

# Applying Decals to Rifle Cartridges

By  
Larry Wirt

A.K.A “[ribanett](#)”

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The following tutorial is supplemented by [this video](#) by ribanett.

# Applying Decals To Rifle Cartridges



I made this simple jig to hold the rifle cartridge while I apply the decal. Made it from scrap took about 30 min to build. It will save you a lot of time.

This is how I apply decals to rifle cartridges. There are different ways of doing it but this works for me.

**Distilled water:** Use distilled water to wet and apply the decal. Any deposits in tap water will tarnish the brass.

**Acetone:** Use acetone to clean any oil off the cartridge. Do not just wipe the cartridge, rub to clean all dirt and oil off the cartridge. After the cartridge has been cleaned, DO NOT touch the cartridge. The tranny makes a nice handle.

**Wear rubber gloves:** If you touch the cartridge after cleaning with acetone, the oil from your fingers will tarnish the brass. When I started using decals, I did not wear gloves and had to redo over 20 pens because after a week or two my fingerprints appeared under the CA.

**1/2" artist brush:** Use to smooth decal onto cartridge.

1. Trim the decal so there is a border around the image about 1/16"
2. Put the decal in distilled water for no more than 15 seconds. You just want to dampen the backing paper not get it soaking wet.
3. Remove the decal from the water and place on a cloth or paper towel to soak up the excess water.

4. Allow the decal to set for at least 2 minutes to soften the backing. I set a timer.
5. Gently push the decal off the backing paper about 1/8".
6. Apply the decal that is off the backing paper to cartridge using your wet brush to smooth the decal down.
7. Using the tranny as a handle, slowly turn the cartridge while holding the backing paper. The decal will slide off the backing paper.
8. Wet your brush and smooth down the decal, moving from the center to the edge in all directions. Make sure the edge is smooth all around the decal.
9. Using a paper towel or cloth. Blot do not rub to remove excess water.
10. Allow the decal to dry

I use CA as a finish. This is how I do it.

1. Apply 5 coats of CA thin and allow to cure.
2. Smooth with MM 6k.
3. Look at the decal using a low-angle light.
4. If I can see the edge, I apply 3 coats of CA med and allow to cure.
5. Smooth with MM 6k and look for the edge.
6. If the edge is covered, I polish using MM12k and Brasso. If the edge is still there go back to step 4.