



Curling is a sport in which two teams of four players each slide 40-pound granite rocks (also called stones) down a sheet of ice toward a target (house) at the other end. Each team tries to get more of its stones closer to the center of the target than the other team.

Delivery - The process of sliding a stone down the sheet is known as the delivery.

The skip will call the required weight, turn and line of the stone.

The **weight** of the stone is its velocity, which depends on the leg drive of the delivery rather than the arm.

The **turn, handle, or curl** is the rotation of the stone, which gives it a curved trajectory.

The **line** is the direction of the throw ignoring the effect of the turn.

The thrower's gripper shoe (with the non-slippery sole) is positioned against one of the hacks. The thrower, now in the hack, lines his/her body to where the skip's broom is placed at the far end for line.

The stone is placed in front of the foot now in the hack. Rising slightly from the hack the thrower pulls the stone back then lunges smoothly out from the hack aiming the stone at the skip's broom. The thrust from this lunge determines the weight. Balance may be assisted by a broom or delivery aid held in the free hand.

When the stone is released the thrower gives the rock a slight clockwise or counter-clockwise twist of the handle from around the two or ten o'clock position to the 12 o'clock on release. A typical rate of turn is about $2\frac{1}{2}$ rotations before coming to a rest.

The stone must be released before its front edge crosses the near hog line and it must clear the far hog line or the rock must be removed from play (hogged).

Sweeping - Sweeping is done for two reasons: to reduce friction underneath the stone, and to decrease the amount of curl. When the ice in front of the stone is swept, a stone will usually travel both farther and straighter.

Much of the yelling that goes on during a curling game is the skip calling the line of the shot and the sweepers calling the weight.

Sweeping is allowed anywhere on the ice up to the tee line, as long as it is only for one's own team stones. Additionally, when a stone crosses the tee line, the opposing skip is allowed to sweep it. This is the only case that a stone may be swept by an opposing team member.

Keeping score - Once all 16 rocks have been thrown, the score for that end is counted based on the final positions of the stones in the house. Only one team can score in an end. A team scores one point for every rock that it has closer to the center of the house than the other team.

Types of Shots

Many different types of shots are used to carefully place stones for strategic or tactical reasons; they fall into three fundamental categories as follows:

Guards are thrown in front of the house in the free guard zone, usually to protect the shot-rock (the stone closest to the button at the time) or to make the opposing team's shot difficult.

Draws are thrown only to reach the house. Draw shots include raise and angle-raise, come-around, and freeze shots.

Takeouts are intended to remove stones from play and include the peel, hit-and-roll and double shots.

The Members of a Curling Team

A team is made up of four players: the lead, the second, the third (also called the vice, vice-skip, or mate), and the skip. Each player has specific duties:

Lead - The lead throws the first two rocks of the end and then sweeps the next six. The lead must be very good at throwing guards and a strong sweeper.

Second - The second throws the third and fourth stones of the end and should be strong at playing takeouts. The second sweeps the first two stones and then the final four of the end. The second and the lead need to be in sync when sweeping together.

Third - The third (or mate or vice), who throws the fifth and sixth rocks of the end, must be good at all shots, but especially draws. It is the third's job to set up the shots that will be thrown by the skip, and to help the skip discuss the strategy of the final two stones of the end. The third also posts the score at the conclusion of the end.

Skip - The skip is the captain of the team and decides the strategy. It's the skip's job to tell the other players where to throw their shots and when to sweep. The skip also delivers the last two shots of the end. The skip must be good at all types of shots.

Important Rules

A moving stone cannot be touched by any part of the sweeper's broom or body or by other team members. If so, the stone must be removed from the ice by the playing side.

Score one point for every stone which is nearer the button than any stone of the opposing team. Any stone touching the outer circle is eligible. Disputed shots must be settled by the vice-skips. No measuring is allowed until after the end is over

When a stone passes the back line it is automatically out of play

A stone must pass the hog line to stay in play, unless it strikes another stone first

All curlers must start their delivery from the hack. Should any part of the body pass the hog line during delivery, the stone must be removed from play.

Curling Etiquette

Curling has often been referred to as a 'Gentlemen's Sport', quite like golf, as there are more courtesies to the game than actual rules.

