Wrap-it-yourself: 5 easy steps to a brand new look

Ever seen a bespoke wrap and wondered how it’s done? Fancy a colour-change without the cost? Customising your vehicle with specialist paint or finishes can be pricey - but now you can get the look for less. 3M Kits are ideal for colour changes, shapes and stripes on flat or gently curved panels and components such as roofs, doors, bonnets and interior/exterior trim. Follow these 5 simple steps to set your own course and stand out from the crowd.

The Kit

Your kit contains a length of professional 3M™ Wrap Film Series 1080, plus the essential accessories you’ll need for a flawless finish:

1. 3M™ VHB™ Surface Cleaner Wipes
2. Scotchcal™ Snitty Cutting Tool
3. 3M™ Squeegee Applicator

Also recommended, but not included in the kit:

- Cotton gloves
- A heat gun
- A friend to help you – particularly when working on large panels like roofs

Location

Dry, clean, dust free and preferably indoors in a warm environment, a garage is good.

STEP 1

Measure up

Measure the size of the panel or component you want to wrap, making sure that you have plenty of material in your chosen wrap kit. Using the Scotchcal Snitty Cutting Tool or a clean, sharp blade, cut more material than you think you’ll need - any overhang is easy to trim once the film has been applied.

Top Tip

Kits are available in lengths of 1 metre and 2.5 metres. Choose the right kit for the component you’re working with: the 1 metre packs are ideal for interior and exterior trim, but if you want to wrap a roof you’ll need the larger one.

STEP 2

Clean up

Wash down the surface of the area you want to wrap with soap and water, making sure that any dirt and grime is completely removed. Avoid using wax or specialist car shampoos that contain wax, as this will affect the film’s adhesive.

STEP 3

Now clean up again

You might think your surface looks squeaky clean, but you’d be surprised what’s left behind after a simple wash. Use the 3M VHB Surface Cleaning Wipes to wipe down the panel or component again to ensure that all potential contaminants and residues are removed. We recommend wearing gloves when cleaning to avoid oils from your skin getting on the surface and to protect your hands from the cleaner.

Top Tip

Don’t be tempted to skip this step. Any oil, grease, dust or waxy residues left on the surface will seriously affect the holding power of the film’s adhesive. 3M VHB Surface Cleaning Wipes give a proper, thorough clean – ensuring that your wrap holds fast and lasts as long as you want it to.

STEP 4

Time for the fun bit!

Remove the backing paper from the wrapping film, being careful not to touch the adhesive or get it dusty or dirty. Slide the film into position: the adhesive won’t stick until you apply pressure, so now’s your chance to get it in exactly the right place.

Top Tip

If you’re wrapping a large panel like a roof or bonnet, get a friend to help you. Working with wide pieces of film can be tricky on your own.

STEP 5

Put the pressure on

Use the edge of the 3M Squeegee to apply firm pressure in wide, even strokes. Work from the centre, smoothing air outwards towards an exit point at the edge of the film. Special channels within the adhesive backing will minimise the risk of bubbles – but the odd one or two can be worked out carefully with your finger.

If you make a mistake, the film can be gently peeled back off (be careful not to overstretch it) and reapplied. When you’re happy, trim the edges with a clean, sharp blade for a neat finish.
Top Tip

When wrapping around curves and edges, use a heat gun to gently warm the film to make it more flexible; you can then stretch it a little to mould it to contours. Be careful not to overstretch it or use excessive heat, as this can cause matte or textured effects to sheen, or the film to melt.

Job done!

Stand back and admire your work. If you’ve followed these steps correctly, you’ll be looking at a bespoke, head-turning wrap that will really stand out from the crowd!

We’d love to see your finished applications.
Share your images at facebook.com/3MWrapsUK

Give your wrap some TLC

Looked after properly, your 3M Wrap will last years and could even help to protect your vehicle from UV and environmental damage.

- Clean the vehicle as normal with non-detergent soap, water and a soft sponge. We recommend 3M Car Shampoo 39000 which can be found on 3Mdirect.co.uk
- An initial rinse will help to get rid of dust particles that may scratch during washing
- Don’t wax or polish the wrap. This is especially important for matte or textured films, where you may create a gloss effect
- Avoid using a high-powered jet wash on areas where the edge of the film is exposed
- Steer clear of automatic car washes – the brushes can damage the film, especially on hot days when the vinyl may be softer than normal.

Some extra inspiration

3M Vehicle Wrapping Film will stick to just about any hard, non-porous surface. Use your leftover film to customise your phone, laptop, tablet, mp3 player...

Time for a change?

Because they are quicker and cheaper than a custom paint job or professional wrap, kits let you change the look and style of your vehicle whenever you feel like it. When applied over a factory paint finish, the film can be easily removed without damaging the underlying surface – so you can go back to your original colour or start from scratch with a new 3M Kit.

The small print

3M Kits are only suitable for application to factory-finished paint. They are not intended for aftermarket-finished paint as this will not have been cured to the same level. If you are unsure about your paintwork do not apply the 3M Wrap Film as it may result in paintwork damage.

When removing your 3M film, use gentle heat from a heat gun to soften the adhesive and reduce any risk of paintwork damage.

3M Kits are ideal for colour changes, shapes and stripes on flat or gently curved panels and components such as roofs, doors, bonnets and interior/exterior trim.

You must be 16 years or older to purchase and use this kit.

For complex wraps and larger panels we recommend professional application by a 3M Authorised Vehicle Wrapper.

Our network of trained wrappers can offer a full range range of 3M materials including printed vehicle graphics and deliver full or part vehicle wraps to your specification.

To locate one near you, visit our vehicle wrapping website at wrapyourcurves.co.uk

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