

PRINTING YOUR OWN DECALS

1. Having Decal Artwork is the first step to producing decals commercially, or at home. However, being able to print decals on your own printer is NOT that simple.

2. First, inkjet printers and laser printers will not produce colors that are opaque when printed on “clear” decal film and applied on a dark surface. For example, the color yellow printed by inkjet on clear decal film will disappear when applied to a “pullman green” passenger car. Believe me, I have tried it! However, color print will work if printed on “solid” white decal film; but, solid white decal film is not suitable for small lettering as it is not practical to cut out each letter.

3. Black print, however, can be produced on clear decal film using a laser or inkjet with fairly good results.

4. Decal paper is available for private use, but, there are just a few suppliers. You must consider the type of paper to use. Inkjet printers will only work on “inkjet decal paper”. Laser printers and ALPS printers must use a “dry transfer paper” or laser paper as it is commonly referred to. You can purchase decal film in “clear” or solid white film.

5. In my opinion, the ALPS printer is the only printer suitable for use in printing your own decals. However, the ALPS printer is out of production in the USA and hard to find. The ALPS ink cartridges are very expensive and hard to find. However, it is still possible to obtain the printing supplies if you are willing to pay for them. There are a few individuals listed on the internet who do commercial printing using an ALPS printer.

6. There are very few commercial decal printers available. Most use a “silk screen” process. However, most commercial printers have a minimum quantity before they will accept the job.

7. The bottom line is this: You can print your own decals, but the results might not be as easy as it sounds. I have done it and it works for me. But I am not recommending you try it unless you have an ALPS printer or access to an ALPS. If you would like more information on this, please drop me an email.

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