

# How to Tune & Wax Your Skis

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For a quality tune and wax job, there are several things one must do. In this report you will learn how to tune and wax your skis with easy instructions and photos.



## Tuning

Before I begin tuning, I like to get my entire set of tools ready. This way I have them all within reach, which saves time. There are a number of tools you will need for tuning your skis. First you will need a stand for your skis. This will prevent damage to your bindings. You will also need a mill file, file guide, diamond stone, paintbrush, gummy stone and a brake-restraining device.

The file is used to sharpen the edges. It is a good idea to use a black felt tip marker to mark the edge of the ski. As you use the file to sharpen the edge you should file just until the felt marker has been removed from the edges.



A file guide is a simple device that holds your file at a desired angle. The file guides come in four different angles. There is a  $90^\circ$ ,  $89^\circ$ ,  $88^\circ$ , and  $87^\circ$ . Before selecting your file guide, make sure you determine the degree of bevel set on your ski.



A diamond stone won't make the edge as sharp as the file, rather it is used to remove burs that form on the edges. It basically buffs the edge and is used to finish the edge after filing.



The paintbrush is actually an important tool when tuning skis. As you tune skis tiny the file takes off pieces of your edge. If these metal filings are not cleaned from the base of the ski they can become embedded in the base of the ski. After each repetition with the file it is strongly recommended that you brush the file, the file guide and the ski to remove any metal filings. This will reduce the chance of the edge particles becoming embedded in the base.

The gummy stone is used to de-tune the tip and tail of the ski by slightly dulling the edge.



The brake-restraining device holds the ski brake down allowing the file and the waxing iron to pass along the base of the ski.

Once I have all my tools gathered, I begin the tuning process. To begin tuning I place the skis in the stand, and place the brake-restraining device on the ski brake. After the ski is in place, I feel the edge of my ski to see if it needs sharpening. One way of doing this, is to run your thumbnail along the edge of the ski. If the edge cuts your nail slightly it is sharp enough.



If my ski needs sharpening, the next step is to place the file on the file guide. When placing the file on file guide make sure the tail of the file is pointing to the back. Once the file is in place I begin to sharpen the edge of the ski. I run the felt marker along the edge and then proceed to apply even pressure along the edge with the file sharpening from tip to tail. After every time I make a pass with the file, I use the paintbrush to brush off the file, the guide, and the base of the ski.



Repeat the process until the edge cuts your nail.

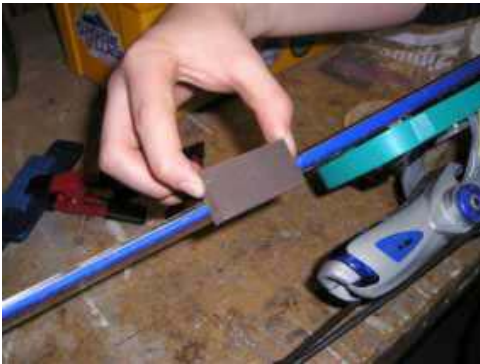


After your ski is sharp enough, it is time to remove the burs that may have been formed. To do this, place the diamond stone on the

file guide. Run the diamond stone from tip to tail until you feel that there are no burrs on the edge.



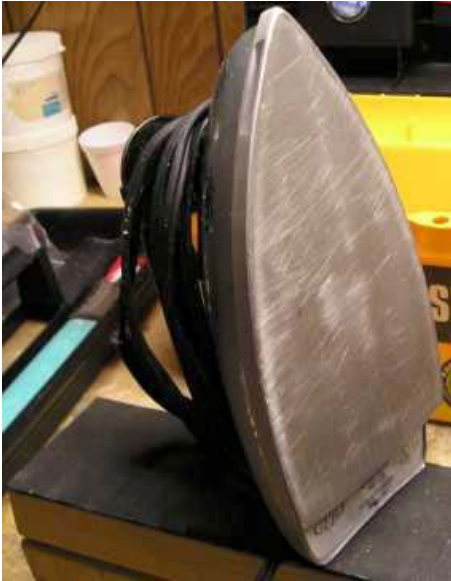
The last step is to de-tune the tip and tail of the ski by running the gummy stone along a short portion of the edges at the tip and tail. Now that your skis are sharp they are ready for the wax.



