

ROCKET CITY CURLING CLUB

LEAGUE RULES

(REVISED MAY 2024)

These rules are condensed and modified for the Rocket City Curling Club's league play. For complete rules and a list of definitions, visit <https://www.usacurling.org/competition-documents>. Red text indicates rules and notes specific to the Rocket City Curling Club.

The Spirit of Curling

Curling is a game of skill and tradition. A well-executed shot is a delight to see, and it is also a fine thing to observe the time-honored traditions of curling being applied in the true spirit of the game.

Curlers play to win, but never to humble their opponents. A true curler never attempts to distract opponents, nor to prevent them from playing their best, and would prefer to lose rather than to win unfairly.

Curlers never knowingly break a rule of the game, nor disrespect any of its traditions. Should they become aware that this has been done inadvertently, they will be the first to divulge the breach.

While the main object of the game of curling is to determine the relative skill of the players, the spirit of curling demands good sportsmanship, kindly feeling, and honorable conduct.

The spirit should influence both the interpretation and the application of the rules of the game and the conduct of all participants on and off the ice.

R1. SHEET

For specific measurements and pictures, view the full rule book at <https://www.usacurling.org/competition-documents>.

R2. STONES

- (a)** A curling stone is of circular shape, having a circumference no greater than 36 in., a height no less than 4.5 in., and a weight, including handle and bolt, no greater than 44 lbs. and no less than 38 lbs.
- (b)** Each team uses a set of eight stones having the same handle color and individually identified by visible markings. If a stone is damaged and becomes unsuitable for play, a replacement stone is used. If a replacement stone is not available, a stone previously delivered in the end is redelivered.
- (c)** If a stone is broken in play, teams should use the "Spirit of Curling" to decide where the stone(s) should be placed.
- (d)** If a stone rolls over while in motion, or comes to rest on its side or top, it is removed from play immediately.
- (e)** Should a handle completely separate from a stone during delivery, the delivering player has the option of either allowing the play to stand, or of redelivering the stone after any displaced stones have been replaced to their original positions.

- (f)** A stone that does not come to rest completely beyond the inside edge of the hog line at the playing end is removed from play immediately, except when it strikes another stone, in which case it remains in play.
- (g)** A stone that completely crosses the outside edge of the back line is removed from play immediately.
- (h)** A stone that touches a divider or a side line is removed from play immediately and is prevented from entering adjacent rinks.
 - (i) A stone may be measured only visually until the last stone of the end has come to rest, except to determine if a stone is in play, or, prior to playing the second, third, or fourth stone of an end, to determine if a stone is in the Free Guard Zone.
 - (ii) **Removal of any questionable stones must be agreed upon by both skips (or, if the skip is throwing, their vice-skip). Please observe the spirit of curling.**
- (i)** Teams are not to make alterations to, nor place any object on or over, their game stones.

R3. TEAMS

- (a)** A team is composed of four players. Each player delivers two stones, in consecutive order in each end, while alternating with an opponent.
- (b)** If a player is missing at the start of a game, the team may either:
 - (i) start the game with three players, the first two players delivering three stones each, and the third player delivering two stones, in which case the missing player may enter the game in the declared delivery rotation and position at the start of an end, **or, if their team has thrown two stones or fewer, in the middle of an end;** or
 - (ii) start the game using a qualified alternate. **(See rules for substitutes below.)**
- (c)** Where a player is unable to continue to play in a game, the team may either:
 - (i) continue play with the remaining three players, in which case the player who left the game may re-enter at any time provided that the returning player's two stones are delivered within the team's declared delivery rotation in that end; or
 - (ii) bring in a qualified alternate at the beginning of an end, in which case the delivery rotation and the skip and vice-skip positions may be changed.
- (d)** A team may not play with fewer than three players, all players delivering all their allocated stones in each end. **(See <https://www.usacurling.org/competition-documents> for rules when a player is unable to deliver their stone in an end.)**
- (e)** **RCCC club members are permitted to play as substitutes during league games. Substitutes should be solicited through the #subs channel in the RCCC Discord server or another platform open to all club members. Substitutes may be charged a \$20 fee per game if they are not registered for the league.**
 - (i) **Substitutes must throw lead or second for their team, or lead if their team only has three players. Substitutes may not skip or vice-skip their team from the lead or second positions.**
 - (ii) **During regular season play, teams must have at least two registered members playing throughout their game in order for their game not to be scored as a forfeit.**
 - (iii) **During playoff/championship games, teams must have at least three registered members playing throughout their game in order for their game not to be scored as a forfeit—unless their team has exactly three registered members on their roster, in which case they may play with two registered members and a substitute.**
- (f)** **RCCC league players are permitted to swap positions in the delivery rotation, and to move in/out of the alternate position(s), between ends. Note that this is generally not permitted in bonspiel play, at the RCCC**

or at other clubs.

