

EDGE & WAX STEP BY STEP GUIDES

3. Ski & Snowboard Waxing

NOTE: For a new snowboard or new skis, you **MUST** wax before you use. The manufacturers wax is there to protect the skis in transit, and prevent the bases from getting dry when in storage. Ski on this, and you could find it wears off very quickly, leaving your bases exposed to wear (white patches or a rough texture are the signs), and shortening the life of the equipment!

If you buy new skis or a new snowboard, please make sure you get as many layers of wax in before your trip. The more layers you do, the better protected the bases will be, and the better your equipment will perform.



WAX

First you need to select a wax appropriate for the conditions you will be skiing or boarding in. There are various waxes with different additives (and prices) but a common theme is that for extreme warm or cold temperatures you can choose a wax that will tolerate and excel in those conditions. For example, in North America, you generally find temperatures well below 0 degrees, so would run a harder wax (For Holmenkol this would be red, or even blue coloured depending on just how cold) and for warmer conditions you would run a softer wax which will work better in slushy or softer conditions. Waxes are coloured for easier identification. You can get pretty technical with wax choice!

For European conditions, you can generally go for a universal wax, and 99% of the time that's what we put on customers skis. A universal wax covers a broad range of temperature, generally a snow temperature around +2 degrees to -8 depending on the brand which are the conditions experienced in many European resorts. Once you have used a universal wax, you can then always layer a harder or softer wax later if conditions change while you are in resort.



Any quality wax will tell you the melting temperature for the wax. This is critical. Too hot and the wax will burn, and along with it your bases! Too low a temperature and the wax will be harder to apply and won't gain maximum penetration of the base. Always set your iron according to the instructions.

We will use a universal melt on wax for this step-by-step. There are other options for waxing such as rub-on waxes or pastes, but for the best results hot waxing with a proper ski wax iron is hard to beat, and will be longer lasting.

A quality wax will indicate the required temperature for the wax iron

NOTE: These guides are intended to be a suggestion on the process for servicing your equipment. They are not set in stone, and we can't take any responsibility for the results of following these instructions, but we hope that these assist you with your interest in ski and snowboard tuning.

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Drip the wax onto the base

Firstly (once any repairs have been made to the base) we need to clean it. There are two methods. The quicker method is to use base cleaner. Spray over the ski, and wipe off with some Care Fleece. The dirt will lift off the base. You have to leave the base 15 minutes before waxing to allow the cleaner to evaporate. This works well, but for the ultimate clean we recommend a 'hot scrape'. We will detail this below.

Before waxing, switch your iron on, and set it to the correct temperature indicated by the wax packaging. This will take a couple of minutes, long enough for you to put an apron on or old T-shirt as it can get messy!

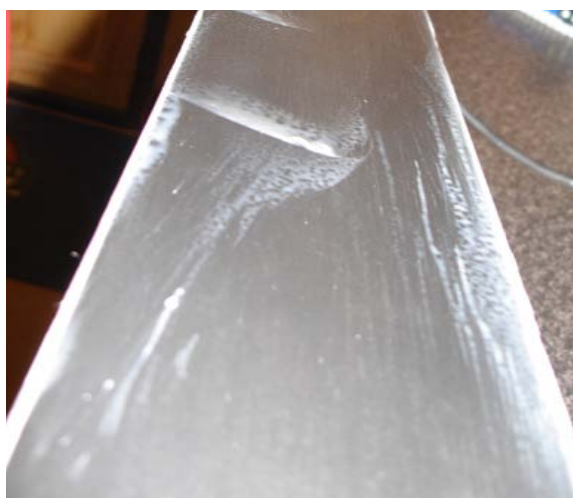
Take your block of wax, and working a section at a time (we do in quarters) melt the wax block against the iron so that it drips onto the base (Image 1). Now gently work the iron along the base in a smooth motion. You are looking to pass the wax across the whole section. It doesn't take much wax to do this!

Now, if you iron too much, the ski will get too hot, and the base could separate. Too little, and the wax won't penetrate. SO, whilst gently waxing backwards and forwards, feel the top sheet of the ski or board underneath. Keep an eye on your watch, and when you feel the top sheet just start to warm, stop ironing that section. The heat will continue to pass through the ski and the top sheet will get warmer, and this process is what pulls the wax into the base. As you have noted how long that took, you can now do each quarter, using the same amount of time. So when the bindings are in the way on skis to prevent you touching the top sheet, you still can be confident that the heat you are using is sufficient.

Generally, it takes about 5 minutes to do a cross country ski, a little longer for a snowboard. Snowboards have a thinner construction so although larger the heat passes through sooner. Once you have done the whole base, leave it to cool for at least 15 minutes. (Image 2) Don't rush this by putting the skis somewhere cold, we want the wax to draw into the base in its own time.

HOWEVER

If you want to do a 'hot scrape' to clean the bases, then do not wait 15 minutes, take your perspex scraper and scrape straight away (Hence the name!) You should see dirt in the wax as you scrape it off. (Image 3) Now move on, skipping the next step.



Wait for the ski wax to cool (15 mins)



Hot scraping the dirty wax from base

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Scraping off the cooled wax

Once you have waited the 15 minutes if waxing, take your Perspex scraper, and scrape the wax off the base. We want to remove as much wax as possible, so hold the perspex scraper at around 40 degrees and push away from you as you work down the base. For a snowboard, work in lengths at a time.

Once you have scraped off any excess wax, we then need to brush wax out of the base structure, so that it glides as smoothly as possible. Take a nylon wax brush, and working from the tip to the tail, brush the wax out of the base.

Finally wipe down the base with some Care Fleece. Take your perspex scraper, and use the little corner square of the scraper to run down the edges, to remove wax from the side edge and base edge. If you don't do this, your edges will not work correctly, so its important!

If you have done a hot scrape, now you can start again, this time allowing the wax to set for 15 minutes.

If you have done a wax, you can repeat the above steps as many times as you wish. If your equipment is brand new, this should be at least 3 times to protect your bases.

And if you are storing your equipment for the summer, repeat the above steps but STOP before the scraping stage. This leaves a nice quote of wax over your bases and edges to protect them. When its time to hit the slopes, continue with the scrape and the brush, and you are ready to go!



Brushing the wax out of the base



Scrape excess wax off the edges!