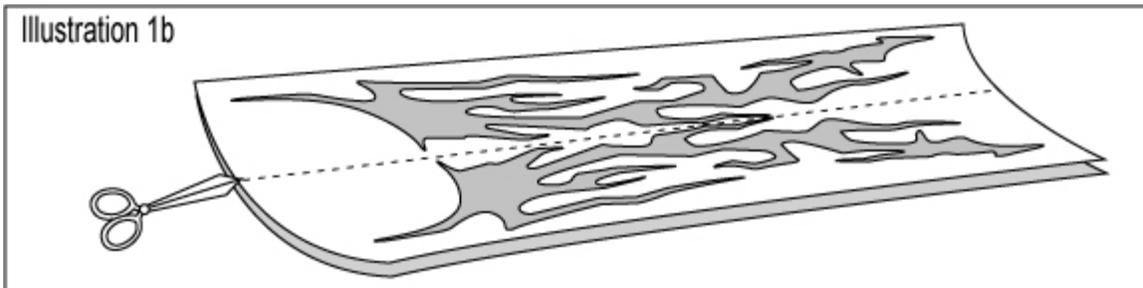
Lay out the product for close inspection.

Closely observe the product to make sure everything is to your specifications.

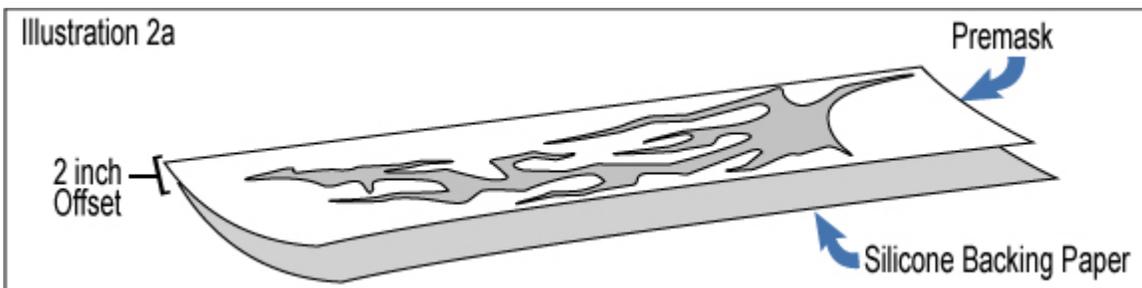
Make sure to have a triangulated (or similar) exacto knife that is sharp, a pair of scissors, your enclosed squeegee, a spray bottle with a drop of dish soap or vinegar mixed in it to clean surface of vehicle, (do not use to 'float' the product while installing, this will void your **WARRANTY**). Please wipe the vehicle dry and let it sit to dry for 20-30 minutes prior to installation. Don't use paper towels, use an old T shirt or chamois, a decent sized rag for wiping dry the vehicle after cleaning, and a measuring tape. (see illustration 1a)



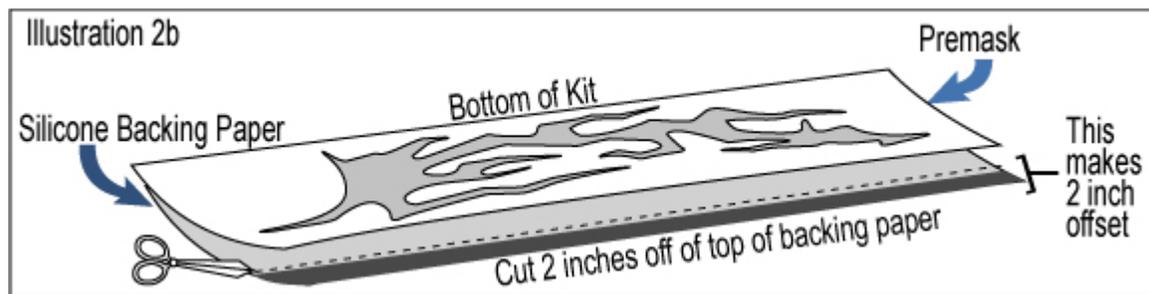
Cut apart any pieces of the decal design that require to be installed in different locations on vehicle, if applicable, with your scissors.(see illustration 1b)



Carefully lift off the decal from the silicone backing paper (a friend to help might be needed for long decals) and set it back on to the silicone backing paper with approximately 2-3" inches hanging off the most horizontal top of the backing paper. This is called 'off-setting'. (see illustration 2a)

