

CLIMBING SKINS — MOHAIR PLUSH

[READ MORE](#)

Pomoca Race Pro 2.0

The Race Pro 2.0 may have been designed for speed-oriented skimo athletes, but you definitely don't have to be racing the clock to enjoy it. In fact, the Race Pro 2.0 is currently the all-time favorite skin of one of our reviewers who has been using dozens of different skins for decades. The Race Pro 2.0 offers the most efficient glide of any of the skins here, excellent packability, potentially the best glue on the market, and effective tip and tail hardware. It's not the most durable and will struggle on the steepest / iciest skin tracks, but overall, these skins are a joy to use. At the top of the run, they are among the most supple and packable skins we've ever used. Pomoca's glue also feels dialed, offering solid hold on the ski while also being really easy to rip. The primary drawback with the Race Pro 2.0 is that, because of its skimo intention, it isn't available in particularly wide widths. But if you've got skis that work with a narrow skin, the Race Pro 2.0 is excellent. For a wider-ski alternative, see Pomoca's Free Pro 2.0.



Pomoca Climb Pro Mohair

[READ MORE](#)

Pomoca's Climb Pro Mohair is a solid all-round option for those who want efficient gliding in a wide range of conditions, from cold and dry to warm and sloppy. Thanks to its water-resistant coating and membrane, the Climb Pro Mohair absorbs less water and glops less than most skins we've used. On top of their excellent water resistance, the Climb Pro Mohair skins offer a good mix of flat-land glide and uphill grip, though they're not as efficient-feeling on the uphill as the previous skin. The Climb Pro Mohair still features Pomoca's fantastic adhesive, as well as their effective tip and tail hardware. This all makes the Climb Pro Mohair a very versatile option, and it's a solid alternative to the Free Pro 2.0 or Race Pro 2.0 if you want more grip and durability, at the cost of some glide and packability. If you want something even grippier and a touch more packability, check out Pomoca's Climb 2.0.


[READ MORE](#)

Contour Hybrid Pure

Contour's "Hybrid" line of skins features a "glueless" adhesive that several of our reviewers like, especially those who prefer skins that are easier to rip than those that are ultra-sticky on the base of your skis. This makes the Hybrid skins particularly nice for those who like to remove skins while still standing in their bindings. The Hybrid Pure's mohair plush offers an effective blend of glide and grip — not as efficient as the two skins above, but slightly grippier. The Hybrid Pure isn't as thin or packable as the Pomoca Free Pro 2.0 or Race Pro 2.0, and Contour's tail clips aren't as secure as G3's hardware (particularly on skis with twinned tails). But overall, the Hybrid Pure's plush glides very well, and the adhesive strikes an impressive balance of adhesion when wet or cold and peel-ability (and they can be easily cleaned and maintained at home, unlike some skins with traditional glue). For a bit more grip and durability, see the Contour Hybrid Mix.



CLIMBING SKINS — MIX PLUSH

Pomoca Climb 2.0

[READ MORE](#)



Some skins that are designed with less experienced ski tourers in mind can feel heavy and sluggish (especially as your technique improves and your goals get more ambitious), but that's not the case with Pomoca's Climb 2.0. It's an excellent alternative to pure-nylon skins if you want something that glides and packs down notably better, without being drastically more expensive or seriously compromising on grip. If you're very frequently skinning up icy skin tracks or on a tight budget, a full-nylon skin like the Big Sky Mountain Products Rover might be better. But for many other folks, the mix-plush Climb 2.0 glides better, doesn't take up as much space in a pack or your jacket pockets, and it also has better adhesive than most of them. Overall, the Climb 2.0 is one of the most versatile skins we've used and one that's really easy to recommend; if you want to lighten up your setup and/or get something that glides a bit better (at the cost of some grip and durability), check out the next skin.

[READ MORE](#)

Pomoca Free Pro 2.0

The Free Pro 2.0 is a bit like a freeride-oriented take on Pomoca's excellent Race Pro 2.0 series. Since bigger skins mean bigger skins (and more friction), Pomoca focused on making the Free Pro 2.0 very packable and very efficient. This skin packs down smaller than most other skins we've tried (in equivalent sizes), glides really well, and is available in very wide widths. The Free Pro 2.0 also grips quite well for how well it glides, especially when paired with big skis (which create more surface area for skin contact / grip). Pomoca's tip and tail hardware has worked very well with just about every ski we've tried them on, and their adhesive is easier to rip than Black Diamond and G3's while being stickier in tricky conditions than Contour's Hybrid skins. The Free Pro 2.0 does cost a bit more than most other skins, and its thin construction doesn't hold up quite as well to repeated exposure to rocks, downed trees, etc. But if you're looking to maximize packability and glide, especially when paired with bigger skis, the Free Pro 2.0 is one of our favorites.