Start and finish with a handshake. At the beginning of the game, greet the members of the opposing team with a handshake, tell them your name, and wish them "Good Curling". When the game is over, offer each of the players a handshake and move off the ice. The winning curlers traditionally offer their counterparts some refreshments.

Opposing vice-skips will toss a coin at the start of the game to determine last stone advantage.

Keep the ice clean. Change your shoes. Sand, grit and dirt are the ice's worst enemy. The shoes you wear should only be used for curling. Keep them clean.

Compliment good shots, no matter which team makes them. Respect your opponent.

Be ready. Take your position in the hack as soon as your opponent has delivered his/her stone. Keep the game moving; delays detract from the sport. Be prepared to sweep as soon as your teammate releases the rock.

When your opponents are preparing for delivery, stand to the side of the sheet, single file and between the hog lines. Move only after the stone has been released.

If you are throwing next you may stand on the backboard, but remain quiet and out of sight of the opposition thrower.

Only skips and thirds may congregate behind the tee line. They do not move or hold their brooms on the ice while the opposition is preparing to deliver a stone.

Be courteous. Don't distract your opponent in the hack. Sweepers should stay on the sidelines between the hog lines when not sweeping.

Place your skip's rock in front of the hack to help speed up the game.

At the conclusion of an end, all players remain outside the rings until the opposing thirds have agreed on the score.

All games on the ice should run approximately the same time. Therefore, if your game is an end or two behind all other games you should pick up the pace. Each player should be ready to deliver their rock when their skip puts down the broom.

What to wear?

Dress in layers. The arena temperature is about 45-50 degrees. You'll be standing on ice for two hours. If you normally wear a hat outside, you'll probably want to wear one while curling as well.

Clothing should allow freedom of movement. You need to be able to squat and lunge (blue jeans are not recommended since your movement is restricted).

Lightweight gloves keep your hands warm while still allowing you to feel the stone.

If your feet tend to get cold, consider wearing two pairs of socks.

The club will supply any other equipment necessary and has curling shoes available to rent.

Curling Glossary

Biter - A rock barely touching the house

Blank end - An end where no points are scored.

Bonspiel - A tournament in which curlers compete.

Burned Rock - A moving stone touched by sweeper's broom

Button - The very centre of the target rings or house

Centre Line - Line drawn on ice from hack to hog

Delivery - The action of throwing a stone to the other end of the playing surface

Draw Weight - A delivery of sufficient weight or put the rock in the house

Freeze - Two stationary stones touching each other

Eight-ender - A perfect end where every one of the team's stones scores a point

End - The way a curling game is divided. An end is like an inning in a baseball game. A curling game has either eight or ten ends

Freeze - When a stone has just enough momentum to stop when touching another stone

Gripper - The sole of one of your curling shoes. It helps you keep your footing on the ice. See slider

Guard - One stone protecting another from removal by opposing rock

Hammer - The last rock of the end

Hack - The foothold in the ice you use to push off from when you deliver the stone

Heavy Ice - Ice that, due to water, frost or too much pebble, requires rocks to be thrown extra hard to reach the rings

Hog - when a rock fails to clear the "hog line"

Hog Line - Line in front of house a rock must cross to be in play

House - Also known as the rings, this is the name of the giant bull's eye at either end of the sheet of ice. It consists of a set of concentric circles, called the 12-foot, 8-foot, 4-foot, and the Button

Hurry hard - A directive given to sweepers by the skip or third, to begin sweeping

Narrow - Stone played "off the broom" on side between the skip's broom and the objective

Off the Broom - Stone not thrown toward the skip's broom

On the Broom - Stone thrown directly at skip's broom

Pebble - Droplets of water applied to the playing surface

Raise - The movement of one stone by another in the same direction

Rink - A curling team; also the name of a curling facility

Rock - Also known as a stone, a curler delivers. Regular-sized rocks weigh approximately 44 pounds

Sheet - The frozen playing surface on which the game is played

Shot Rock - The stone nearest the centre of the house

Slider - The sole of one of your curling shoes. It helps you move or slide along the ice.

Take Out - Removing an opposing stone from play by striking it with your own

Tee line - The line on the playing surface that runs through the middle of the house

Weight - The amount of force used to deliver a stone

Wick - Striking the side of another stone

Wide - Stone played "off the broom", outside of the skip's broom away from objective