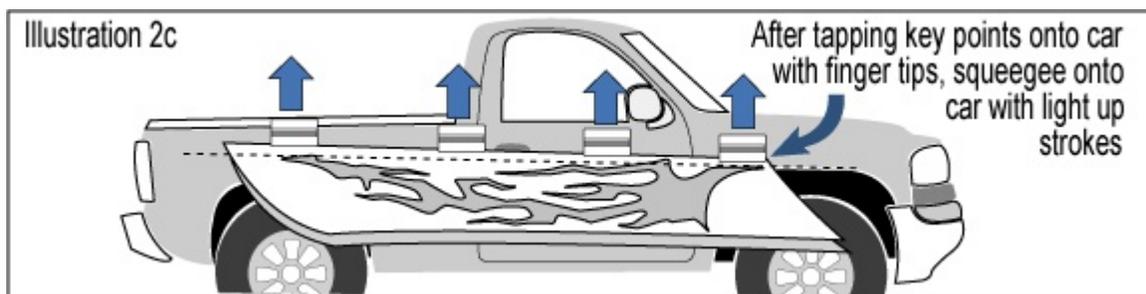


Alternatively, if you are uncomfortable removing whole graphic from backing paper you can lift approximately 2" inches of the top of decal away from backing paper and cut off about 1-2 inches of the silicone backing paper, then let the decal relax back onto the silicone backing paper.(see illustration 2b)



Be sure you are ready to go. Once the adhesive is exposed it is all too easy to get debris and grime onto the 'sticky' part of the vinyl and compromise the installation success.

Now assuming you have measured where you want the product to be installed onto, lightly tap key points of the exposed decal onto the vehicle body for placement. Check and finalize the location you chose by squeegeeing the adhered part of the pre-mask (the off-set that is on top of your decal) into place.(see illustration 2c) Do not exert excessive force, it will warp product, create bubbles.

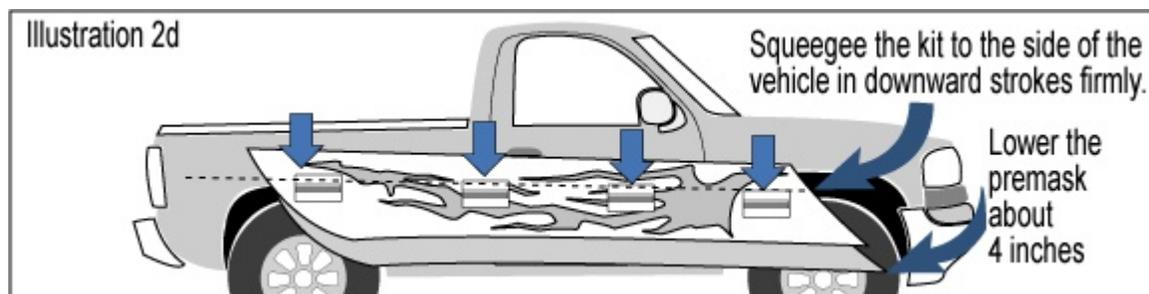


Stand back and view your work at all times. It is far too easy to say 'almost perfect' and it is that kind of thinking that makes the difference between a professional looking installation end up looking like a couple of guys with beer in the other hand while installing. Save the beer for later.

Measure twiceapply once.

Now, lift up the flap of backing paper and lift away the decal from it. Remove it all the way off and lower the backing paper towards ground. Do it so you have approximately 4-5 inches of exposed decal to be adhered to the surface of vehicle (or whatever destination). In downward strokes with your squeegee, move out toward the edges (just like vinyl flooring is installed....same technique) effectively adhering the exposed vinyl decal to the final destination. Then let the decal rest on the backing paper again until you are ready to do another section. Smaller installations are easier.

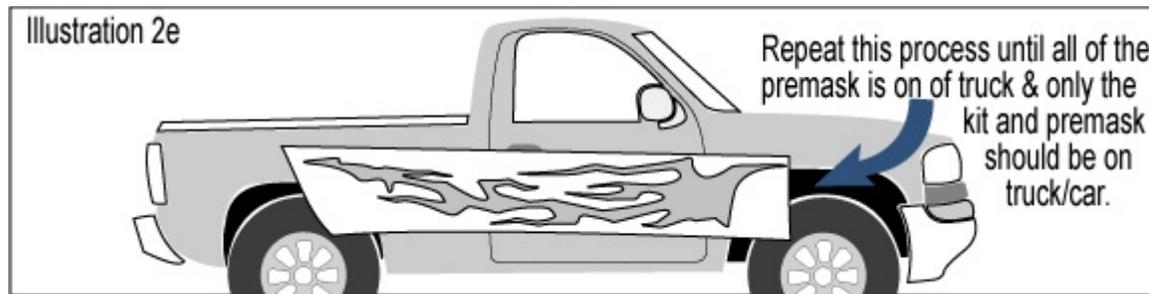
(see illustration 2d)



