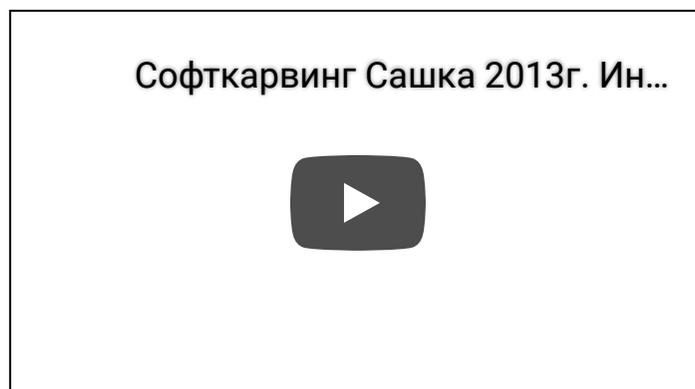


How to read the description of a snowboard

Well, in the previous article we have discussed the main features of snowboards used for carving. In this one, we will talk about the so-called «stuffing» and technologies used by some well-known manufacturers. And we, surely, will touch on the topic of their influence on board behavior. I'm not a shaper and I have never crafted a board, so the description may be somehow subjective. I have just held a couple of boards from various manufacturers, saw them «ride», but never got the chance to try some of them out myself.



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Snowboard core

The board core is made of several strips of hardwood that run along the length of the board. The strips can often be made of different woods like, for example, bamboo, poplar, etc. However, it is quite difficult to say anything about the board by its core. This is why you needn't pay much attention to it. Most importantly, it has to be made of wood. If it is, the name contains the word «WoodCore» or something like that.

Core wrap. Fiberglass laminate

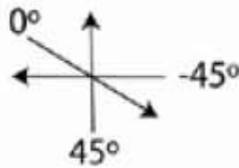
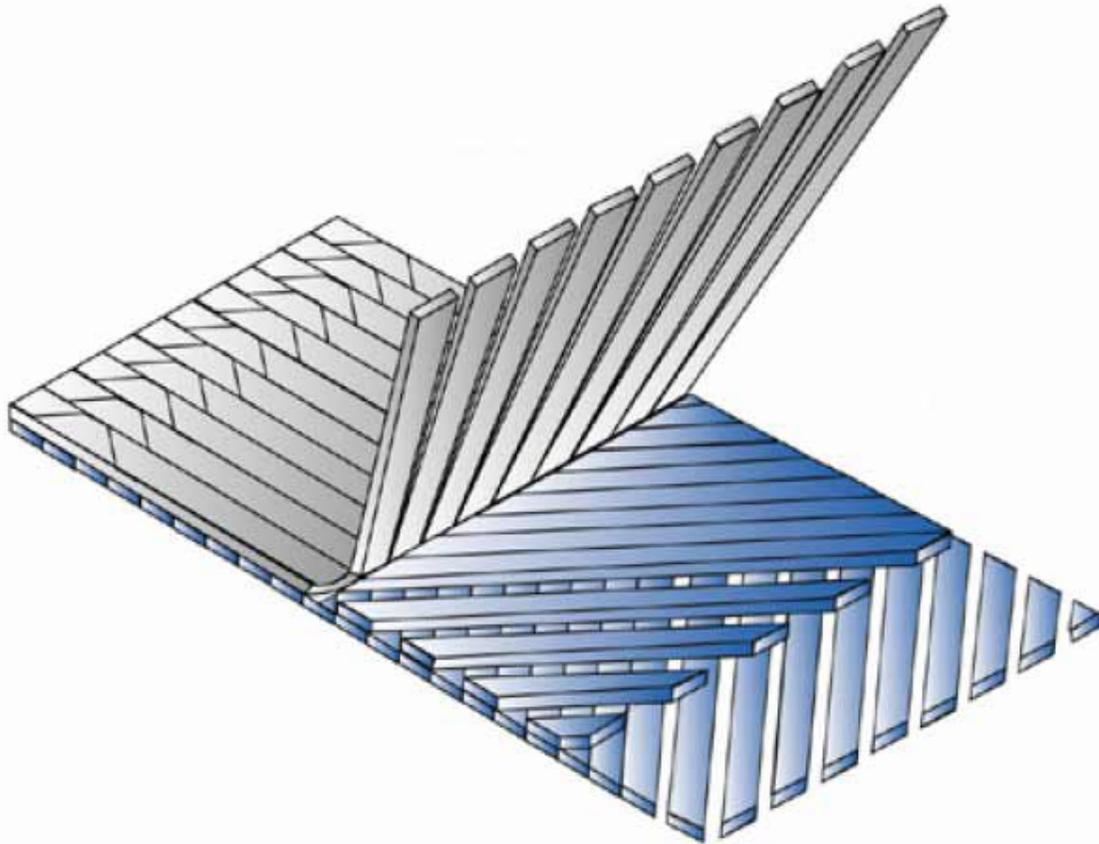
This feature is perhaps the most important one when it comes to stiffness. The number of fiberglass layers directly affects the torsion and axial stiffness. Basically, the fibers in each layer are located along the strip. Therefore, combining different layers, the manufacturer can deploy them at an angle

to each other. For example, the bottom layer is laid along the snowboard, the middle is at an angle of 45 degrees (clockwise), and the top one – at 45 degrees (counterclockwise). The wrap may be BiAxial, TriAxial, and QuadAxial.

BiAxial is a two-layer wrap. For example, 45\ -45 or 0\90. It has a great deal of flexibility and low stiffness. This is the reason why it is used in inexpensive boards, suitable for beginners or girls, as well as in many freestyle and jib models. The manufacturers often note that it is the BiAx that makes the board weigh less. Well, if you have no questions concerning the first statement, let's move to the second one...

