

[HOME](#)[GEAR REVIEWS](#) ▾[NEWS](#)[TRIP REPORTS](#)[VIDEOS](#)

GEAR REVIEWS

KneeBinding Carbon Ski Bindings Review

by JASON MITCHELL on JANUARY 9, 2017 0 COMMENTS

As someone who has suffered an ACL injury while skiing, I'm particularly cognizant of my knees when schralping the gnar. Luckily, the folks at [KneeBinding](#) are also well-aware of the staggering amount of ACL injuries that skiers suffer each year. Their mission is to improve the safety of ski bindings and I gave them a whirl to experience them for myself.

Features of KneeBinding Carbon Ski Bindings:

- PureLateral™ 3-D ACL protection
- FlexFloat™ mounting system
- LeverEdge™ technology
- DIN 3 to 12
- 26mm – 32mm stack height
- Configurable ramp delta from 0mm – 6mm
- Convenient treadle scraper
- Interchangeable Brakes (75, 90, 110, 130, 150mm)
- Conforms With International Testing Standards
- Made in the U.S.A.
- Weight: 2154 grams/pair
- Retail: \$399



The KneeBinding Carbon offers extra protection for those knees.

The bee's knees

When anyone talks about a ski injury, 9 times out of 10, they're talking the dreaded ACL injury. It sucks and it's a long recovery. And, even if your body is mended (like mine has been for 20 years), the pain and subsequent recovery lingers in the back of your mind.

When I tore my ACL, it was a forward-twisting affair as I landed on and broke through a wind crust layer, which was stout enough to reduce my momentum immediately. My bindings were a set of Look turntable bindings — essentially identical to those still sold today. Had the KneeBinding been around then, there is a chance my knee would have been spared nearly a year of recuperation.

John Springer-Miller, Chairman of KneeBinding explains the benefits of their patented PureLateral™ heel release in this video:

Mounting them up

Most ski shops have jigs for the most common bindings on the market. The process is easy and they do it all the time. With KneeBinding, that's not yet the case, but luckily, REI both sells and mounts them as do many other specialty ski shops. In the Salt Lake City area, there are several as I'm sure there are in other ski towns. Their dealer network is expanding, so [search for one nearby](#). I had to swing them up to REI in Salt Lake City (30 min away) to get them installed. They were eager to do it and I'm glad I called beforehand because they will need both boots. Most of the time I just bring one in, but since there is a right/left binding, they need both boots.



<https://youtu.be/qyMI4KZFbWc>



The toe piece doesn't look all that sexy, but does its job

Once mounted, the KneeBinding Carbon's may not look as streamlined as some of the top bindings on the market, but that unique look is a key part of the function. For starters, you'll notice that there is quite a stack height and dual AFD pads at the toe and heel to ensure friction-free release at both ends. The base plates are wide and match the extra width of today's skis. They also include a variety of brake widths to cover any ski on the market. While I've been testing the rather bland Carbon model, there are other models with flashier colors to suit your tastes.

On the hill

When going with a set of dedicated alpine clamps, there are a few things to consider: Stack height, ramp angle (delta), boot compatibility, DIN, price, weight and overall safety. KneeBindings do offer a bit of a trump card on that last item since they are the only bindings with lateral release at the heel (PureLateral). If ultimate safety is a concern, then all the other items go out the window. But, the reality is every ski binding has tradeoffs.



*The heelpiece is where the magic happens
with PureLateral release*

In slush, hardpack and powder, the KneeBinding Carbon's do their job quite well. There's no slop or question as to whether the binding is functioning as expected. It features a solid step-in "clomp" and releases just as easily when the day is done. Throughout my testing, I didn't have any pre-releases or any releases at all for that matter. Based on the feedback from more demanding park and pipe skiers, I've got zero reasons to believe that there will be any pre-release or improper release issues here.

I do notice that the skis I have these on (Revision Bodrum 179) do feel extra damp and

lack pop. Without mounting the bindings onto another set of skis, I can't yet say it's the bindings fault, but that is a question I've got in the back of my mind.

Since I do have both alpine and A/T boots, it sure would be nice to see KneeBindings with WTR sole compatibility. And, they don't have the sexiest look to them. Vanity aside, the extra bit of safety is worth it.

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The Good

- Added lateral release brings safety to a new level
- Adjustable ramp angle for that perfect ski connection
- Solid clamping with no slop
- Confidence-inspiring
- Made in the USA
- 3-12 DIN is just fine for most folks

The Bad

- A bit heavier than traditional bindings
- Might have to hunt for a shop with a jig

Manufacturer's Notes

Weight – KneeBindings weigh approximately the same as other premium bindings from other manufacturers, despite the fact that KneeBindings have a third release mechanism (with its own springs, cam, DIN setting, etc.).

Boot Soles – KneeBindings are compatible with WalkToRide, GripWalk, and many other boot sole variations.

The Bottom Line: KneeBinding Carbon

We should all be more conscious of our precious knees. And, if you're in the market for new bindings, it's certainly worthwhile to consider a set of KneeBindings. They offer solid performance and clamp like champs on all terrain plus they will significantly reduce your chances of that dreaded ACL injury.

Buy Now: [Available at REI](#)

ABOUT AUTHOR



JASON MITCHELL

A Seattle native, Jason developed a love for the outdoors and a thing for mountains. That infatuation continues as he founded this site in 1999 --sharing his love of road biking, mountain biking, trail running and skiing. That passion is channeled into every article or gear review he writes. Utah's Wasatch Mountains are his playground.