R4. POSITION OF PLAYERS

(a) Non-Delivering Team:

- (i) During the process of delivery, the players take stationary positions along the sidelines between the hog lines. However:
 - 1) the skip and/or vice-skip may take stationary positions behind the back line at the playing end, but must not interfere with the choice of place of the skip or vice-skip of the delivering team, and
 - 2) the player who is to deliver next may take a stationary position to the side of the rink, behind the hacks, at the delivering end.
- (ii) The non-delivering team players must not take any position, nor cause any motion, which could obstruct, interfere with, distract or intimidate the delivering team. If such an action occurs, or an external force distracts a player during delivery, that player has the option of allowing the play to stand, or of redelivering the stone after all displaced stones have been replaced to their original positions.

(b) Delivering Team:

- (i) The skip, or the vice-skip when it is the skip's turn to deliver, is in charge of the house.
- (ii) The player in charge of the house is positioned inside the hog line, and on the ice surface of the playing end of the team's sheet, while the team is in the process of delivery.
- (iii) The players who are not in charge of the house or delivering a stone take a position to sweep.

R5. DELIVERY

- (a) The teams opposing each other in a game shall use a coin toss or similar method to determine which team delivers the first stone in the first end, after which the team that most recently scored delivers the first stone in the next end.
- (b) The team playing the first stone of the first end has the choice of stone handle color for that game.
- (c) Right-handed deliveries are delivered from the hack on the left of the center line and left-handed deliveries are delivered from the hack on the right of the center line. A stone delivered from the wrong hack is removed from play, and any displaced stones are replaced to their original positions by the non-offending team.
- (d) A stone must be clearly released from the hand before it reaches the hog line at the delivering end. If the player fails to do so, the stone is immediately removed from play by the delivering team.
- (e) If a hog line violation stone is not immediately removed and strikes another stone, the delivered stone is removed from play by the delivering team, and any displaced stones are replaced to their original positions by the non-offending team.
- (f) A stone is in play when it reaches the tee line at the delivering end. A stone that has not reached the tee line at the delivering end may be returned to the hack and redelivered.
- (g) All players must be ready to deliver their stones when their turn comes, and not take an unreasonable amount of time to play.
- (h) If a player delivers a stone belonging to the opposing team, that stone is allowed to come to rest, and is then replaced by a stone belonging to the delivering team.

- (i)** If a player delivers a stone out of proper rotation, the end continues as if the mistake had not occurred. The player who missed a turn delivers the last stone for that team in that end. If it cannot be determined which player delivered out of proper rotation, the player who delivered the first stone in the end for that team delivers the last stone for that team in that end.
- (j)** If a player inadvertently delivers too many stones in one end, the end continues as if the mistake had not occurred and the number of stones allocated to the last player of the offending team shall be reduced accordingly.
- (k)** If a team delivers two stones in succession in the same end:
 - (i)** The second stone is removed and any displaced stones replaced to their original positions by the non-offending team. The player, who delivered the stone played by mistake, redelivers it as the last stone for the team in that end.
 - (ii)** Should the infraction not be discovered until after the delivery of a subsequent stone, the end is replayed.

R6. FREE GUARD ZONE (FGZ)

- (a)** A stone that comes to rest between the tee line and the hog line at the playing end, excluding the house, is deemed to be within an area designated as the FGZ. Also, stones that are in play, on or before the hog line, after striking stones in the FGZ, are deemed to be in the FGZ.
- (b)** If, prior to the delivery of the sixth stone of an end, a delivered stone causes, either directly or indirectly, an opposition stone to be moved from the FGZ to an out-of-play position, then the delivered stone is removed from play, and any displaced stones are replaced to their original positions by the non-offending team.

R7. TICK RULE

- (a)** The “no-tick rule”, which states that stones on the center line of the FGZ may not be moved off this line before the delivery of the sixth stone, is not applied to RCCC league play.

R8. SWEEPING

- (a)** The sweeping motion is in a side-to-side direction (it need not cover the entire width of the stone), deposits no debris in front of a moving stone, and finishes to either side of the stone.
- (b)** A stationary stone must be set in motion before it can be swept. A stone set in motion by a delivered stone, either directly or indirectly, may be swept by any one or more of the team to which it belongs anywhere in front of the tee line at the playing end.
- (c)** A delivered stone may be swept by any one or more of the delivering team anywhere in front of the tee line at the playing end.
- (d)** No player may sweep an opponent’s stone except behind the tee line at the playing end, or start to sweep an opponent’s stone until it has reached the tee line at the playing end.
- (e)** Behind the tee line at the playing end, only one player from each team may sweep at any one time. This may be any player of the delivering team, but only the skip or vice-skip of the non-delivering team.
- (f)** Behind the tee line, a team has first privilege of sweeping its own stone, but it must not obstruct or prevent its opponent from sweeping.
- (g)** If a sweeping violation occurs, the non-offending team has the option of allowing the play to stand, or of

placing the stone, and all stones it would have affected, where they would have come to rest had the violation not occurred.