TriAxial is a three-layer wrap, 45\0\45. It has fairly high stiffness and is the basis for snowboards suitable for freeride and softboot carving. Classic snowboards without special amplifiers, but with a three-layer wrap have a responsive and, at the same time, an extremely playful character. These are very lively boards. Most commonly, this wrap type significantly increases the cost of the board. It's just another layer, though.

QuadAxial is a four-layer wrap, 45\0\90\45. It gives a board maximum stiffness, and the weight is shifted to the edge of the board. This one is mainly used for hardboot snowboards, so it rarely occurs in the models designed for regular boots.



The core is wrapped with fiberglass on sides, top, and bottom. To achieve an optimal stiffness of a board, they may often use both full and partial mixes of laminate. For example, BiAxial – at the top, and TriAxial – at the bottom. Or BiAxial – at the nose of the board, TriAxial – in the middle part and tail. The combinations may vary...

Besides, it is possible to achieve a finer gradation of stiffness along the board. Position the board in the line more accurately and distribute the stiffness depending on the length of the board.

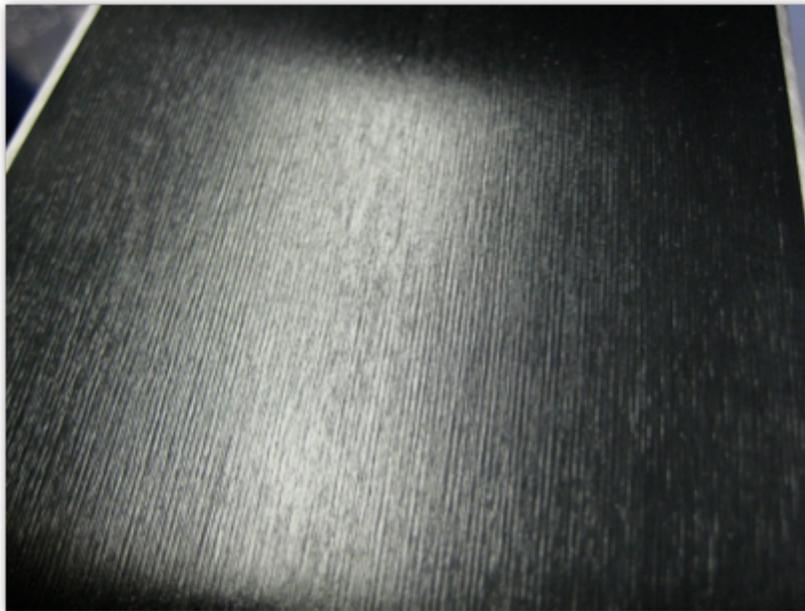
Aside from classic fiberglass, manufacturers use all kinds of stiffeners (additional layers of wrap or partial stingers). However, it is not easy to think about the impact of such elements on the board judging by the description. Surely, it is better with them, than without them, but excessive use of such amplifiers can kill the board flexibility. You must remember that a snowboard should bend, otherwise it would be impossible to turn. The board too stiff for you will passively turn and feel like a piece of metal under your feet.

Sliding base

Basically, there are two ways of crafting the base, depending on the density of its plastic: Sintered or Extruded.

The sintered base is more solid, durable, and fast. The structure does not get off for years, and the base rarely gets scratched. Especially, if it is graphite. Sometimes they say that such a base is more difficult to maintain. However, it is not the deal with those who bring the board to a service center. And those who paraffin it at home will not see the difference with the extruded one. One of its main drawbacks is that it significantly affects the cost of the board.

Extruded base is softer, but, depending on the composition, it is also strong. Over time, the base along the edges smooths and loses structure quickly enough. It also quickly loses paraffin and gets a whitish color... Such a base is used on more affordable snowboards. However, it would be a mistake to say that all the drawn sliding bases suck. A lot depends on the plastic quality.



At the factory, they also can apply a structure on a base since it helps the base not to stick to wet snow. If the sliding surface is too smooth, it will create a molecular attraction that will stop the board. The appearance of the structure may vary from thin longitudinal notches to quite distinguishable dimples.

When making a slider, manufacturers often use graphite as it is a very hard and durable material. Such snowboards are quite tenacious; they slide well and rarely get scratched. Unfortunately, they are also more expensive.

Topsheet

It is the top cover of the board, which protects the laminate from damage, and is also used as a layer for applying the design. Most often than not, they make prints under the lacquer. Such a practical and inexpensive way allows you to print any design you want.

Veneer sheet looks beautiful and authentic and appeals to surfing and its origins. Some manufacturers claim that it increases the stiffness of the board, but it is hardly significant, even if it is true. However, a poorly treated veneer may crack from constant contact with water. This was the case with some HoverCrafts of 13-14 and 14-15 years.

Some freestyle boards do not have a topsheet. The design is printed on the core laminate, which, of course, facilitates the total weight of the snowboard.

Edges

It is far better if the edges are made of stainless steel. If the edges are made of this material, on a board you will find the phrase «Stainless steel». If they are made of ordinary steel, you should not leave it in the bag after riding. The edges will be covered with rust in just a few days. The rust destroys them, so, in the future, it would be much more difficult to sharpen them. If it happened anyway, you should run a sand paper (150-200) over it. And before summer, the edges should be greased with silicone grease or mixes like WD-40.

The edges may be seamless or have 1-4 spots of an intersection. Seamless edges are more preferable because the joint point is always a weak one.

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