## Waxing

As with tuning, there are several tools that are needed to wax your skis. The tools include a stand, brake-restraining device, an iron, brass brush, base cleaner, wax, wax scraper, and a pot scrubber or nylon brush.

If you are using an ordinary clothes iron, you must ensure that the iron temperature is not set too high. If it is, the wax will smoke and this is not the ideal situation.



A brass brush is used to open up the pores in the base, which allows the wax to be absorbed by the ski. It can also clean out any metal filings that may have become embedded in the base from the tuning process.



Base cleaner is a spray that can be applied to the base of the ski. The base cleaner removes old wax and cleans any oils, grease, or dirt that may have been picked up on the base of the ski.

A pot scrubber is something that may not seem like it should be included in your waxing tools. The pot scrubber is very important for waxing your skis. The pot scrubber is used to buff or texture the base of the ski after waxing. To texture the ski, after the excess wax has been scraped off, run the nylon pot scrubber along the base from the tip to tail,

White areas on the base of the ski (usually along the edges) are a sign that the bases are drying out and need to be waxed. There is nothing wrong with waxing a ski that doesn't show the white areas, but for sure you don't want to ski very long on a ski with white areas on the base.



Once the ski edges have been sharpened, it is time to wax the bases. Place the ski in the stand with the brake-restraining device in place.

Plug in the iron to warm it up, watching that the iron doesn't begin to smoke. As the iron is heating, I use the brass brush to remove old wax and open up the pores in the base. When the base is dirty, or there is lots of old wax on the ski, I use the base cleaner. To use the base cleaner follow the instructions on the bottle. After I use the brass brush, I remove the wax particles with my hand or a soft cloth.



Once the iron is heated I can begin to apply the wax. It is important to choose a wax that is at the proper temperature for the conditions. Applying the wax is a very simple process, but if not done properly can damage your skis.

First hold the iron above the ski and touch the wax to the iron. Let little drops fall upon the ski. Make sure you allow the drops to fall evenly rather than grouped all together. A tip is to do one half of the ski at a time. This allows you to focus on a smaller surface area, and do a more effective job.



Once the drops are on the base of the ski it is time to spread them. Place the iron across the ski and move it back and forth. It is very important to keep the iron moving at all times. If you don't



keep the iron moving, the heat could cause your base to bubble, which will cost a lot of money to repair.



There are a number of ways to tell if the wax job is finished. One way is you can tell by a shiny, almost water like substance on the ski. The substance is the melted wax. The second and more efficient way of telling of you are done waxing, is to feel the underside (top sheet side) of the ski. If the ski is warm to the touch, you are finished!



After the wax is spread out, repeat the process for the other half of the ski and the other ski.

Once your wax is spread on both skis, let the wax dry and cool. Trying to scrape the excess wax away before the base material

has cooled may result in some of the base material being scraped away with the wax.

When your wax is dry and cool, you are ready to scrape the wax. To scrape the wax, take your wax scraper and hold it against the base. Apply pressure and scrape the wax from tip to tail. You will reach a point where no wax will be scraping off.



Next, you should remove the wax from the edges with the corner of the scraper.



Once you have finished scraping the excess wax of the base of the ski, it is time to texture or buff the base of the ski.

To texture the ski, run the pot scrubber along the base from the tip to the tail. This will texture the base, making the ski glide more effectively.



Once your skis are buffed it is time to strap them up and store them, or hit the slopes.

It is important to strap your skis together because when you travel, your skis might cross or scissor which will dull your edges that you have just spent valuable time sharpening.



It is also important to wax your skis at the end of the season before you store them. This will protect the bases during the off season.