R9. TOUCHED MOVING STONES

(a) Between the tee line at the delivering end and the hog line at the playing end:

- (i) If a moving stone is touched, or is caused to be touched, by the team to which it belongs, or by its equipment, the touched stone is removed from play immediately by that team.
- (ii) If a moving stone is touched, or is caused to be touched, by an opposition team, or by its equipment, or by an external force:
 - 1) If the stone was the delivered stone, it is redelivered.
 - 2) If the stone was not the delivered stone, it is placed where the team to which it belongs reasonably considers it would have come to rest had it not been touched.

(b) Inside the hog line at the playing end:

- (i) If a moving stone is touched, or is caused to be touched, by the team to which it belongs, or by its equipment, all stones are allowed to come to rest, after which the non-offending team has the option to:
 - 1) Remove the touched stone, and replace all stones that were displaced after the infraction to their original positions; or
 - 2) Leave all stones where they came to rest; or
 - 3) Place all stones where it reasonably considers the stones would have come to rest had the moving stone not been touched.
- (ii) If a moving stone is touched, or is caused to be touched, by an opposition team, or by its equipment, all stones are allowed to come to rest, after which the non-offending team places the stones where it reasonably considers the stones would have come to rest, had the moving stone not been touched.
- (iii) If a moving stone is touched, or is caused to be touched, by an external force, all stones are allowed to come to rest, and then placed where they would have come to rest if the incident had not occurred. If the teams cannot agree, the stone is redelivered after all displaced stones have been replaced to their original positions. If agreement on the original positions cannot be reached, the end is replayed.

R10. DISPLACED STATIONARY STONES

- (a)** If a stationary stone, which would have had no effect on the outcome of a moving stone, is displaced by a player, it is replaced in its original position by the non-offending team.
- (b)** If a stationary stone, which would have had no effect on the outcome of a moving stone, is displaced by an external force, it is replaced in its original position, with agreement of the teams.
- (c)** If a stone which would have altered the course of a moving stone is displaced by a player, all stones are allowed to come to rest and then the non-offending team has the option to:
 - (i) Leave all stones where they came to rest; or
 - (ii) Remove the stone whose course would have been altered from play and replace in their original positions any stones that were displaced after the violation; or

- (iii) Reasonably place stones in the positions they would have come to rest had a stone not been displaced.
- (d) If a stone which would have altered the course of a moving stone is displaced by an external force, all stones are allowed to come to rest, and are then placed in the positions in which they would have come to rest had a stone not been displaced. If the teams cannot agree, the stone is redelivered after all displaced stones have been replaced to their original positions. If agreement on the original positions cannot be reached, the end is replayed.

R11. EQUIPMENT

- (a) No player shall cause damage to the ice surface by means of equipment, hand prints or body prints.
- (b) Teams must not use electronic communication equipment, or any device to modify the voice, **for curling purposes** during a game.
- (c) A player may change the type of brush or synthetic broom at any time during a game, provided there is no delay. A player choosing to sweep with a corn broom must use only that style of broom during the entire game.
- (d) The use of a delivery stick shall be restricted as follows:
 - (i) Players choosing to deliver with a delivery stick must use that device for the delivery of all their stones during the entire game.
 - (ii) The stone must be delivered along a straight line from the hack to the intended target.
 - (iii) The stone must be clearly released from the delivery stick before the stone has reached the hog line at the delivering end.
 - (iv) A delivery stick shall not convey any mechanical advantage other than acting as an extension of the arm/hand.

R12. SCORING

- (a) The result of a game is decided by a majority of points at the completion of the scheduled **time of play (90 minutes)**, or when a team concedes victory to its opponent. **The winning team earns 2 points in league standings, and the losing team earns 0.**
 - (i) **If time runs out in the middle of an end, the score as it stands is the final score – i.e. no points will be awarded for the unfinished end. The final stone must be released (out of the thrower's hand) before time runs out for an end to be considered complete.**
 - (ii) **If, in a league game, the score is tied at the completion of the scheduled time of play, the game is recorded as a tie. Each team will earn 1 point in league standings.**
 - (iii) **If, in a playoff/championship game, the score is tied at the completion of the scheduled time of play, the winner will be decided by skip stones. Each team may select one member to throw one stone, which (if it stops in the house) will be measured for distance to the button and removed. The closest stone to the button wins.**
 - 1) **Teams may sweep their own stone at any point, but may not sweep the other team's stone. If neither team's stone lands in the house on the first attempt, each thrower will throw again until a winner can be decided. The team that would have hammer following the completion of the previous end throws second.**
 - (iv) **League teams are encouraged to maintain a brisk pace of play, without rushing themselves or their opponents. Teams should generally be able to complete at least six full ends in 90 minutes of**

play, unless victory is conceded early.

