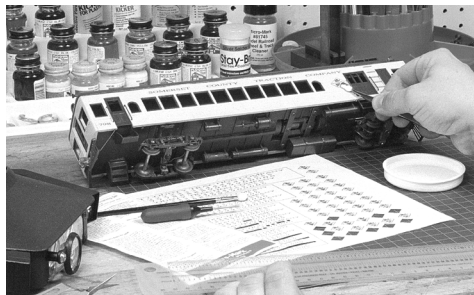


# DECAL PAPER INSTRUCTIONS



*Note: Decal printing and application are not difficult tasks, but do employ techniques that are developed with experience.*

Notice: Micro-Mark guarantees this decal paper to be free of manufacturing defects for a period of 90 days from date of purchase. Although this decal paper has been successfully tested on many copiers and printers, equipment compatibility is not guaranteed by Micro-Mark. It remains the responsibility of the purchaser to determine compatibility with printers and copying machines and, by use of this paper, the purchaser agrees that Micro-Mark will not be held responsible for consequential damage to purchaser's or copy center equipment.

## Introduction

Before making your own decals, it is recommended that you become familiar with three popular types of computer printers:

**INKJET PRINTERS** use liquid inks to create images on paper. Making decals with this type of printer requires the use of decal paper that has a special coating which prevents liquid ink from beading-up, plus a top coat fixative spray (either acrylic or lacquer), applied immediately after printing, that prevents ink from smearing or washing off during application. Since white ink is not available for inkjet printers, white paper stock supplies the white component of artwork; therefore, decal paper with a white film, instead of a clear film, is also available so that images with a white component may be created.

**LASER PRINTERS** use dry, powdered ink (actually a finely-ground black plastic, called toner) to create images, and employ heated rollers to fuse the ink to regular paper. Most copy machines also use this principle to print images. As with inkjet printers, white toner is not available, so decal paper with a white film is also made for laser printers to create images containing a white area. To keep laser-printed images from cracking and chipping during decal application, a fixative spray (acrylic or lacquer) is required immediately after printing.

**MICRO-DRY PRINTERS** (such as Alps\*) use dry ink-coated ribbons (similar to typewriter ribbons) to create images on paper. In addition to standard colors, these printers can print white and metallics. They are recommended for use when white, yellow, and other light-colored artwork needs to be applied to dark surfaces...a layer of white ink can be pre-printed under the final image to create the opacity necessary to block dark backgrounds from showing through. Micro-Dry images are easily scratched after printing, so a fixative spray is recommended, but the user must use only lacquer-based sprays, since acrylic sprays will destroy the image (and, a lacquer spray will not protect the image from a top coat of acrylic). Sometimes, if a Micro-Dry image doesn't print well (image breaks up) on the decal paper, applying a clear gloss acrylic fixative spray before printing (must be thoroughly dry before insertion into the printer!) may help.

Micro-Mark has two varieties of decal papers (inkjet and laser) that are made specifically for the above types of printers: Use Inkjet decal paper for Inkjet printers; use Laser decal paper for Laser printers, Micro-Dry printers and copy machines.

*Note: Inkjet decal paper will also work in laser printers, micro-dry printers and copy machines if the proper fixative spray is used, but laser paper will NOT work in inkjet printers.*

Sorry, we have no information about compatibility with bubble-jet printers.

### \*Micro-Mark Tip

When printing decals with an Alps printer, we recommend setting the Printer Preferences to **Cardboard (Thick Paper)** as follows:

- Left click Start
- Left click Control Panel
- Double left click Printers and Faxes
- Right click the Alps printer you're using
- Select Printing Preferences
- Change Media Type to Cardboard (Thick Paper)

## Follow the three steps below to create and apply your own custom decals:

### 1. CREATE ARTWORK

Use a computer, dry transfers, previously printed designs, and/or pen and ink to create your artwork. You may use multiple colors, but be aware that dark model colors may show through light-colored artwork. Again, most copiers and printers do not print white; however, decal paper with white film may be used to produce white areas on your decal, or as an underlayment for light colors, such as yellow.

You may also print a background color that matches the surface of the item to which the decal is being applied. Touch up the edges of the decal after application to help it blend in with the surrounding surface before spraying an additional coat of fixative. Color photos may be used as artwork, but they should be printed on decal paper with white film so that the white component of the photo is present. Some creativity and experimentation may be required to generate artwork that will produce the desired decals.

### 2. PRINT ARTWORK ONTO THE DECAL PAPER

If you created your artwork on a computer and have a printer, remove any tissue-type sheet protector that may be present, and print that artwork directly onto the glossy side of the decal paper. For inkjet printing, we recommend using the "Transparency Film" (or similar) setting if your printer software supports this option. Also, you must immediately apply a few thin, but thorough, coats of Micro-Mark #82858 Clear Acrylic Sealing Fixative Spray to seal the inkjet printed image on the decal paper; otherwise, it will smear and/or wash off.

Top spray is also recommended for Laser or Micro-Dry printed decals to reduce the chipping of image edges when the decal is trimmed close to the ink. **Note: Do NOT use acrylic spray for Micro-Dry (Alps) printed images; use Dullcote type lacquer sprays only; otherwise, the image will be ruined.**

If your artwork was not created on a computer, take your artwork to a copy center and ask for a copy on the glossy side of the decal paper. You may take black artwork and ask your copy center to print it in all one color (except white); example: make an all-red decal from black artwork. Certain copiers can even change the colors of selected rectangular areas of your artwork, or enlarge/reduce your artwork. We have found that the best results are obtained by setting the copier two steps darker than what is normal for printing on plain paper. Note: Laser machines that have been on all day may have rollers that are too hot for decal printing; we recommend using machines that have been just powered-up.

White lettering is currently available only on Micro-Dry printers (or on the traditional silk-screen method for professionally mass-produced decals). Again, apply a lacquer-based fixative spray to protect the printed image before applying the decal.

If you have computer art, but do not have a printer, outside services are available that will print art for you on their printers.

### 3. APPLY DECAL

Decals are best applied to a glossy surface. Apply glossy paint or spray a clear gloss coating on your model before applying decals. Carefully cut out the decal from the sheet and soak it in a cup of plain water for about one minute or until you see the film start to separate from the backing paper. Carefully test that the decal film has released from the backing paper, then slide the decal into position on your model. Gently blot excess water. Allow to dry.

For best results, use our #84304 Decal Finishing System to apply decals. It helps decals conform to irregular surfaces and hides decal film, making your artwork appear to be painted on the model, rather than applied by decal. Be aware that large decals may wrinkle when setting and softening solutions are applied. If this happens to your decal, splice together smaller decals to make up your final image.

Top coats of a fixative spray are required in all cases to minimize curling and to hold/protect the decal. Clear lacquers may be used on all types of decals, but acrylics must not be used with Micro-Dry (such as Alps) printed images.

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