

# Getting started: A basic guide to waxing your skis.

## General Tools:

Synthetic Cork	Wax Iron
Plastic Scraper	Fiber-pad
Wax remover	Combi Brush ( brass / poly )
Groove scraper	

## General Base Prep & Glide Wax

1. Clean the base of the ski by hot waxing

- a. Use Ch-10. Wax the base
- b. While the wax is still warm scrape the base; this will clean the skis.
- c. This should be done at the beginning of the season and as necessary based on conditions (old, dirty snow) and the frequency of your skiing.

2. Crayon the wax on the ski or slightly heat the wax on the iron and then crayon.

\* Do not drip on the ski unless you like wasting wax.

3. Use an iron at the appropriate temperature (Swix irons are calibrated ). If using “mom’s iron” (not a good idea!) be sure the temperature is as low as possible. So start at a very low setting until the iron just melts the wax. If the iron smokes it’s too hot !!!

Caution: Bases can be “torched” and permanently sealed at 135 degrees!

4. Work the iron over the ski once to get the wax warm. Then at a slow but steady pace iron from tip to tail 3 to 5 times. Be sure to always keep the iron moving!

\*You should try to get as much wax in the base of your skis as possible. This can be done by repeating the ironing process without stripping off the wax.

- a. Wax the ski and set it aside for a couple hours
- b. Work the iron over the ski again, set aside again
- c. This process can be repeated four or five times; its not necessary to add more wax unless its obvious the ski has absorbed all you have put on. For instance you can hear / feel the iron on the ski. Stop and apply more wax.

5. After wax has been applied you will want to scrape, brush and polish.....
  - a. Clean the edges and groove with a groove tool
  - b. Scrape the bottom of the ski. Remember to exert even pressure and use smooth strokes from tip to tail. Both thumbs should be over the ski.
  - c. Brush with a Brass or Combi brush until all wax appears to be removed.
  - d. Polish with a fiber pad
  
6. Choosing the right Glide Wax:
  - a. Check the temperature for the day
  - b. Check the humidity: If the humidity is high and its an important race, consider using an lf (low fluoro) or hf (high fluoro) wax.
  - c. Swix wax is identified by number scale: low (CH4) is cold and high (CH10) is warm
  - d. Generally start with an appropriate CH wax and add an LF on top if appropriate. Scrape & brush in-between applications.

### **Classic Base Preparation:**

1. Identifying the wax pocket: (You will need two people for this )
  - a. Place the skis on a hard smooth surface
  - b. Have the skier stand on the binding as if they had ski boots on with feet "track" width apart.
  - c. Place an index card under the binding.
  - d. Instruct the skier to evenly distribute their weight and look straight ahead.
  - e. Slide the card back and forth. The distance the card can freely travel is the wax pocket. The pocket should measure @ 45-65 cm starting from the heel plate.
  - f. Mark the front of the pocket with a permanent marker on side of skis.
  
2. Depending on snow conditions you might want to:
  - a. Apply a layer of binder wax (VG 35), cork or iron in. If you use an iron be sure to clean thoroughly after.
  - b. Lightly sand the "kick zone" with 100-150 grit sand paper in a cross pattern.

**\* If you have Combi skis use the binder, never sand!.**

### 3. Apply the wax of the day

a. Hard waxes should be applied in “3-5 thin layers” with thorough corking in between. \*Thorough corking means that the wax “appears” to vanish and is no longer white on the ski.

b. Allow the wax to adjust to the outside temperature before skiing. This will help prevent icing.

### c. If after 1-2 km’s the wax seems not to be working:

1. Put on another layer of wax.... If that fails
2. Extend the wax zone... If that fails
3. Move up to the next wax, but apply to as shorter zone.... If that fails
4. Work on your technique

4. Klusters: Seemingly feared by all this very soft, sticky wax is available in the traditional tube form, “aerosol type” canisters and tape.

a. Tube Klister should always be kept warm. Put it in your pocket, on the car heater or in a thermos filled with warm water

\* With proper training klister is best applied with a torch or heat gun!

b. Apply a very thin line or a series of drops of klister on each side of the groove and smooth with a paddle. Think less is more ...

c. ***Allow the Klister to set up and adjust to the temperature of the snow. If klister is applied and immediately skied on it will ice over very quickly.***

\* Although not as durable as traditional applications, "quick klister" is very easy to apply. Turn the can over, press and slide along the ski. Smooth with applicator. Allow the klister to set up !

*These instructions are meant to be a brief review of basic wax techniques; for a thorough review of the art form get a copy of Nat Brown’s Book on Wax Preparation.*

**Happy Skiing !!**