



Tuning and Snowboard Maintenance

It is absolutely crucial to maintain your snowboard equipment! We will provide every avenue in order to do this! Below you will find a written Tuning Guide to guide you along as you tune yourself throughout the winter. You have the option to have your board professionally tuned by our Team Pro Tuner, Curt!

Tuning Guide

Use this information as a guide to your equipment maintenance. Tuning can be pretty complex, so you may want to wait until we have our first tuning clinic before you tune on your own. Parents, you may want to supervise tuning, use your discretion. Note – remember the tuning clinic is a great opportunity to learn first hand!!

Here is a list of equipment of tuning, all the equipment and supplies are not necessary, although suggested:

- Old rags
- Base cleaner
- Gummie stone
- Sharpie Black Pen
- Diamond stone
- Flat file or an Edge Tool (recommended)
- Scraper
- Wax
- An iron (*not your mom's*)
- Scotchbrite pads
- Fiberlene or paper towels
- A sturdy board vice
- Fire extinguisher?
- Eyewear!

Steps in the home tune-up process:

1. Inspect
2. Base
3. Edges
4. Waxing
5. Scraping

Step 1: Inspect

Once you have gathered all the required tools, place your board in the vice, base-side up. Look for rust on the rails, deep gouges in the base, separated rails, delaminated tip or tail, cracked sidewalls / ABS, or ripples in the base material. These are common problems that can cause poor board performance, or are indications of more serious problems with your board.

I will be talking only about taking care of the rust. If you have serious gouges, separated rails, delamination, cracks or ripples ask a coach for some tips.

This is a GOOD time to check your bindings. Any broken straps? Loose bolts? Misaligned angles?

Step 2: Base

There are three essential items here.

- 1) No serious gouges, holes, scratches
- 2) Flat base
- 3) Clean
- 4) Structure (little pattern on the bottom of the boards...give the water a "channel" to move)

When you buy a board, the base is flat...or it's supposed to be. Sometimes, getting a "stone grind" is unavoidable. If your board's base has major damage, don't monkey around, take it to a shop!

I don't recommend newer riders to "flat file" their boards. You'll end up causing more harm than good. Let's move on to cleaning....

Spray some Citrus or some sort of base cleaner on your board and let it absorb for a few minutes. Wipe off with Fiberlene, a non-lint rag or paper towels. Keep scrubbing until there is NO dirt remaining. If you let dirt stay on the base, you'll only be pushing the dirt into the base during your wax!

After your base is clean, we can structure the base. All right folks, you can do some SERIOUS damage to your board here, so only proceed if you feel you're a pro. There is a difference between "base structuring" and "wax structuring".

Structure. For a more "open" grind (for wet, granular spring snow), use a nylon or horsehair brush. If the grind's texture is very fine and tight (cold, mid-winter conditions), use a brass brush. Either way, the same technique applies. Brush the base in **longitudinal** strokes from nose to tail. What you're doing is removing all the "micro-hairs" left deep in the grooves by the grinding process. Although minute, these will create speed-robbing drag if neglected. Brush until the small flecks of base material don't collect on the bristles and the base looks shiny and smooth.

When satisfied that this initial brushing phase is complete, wrap some 320-grit sandpaper (finer for extremely cold conditions) around a rectangular wooden block and, using light pressure, sand the base lengthwise the same way you used the brush. This process removes all the sharp "peaks" from the stone-ground texture, presenting more surface area to absorb wax and leaving the "valleys" to channel moisture. After sanding, brush again to remove any remaining debris.

Step 3: Edges

Set the board in the vice sideways. A good vice will allow you to lay the board flat, and on its side.

Make sure you have gathered:

- flat file or edge tool
- Sharpie Black Pen
- gummy stone

- diamond stone

If your board has deep rust pits, it will require a grinder to remove the excess material. *Consult your local technician for this! (If you remove the red/brown areas of rust, but you still see black areas on your rails, its time for the grinder.)*

The goal is to remove as much rust as possible. First off, take your Sharpie and run a black mark down the entire base and side edge, this will give you a visual clue on where you tuned, and where you didn't! You want to use the flat file at a 90 ° angle to the base. As you remove the edge material make sure that you only go ONE direction with your file. The ideal motion to make with your flat file is from the tip to the tail of the board in ONE stroke.

