



FLIGHTLINE GRAPHICS

Paint Masks - Stencils - Dry Rub Decals - Waterslides

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Do's and Don'ts with waterslides

Waterslides are made using a very thin gossamer material which is cast on sheets of special paper. The thinner the carrier film the better the decal paper. At Flightline Graphics we use the thinnest material available which gives good results when used correctly.

Before painting your model you should consider the following guidelines if you are considering using waterslides

Waterslides are made from a very thin material which has the artwork printed on top using a special printer. Areas that are not covered by colour need to form a perfect seal excluding all trapped air otherwise it will show up as a slight opaque casting.

Matt or "flat" paint finishes look dull because the light hitting the surface is scattered in all directions. To achieve this effect the surface of the paint is extremely rough to make the light scatter. Applying a waterslide to this type of finish will result in air getting trapped behind the film in all the small air pockets in the paint surface. Nothing can be done to correct this so it is vital that you do not use flat colours before applying waterslides.

For the very best results you should use full gloss paints so you have a super smooth surface which will not trap air in the paint surface. The paint must be completely dry before using waterslides!

If the surface where you want to apply a decal to has any blemishes such as a flake of dust, you can try using mildly abrasive polishes to flatten the defect. Always clean the surface after with white spirits to remove any excess wax deposited by the polish. Be sure to test the compatibility of white spirits with your paint before you do so.

There are a few products that you can use to help you apply your decals:

Micro-SET[®] (in blue printed bottles) is a very versatile decal setting solution to improve adhesion. Micro-SET[®] should be applied to the surface of the model where you will be positioning your decal. This prepares the surface with special wetting agents that cuts the oils in new paint and converts the adhesive on the back of the decal to a stronger and more lasting one. It also softens the decals film to make it more flexible so that it can conform better to the model's surface. Better adhesion by the decal to the model helps to prevent the small packets of air developing under the film.

Micro-SOL[®] (in red printed bottles) is a special setting solution for the most difficult irregular surfaces you find on models. It completely softens the decal film allowing it to drape down onto the surface of the model conforming perfectly and without distortion. You can get the most amazing results in seemingly impossible places, because Micro Sol actually makes the decal melt into the paint surface. For that reason you should coat Micro Sol on for only a few seconds and then leave it alone, it does the work. Do not touch until dry as the decal is very soft at this stage and could be easily damaged.

Both of these products are available from most good model shops.