Now with your squeegee, firmly (but not excessively) apply pressure downward and from the centre (just like you do with flooring). Don't worry about air bubbles unless they are large or wrinkled. *See section on 'Surgery'

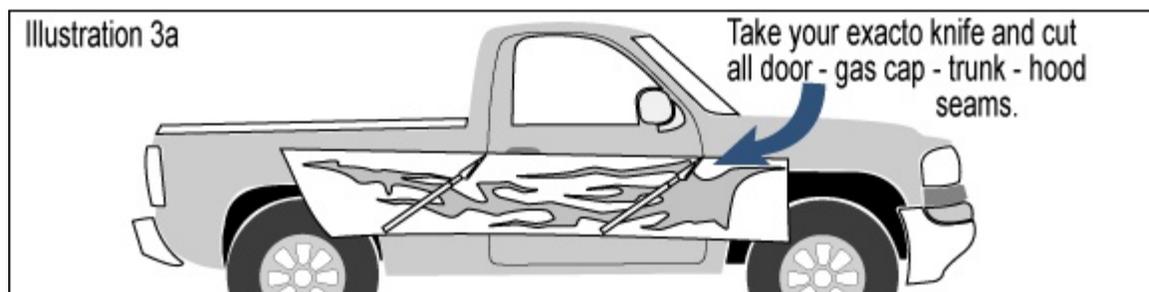
below for remedying that situation.

Repeat this off-setting install process until the silicone backing paper is completely away and removed from the decal, which should now be applied in whole onto your final destination / vehicle with the 'pre-mask' on top of the vinyl decal still. (see illustration 2e)

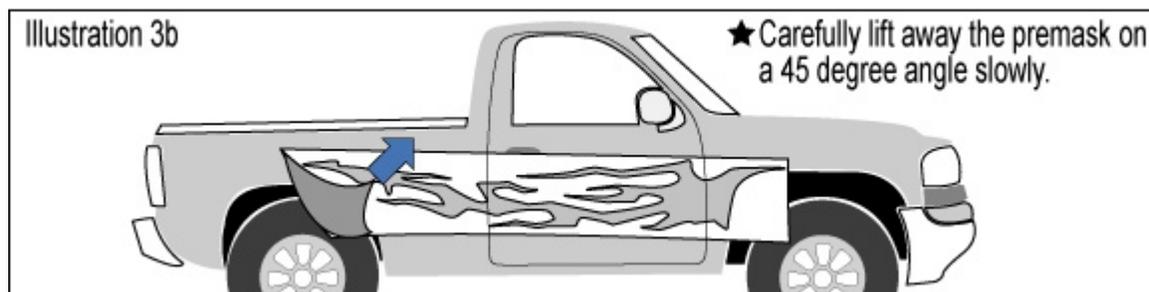


Don't go driving away yet.

Get your triangulated exacto knife and now carefully cut a straight line in between the DOOR, TRUNK, HOOD, GAS CAP.....wherever there is a seam. It is acceptable to wait till pre-mask is off of vehicle and graphic to cut seams as well. Some people like to fold the remainder material of the cut vinyl on door seams behind the metal to the inside. Some like to take the chance and cut again along the actual edge of the door metal so you have no material to fold under. Both are acceptable. It is your choice. (see illustration 3a)



Now with all that said and done, you should be able to carefully on a 45 degree angle, pull away the pre-mask paper. Do so in small calculated sections until all of the pre-mask is gone. Don't drive away yet. (see illustration 3b)



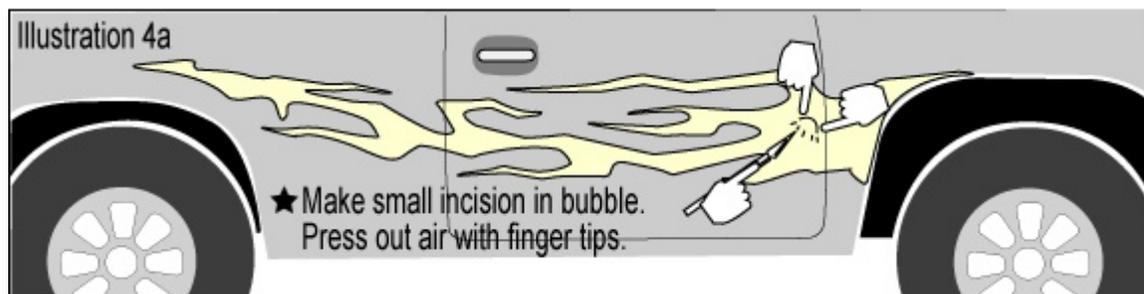
Now inspect the vehicle decal for bubbles, wrinkles, seams to make sure they are all in good condition or not present at all. When a seam is present in a designed decal, ALWAYS put the top part of seam facing towards back of vehicle and downward when applicable. If you reverse this by any reason, over time the seam will lift away from its mated piece because of driving at 100km an hour over time and all the elements will get at it.

