

Ike Whitehead's Guide to Ski Maintenance



Developed July 2026
for RNS's Equipment Loan Program
Community of Practice



Ike's Guide to Ski Maintenance

Introduction:

- Ike has been involved with the sport/recreation activity of cross country skiing for over 50 years.
- He started as a racer, then was an instructor, and now is a ski enthusiast.
- Over the years, Ike has noticed that skis have been purchased for loan or rental programs with no plan on how to maintain them
- The last few winters, Ike has offered his services to recreation groups, schools and individuals to teach them how to maintain their ski investment

The following resource was created for a presentation that Ike made to Recreation Nova Scotia's Equipment Loan Program Community of Practice on July 22nd, 2026.

It Starts at Purchase

Your maintenance starts with the purchase, skis are usually shipped with shipping wax, which is easily worn off when first skied. Some retailers offer base prep with the purchase of new skis, but this may not be the cheaper quote. (Could be a value of \$20-\$30 per pair).

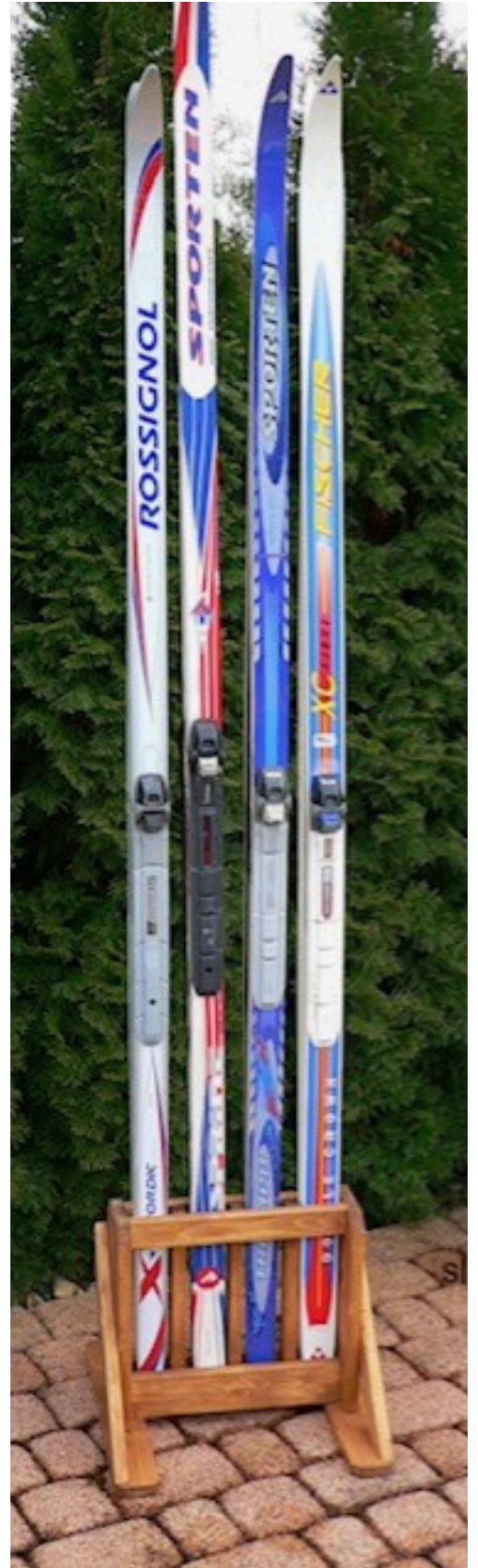
Storage

The next step to Ski maintenance is proper storage, best is a cool dry environment. Probably the worst I have seen is the skis stored with the tips down supporting the weight of the ski. The weirdest is where the maintenance staff had drilled a hole in the tip of each ski and hung them on pegs.

the following are some photos of ideas for proper Ski Storage.

