

Rent or buy? – a skiers' dilemma

By Brett Prettyman, Salt Lake Tribune

There comes a point when every more-than-once-a-year skier faces the same question:



Is it time to buy a pair of skis or a snowboard?

Economics is at the core of the question. Would you feel you got your money's worth on what many consider a serious investment?

The answer depends on whom you ask.

"Everybody likes to add it up and see how many times they would need to rent to equal the cost of buying their own," said Brenton Sondrup, the rental manager at Christy Sports in Millcreek.

That magic number, depending of course on the cost of the skis you are eyeing, is somewhere between 12 and 15 trips to the slopes.

There is a blizzard of other questions to consider when weighing the pros and cons of renting or buying.

With technology constantly changing for skis, how long will it be before a skier starts feeling old school on the lift with his or her own gear? Will you spend more on your equipment to get it tuned and waxed, or can you do it yourself?

Most rental fleets are updated at least every other year and usually offer a wide range of price and skill options. Shops review every item when it comes back from being rented and perform maintenance before renting it out again.

For many people, the biggest concern with renting equipment is the fit of the boots.

Molly MacGregor of Dave's Skis and Boards in Lake Tahoe suggests buying only boots. "Boot technology does not change that often, but skis change yearly. If you buy boots, then you can rent nice skis and they come tuned/waxed every time and you can always get the latest and greatest," she said. "I bought skis just two years ago and I already want new ones. My boots will last forever."

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