

The instructions on the back of the packaging make it look as easy as 1-2-3-4, don't they? Unfortunately, most things in life aren't that easy, and this is no exception. But with a little patience, a couple of tools, and a good beer waiting for you at the end, this'll go just fine.



First off, there are two kinds of screws. We've marked the screws for the inner holes with blue tape and used white tape for the outer pair of holes. If you've already mixed them up, the ones for the outer holes have two different thread heights, while the inner hole screws have uniform thread height.

#### Step 1:

Line up the smile plate on your boot sole while it is upside-down. This makes marking easier because the dimples would otherwise keep it from being flat. Trace the outline and mark the holes. Make sure to mark the centers well. If you have a center punch, use it. If not, an awl or something like it will work. Centering is critical.

#### Step 2:

The only really tricky part of installation is the predrilling. It's really important to get those drill holes lined up, square, and the right size. Otherwise your screws will go in crooked and everything will work out badly, possibly even snapping screws. Make sure that you've marked things accurately, then make sure that you're drilling square and that the tip doesn't wander.

If you have a drill press, use it. If not, then just be very careful that you stay centered on your marks and square. Use a drill stop so you don't drill too deep. The screws are 1/2" long, so that's how deep to go. A piece of tape wrapped around the bit works pretty well as a marker.

The outer two screws typically thread into soft material, and they work well in 1/16" pilot holes. The inner screws often find metal or hard plastic in the boot sole. The inner screws are thread-forming when piloted with a #44 drill bit. We highly recommend that you go to the hardware store and spend the \$2 or so it'll cost to get one the right size. In a pinch you can try 5/64", but isn't a drill bit cheaper than a new pair of boots?

It's really easy for the bit to wander while you're drilling, especially when it's hidden in the rubber so you can't see what's happening. One way to help with this is to drill through a fairly thick (say, 1/2" or so) piece of rigid material (e.g. wood, but best if it's transparent) and use it as a guide. Here's how:

1. Mark and center punch the rubber sole. Start the hole if you can do it well.
2. Drill through the rigid material off-sole. Make sure it's square.
3. Put the bit through the rigid material so the tip pokes through, and line it up to the started hole on the sole. Flatten everything out and clamp. Then drill very carefully until the stop on the bit.

#### Step 3:

Following the outline you traced in Step 1, use a sharp razor knife to cut a shallow line around the outside of the plate. Then carve out a pocket so that the plate will sit flush with the sole. Rotary tools (e.g. Dremel) work great for this. Use a slow speed so you don't burn the rubber. As long as you're careful, this step is actually easier than it sounds. Test often so that it's a nice fit. Once you're happy with the fit of the plate and the screws (don't tighten to full torque yet, but make sure they're going to fit), then move on to Step 4.

#### Step 4:

Wash the pocket with rubbing alcohol and let dry. Use your favorite low-temperature-tolerant epoxy to bond the plate to the sole. Opinions vary on whether you should use epoxy on the screws as well. We think you should. Allow the epoxy to cure and trim away any excess. Now go ski!