Black Diamond GlideLite Mix STS

Black Diamond's GlideLite Mix is a solid all-round performer, beating full-nylon skins in terms of glide but still being pretty rugged and grippy. The GlideLite Mix's overall performance is very comparable to the Pomoca Climb 2.0, with the main differences being that Black Diamond's glue is notably stickier, and the Climb 2.0 packs down a bit smaller and weighs a touch less. We're big fans of the latest iteration of Black Diamond's STS hardware, which is lower profile than the previous generation, and we've found the current hardware to be a bit less prone to snow creep while still working well with tons of different ski shapes and widths. There are more packable alternatives out there (Pomoca Free Pro 2.0 and G3 Minimist Glide), but the GlideLite Mix STS gets good marks in most regards without showing any serious weaknesses.



[READ MORE](#)

G3 Minimist Glide

We've always been big fans of G3's skin hardware, and despite being way more, well, minimal than the brand's Alpinist series, the Minimist series maintains that track record in a lighter package. The Minimist Glide uses G3's mix plush, which offers useful, middle-of-the-road grip and glide compared to other mix plushes. The Minimist tip hardware stays impressively secure for being so simple, making it a great choice for skis with odd or wide tip shapes. That said, G3's glue is very tacky and we prefer Pomoca and Contour's Hybrid adhesives (especially for ripping skins with skis still on your feet). Like many skins that pack down this small, the Minimist wouldn't be our top pick if you're really hard on your gear, but the Minimist Glide does prevent snow creep better than nearly all similarly thin skins. So if you prioritize a lightweight setup and often find yourself frustrated by snow getting between your skins and skis, the Minimist Glide should be on your list (as should the better-gliding, full-mohair Minimist Speed).



CLIMBING SKINS — MIX PLUSH

[READ MORE](#)

G3 Alpinist+ Glide

G3 offers their various plushes with several different tip and tail attachment systems; the Alpinist+ line is their most rugged, featuring a large plastic insert at the tip. The Alpinist+ Glide, which uses the same plush as the Minimist Glide, provides good grip across many snow conditions and glides notably better than pure nylon options. The Alpinist TPU tip means that the Alpinist+ Glide doesn't pack down very small, but we continue to be big fans of G3's tip and tail hardware and plush. This is not the best option if low weight, packability, and/or a less-tacky adhesive are your top priorities, but the Alpinist+ Glide will work well with a very wide variety of ski shapes and sizes, and its plush should offer a suitable blend of grip and glide for the majority of backcountry conditions. If you like the sound of G3's grippy glue and the performance of their "Glide" mix plush but want more minimal hardware and/or a lower price, check out their Escapist Glide.



Contour Hybrid Mix

[READ MORE](#)

The Hybrid Mix is the more middle-of-the-road option in Contour's "glueless" Hybrid series of skins. Contour's Hybrid adhesive has kept these skins secure on our skis the vast majority of the time, but is so much easier to rip off than the G3 and Black Diamond glue when you're ready to descend. This is really nice for people who like to keep their skis on when ripping skins, or those who don't want to deal with mesh sheets to put between ultra-tacky skins. And while the Hybrid adhesive does lose its stickiness over time, we've also had good success easily reviving it at home by following Contour's simple instructions. Contour's tip and tail hardware isn't quite as secure as G3's, but Contour's hardware also packs down much smaller than G3's Alpinist skins and still stays put on most ski shapes. The Pomoca Free Pro 2.0 and G3 Minimist Glide have thinner plushes that pack down smaller, but the Contour Hybrid Mix offers slightly more grip and has held up very well over several seasons of use.

[READ MORE](#)

Kohla Vertical MixMohair

The Vertical MixMohair is one of Kohla's "do-it-all" skins, and we've appreciated its versatility on several skis over the years (Volkl, Nordica, and other ski brands use it for some of their pre-cut skins). The Vertical MixMohair is fairly thin and light, slotting between Pomoca's Climb 2.0 and Free Pro 2.0 in those regards, though the Vertical MixMohair is notably stiffer. While this makes it less packable, it has also held up very well in our experience and isn't quite as prone to snow-creep. Its mix plush sits around the middle of the pack of mohair / nylon skins in terms of grip and glide, though it's above average when it comes to water resistance (which is very nice on warm spring tours). Kohla's tip and tail hardware is very similar to Pomoca's and works well on most skis, as does the Vertical MixMohair's adhesive, which isn't as sticky as G3's nor as easy to rip as Contour's Hybrid skins.