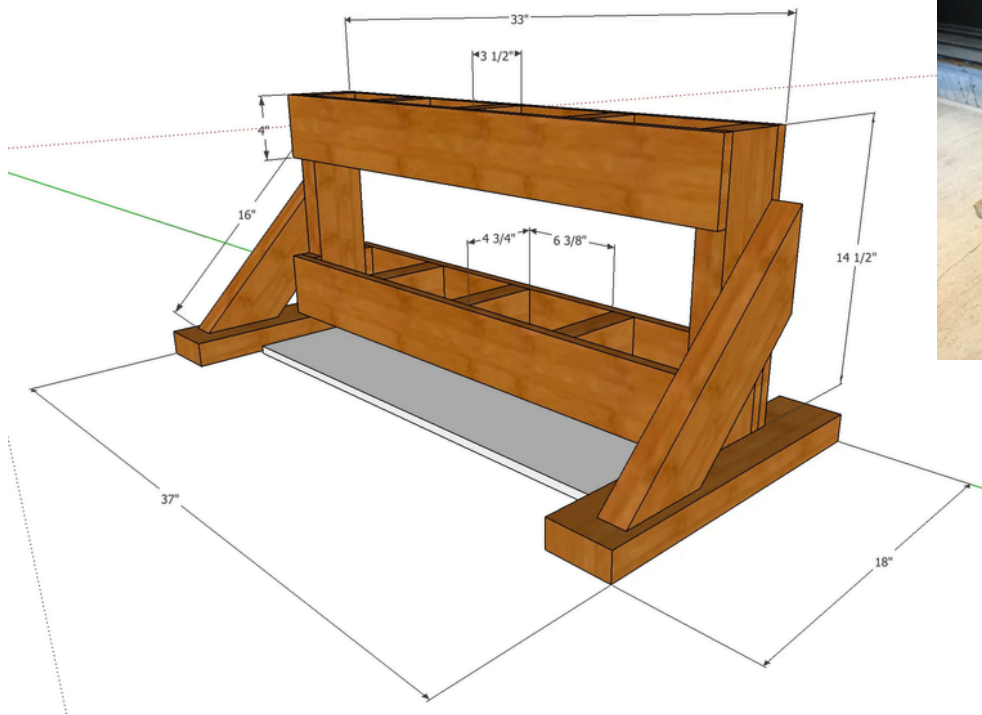


Storage Ideas Continued...





<https://www.thehandymansdaughter.com/diy-ski-rack/>



<https://www.instructables.com/Ski-Rack-From-2x4-Plywood/>

Steps to Maintenance

- Skis should be checked each time they are returned, nicks in the base, dirty bases, loose binding screws, top tail delamination, loose or missing flex bits, aka those little rubber things.
- When the base starts to feel dry and maybe turn white, time to do some base prep/waxing
- Wire brush, (soft steel) the base
- Clean with base cleaner, let dry
- Melt in a base pre wax or a solid wax (Swix 10), smooth, let cool
- Scrape (sharp scraper) of the wax that has not gone into the base, scrape the tracking groove first
- Brush with a copper brush
- If your budget allows, I suggest using a universal glide wax for your skis, this can be the “iron in” type or the “liquid easy on” (also easy of, but better than nothing) ie Swix F4
- Boots should be dried after every use
- Poles, use different color tape (jut under the handle) to distinguish the pole length, ie 120 cm may have black tape, 110 cm poles have green, etc.

Ski Maintenance Equipment

Ski Waxing Profile



Ski Waxing Profile & Frame



Ski Vise



NOTE: Don't throw out broken equipment! It can sometimes be used to fix other pieces of equipment, ie a broken pole can be cut down to make a pair of smaller poles

Maintenance Equipment List

Shop List

pencil groove (scraper)
synthetic cork
sharpener (for scraper)
nylon brush
bronze brush
universal glide wax
base prep wax
Ski profile or ski vices (would recommend profile)
Iron (waxing iron)
scraper
Base cleaner (liquid or aerosol)
Workshop:
good ventilation
solid bench
good lighting
clean up tools
garbage can
apron
old tooth brush(es)

Swix catalog numbers

T0088. pencil groove
T0012. synthetic cork
T0408. sharpener
T01610. nylon brush
T01620. bronze brush
U180. universal glide
bp088. base prep
TO767. Ski profile
T77110. Iron
TO406. Scraper sharpener
TO8240. Scraper