

SKIN SKIS

How to get the best performance and wear from Skin skis.



From Europe's elite, to casual out the door skiers, everyone is enjoying Skin technology.

Folks love their Skin skis. Every manufacturer has them, and all levels of skiers are using them. And why wouldn't they? Excellent performance, convenience and genuine fun are to be had with a good pair of Skin skis. What are some steps that you can take to make sure you get the best performance and longest wear from your Skin skis? There are three primary factors that will determine performance and durability: *FIT, BINDING LOCATION, TREATMENT*

1. **FIIT.** How well your Skin skis fit you is very important. It is so important, we are pretty much going to skip over Fit for this article. Why? Because fitting Skin skis is best done at the shop level. There are so many factors to consider: body weight, technique, experience, where you will be skiing, age of the skier... It would be a mistake for this article to try and take the place of good shop employees in regards to fit. For racing, Skin skis typically flex at the same stiffness as your favorite Klistar ski. For touring, they

should flex just a little stiffer than a waxless touring ski. We should leave it to smart ski fitters to determine those flexes and what will work best for you.



Look to knowledgeable shop employees for a good fit

2. ***BINDING LOCATION.*** Binding location is to Skin skis what the choice of kick wax is to waxable skis. Just as you need to change your grip wax depending on the conditions, Skin skis need to have the bindings moved depending on conditions. Of course, binding location is a significant factor with waxable or regular waxless skis. However, Skin skis are so sensitive to changing snow conditions that it is imperative to be able to move your bindings as the snow changes. If you are not getting good grip, slide your bindings forward until you get the grip you want. If you are not getting good glide, slide the bindings back until you get the glide you want. Further forward results in better grip, further back results in better glide. Whenever we do demos, we show up that morning with the bindings of our Skin skis at balance point. If the temperature rises, and the snow gets stickier, we have to slide those bindings back a notch or two if people want acceptable glide. Or, sometimes the track gets glazed and icy as the day progresses and people testing the skis are losing grip. Then we just move the binding forward a couple of notches and they have excellent grip.

Binding location is not just for performance. The durability of the Skins is also affected by where the bindings are located. If you leave your bindings in one spot and never move them, the skins will show premature wear. Whenever you feel any dragging at all,

move those bindings back. That dragging means your skins are digging too hard into the tracks and that is going to lead to wear. Bringing your bindings back a couple of notches will eliminate that drag and prevent too much wear on the skins. This can often happen when you go to man made snow or old transformed old snow that has gone back and forth from melting and refreezing. Move your bindings forward again after a nice new fresh snow.

3. **SKIN TREATMENT.** There are a number of pastes and liquid waxes that will prevent icing and improve the glide of your skins without affecting the grip. They are easily applied. Just be sure to avoid alkaline, citric acid and anything highly flammable. Best rule for whatever you rub on your skins is to go sparingly, too much can damage the skins. To avoid saturation, apply the paste or liquid to a cloth and then rub onto the skin. At the high end of these offerings are Toko Helx Spray and Toko TF90 Paste. Good choices for casual touring and recreational skiing are Swix Skin Wax and Toko Grip & Glide. Avoid applying heat to the skins, this can weaken the epoxy holding the skins to the skis. The best way to apply glide waxes to Skins is to simply crayon them on cold. There are many good choices out there and the best thing to do is work with a local shop on what works best for your part of the country.

Any other questions? Give your favorite shop a call. Skin skis are popular with shop employees and a good shop will be able to answer your questions.

