

Three Steps To Hassle-Free Traction Mat Installation

Looking for a winter project? Want your ski looking brand new for the upcoming riding season? Installing a set of [traction mats](#) is one of the simplest ways to make your PWC look new again, and keep you safe and in control. Unfortunately, the job is also one that many owners have come to dread. Follow these three simple steps to take the pain out of the job and make sure your new mat installation lasts as long as possible.

Step 1. Remove: start with some rubber gloves to protect your hands, then round up a putty knife or plastic squeegee and some type of chemical adhesive remover. Don't forget to work in a well-ventilated area...you don't want to get loopy from the chemical smell.

Start at a corner and squirt or brush some of the adhesive remover around the base of the mat. If you don't care about using a lot of adhesive remover, you can also pour it right atop the old mats. It will soak down through the mat material and to the glue below. Just have plenty of rags handy to soak up the leftover liquid.



Give it a few minutes to work, then begin pulling upwards on the mat edge as you scrape between the mat and fiberglass to work the mat free. As you loosen sections of mat, continue the process, applying the adhesive remover, letting it soak in, and then lifting and scraping.



Solid, EVA foam mats usually come up the easiest. Old-school rubber is going to take a little more patience. Just remember to work small sections at a time. You should be able to finish the job with a minimum of hassle.

Depending on the existing mats, you may find leftover “peel-and-stick” adhesive attached to the footwells. Score it with a razor and wire brush to allow the adhesive remover to work its way within, before scraping it away.

Step 2. Prep the surface: remove as much adhesive and old mat residue as possible. Ideally, you want the surface clean and smooth. Leftover glue or mat material will weaken the bond of your new mats, and may result in bumps or imperfections below the surface. A final wipe with a rag soaked with adhesive remover should leave you with a smooth, clean surface.



When you're satisfied, tape off the outlines of your new mats to protect your paint job, then sand the areas the mats will cover with 80 grit sandpaper. This will roughen the surface and create a better bond with the adhesive.

As final preparation, wipe the surface down with acetone to remove any dust or leftover chemical residue.

Step 3. Get sticky with it: before you stick, do a dry run to ensure you know where your mats are to be placed. If you're worried about lining up the mats, mark outlines with masking tape to keep you on target. It also helps to have an extra set of hands to help you hold the pieces as you lay them into position.



All BlackTip Jetsports mats come with peel-and-stick adhesive; others require contact cement. If your set is the latter, make sure the adhesive you choose is waterproof, and that you follow the manufacturer's directions. Typically this means coating both the footwell and the underside of the mat with adhesive, letting it dry till it becomes tacky, and then pushing the pieces together.

With the adhesive ready and a friend helping you, hold the pieces in position, carefully align the mats above the surface, and then lower them into position. You won't get a second chance, so take time to get it right. Once they're stuck, apply firm, even pressure over the entire surface to maximize the strength of the bond and prevent water from getting below the surface.

Now that your traction mats are complete and things are looking new again, treat your mats with extra care. They are made to be durable but try and avoid unnecessary sand or rocks. Also, to prevent your new mats from fading or drying out from the sun, invest in a [BlackTip Jetsports custom storage cover](#) to keep your mats looking new for many seasons to come!

