

# Unisub® Acrylic Products Tip Sheet

## HANDLING AND STORAGE INSTRUCTIONS:

**Masking.** To provide protection during shipping and storage, Unisub Acrylic Products are protected with polyfilm masking on both sides. Masking can be removed by loosening one corner and peeling back with a steady pull or rolling onto a tube. Masking should be removed prior to sublimation and forming. Tip: Acrylic can be re-masked with the used masking that has been rolled up onto a tube and kept clean. In the unlikely case of masking residue, wipe the face with a microfiber cloth containing water and a mild detergent or isopropyl alcohol, rinsing with water afterwards. Some masking can become difficult to remove when exposed to the elements or left on the product for a long period of time.

**Tip:** Use isopropyl alcohol in a well-ventilated area away from open flame and sparks.

**Storage.** Unisub Acrylic products may be stored flat or stacked vertically. While all precautions are taken to keep the product free of dust and debris, the pressure of horizontally stacked products could force hard particles into the acrylic and cause a blemish.

Acrylic that has bowed due to improper storage can be straightened by heating the sheet to 275°F and placed on a flat surface covered with a grit-free, non-linting, soft cloth to prevent marring and promote uniformity of cooling.

Acrylic absorbs moisture from the air, and in locations of high humidity the sheet may develop a temporary wavy appearance. To relieve, remove the masking and allow the product to become fully acclimated over several days.

**Cleaning.** Do not use abrasive cleaners or solvents which will damage the surfaces. Dust and dirt can be removed with a microfiber cloth dampened with water, a mild detergent or isopropyl alcohol, rinsing with water afterwards.

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## GENERAL SUBLIMATION INSTRUCTIONS

Recommended sublimation settings should be used as a guideline to get started. Variation in sublimation presses is very common and differing optimal settings for each system is expected.

### Required Equipment:

- Sublimation printer and paper
- Sublimation Heat Press
- Heat tape and/or temporary adhesive spray mount, ex: Scotch 3M Spray Mount
- Blowout paper or Teflon sheet
- Heat resistant gloves or oven mitts

### Recommended Settings for Small Acrylic Products:

Temperature	385°F
Pressure	Medium (40psi)
Dwell Time	70 sec (1 min, 10 secs)

**Step 1:** Preheat the heat press to recommended temperature, pressure, and time.

**Tip:** The blowout paper can also be pressed to remove moisture. The transfer paper can be preheated as well, which removes moisture and helps control the contraction of the paper, resulting in a higher quality image (the paper doesn't "drag" the surface of the substrate). This is generally less noticeable in smaller pieces and may be unnecessary for ornaments.

**Step 2:** Print the desired image with IMAGE MIRRORING TURNED OFF. Image should have a small bleed.

**Step 3:** Remove the protective masking from the coated side of the acrylic sheet.

- If using spray mount adhesive, follow product instructions to lightly spray the transfer and place the blank with the coated side face-down onto the printed image. This method is recommended if heat tape marks appear on the face of the acrylic.
- If using heat tape, place the blank with the coated side face-down onto the printed transfer paper and secure with heat tape. This method is recommended for items being laser cut after sublimation to avoid tape marks on the glossy face.

**Step 4:** Place blowout paper or Teflon sheet onto the lower press platen. Place the acrylic blank onto the paper/teflon with attached transfer facing towards the heated upper platen. Place another piece of blowout paper or Teflon sheet on top of the blank. Close the heat press and wait the recommended time.

**Step 5:** Upon cycle completion, the press opens automatically. Using heat resistant gloves, carefully remove the transfer paper and discard. The acrylic item will be SOFTENED and malleable.

**Step 6:** Wearing gloves and working on the warm pad, the item can be flipped to cool, flipped repeatedly, or can be pressed flat immediately upon coming out of the press. Repeated flipping and pressing flat by hand will product a flatter result. For a slightly domed look, flip face up and allow to cool.

**Step 7:** Once the item is rigid again, move the sublimated item to a clean, flat surface to finish cooling to room temperature.

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## **TROUBLESHOOTING:**

### **Incomplete sublimation:**

- Increase time by 5s increments -or-
- Increase temperature by 5F increments

### **Acrylic's face is marred:**

- Decrease time by 5s increments -or-
- Decrease temperature by 5F increments
- Ensure cooling surface is flat and clean.

### **The sublimation paper is sticking to the product and/or brown:**

- Decrease time by 5s increments -or-
- Decrease temperature by 5F increments
- Use of a different sublimation paper brand or type may be needed for the particular product.

### **Blurry image/ghosting:**

- The sublimation transfer paper may have shifted after pressing. Be sure to attach the transfer securely to keep the paper from moving.

### **The sublimation blank sticks to the top of the heat press when it is opened:**

- Place a piece of blowout paper or Teflon sheet between the sublimation blank and the heated upper platen. Add sublimation time as needed.

### **The image colors are not correct on the sublimated product:**

- The printer settings or color profile may need to be adjusted.
- Check for proper sublimation paper type.
- Convert the colors used in the image to RGB color mode in the design/layout software before printing, including spot colors (common for logos).