

ATV Graphics Application Guide

Thank you for your interest in graphic kits from Twister Graphics. In this decal application guide the featured quad is a 2003 Polaris Predator but the basic application instructions are the same on any ATV that uses the decal materials.



Please follow the instructions below to ensure you get the best results from your new graphics kit.

Preparing the Plastic

Wash, thoroughly clean and dry your ATV to remove any dirt from the decal area. Remove all existing decals and smooth any nicks or scratches in the plastic with a razor knife or sandpaper. The smoother the plastic the better final appearance the decals will have once applied. Room temperatures should not be below 60 degrees but if this is not possible you may want to remove the plastic and apply indoors or use a heat gun to warm the decals and plastic for application.

Cleaning the Plastic Before Application

Once your plastic is decal and nick-free you need to remove any chemical films or oils that may still be present on your plastic.

Wipe down your plastic with isopropyl alcohol and a soft rag to remove any oils from your hands or waxes from some plastic cleaners and polishes.

New plastic usually has a film coating used as a molding release during manufacturing so they will also need wiped down before graphics application.

Along with having squeaky clean plastic you may also need to use the same rag to wipe your hands during application. Oils from the skin can reduce the gripping ability of the adhesive so remember to wipe your hands during application. This will also allow repositioning without damaging the adhesive.



Starting Graphics Application

Starting with the gas tank area, align the upper edges of the decal with the plastic and apply working your way to the lower left (in this example) corner of the graphic. Slowly use your thumb and slide it back and forth as the decal is lowered onto the plastic. What you are trying to do is make sure you apply the decal without trapping any air bubbles under the decal. If this happens you should be able to pull back the decal to the bubble area, releasing the air and continuing along until the entire decal is in place.

As long as your hands are oil-free, and you do not overstretch the decal, you should be able to partially pull back and re-apply the vinyl without any loss in adhesive strength until it fits the contours of the plastic.



Fitting Vinyl in Difficult Areas

In applying this decal on the Predator 500 you may also find using some heat from a heat gun will relax the vinyl somewhat to allow conforming to the sharp angles near the headlight and fender areas. This is the most difficult area on the Predator to apply the decals so be very patient, take your time and make sure you work the vinyl in to the difficult lower areas.

I find I have the best results by applying the decal, pulling back and reapplying to slowly stretch into the fender tank seam until it fits without being forced.

Once applied I then warm the decal with the heat gun and rub with more force in those hard to fit areas to make sure the adhesive bonds with the plastic especially in the seams.

Bubble Removal

You are probably going to have some bubbles that were missed in applying the graphics so here's how to do it.

Rub the applied graphic towards the air bubble and get it as small as you can. Then take a sharp needle and poke a hole in the highest point to allow the trapped air to escape once heat is applied.

Next take a heat gun and heat this area until the air in the bubble expands and escapes through the hole. Now you can rub out any remaining air and the bubble will be gone.



See, that wasn't so bad?

Here's the same panel after releasing the air bubbles.

Any remaining trapped air should reduce more as it cools and the process can be repeated if needed.



Side Panel Application

Now you'll want to apply the lower front panel graphic that will overlap the tank decal you've just applied.

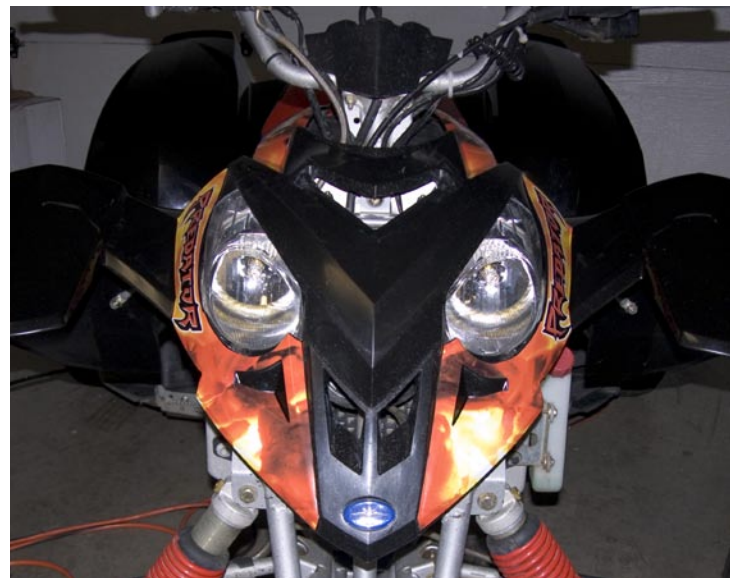
Start at the front and align the graphic to follow the shape of the plastic. Slowly use your thumb and apply the decal as shown while holding tension and guiding the graphic in position as you apply.

You will want to make sure this graphic has about a 1/8" overlap with the tank decal you just installed and was designed for the small amount of decal stretching that will happen as you apply the decal.

Complete the Opposite Side Panels

Follow the same procedure on the other side and then you can continue with the remaining graphics. This image shows what graphics should be in place at this time.

In this installation I went to the rear fenders next but if you choose you can continue with the front and then apply the rear fender graphics.



Rear Fender Graphics

Now we will apply the rear fender graphics. Starting with the lower front part of the fender, align the upper part of the decal with the matching seam on the fender.



Lower Rear Fender Application

Keep using the same back and forth pressure method with your thumb when applying the graphic. You will cover the (2) lower fender bolts during application of this graphic and if you need to later remove them you can take a razor knife and cut holes around the bolt openings for access.

Upper Rear Fender Application

While aligning the upper piece, overlap the decal about 1/4" over the already mounted lower graphic. Due to the large size of this decal section you may need to apply, pull-up and re-apply the graphic partially to maintain alignment.

Take your time and try to remove any air pockets while you are applying the graphic. This is the most noticeable graphic for any trapped air so take it slow, make sure your hands are oil-free and the plastic is clean.



Front Grill Graphic Application

The front grill graphics are next and the last stage of this application guide. Start with the bottom piece and work your way up. The lower piece is designed to cover the oval Polaris logo but if you want to have it visible you can cut it out with a razor knife using the outer edge of the logo as a guide.



Center Graphic Application

The center graphics are precision cut to follow the shape of the faceted front grill sections. The pieces are designed to butt against each other but not overlap. Start from the lower part of the decal and work your way up to the top following the seams as your guide for each piece.

Finishing the Installation

Finish adding the remaining pieces and you will be rewarded with a stylish new look to impress your friends. While the adhesive in this kit is very aggressive it will not fully bond until a week or so after application.

If for some crazy reason you want to remove these graphics in the future, applying heat will soften the adhesive and allow the graphics to allow clean removal.

Make sure to replace your former graphic kit with a new version from Twister Graphics . :-)

