

Canoe polo players are often required to change the colour of their boats to meet team and championship requirements. The easiest way to do this is to cover the complete top deck in self-adhesive vinyl. The technique is straightforward, but does require care and patience.

This guide sets out the procedure for covering the deck with vinyl. For *YouTube* instruction, go to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZt-Y9Bu9u8>.

1. Equipment required

The following tools and materials are required:

- roll of self-adhesive vinyl – 70 cm wide x 400 cm long. Choose good quality vinyl available from professional sign writer suppliers (brands available include Arlon, Avery) or car vinyl (available on ebay <http://www.ebay.com.au/itm/151707538317>). Avoid using the cheap contact adhesive vinyl intended for covering books and shelving as it does not withstand the bumps and tackles and is soon torn off the boat.
- mineral turpentine
- towel
- pen or pencil
- scissors
- knife
- plastic card
- spray bottle – with soap and water
- hair dryer

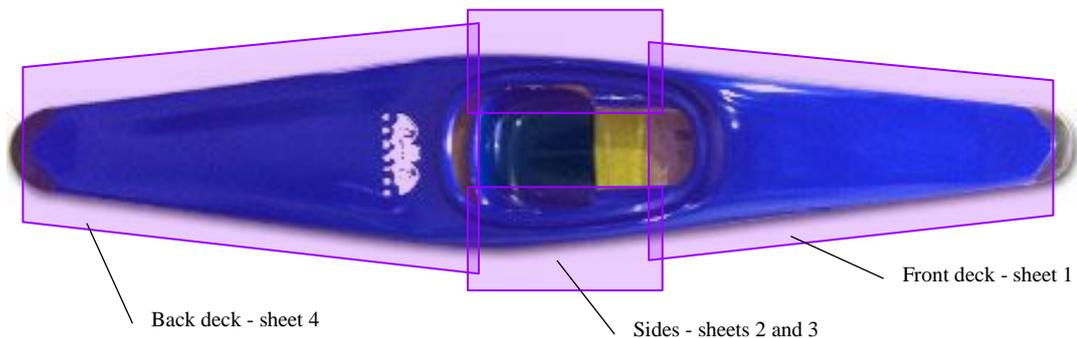
2. Prepare the deck

Remove any unwanted decals, tape and previous coverings. Clean the deck with mineral turpentine to remove dirt and grime and dry off with a towel to give a clean dry surface.

3. Cut vinyl sheet to size

Roll out the vinyl along the boat and cut four separate pieces as shown in the sketch. Allow sufficient width to cover the seams of the boat as the vinyl flows down the side of the boat.

- Front deck – the piece extends from the bumper to the sides of the cockpit. Trim the sides to take the triangular shape of the deck (makes it easier to handle when applying).
- Sides – the length of the cockpit and overlapping the front deck by 1–2 cm
- Back deck – extending to the bumpers and overlapping the side pieces by 1–2 cm. Trim the sides to take the triangular shape of the deck.



Sheet preparation

4. Apply the vinyl

Apply the vinyl one piece at a time, starting with the front deck.

- a. Spray the deck with soapy water, being sure to not to leave any dry patches. (The use of spray to assist applying the vinyl is a choice – some prefer it, some don't.)
- b. Starting at the bumper, peel about 10 cm of backing paper from the vinyl. Apply the film to the wet deck using the plastic card to direct air and water away from under the vinyl. (Drag the card rather than push it to avoid damaging the vinyl.) Continue along the flat centre part of the deck unrolling and removing the backing paper as you go. If you make a mistake the film can be peeled back to start again.
- c. Once the vinyl is fixed to along the centre of the boat, work from the centre, down the sides to the seams.
- d. At heavily curved areas along the boat's side slit the vinyl to create cleats for a smooth finish around the curve.
- e. At the cockpit use the coaming as a template to trim the vinyl to right shape. And then slit the vinyl where the deck transitions under the coaming for the spray deck.
- f. Trim off excess vinyl along the seam and around the bumper with a sharp knife. Be careful not to damage the surface of the boat, the seam tape or the rubber.
- g. For a smooth finish, use the hairdryer on *warm* setting to iron out any remaining small bubbles and set the bond between vinyl and boat.
- h. Take the time to achieve a high standard of finish: carefully trimmed and without bubbles or crinkles.
- i. Complete the sides and back deck in a similar way.