SURGERY

If you experienced bubbles and creasing or wrinkles while installing here is what you do.

Sometimes, with what I call a 'Rip & Snap' technique you can lift off the area that has a bubble if it is freshly applied and still has the pre-mask on. Just grab the afflicted area with your thumb and index fingers, and slowly lift with a small tug and release - repeating this process if necessary until you have the edge of the bubble exposed and open. Then squeegee the vinyl back down again thus removing the bubble. If you are skilled enough, use your triangulated exacto knife on the adhesive side in question and your finger pad on top side of decal. This works the best, but it requires skill.

If the above technique for whatever reason is not available to you (or you are not comfortable with it), take your triangulated exacto knife and insert the tip of it into the edge of the bubble. Then carefully and easily push the air out towards the tiny hole/incision you made. The better you do it the less you will have to repeat the process with the bubble and the better it will turn out.(see illustration 4a)



Wrinkles are a problem, and if you were following my instructions carefully it should never have happened. So that's your slap on the wrist part. Now for the resolve.

Depending on where the wrinkle is sometimes you can lift the area effected and stretch the decal area and then replace it onto the vehicle body (some vinyl roll-stock is specifically made for stretching these days for body wrap designs on vehicles. With 'Airbrushed' or 'Solvent printed' decals you are pretty much hooped. This will alter the lines and the colour of the area effected but it wont be wrinkled. Have clean fingers when doing this, finger oils drastically reduce the stickiness of the decal backing with repeated handling. You are on your own if you choose to do this as per **WARRANTY** It is better not screw up in the first place.

The other resolve is to surgically cut a line along the ridge of the wrinkle, or TAKE IT TO A PROFESSIONAL SIGN SHOP. Cut it so that depending on where it is, the top seam will flow backward or be above the lower tab under the flap of the wrinkled seam. This is because if you fold the upper part of the wrinkle seam so that it is facing forward, wind, rain, grit and grime and vehicle travel speed will lift the afflicted area away, sort of rolling it back and off. Slicing the fold from above or inserting triangle blade under fold and cut up is a judgement call and is specific to the item, vehicle and location and all of this voids your **WARRANTY**. These 'tips' are tips that we offer because nobody else offers them online for free. **We hold no responsibility for what you choose to do just because we are providing techniques that require skill. This install page is a free resource for all. Damages and 'Our' way of doing it is simply our way, it doesn't mean you have to do it. So I repeat, "We are not responsible for what you choose to do and what you do if you bought decals off of us will affect or void your **WARRANTY**. Go to a professional if you can't deal with what we explain here."**

Always make sure to fold the seams of cut wrinkles towards back of vehicle or towards the ground.

The last resolve is to alter the graphic entirely. This will **VOID** your **WARRANTY**, so sometimes it is better to just get a professional to do it problem free and retain your warranty as active. Your call.

If you are unsure of any procedure go to a sign studio or installation shop and have them do it.

Most bubbles will relax and disappear within a few days without any surgery. So wait to see if they do relax.

Do NOT use power washers or power wash bays to clean your vehicle if you have any kind of decal(s) on your vehicle. This will VOID your **WARRANTY as well. Take pride in your vehicle and hand wash your vehicle if you have decals on it. Hand wax vehicle too if you wax at all AFTER decal(s) have been applied. I do not wax my vehicles with graphics on them, ever.**

Another good tip is to take your hair dryer on low heat approximately 6-7 inches away from decal / sign and 'heat seal' the vinyl onto its final destination. Works very well when done properly. Properly means apply heat until you feel the vinyl warm up, then let it cool. When it is not...it voids your **WARRANTY** because you cooked it. **DO NOT USE HEAT GUNS.....EVER!**

To remove old decals and vinyl, go to an auto parts supply store and ask for an eraser wheel. This attaches to your common house hold drill. Turn on drill and go against the spin while drawing along the old vinyl. You will be surprised the effort you will be saving. I think they cost around \$40.00 these days but you will get a wheel big enough to do about 1-2 vehicles, depending on how much vinyl is on it and how quickly you get the hang of the tool. After vinyl is removed a light wash and towel dry with a chamois is all you need. Very cool.

If you have questions or problems other than what has been dealt with here, email me or call me. Go to [Contact](#) page. The resolve and solutions that we provide is what we would do as professionals that I have been doing it for over 30 years, it does not mean it is what you should do; and in most cases I question the skill of the average weekend warrior. I just don't like secrets, knowledge should be accessible to everyone.

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