



# Caring for your Vinyl

Demonstrated by executive pastry chef Anthony Chavez

Our goal at the Chicago School of Mold Making is to help you get the most out of your new materials and tools. Given that vinyl is a petroleum based product, we see value in helping you keep it in usable condition for as long as possible. As the environmental and political effects of harvesting more petroleum from the earth magnify, we want to encourage good stewardship of this material. We hope this demonstration will help you use the vinyl to its maximum efficiency.



**1.** Since we store and ship the vinyl in rolls, it will be curled upon arrival. To flatten it out, place a full sheet pan upside down on the middle shelf of a baking rack. On top of the sheet pan, place a full sized Silpat. Drape the vinyl sheet evenly over the sheet pan. *Note:* If you lay the vinyl directly onto the metal rack (without a baking mat in between), the vinyl will become permanently indented with 'bar lines' from the baking rack.

**2.** Roll the rack into a preheated oven (300°F/149°C max.) and leave it in for a maximum of three minutes, which is long enough to soften the material. Vinyl is flammable and will give off hazardous fumes if it is over-heated. **DO NOT LEAVE THE OVEN UNATTENDED.**

**3.** After three minutes, pull the rack from the oven and remove the vinyl sheet. Be careful not to let the vinyl sheet fold onto itself. If it does, it might temporarily bond to itself and leave a textured blemish at the contact point.



**4.** Before putting the vinyl in the oven, prepare a clear, flat cooling area for the warm vinyl. Make sure to wipe the counter surface clean. If there is any debris beneath the vinyl, it will pick up the impression, scarring your vinyl. Next, lay parchment paper on the counter to ensure a smooth surface for cooling. Use this technique to flatten your vinyl anytime it becomes warped or misshaped.

## FAST FACTS

1. Do not use a metal scraper to clean the vinyl. It will permanently scratch the surface.
2. To clean your vinyl, use hot soapy water or a household glass cleaner such as Windex.
3. Store vinyl in a loose roll. (Save the packing paper. Use it again to wrap the vinyl.)
4. Never leave in the oven longer than 3 minutes and do not heat above 300°F/149°C. It is dangerous and not safe.

## WHAT TO DO WITH YOUR OLD VINYL

1. Use it to make custom casting templates for sugar and chocolate casting.
2. Pass it forward to an apprentice or student (along with this literature).
3. Send it back to us. We will give it to a student to use. Thanks!



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