

SKIS

Classic Skis – The “classic technique” is traditionally what you think of when you think of a cross country skier. Both skis stay in a track, parallel to each other, making the following pattern in fresh snow: ===== These skis are specially designed with a shape that allows the skier to apply sticky kick-wax under the foot which will only come into contact with the snow when additional pressure is applied to that ski. This allows the skier to glide unencumbered until a kick is necessary. For this reason, a proper fit to the ski (height and weight to match the ski camber) is critical for a successful and enjoyable experience. A knowledgeable salesperson (or coach) can help you find skis that fit well.

Skate Skis – Skate skiing is a technique developed in the early '80s which brings to mind speed skating in that the skis will glide away from each other and then be brought back in to the center, making the following pattern in fresh snow: < < < < < These skis are also specially shaped, but the shape and flex of the ski is less important to newer skiers. Still, if you decide to invest in skate skis, have them properly fitted for you.

Combi Skis – As the name implies, “combi” skis incorporate a combination of attributes from both skate and classic skis to allow beginner skiers to use a single pair of skis for both techniques.

Rock Skis – Rock skis are a good piece of equipment to have when conditions are not ideal. When snow is insufficient, you may encounter rocks or other debris on the ski course which can damage your skis. If you can find a cheap pair of skis that you aren't worried about scuffing up, you can keep your larger investment safe from harm while still getting good training in.

Ski Brands – There are some significant differences between different brands of skis, and many skiers become very loyal to their brand. Some brands are good for people who are very aggressive skiers, and want a strong response from their skis with each stride/push. **Rossignol**, **Atomic**, and **Peltonen** are good examples of skis for this type of skier. For someone who is a little more fluid and graceful, and likes to feel like their skis are an extension of their foot/leg, a brand like **Madshus** or **Fischer** would be best suited.

Coaches Recommendation – This year, most races will be in the classic technique, so I would recommend a good pair of classic or combi skis. Combi skis are a good, inexpensive way to introduce yourself to the sport, but skiers who progress quickly will find themselves frustrated later in the season. Most beginners, however, will be well suited in combi skis.

SKI POLES

Classic Poles – Should typically come up to the armpits

Skate Poles – Should come up to between the mouth and nose, in the mustache area

Coaches Recommendation – a pole length somewhere between the shoulder and chin will work well for most beginning skiers

SKI BOOTS/BINDINGS

Classic Boots – Lower cut to allow for more flexibility in the ankle, an advantage in the classic technique. The sole of the boot is also more flexible to allow a more responsive kick.

Skate Boots – Higher cut (like high-top shoes) to lock in and support the ankle during the side kick used in skating. The sole is more rigid to provide more support.

Combi Boots – Medium height cut with medium flexibility. In my opinion, doesn't offer enough stability for skating, and provides no real advantage for classic technique

Coaches Recommendation – Invest in Skate boots. Most beginning skiers will never notice the difference in the classic technique, but will have a terrible time learning to skate in classic or combi boots.

Boot/Binding Brand – There are a variety of brands available. What is MOST IMPORTANT if you want to be able to use team equipment is to invest in a binding system that is compatible with ours. WE USE THE NNN BINDING SYSTEM (available on Alpina, Madshus, and Fischer ski boots), which is will have two distinct ridges on the binding. Some people prefer the SNS binding system (available on Solomon and Atomic boots), but it is not compatible with our team equipment.

WAXING TOOLS – We have some waxing equipment to share on the team, but I would recommend that you also invest in some of your own. At least a **plexi-scraper, white nylon brush, and synthetic cork.**

CLOTHING – We will provide you with a race suit, but that is all. Baggy clothing is very difficult to ski in, so find things that fit well, and conform to your body.

Long Underwear – You'll especially need a good set of long underwear. It should be synthetic material with wicking properties. NO COTTON. Cotton absorbs sweat and holds it against your body, which will make you colder and more susceptible to sickness.

Hat/Gloves – I would recommend a good pair of NORDIC ski gloves. They will be thinner than downhill ski gloves and make it easier to grasp the pole. A hat is also very important. Something medium weight in synthetic material. Thick, knit hats with ear flaps get really hot when you're skiing hard and sweating.

Jacket – A well insulated Nordic ski or running jacket is much easier to ski in than a parka, in which you are very likely to overheat.

Pants – Many skiers just ski in tights on the bottom, but if you do want something more substantial, it should be able to somewhat conform to your body so it won't trip you up when skiing.