

## STORAGE RULES OF THUMB

- To protect application tape from ultra-violet light, heat and dirt, store it its original packaging until you are ready to use it. Application tape, when exposed to light, yellows. Even shop lighting can yellow application tape.
- Never store application tape in an excessively hot environment. Prolonged exposure to temperatures above 85°F prematurely ages an adhesive and degrades its performance.
- The maximum shelf life for application tape and premask is 12 months. Old application tape can “block-up” on the roll. The adhesive binds to the facstock’s first surface, making the product difficult, and often impossible to unwind.
- Rotate your tape inventory. The material first entered into stock should be used first.
- Handle rolls of application tape with care. Damage to a roll’s ends impairs unwinding the tape. The paper easily tears where it’s damaged.
- Always stack application tape rolls upright. Laying a roll on its side causes a flat spot, which makes unwinding difficult.

## TRANSFERRING VINYL GRAPHICS

- After applying the application tape to the vinyl, turn the graphic over so the tape is against your work surface.
- Peel the liner from the back of the graphics, rolling it 180° against itself, rather than picking the graphics off of the liner.
- If the graphics release with difficulty from the release liner, rub the back of the liner against a sharp edge of your work bench. This step helps break the bond between the graphic and the release liner.

## FACTORY CUT ROLLS™

RTape razor cuts all of its application tape rolls. We never baloney cut our tape. Each layer of tape is slit perfectly, one layer at a time. There are no adhesive balls, no gapping between layers of tape and no nicked edges which can cause tape tears. Cutting application tape with a baloney slicer damages the ends of the rolls. The pressure of the cutting blade compresses edges of the roll causing gapping and fusing one layer of the tape to stick to another.

## WET APPLICATION TIPS

Using an application fluid can aid the installation of vinyl films with aggressive adhesive systems. The fluid helps float the graphic onto the surface, to prevent pre-adhesion. For successful wet applications:

- **Always** use firm squeegee pressure to force application fluid out from under the applied vinyl graphic.
- **Never** use application fluid if you can install the graphics dry.
- Use the least amount of application fluid to accomplish the task. If the application tape gets too wet, the adhesive can delaminate from the tape. Clean any residual adhesive using a cleaner, such as RapidPrep™.
- **Never** use application fluid to apply vinyl to riveted surfaces. Application fluid collects underneath rivet heads, creating a residue that later seeps out. This causes vinyl to tent and eventually crack. Fluid under trailer-panel seams can also cause edge lifting.
- **Never** use glass cleaners, such as Windex, as an application fluid. Some glass cleaners contain silicone, ammonia and other additives that contaminate the adhesive, resulting in failure.
- **Never** apply air-egress vinyls, reflective films or metalized films wet. Air-egress vinyls have micro tunnels embossed in their adhesives, which will trap application fluid, resulting in adhesion failure. Application fluids can promote galvanic corrosion of the metallization layer on reflective films and metalized vinyls.

### PRODUCT WARRANTY

All RTape products are subject to continuous quality control throughout the manufacturing process and are under warranty to be free from manufacturing defects. RTape stands behind its products and will replace for credit any defective material. Because RTape products are used for a variety of applications, the purchaser is responsible for determining the suitability and performance of this product for their specific purpose prior to use, and the purchaser shall assume all risks regarding such use.



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## APPLICATION TAPE QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

Have questions? Need more information or samples?  
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**Responsive. Reliable. Resourceful.**

THANK YOU FOR CHOOSING **RTape**

Since 1980, RTape has manufactured high quality application tapes and premasks for the Graphics Arts industry. To satisfy the ever-changing demands of the market, we have developed a comprehensive line of paper and film tapes for sign making, screen printing and digital print applications.

TYPES OF TAPES

Two grades of paper are used in manufacturing application tapes: a standard weight paper and a premium heavyweight paper. One key difference between the types of paper is the thickness. Standard weight application tapes are 4 mils (101 microns) thick. Heavyweight premium papers are 5 mils (127 microns).

RTape offers several adhesive-tack levels for each paper grade. In selecting the right tape for the job, the general rule of thumb is:

- For small, computer-cut lettering or general sign work, use a high-tack tape, such as 4075RLA or 4076RLA.
- For large- to medium-sized lettering and banner applications, use a medium-tack tape, such as 4050RLA .
- For large-format digital prints, use a low tack tape, such as 4000, 4000RLA or DigiMask Clear.

