

Tips on Laminating & Installing CLEAR FOCUS Perforated Window Films for Curved Surfaces

Laminating is as much an art as a science. Laminating and installing are challenging because streaks and marks caused by uneven hand or squeegee pressure can occur yet be difficult to see until after the graphic is installed. When using a laminator, make sure there is proper tension on the rollers so that neither the overlaminates nor the film is stretched during the lamination process. Ensure that there are no uneven areas on the laminator rollers (caused, e.g., by bowing of the nip rollers — a common problem with hot laminators) or other problems that could cause streaks/marks.

CLEAR FOCUS offers a pressure-sensitive (cold), conformable PVC overlaminating film called CurvaLam™. This optically clear product is designed specifically for perforated window graphics that will be installed on surfaces that are flat or have simple to moderate curves.

If using a non-CLEAR FOCUS finishing product, we recommend conducting a test to make sure the product in question is compatible with perforated window graphics film, maintains the film's one-way visibility, and is suited for the intended application.

Before installing graphics on window

- After printing graphics, allow at least 24 hours for the inks to dry and outgas prior to applying overlaminates.
- After applying an overlaminates, let the graphics sit for at least 12 hours. This allows the overlaminates' adhesive time to bond adequately to the vinyl film.

Curves ahead: Proceed with care!

- Start in the center of the window and install from the center outward to the edges of the glass.
- Peel back part of the release liner and make a V-shaped cut in it (from the top edge of the liner toward the center) to keep the liner out of the way during installation. **Be careful not to cut the film!**
- Avoid stretching the vinyl during installation. The vinyl has a memory and, if stretched, may return to its original shape, causing the film to lift off the glass later.
- If possible, avoid using an overlaminates on graphics to be installed on surfaces with compound curves. For such applications we recommend a clear coat, such as CLEAR FOCUS PerfxCoat™, or a liquid laminate. Even a conformable overlaminates such as CurvaLam adds more thickness & rigidity, making it harder to install the graphics on windows with extreme curves.
- If you must laminate the graphics (e.g., to prevent the film's holes from filling with water when it rains or when the vehicle is washed), leave the outside edge — approx. 1/4 inch — around the graphics un laminated. That way the center portion of the graphics will be laminated and the un laminated edges will be more pliable and will conform more easily at the edges, where the curvature of the glass is more pronounced.
- If a heat gun is used to install graphics around curves, do not exceed 250°F and apply heat for only a few seconds at a time. Applying too much heat and tension during installation can stretch the vinyl out of shape and deform the holes, as well as negatively impact the film's adhesive properties.
- Use an edge sealer. If the edges of the film have been handled a lot or have been stretched — both of which can adversely affect the film's adhesive — an edge sealer will help prevent them from lifting.
- If all else fails, try using either CLEAR FOCUS PerfxCoat™ or an optically clear, conformable overlaminates that's thinner and more conformable than CurvaLam. Check with your distributor or local sign shop for the names of overlaminating films that are compatible with perforated window film and designed for compound-curved surfaces.

Questions? Call your distributor or call CLEAR FOCUS at **707-544-7990**
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