

How to Tune Downhill Skis

By Allen Smith, eHow User

Regardless of how good a skier you are or how great the conditions remain, sooner or later your skis will need to be tuned. Over time, the bases will lose their wax, pick up rock dings and the edges will lose their precision. It's a good idea to let a professional do a complete tune-up at the beginning of the year, but throughout the rest of the season, you can do it yourself, saving time and money.

Difficulty: Moderate

Instructions

things you'll need:

- Ski workbench or a pair of chairs
- Thick rubber band
- Metal file
- Diamond stone
- File guide
- P-tex candle (optional)
- Metal scraper
- Wax
- Used clothes iron

- 1 Secure your ski brakes in the up position using a thick rubber band. You can find one at any office supply store. Secure your skis in a ski workbench if you have one. Otherwise, turn two chairs back to back and use the tops of the the chairs to support your skis.
- 2 Examine the ski bases for burrs or dings. Fill any dings by igniting the end of a P-tex candle and melting a generous amount of P-tex into the dings. Allow it to dry for at least 15 minutes and scrape off the excess P-tex using a steel metal scraper. If the ding is deep, you may need to repeat the process.
- 3 Run a steel scraper down the complete length of the ski bottoms to ensure a smooth, even surface.
- 4 Flatten the entire running surface of the skis using a steel file. Your local ski shop can recommend the best type for your particular skis. Run the file in one direction - from tip to tail. The goal is to create a uniformly flat running surface.
- 5 Secure a steel file in a file guide set to the degree of bevel you wish. Most ski shops use a one degree bevel, but you may have your own preferences. While pressing firmly on the edges, run the file and file guide from tip to tail several times, being careful to keep the bevel even. Repeat on the other set of edges.
- 6 Turn the skis over onto their sides and repeat the preceding step. Adjust the degree of bevel if desired, but generally, a one degree bevel will work for both sides of the edges.
- 7 Run a diamond stone down the entire length of the edges--both along the bottom and the sides to remove any small burrs from the edges.
- 8 Plug-in and heat a used clothes iron on the lowest setting it has. After the iron is warm, press the corner of a bar of wax onto the warm surface of the iron, dripping wax down the entire length of the skis. While the wax is still warm, iron the wax from tip to tail, adequately covering the entire running surface of the skis. Allow to cool for 15 to 20 minutes. After the wax has cooled, scrape the excess wax off of the running surface using the metal scraper. Repeat the process on the other ski.

Tips & Warnings

- Secure your skis in a workbench if possible.
- Repair all dings and burrs before waxing.

- Run a kitchen pot scrubber over the entire surface of the skis after waxing to polish their surface.
- Be sure the surface of the skis are clean before beginning.