

Guidelines for use with CitadelSix Custom Design water-slide decals / transfers* printed on CLEAR decal film

* Please note that in the UK, where CitadelSix Custom Design is located, decals are more generally referred to as 'transfers'.

The sheet of water-slide decals that accompanies these instructions has been laser-printed by CitadelSix Custom Design onto high-quality CLEAR carrier film.

Please note: These decals are **only** intended for use on WHITE painted or natural metal (SILVER) surfaces. Any other painted colour will show through the decal and even change the colour of its appearance.

To obtain the best results, it is highly recommended that you read through all the instructions provided on this sheet **first** and then follow the steps exactly as described below.

1. Paint the surface on which the decals are to be applied with GLOSS WHITE or, if the metal surface is left unpainted, give the surface a coat of GLOSS varnish or lacquer. This will help any air bubbles trapped beneath the decal to escape easily when the decal is applied. Make sure the gloss finish / varnish / lacquer is thoroughly dry before you apply any decals to the surface.
2. Using a razor-sharp scalpel or craft-knife, and with the decal sheet laid flat on a cutting mat, very carefully cut around the decal shape, leaving a border of two to three millimetres around the outside of the printed image.

Note: It's not advisable to use scissors, as these can damage the decal and create a roughened edge which will spoil the finished product.

3. Fill a saucer or shallow dish with warm water, into which a very small drop of wetting agent or washing-up liquid has been added. This will help the decal to slide better from the backing paper onto the surface on which the decal is to be applied.

Note: A better alternative to using wetting agent or washing-up liquid in the warm water is to brush a coat of Microscale's Micro-Set Decal Solvent™ (product MI-1) directly onto the surface to which the decal is to be applied. Micro-Set acts as a wetting agent, as well as helping to form a stronger bond between the decal adhesive and the surface on which the decal is to be applied, and softens the decal slightly so that it will conform to the surface shape better. Also recommended is Microscale's Micro-Sol Decal Solvent™ (product MI-2) which softens the carrier film and helps the decal to 'snuggle down' over any raised surface details.

4. Place the decal into the warm water (the decal may curl slightly and then flatten out, depending on the warmth of the water). After about 30 seconds lift the decal out and place it onto some absorbent paper, such as kitchen roll, to soak up most of the surplus water.

5. If you are using Micro-Set Decal Solvent, apply a coat of this over the surface on which the decal is to be applied and, using a small, moistened paint brush, slide the decal off its backing paper onto the Micro-Set Decal Solvent while it is still wet. Apply a coat of Micro-Sol Decal Solvent to the decal at this point to help it conform to any raised surface details.

Technical tip: If the surface on which you're applying the decal is very sharply curved or uneven, the decal will only mould itself to as much as it will naturally stretch before it starts to 'tent', i.e. leaving gaps between the underside of the decal film and the peaks and troughs of sculpted details moulded on the surface of the miniature. So, to help the decal fit closer to the surface, you may need to lightly brush on another application of Micro-Sol with the tip of a fine paint brush to help release a little more of the resistance of the carrier film to reshape itself to the contoured surface.

Note 1: Decals will **not** conform well to highly detailed / sculpted surfaces. They only work best on flat or gently undulating / curved surfaces.

Note 2: Very tiny decals, such as cloak or surcoat badges, may tend to be quite stiff and resistant to conforming to surface shapes. This is simply because the decals are so small in area which makes it more difficult for the decal film to flex (bend). The problem can be overcome by applying a drop of Micro-Sol or Micro-Set Decal Solvent with the tip of a paintbrush to the decal once it has been applied, then leaving the decal to soften and settle onto the model's surface. Any visible edges of the decal can be blended-in with the help of an over-coat of clear **acrylic*** varnish once the decal has thoroughly dried.

6. Use the corner a tissue, or some other absorbent paper or soft cloth, to soak up any surplus moisture, then leave the decal to set. **Don't** be tempted to reposition or touch the decal once you've applied it to the surface and it's settled into its final position, as you may damage the decal while it is still softened by the Micro-Set and Micro-Sol Decal Solvents.

Note: Quite often, especially when using Micro-Set or Micro-Sol, the decal may wrinkle when the liquid is first applied to its surface. **Don't panic** and be tempted to try to smooth the wrinkles out, because they will gradually disappear as the decal and Micro-Set or Micro-Sol dries.

7. Finally, it is recommended that you give the decal a coat of clear gloss or matt **acrylic*** varnish to help protect the printed image and produce the final finish you want to obtain.

If you have any comments or suggestions you'd like to make about improving these guidelines or concerning CitadelSix Custom Design decals, then please send an e-mail to: citadelsix@btinternet.com.

Thank you for your custom

Geoff Buss

* Do **NOT** use a solvent-based varnish to over-coat the decals. The solvent may soften the medium used to print the decals and spoil or even damage the decal's surface.