

VINYL WRAP MAINTIENCE 101

VEHICLE WRAPS aren't meant to be installed and forgotten. Like the rest of your vehicle, your vehicle wrap requires regular cleaning and maintenance. For longer-lasting, vibrant color, wash your wrap on a regular basis and keep your vehicle away from possible pollutants.

Here are answers to some common questions customers have about cleaning vehicle wraps.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WASH MY VEHICLE WRAP?

Wash your wrap once a week or more often if your vehicle is exposed to a lot of dirt or pollutants. You should hand wash it using 3M® Car Wash Soap 39000, or Meguiar's NXT Generation® Car Wash or Deep Crystal® Car Wash. At Wrap Works Orange County, we also recommend 3M Quick Detailer Spray Wax or Meguiar's Ultimate Quik Wax. You can use another gentle automotive detergent if necessary – any good brand will work. Always use a nice automotive sponge or clean, soft cloth to wash your wrap. Rinse vehicle with clear water after washing. Minimize water spotting by using a silicone squeegee or chamois to remove water. Dry with a clean microfiber cloth.

CAN I TAKE MY WRAPPED VEHICLE INTO A DRIVE-THROUGH CAR WASH?

You can bring your wrapped vehicle to an automated brushless car wash, though hand washing is safer and more thorough. Brush car washes may be too rough on the film, degrading it and causing peeling and lifted edges. If a car wash uses water spray and no brushes, it should be safe for most wraps.

WHAT SHOULD I USE FOR SPOT CLEANING?

Use Simple Green or isopropyl rubbing alcohol to spot clean isolated stains. Rinse area with cool water after cleaning. Don't use tire dressing to spot clean as it may splash on the wrap and cause stains. Avoid wiping the wrap when it's hot; this can distort the material and cause wrinkling.

CAN I PRESSURE WASH MY VEHICLE WRAP?

If you want to pressure wash your wrap, keep it below 2,000 psi. Use a spray nozzle with a 40 degree wide angle spray pattern and keep water temperature below 140 degrees Fahrenheit. Keep the spray nozzle at least 12 inches away from the car edges.

HOW DO I CLEAN BIRD DROPPINGS, INSECTS, TREE SAP OR OTHER DIFFICULT STAINS?

Clean bird droppings and difficult stains immediately. Letting them sit for too long will make them harder to remove and may permanently damage the wrap. Soak the affected area for a few minutes with warm, soapy water to loosen the contaminants. Rinse completely and dry with a microfiber cloth. For stubborn contaminants, use denatured alcohol, 3M® Citrus Base Cleaner, Meguiar's Gold Class™ Bug and Stain Remover or two parts isopropyl alcohol to one part water. Always test these solutions on a small area that's not easily noticeable to ensure the cleaner will not harm the wrap. [Do not use solvents or oil-based cleaning products!](#)

WHAT SHOULD I DO ABOUT GAS OR FUEL SPILLS?

Wipe off fuel spills immediately, then handwash the affected area. Letting the spill stay the wrap too long will degrade the vinyl. A quick wipe with a wet paper towel at a gas station will clean the fuel affected area decently enough until you can get home to do a more thorough job.

CAN I PARK MY VEHICLE OUTDOORS FOR LONG PERIODS?

Excessive amounts of time under the sun or other outdoor elements (rain, smog, debris, and road pollutants from passing cars) can degrade the wrap on the roof, trunk lid and hood. These horizontal areas are a magnet for pollutants, which are intensified by UV ray exposure. Try your best to park your car in a garage or under a canopy or shelter. If you must park it outside for prolonged periods, look for shady parking areas.

MY VEHICLE WRAP IS TURNING BROWN OR RUST COLORED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Wrap turns brown due to prolonged exposure to acid from pollutants in the air. This is typically a result of neglect and failure to follow the above-mentioned procedures. If you notice brown, discolored, or rust-colored areas on your wrap, it is best to remove the film from your vehicle to prevent damage to the paint beneath it and reapply fresh wrap. Often it is only necessary to replace the affected panel.

WHAT PRODUCTS SHOULD I AVOID WHEN CLEANING MY WRAP?

Never, EVER use any of the following cleaning products on your wrap:

- Solvents
- Oil-based cleaners
- Kitchen & Bathroom Cleaners
- Oven cleaner
- Orange Oil
- Engine Degreaser