



Wrapping Buyers' Guide

What should you look for in a vehicle wrap?

Andrew Gamble our 3M Authorised Graphic Trainer and Mark Weatherley our 3M Advanced Technical Specialist have produced this guide to equip you with hints, tips and questions you should be asking when you consider wrapping your vehicle. Above all, with vehicle wraps, the major tip is you get what you pay for. The key to a good wrap is in the detail, preparation design and application.

The Company

Questions you should ask about them.

Are they specialists in vehicle wrapping?

Vehicle wrapping requires skilled and experienced specialist fitting. Ask to see pictures and evidence of wraps they have completed. Customer testimonials or contacts to speak to are also a good indication of a quality wrapping specialist.

Have they got heated and covered premises to work in?

The optimum air temperature for applying a vehicle wrap is around 22°C, the film is more conformable and less brittle and the adhesive is able to flow more quickly. The environment your vehicle is wrapped in is critical to the longevity of the wrap.

Is it a dust free clean environment?

Vehicles have to be dust free to ensure a full bond between film and vehicle, any contaminants on the surface of the vehicle will reduce the bond between the adhesive and the vehicle.

Have their fitters attended 3M training?

If your vehicle is being wrapped in 3M IJ380 film there are specialist techniques involved in applying the material, which your wrapper needs to know.

Do they give you confidence?

The Wrap

A high quality wrap can take up to 15 hours. Anything short of a day for a full wrap on an average size car should be questioned.

What material are they using?

If you have specified 3M make sure that's what you are getting and paying for.

Make sure you see a sample of the film and colour you want.

If your vehicle is being fully wrapped, a cast vinyl should be used to provide the necessary amount of conformability to stretch around the challenging panels on the vehicle.

Has the wrapper advised you that the wrap is considered a modification by insurers, so might incur a charge?

What is the condition of your car's bodywork?

Any wrapper should be asking questions regarding the quality of your car's paint work to make sure it's suitable for wrapping. Any fresh or new paint work must be properly cured.

If you're having a digitally printed image make sure logos, images, lettering, etc are exactly where you want them. Bear in mind, if any text or logos are placed on curves on the design, they may become distorted when applied to your vehicle. We'd recommend logos, lettering and important imagery are positioned on flat surfaces.

Make sure door, bonnet and boot wrap edges have all been trimmed and correctly applied.





What to look for when your car's been wrapped

If you chose a metallic wrap make sure the metallic flake is all going in the same direction; if it isn't the colours will look different.

Can you see the original body colour from the outside of the car with all doors shut?

Check between door shut lines and areas where the wrap meets light clusters or plastic trim parts.

If there are joins - are they neat, tidy and discreet?

Is the wrap free from scratches?

Is there any unacceptable discolouration or distortion where the film has been stretched?



What types of wrap failures to look out for

If the wrong film has been used or incorrectly applied it may peel back and lift in areas where it has been overstretched. Look out for:

- Body work seams and panel edges
- Door, bonnet and boot lid edges
- Wing mirror edges
- Wheel arches
- Number plate recesses
- Joins and overlaps where two pieces of film have been used

Printing distortion can occur if the film has been over stretched or if the film is too thick and therefore not suited for wrapping. Be sure to look out for:

- Too much image and logo distortion into recesses and heavily curved areas. Some distortion can be expected but not to a large degree.
- Loss of colour in the graphic in stretched areas; colour can be lost and appear white in stretched areas.

If you've chosen a matte colour, particularly matte black, look out for irregularities in gloss level. Heat is required to conform the film to challenging areas. If too much heat is applied, a matte finish can become glossy.

Keeping your wrap clean

Use a non detergent soap, a bucket of warm water and a soft sponge.

Initially thoroughly rinse the car to get rid of dust, this will minimise the risk of scratching the wrap during the wash process.

Clean the vehicle as you would normally with a bucket and sponge.

Do not wax or polish the wrap especially on matte finishes; you may create a gloss finish.

Try to avoid using a high power jet wash on areas where the edge of the film is exposed.

Try to avoid automatic car washes; the brushes can damage the wrap especially on a hot day when the vinyl can be softer than normal.

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