

# Preparing dirt bike plastics and applying motocross graphics / dirt bike graphics.

So you've got a shiny new motocross graphics / dirt bike graphics kit. Before you even think about getting it out of the wrapper you need to prepare your dirt bike plastics. If you get this part wrong then you'll end up with a pretty second rate result.

Have a good look at your plastics, if they're pretty scuffed and scratched or have some major gouges from a high speed get off it may be worth looking at replacing them. Before applying your motocross graphics kit your dirt bike plastics do need to be in a reasonable condition.

Replacement aftermarket plastics are pretty affordable these days, OEM (original) plastics can still be pricey but with companies like Acerbis manufacturing dirt bike plastics for just about every type of bike, dressing up your bike doesn't have to cost a bomb.

## **Preparation**

First up remove the old stickers, a heat gun or hair dryer helps to soften them up so they'll peel off easy. Then comes the most important part of the whole process, **cleaning the plastics**. If there is still sticker residue on your plastics you can remove it with contact cleaner or I've found that methylated spirits works well.

Once the residue's removed get some hot soapy water and scrub your dirt bike plastics like they've never been scrubbed before! They have to be perfectly clean. Rinse them off and allow them to dry well.

## **Applying your Motocross Graphics**

Now the tricky bit, this will be a lot easier with two sets of hands so try to get someone to help you. With your heat gun or hair dryer first warm your dirt bike plastics up particularly if it's cold where you're working.

With a large sticker like a radiator shroud, peel back a small section from the leading edge and fold the backing flat underneath. Now you can stick just the small section to the shroud and lay the sticker flat against the shroud to make sure everything lines up. Pay attention to the cutouts for bolt holes etc.

If it all looks good peel back a little more of the backing and keep working your way along making sure to squeeze out any air bubbles. Apply a bit of heat as you go, this softens the sticker and makes it easier to stick on curved sections of your plastics.

Once the whole sticker is applied, squeeze out any air bubbles and give it a good rub down with a rag while applying a bit more heat, this makes sure it has stuck well.

If you find at any point that you have an air bubble that you can't squeeze to the edge, just prick it with a pin and get rid of the air that way.

I once had some motocross graphics made by a guy whose favourite method of applying stickers was to get a spray bottle filled with some soapy water and

lightly spray the surface you're applying the sticker to. He would then peel the backing off the sticker completely and put the sticker on.

The soapy water is supposed to allow you to slide the sticker into position and then you squeegee the water out from underneath and let it dry. I've never used this method but if you think it sounds easier, give it a go.

A new set of dirt bike plastics and some motocross graphics / dirt bike graphics are a cheap way of making your worn bike look almost brand new.