

A Cross Country (X-C) Ski-Waxing Guide for the Rochester Nordic Ski Club

- Wax has two primary purposes: a) protect the ski base from abrasive snow & dirt, and b) reduce interactive conditions of the ski base and snow that can slow the ski
- Waxes include a) smear-on liquids, b) crayon pastes, and c) melt-in hard waxes
- Waxes are designed & selected for a) condition of ski base, b) temperature & humidity at the ski trail, and c) trail conditions – such as new, moist, cold, or crystalline snow

A. Become informed – Attend waxing demonstrations. Consult experienced X-C skiers & X-C ski businesses. Review relevant websites & “You Tube” videos, such as the following:

- <http://crosscountryskitechnique.com/glide-waxing/>
- <https://www.nordicskiersports.com/basic-hot-wax-tutorial.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oWZsD765vxQ>
- <http://www.parryloeffler.com/waxbench.htm>

B. Supplies & Equipment for Applying Melt-in Hard Wax to Nordic Ski Bases:

- ✓ A wax profile, clamp & table. The profile is a metal or wood form (commercial or homemade) that matches the contour of the ski and fastens the ski, base up, to facilitate the waxing process
- ✓ Digital control wax-iron (Avoid using an old clothes iron which may damage a ski base)
- ✓ Wax brushes including: a) soft metal (copper, brass, or fine stainless) b) stiff nylon & c) soft polishing
- ✓ Plexiglass scraper with sharp 90 degree edges. (Scrapers can be sharpened with a commercial edge-sharpener or by sliding the edge of the vertical positioned scraper a few strokes on 100 grit sandpaper)
- ✓ A groove scraper and dry cloth to wipe scraped wax particles from skis
- ✓ A tarp on the floor to capture scraped or melted wax
- ✓ A soft base-wax and about 3 glide waxes rated for typical ski temperature ranges

C. Ski Waxing Procedure:

1. Adjust the wax-iron’s dial to the advised temperature printed on the wax package
2. Then crayon the wax onto the ski base. Follow-up by dripping melting wax off the wax-iron base on to each side of the ski’s center groove - the length of the ski
3. Lightly glide the wax-iron on the ski base to melt the wax-drippings the length of the ski from tip to tail. Ski bases can be damaged by too much heating, so keep the wax-iron moving. Stop when the melted wax covers the width & length of the ski base.
4. After wax is melted evenly into the ski base, remove visible wax from the center groove & ski edges. Then let each ski cool at room temperature (about 20 minutes). This allows the wax to absorb into the base & prepares the ski base for the following steps - 5 & 6
5. Scrape the cooled ski base by a) holding the plexiglass scraper at about 45-degree vertical angle to the ski base and b) pushing or dragging the scraper the length of the ski base, from tip to tail. Stop scraping once little or no wax is being removed from the ski base. Also stop if dark p-tex ski-base material shows in the scrapings.
6. Wipe the ski base with a cloth and lightly brush the ski base, from tip to tail, with the soft metal brush. Follow that with the stiff nylon brush. When there is very little wax being removed, polish the ski base with the soft brush. The ski base will look uniformly shiny & smooth, when adequately polished.

References: a) RASC Members; b) Websites sited above; and c) Complete Guide to XC Ski Glide Waxing, X-C Ski Nation 2016