Part A: Preparing Your Dura-Max™ Vacuum Bag
1. Remove the zinc-plated nut, washer, and the top gasket ring from the valve stem assembly. Do not separate the metal washer from the gasket material.
2. Insert the valve stem (with the lower gasket ring in place) through the hole in the center of the bag. You’ll find this is the best location for the stem because it allows various types of vacuum work to be completed. For flat panel work, simply place a portion of the grooved top platen under the valve stem. Use plastic breather mesh (available at VeneerSupplies.com) instead of a top platen for curved projects.
3. Place the other gasket ring back onto the valve stem with gasket side against the vinyl.
4. Install the washer and tighten the locking nut with finger pressure. Then turn the nut one full turn with a wrench.

Part B: Using the Bag Closure
The PVC closure system included with your vacuum bag will allow you to easily seal the bag opening. Simply roll the bag end over the PVC tube. Then snap the PVC C-channel over the bag starting from one end and working towards the opposite end. To ensure a perfect seal, be certain that the entire bag opening is secured by the closure and that there are no heavily wrinkles in the bag material.

Note that the closure system is slightly longer than the bag opening.

For additional clamping strength, you can attach spring clamps over the C-channel. This is not necessary under normal conditions but it will provide a better seal if the bag is heavily worn. For the ultimate gripping strength, the bag may be rolled over the tube twice before the C-channel is attached. We do not recommend more than a double roll over the tube due to the difficulty of removing the closure under such clamping pressure.

To remove the closure, pull the C-channel off of the PVC tube starting at one end and work toward to the opposite side until the closure is released.

Part C: Dura-Max Vacuum Bag Maintenance
During the first two or three uses, the vacuum bag may seem rigid and difficult to work with. However, with each use, you’ll find that the Dura-Max vinyl becomes more soft and pliable. Within the first ten pressings you will see and feel a noticeable increase in the bag’s flexibility.

With ordinary use, your vacuum bag will last for a very long time. You can extend the service life of the vacuum bag by using and storing it carefully. Be sure to round over any protruding edges on the platen and cauls the might puncture the bag. When you’re finished with the vacuum bag, store the bag rolled up instead of folding it. You can also extend the life of the vacuum bag by using it only when the ambient temperature is above 60°F. You’ll find that higher temperatures make the vinyl more supple and conforming.

Should your bag develop a leak, the easiest way to find it is place pieces of brown paper in the area where you suspect there is a leak. Then place the platens inside the bag and clamp it shut. Next, turn on the vacuum unit and allow it to achieve as much pressure as possible. Now spray the outside of the bag with water. Any holes in the bag will show up on the paper as the water is absorbed.

For a quick fix, place some clear packing tape over the hole and press it down firmly. If you prefer a more durable repair, please contact us for a vinyl patch kit.
Part E: Avoid this Common Mistake
Be careful that you do not stress the seams on your vacuum bag. The seams will surely break if they are being pulled apart by vacuum pressure. With a bag of the correct size, the seams will pull together. Imagine a very small project inside a large bag. Under pressure, you would notice that the seams actually pull together and are under virtually no stress.

Part E: Making Large Bags More Convenient
It can be difficult to work with a large project in a large vacuum bag. To make the process easier, you can cut off the seam at the far end of the bag. This will allow unencumbered access to the project panel from both ends. Keep in mind that you will need a second bag closure to seal the end. These are available for immediate shipment at VeneerSupplies.com.