Montana Adrenaline

Montana might be best known in some parts for their ski-tuning equipment, but they've been making climbing skins for over 80 years now. The Adrenaline is one of their newest models, featuring their glueless "FusionTec" adhesion system, which feels like it falls between Contour's Hybrid skins and most Pomoca skins in terms of stickiness. I.e., it's very easy to rip the Adrenaline skins during transitions, but we've still had very good luck with them staying on skis when we want them to. The Adrenaline is a mohair / nylon mix plush and its thickness / weight feels fairly similar to the Pomoca Climb 2.0, with the Adrenaline maybe being a touch lighter. As far as grip and glide go, the Adrenaline is quite similar to other mix-plush skins we've used — i.e., plenty grippy for the vast majority of situations, but more efficient than full-nylon skins, especially on flatter skin tracks. Particularly if you like to rip skins with your skis on and appreciate skins that are easy to clean and maintain at home, the Adrenaline warrants close consideration.



CLIMBING SKINS — NYLON PLUSH



Black Diamond Ascension Nylon STS [READ MORE](#)

Black Diamond's Ascension skins have been around for quite some time and have become go-to options for lots of folks — and the latest version seems like the most refined yet. They don't glide as well as mohair or mohair-mix skins (though they do glide slightly better than the G3 Alpinist+ Universal), but the Ascension skins are solid, dependable, and easy to recommend. The Ascension skins are also a bit lighter and pack up smaller than the nylon versions of G3's Alpinist series, due to Black Diamond's more minimal tip and tail hardware, which the brand updated in the past couple years and is now sleeker and better at resisting snow creep than the original hardware. Like most nylon options, the Ascension Nylon STS falls short of thinner, better-gliding, mohair-mix alternatives in terms of efficiency and packability, but we've had very good experiences with the recent pairs of Ascension skins we've used. If you're willing to pay a bit more for better glide, see Black Diamond's GlideLite Mix.

[READ MORE](#) G3 Alpinist+ Universal

G3's full-nylon Alpinist+ Universal skin stands out for being burly and grippy. The Alpinist "fishscale" plastic piece on the front of the skin is meant to decrease friction when breaking trail through deep snow and eliminate snow creep under the glue at the tip of the ski. Although we haven't noticed a significant difference in deep-snow skinning effort, the TPU tips on all the Alpinist+ skins do seem to help decrease snow creep. The full-nylon Universal comes in at a moderate weight, though the BSMP Rover is notably more packable. But consider the Alpinist+ Universal if you tend to stow skins in your pack (rather than in your jacket), would rather have better grip on firm snow than very efficient glide, and especially if the tips or tails of your skis don't hold touring hardware well. For a more packable, less expensive alternative, check out G3's Escapist Universal skins.



Big Sky Mountain Products Rover

Big Sky Mountain Products' (BSMP) Rover skins shine both because of their durability and their affordability, making them an easy pick if you're on a tighter budget. This is one of the heavier and bulkier skins in this section, but what the BSMP skins lose in packability, they make up for in grip and durability. This skin glides as well as any nylon skin we've used and offers plenty of grip, too. But the real strength of this skin (other than its price) is durability. We've now spent several winters of backcountry skiing on a single pair of these — including many spring days of skinning over logs, rocks, and dirt — and both the glue and plush are still functioning really well (plus, BSMP offers a re-glue service for any skin). If you're less concerned with weight and packability and more concerned with having a reliable, fairly affordable skin, the Rover is hard to beat. Plus, BSMP now offers a mix-plush version that's similarly impressive in terms of value.

Montana MontaNyl

The MontaNyl is the grippiest, most rugged, and least expensive model in Montana's lineup. It uses a traditional glue for the adhesive, which feels fairly similar to Black Diamond's in terms of stickiness. The MontaNyl plush is a solid all-rounder for a full-nylon plush — it's plenty grippy, glides well enough for this class, does a pretty good job of repelling moisture, and has held up well so far in our testing. The MontaNyl packs down a bit smaller than G3's Alpinist Universal, largely due to Montana's hardware; that hardware has worked well with most skis we've used, though G3's or other bar-style systems might be worth considering if your skis have particularly pointy or asymmetrical tip shapes. All in all, the MontaNyl is worth a look if your priorities lean toward grip, value, and durability. If you prefer a faster-gliding, more packable skin, check out the MontaMix; if you want that and a less-tacky adhesive, see Montana's Adrenaline.

