

Coach's Corner – Base Width - What's right?

'What's the right width to have your feet apart' (base width) is a perennial cry. It depends on the task that is being solved. Stability or agility, this is the trade off - (TANSTAAFL - "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch" - Robert Heinlein).

Many skiers look to get a narrower and narrower base width. (Some will even remember 'old school' ski instructors with their legs glued together).

Here is Mikaela Schiffrin, think base width:

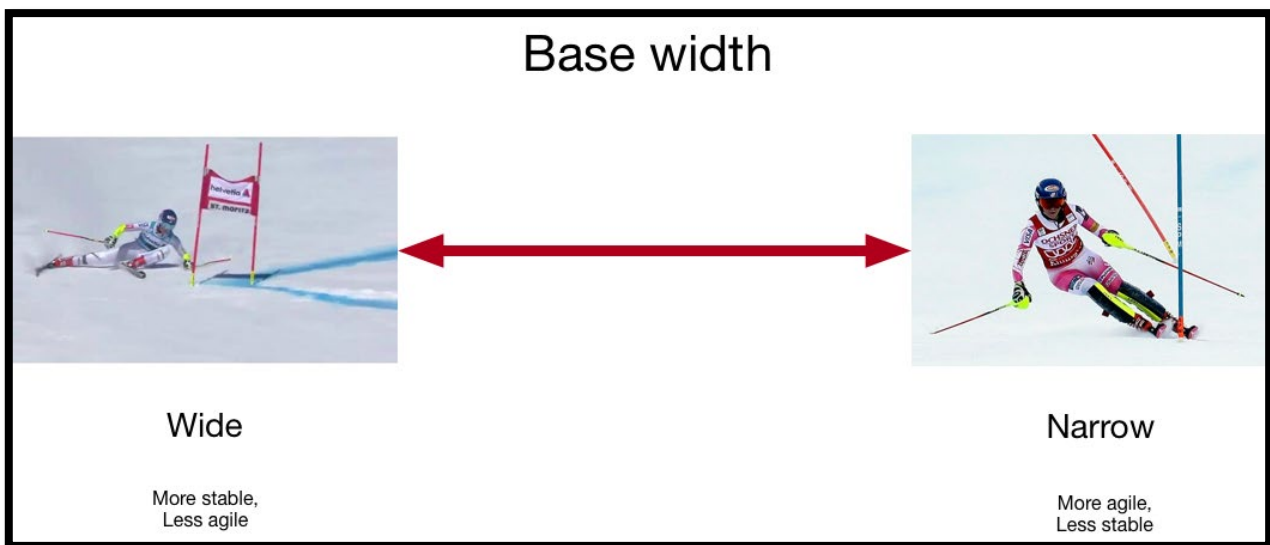


Image: Tomasz Ondrusz



There is no 'right base width', it depends on what you are doing and the key to dynamic skiing is recognising that the base width will vary and be adapted depending on the slope, speed, aim and terrain. Take a look at the photos. Imagine the skier upright and look at the width between the feet.

Rules of Thumb

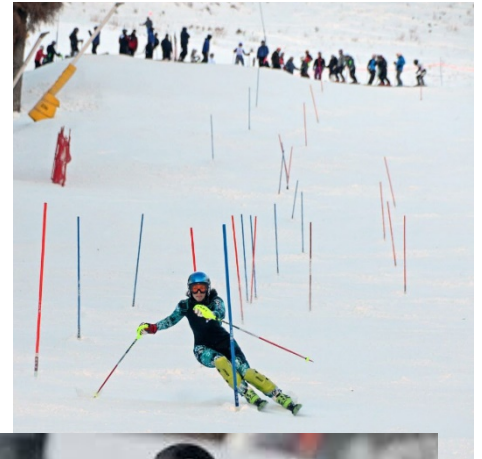
General Skiing = hip width

Faster carving or racing = wider base width, more than hip width

Tight, vertical slalom gates = tighter base width

Moguls = very tight base width – skis as one platform

Powder and Crud = close base width, again to get the skis to work as one platform



Most importantly, don't think of a 'right base width', think of changing it depending on what you are skiing.

By Rob Blyth in collaboration with Tomasz Ondrusz