If you keep a consistent 90 ° bevel with your flat file, the edge will become very sharp. Watch your fingers! After you have removed most of the rust, grab your diamond stone. The diamond stone puts the finishing touches on the side rails. Once again, you will want to run it at a 90 ° angle in a tip-to-tail fashion. As you sharpen the edge, you will want to "mellow" it out with your gummie stone. This removes "burrs" and "nicks" in the edge material.

Some guys like different "bevels" on their edges. Personally, I ride with a 2-degree side and base bevel. BUT, keep in mind any bevel other than 90 degrees is pretty high maintenance and requires MUCH tender loving care. I recommend 90-degrees for most of the team.

When you have removed as much rust as possible and the rail seems to be sharp enough to slice ice, you will want to detune the tip and tail regions. This is so that when you are riding you do not catch an edge unexpectedly. Detuning involves the use of a gummie stone. You will use the gummie stone to dull the edges approximately 1" into the effective edge. (This is where your edge actually meets the snow) Detuning is real important for the freestyle guys. I don't recommend the alpine guys do any de-tuning unless they consult with a coach. As weird as it may sound, a good time for an alpiner to de-tune is in icy-hard conditions to give you more ability to vary your style.

Step 4: Waxing

Waxing is the single most important thing that you can do for you and your board.

Make sure you have gathered:

- An iron, or wax roller
- Scotchbrite pads
- Several wide scrapers (metal or plastic)
- ... and oh yeah, wax.

First you will want to plug in your iron and preheat it on high, (or wax roller if you have one). This will take a few minutes, but you DON'T want it smoking up the house. If the iron is smoking, it's toooooo hot. While the iron is heating up, quickly inspect the base for particles of dirt or grime. The base should be relatively clean from step 1, but can pick up little pieces of junk during the tuning step. The idea here is not to inundate the base with too much wax, but rather to put a thin and even coat of wax into the base material.

The amount of wax that your board will absorb depends on the quality and type of base material that your board is constructed with. There are two main types of base material: **sintered** and **extruded**. Sintered base material is more porous since it is made by fusing together very tiny particles of plastic. The result is material that is porous due to the void space that is left over

when the plastic cools. Extruded base material is made from one solid piece of plastic and absorbs less wax. Having an extruded base means that you will need to wax your board a little more often.

Once your iron heats up considerably, (to the point, not over, where it is smoking the old wax) you are ready to melt the wax into your board. Holding the iron upside down with the point towards the base, push a piece of wax into the iron. You want to spread an even amount of wax dots around the board first.

After scattering a sufficient amount of wax polka dots, begin ironing the base at one end. You want to evenly distribute the wax so that there are no void spaces. As you work your way down the base, the wax will cool. When you have reached the end, turn off the iron and wait 15-20 minutes for the wax to **completely** cool. If you like to clean as you go, use a scraper to knock off any excess wax that may have dripped onto the side rails.

Step 5: Scraping

This is the final and most messy step. You want to make sure that the wax has **completely** cooled. A good test is to dig your fingernail into the wax. If there are any gooey spots, wait a little while longer for the wax to cool.

You will want to grab your scraper with both hands at about a 30 ° angle to the base. Beginning at the tip you will want to shave the wax with your scraper in a 1-direction fashion. If you scrape your board this way, you will get the smoothest results. Continue to remove as much wax as possible from the base.

As you are removing wax you will want to knock off the sheets onto your workbench or the floor. You don't want to get pieces of wax crammed back into the base; this does the board no good.

Some guys like to put multiple coats of wax on their boards. This is where you would go back to ironing.....

After you have removed as much wax as possible with your scraper, you will want to buff the wax with a scotchbrite pad in the same tip-to-tail fashion. You know that you are done when you have buffed the entire base with the scotchbrite pad as the base should look shiny and smooth. If you rub your fingers along the base material you should hear a squeaky sound. This is good. You have now ensured the best riding results for you and your board the next time you are on the hill.

If you have questions, talk to your coaches.

Happy Riding ~

Your G Team Coaches!