- 1) Teams are encouraged to concede, by shaking hands with their opponents, if their team has no reasonable chance to win or tie. If a game is conceded, both teams have rights to use the ice (practice, scrimmage, etc.) for the rest of their draw time as they see fit.

- (b) At the completion of an end (when all stones have been played), a team scores one point for each of its own stones located in or touching the house that are closer to the tee than any stone of the opposition.
- (c) The score of an end is decided when the skips or vice-skips in charge of the house agree upon the score. If stones that may have affected the points scored in an end are displaced prior to that decision, the non-offending team receives the benefit that might have accrued from a measurement.
- (d) When determining the score of an end, if teams cannot visually decide which stones are closer to the tee, or whether a stone is touching the house, a measuring device is used. Measurements are taken from the tee to the nearest part of the stone. The person in charge of the house from each team is allowed to observe any measurement that is made by a measuring device.
- (e) If two or more stones are so close to the tee that it is impossible to use a measuring device, the determination is made visually.
- (f) If a decision cannot be reached, either visually or with a measuring device, the stones are considered equal, and:
 - (i) If the measure was to determine which team scored in the end, the end is blanked.
 - (ii) If the measure was to determine additional points, only the stones closer to the tee are counted.
- (g) Should an external force cause the displacement of stones that would have affected the score prior to agreement of the score, the following applies:
 - (i) If the displaced stones would have determined which team scored in an end, the end is replayed.
 - (ii) If a team secured a point(s), and the displaced stone(s) would have determined if an additional point(s) was scored, that team has the option of replaying the end or of keeping the point(s) already secured.
- (h) If a team is not available to start a game at the designated time, the following takes place:
 - (i) If the delay of the start of play is 05:00-14:59 minutes, then the non-offending team receives one point and will have choice of first or second stone in the first end of actual play; one end is considered completed.
 - (ii) If the delay of the start of play is 15:00-29:59 minutes, then the non-offending team receives one additional point and choice of first or second stone in the first end of actual play; two ends are considered completed.
 - (iii) If play has not started at 30 minutes, then the non-offending team is declared the winner by forfeit. A team may choose to forfeit earlier than this time (including at any point before the scheduled start of play) if they wish. A forfeit before play has begun will be scored as a 6-0 win, with 6 ends won, for the non-forfeiting team.
 - (iv) The non-forfeiting team has the rights to use the ice (practice, scrimmage, etc.) during their draw time as they see fit, but are welcome to invite players from the forfeiting team and other club members to join them.
 - (v) If a team is required to forfeit in the middle of a game (due to injury or other extenuating circumstances), the non-forfeiting team will receive credit for the win (2 points in league standings), with 1 point scored and 1 end won for each unplayed end up to 6 ends. If six or more ends have already been played, the final score stands as is (with the non-forfeiting team still receiving the win).
- (i) If two or more teams are tied in league standings, the following tiebreakers will apply, in the order listed:

- (i) **Head-to-head**—the team with the most wins in matchups between the two tied teams
- (ii) **Point differential**—points scored minus points against for each individual team
- (iii) **Ends won for each individual team**
- (iv) **Coin flip**

R13. RESCHEDULED GAMES

- (a) If games do not start on schedule, the president or another senior member of the club will notify members of the updated schedule via digital communication.
- (b) If a game needs to be made up for any reason, the president or another senior member of the club will provide information as necessary.

R14–17. See official rule book or visit <https://www.usacurling.org/competition-documents>.

R18. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

Improper conduct, foul or offensive language, equipment abuse, or willful damage on the part of any team member is prohibited. Any violation may result in suspension of the offending person(s).

DEFINITIONS

Blank end: an end resulting in no score for either team.

Delivery end: the end of the sheet from which the stones are being delivered.

End: a portion of a curling game that is completed when each team has thrown eight stones and/or the score has been decided.

Extra end: an additional end played to break a tie at the end of regulation play.

Free Guard Zone (FGZ): the area at the playing end between the hog line and the tee line, but excluding the house.

Hack: the foothold at each end of the ice that is used by a player to start the delivery of a curling stone.

Hog line: a line extending across the width of the sheet that is parallel to and 21 ft. from each tee line.

House: the area within the concentric circles at each end of the sheet.

Playing end: the end of the sheet to which the stones are being delivered.

Sheet: the specific ice surface upon which a curling game is played.

Skip: the player who directs play for the team.

Te: The exact center of the house. (*Not to be confused with ‘tee line’, below.*)

Tee line: a line extending across the width of the sheet that passes through the center of the house parallel to the hog line and backline.

Vice-skip: the player who directs play for the team when it is the skip’s turn to deliver.