HEAVYWEIGHT PREMIUM GRADE TAPES

Most of what is used in the sign industry is the lighter weight paper. In the large format screen print market, the reverse is true. Most professional decal installers prefer premium grade tapes for the following reasons:

- Heavyweight premium grade application tapes are about 1 mil thicker than the standard grade application tapes. The added thickness makes handling large format graphics easier.
- When working outdoors, a premium application tape is less likely to tear by a sudden gust of wind.
- When the application is done, heavyweight application tapes remove in one piece. Thin standard grade paper tapes tear more easily and often remove in little bits and pieces.
- When applying graphics wet, a heavyweight paper is less likely to fall apart.

CONFORM® SERIES

Conform® Series with RLA® is the #1 best-selling brand of application tape in the sign market. All Conform® Series products feature RLA® Release Liner Adhesion, which allow these tapes to stick to slick release liners. With RLA® Conform® application tapes will not tunnel or edge lift, so graphics stay neat and clean, even when they're rolled.

PRODUCT CODE	DESCRIPTION & APPLICATIONS RLA Denotes Conform® Series
4000, 4000RLA	Standard grade paper. Low tack. Surface protection of metal and plastic & premask for large format digital prints.
4050, 4050RLA	Standard grade paper. Medium tack. Medium and large computer-cut & die-cut graphics and vinyl banners.
4075 4075RLA	Standard grade paper. High tack. Popular choice for most sign shop applications, especially small, medium and large-size computer-cut letters.
4076RLA	Standard grade paper. Slightly higher tack. Excellent for hard-to-transfer vinyls, small and medium-size letters, specialty vinyls and thermal die cuts.
4700 4700RLA 4700LTRLA	Premium grade paper. Low tack. Perfect for paint mask vinyls.
4750RLA	Premium grade paper. Medium tack. Superior choice for fleet graphics, large and medium-size computer-cut letters.
4760 4783	Premium grade paper. Medium tack. Excellent for medium-size decals, striping and die-cut graphics. Adheres to rough textures of halftone prints and the slick decal surfaces of UV inks and clear coats.
4775RLA	Premium grade paper.High tack. Excellent for smaller graphics and die-cuts. Excellent choice for fleet graphics.
4885	Premium grade paper. Ultra high tack. Excellent for thermal die cut decals and highly textured window graphics films
AT60	Clear application film. Medium tack. Best choice for aligning multiple color overlays.
AT75	Clear application film. High tack. Excellent for aligning multiple color overlays.

APPLICATION TAPES TIPS & TRICKS

- Whether you laminate application tape via hand or a laminator, avoid trapping air bubbles between the vinyl graphics and application tape. Bubbles and wrinkles in the application paper generally result in bubbles and wrinkles in the applied graphics.
- During the lamination process, avoid stretching the application tape. Stretched tape usually shrinks and causes the vinyl graphic to curl.
- The best way to apply application tape to graphics is with a laminator. A properly set-up laminator can apply application tape to graphics with minimal wrinkles and bubbles.
- If the application tape puckers from the surface of the vinyl graphics, you can increase adhesion by applying heat up to 100° F or 38°C in a hot laminator to avoid bubbles.
- Use a single tape sheet (rather than overlapping pieces) to cover the graphic. Otherwise, a fine line of tiny air bubbles will appear where the tape pieces overlap.
- For screenprinted and digitally printed decals, thoroughly “cure” inks and clearcoats before applying the tape. Solvents in uncured inks and coatings often cause the decal and tape to adhere to each other, which hinders tape removal once the graphic is applied. The rule of thumb is to wait 24 hours allowing inks to thoroughly dry before clearcoating or overlaminating. Then wait 24 hours before applying the application tape and trimming the print.
- After a vinyl graphic has been “taped,” it should be applied shortly thereafter. Prolonged storage can increase the bond between the tape and vinyl, making tape removal difficult following application. This condition worsens if the graphic is stored at elevated temperatures.
- If an application-paper tape isn’t releasing easily following an application, lightly spray the paper with application fluid, wait approximately 30 seconds and then remove it. The application fluid will penetrate the paper facestock and soften the tape’s waterbased rubber adhesive, causing it to release more easily.
- When removing the application tape, carefully pull the tape 180° against itself. To minimize edge lifting, and prevent the squeegee from scratching the graphic, use a squeegee covered with a low-friction sleeve to re-squeegee the entire graphic, especially the edges.