

Cross Country Ski Waxing

by Greg Fangel

Classical cross country skis are waxed for both kick and glide. Skating skis are waxed for glide only, the whole length of the ski. The kick section of a classical ski is determined by the "paper" test, which is done at a reputable ski shop. This section of the ski is below your foot and is slightly different for each skier, according to your weight and the stiffness of the ski. The kick zone is normally marked on the side of the ski with a black permanent marker, after the paper test is complete. The glide section of a classical ski is the tip and tail section, on each side of the kick zone. The glide section of a skating ski is the whole base.

Preparing the Kick Zone

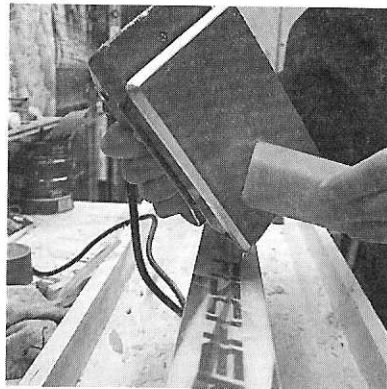
1. Scrape most of the old wax off of the kick zone with a plastic scraper wrapped with "Fiberlene", which is a lint free cloth.
2. Clean the kick zone with a liquid wax cleaner. Remove all traces of wax and let the base dry.
3. Using 150 grit sandpaper, lightly rough-up the base of the ski in the kick zone only! Some skiers like to sand lightly in a cross-hatched pattern. ***If you have combination skating/classical skis, do not perform this step!***
4. After cleaning the kick zone, use a hard wax base binder and crayon a light layer onto the newly prepared kick section of the ski.
5. Using a warm wax iron, melt the base binder into the base of the ski and spread it evenly with your thumb or a klister spreader.
6. After letting the base of the ski cool, you are now ready for applying the wax of the day.

Applying Hard Kick Wax

1. Determine the appropriate kick wax of the day by looking at a chart or on the canister for the correct temperature.
2. Lightly crayon a layer of hard kick wax onto the top of the base binder that was applied in the previous steps.
3. Using a wax cork, rub the wax until it smoothes itself and becomes slightly shiny.
4. Repeat steps one and two as often as necessary for the conditions.

Applying Klister Kick Wax

1. Consult the tube or a chart to determine the correct wax to use.
2. The base of the ski and klister wax need to be room temperature before using. Some skiers warm the ski and the klister with a warm air gun.
3. Apply small, thin strips of the klister wax to the kick zone area of the ski and spread them thin with a klister spreader or your thumb. Do not apply wax to the groove of the base of the ski.
4. Repeat steps two and three as necessary for the conditions.

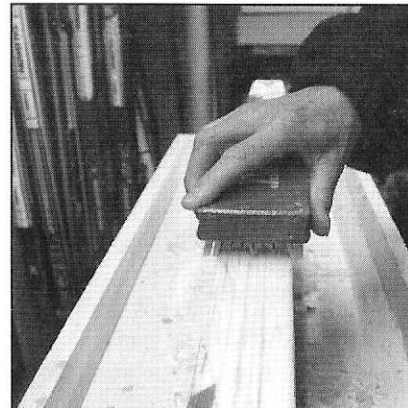


Preparing the Glide Zone

1. Clean your glide zone by melting a warm temperature glide wax, dripping it onto the base of the ski.
2. Melt the hardened drip spots into the base with a warm wax iron. If the wax smokes, the iron is too hot.
3. Smooth the wax with the warm wax iron, keeping it moving so as not to burn the base of the ski.
4. After the wax is applied, immediately scrape the wax off with a plastic scraper.
5. The dirt from the base will be floated to the top by applying the warm wax and the dirt will be removed by the immediate scraping.
6. Let the skis cool to room temperature before going to the next step.

Applying Glide Wax

1. Using a warm wax iron, melt the correct temperature glide wax, dripping it onto the base of the ski.
2. Melt the hardened drip spots into the base with a warm wax iron. If the wax smokes, the iron is too hot.
3. Smooth the wax with the warm wax iron, keeping it moving so as not to burn the base of the ski.
4. After the wax is applied, let the ski cool to room temperature. (Usually 15-20 minutes)



5. Scrape the hardened glide wax from the ski with a plastic scraper. The melted wax will have been soaked into the base of the ski and the top layer of wax needs to be removed.
6. After scraping and removing all visible signs of glide wax, brush the base of the ski with a nylon, short bristle waxing brush, until the base has a slight sheen.
7. Remove all wax in the ski base groove with a groove scraper or the edge of the plastic scraper.
8. Repeat steps 1 thru 7, eight times for new skis and two times for seasoned skis.

Recommended Wax Supplies

1. Wax iron
2. Plastic scraper
3. Nylon brush
4. Groove scraper
5. Fiberlene (lint free cloth)
6. Waxing cork
7. Liquid wax remover
8. Base binder for kick zone
9. 4 kick waxes
10. 2 klister waxes
11. 3 glide waxes
12. Waxing bench or clamps for table top.

Tips

1. Keep waxing simple and spend more of your time skiing.
2. Go to a wax clinic to see hands-on ski waxing.
3. If the glide wax smokes while you are melting it, the iron is too hot.
4. Keep the wax iron moving on the base of the ski to prevent scorching the base.
5. Install kick wax layers thinly. Use multiple layers for longer distances.