



2018-2019 USCA RULES of CURLING & Competition

USA Curling National Office: 5525 Clem's Way, Stevens Point, WI 54482-8841
888-287-5377 or 715-344-1199; Fax 715-344-2279
info@usacurl.org www.usacurl.org

Notice: The USCA's Championship Rules may be changed, in whole or in part, prior to the playdown process. This includes championship berth allotments for regions and specific teams, as granted in these rules. The regions and teams are not guaranteed a berth beyond the current USCA Championship. The rules for one year's championship will not be construed to give or imply any right for future championships. USCA policy is to promulgate its rules in advance of the competition affected by those rules, through its due process of committee and board meetings. Any mistakes, omissions or ambiguity may be subject to clarification by the Competitions Committee.

(Revised October 2018)

The Spirit of Curling

Curling is a game of skill and tradition. A shot well executed 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.

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

SECTION I – RULES OF CURLING

R1. SHEET

(a) The length of the ice sheet from the inside edges of the back boards is 150 feet. The width of the sheet from the inside edges of the side lines is a maximum of 16 ft. 5 inches. This area is delineated by lines drawn, or by dividers placed on the perimeter. If the size of an existing facility will not permit these measurements, then the length may be reduced to a minimum of 146 ft., and the width to a minimum of 14 ft. 2 in.

(b) At each end of the sheet there are clearly visible parallel lines in the ice from side line to side line as follows:

- 1.) The tee line, 1/2 in. maximum width, placed so that the center of the line is 57 ft. from the middle of the rink.
- 2.) The back line, 1/2 in. maximum width, placed so that the outside edge is 6 ft. from the center of the tee line.
- 3.) The hog line, 4 in. in width, placed so that the inside edge is 21 ft. from the center of the tee line.
- 4.) A center line, 1/2 in. maximum width, joins the midpoints of the tee lines and extends 12 ft. beyond the center of each tee line.
- 5.) A hack line, 1 ft. 6 in. in length and 1/2 in. maximum width, is placed parallel to the tee line, at each end of the center line.
- 6.) A courtesy line, 6 in. in length and 1/2 in. maximum width, is placed 4 ft. outside and parallel to the hog lines, on each side of the rink.

(c) For wheelchair events, at each end of the sheet, 2 thin (i.e. - wool) wheelchair lines are placed parallel to and on opposite sides of the center line, extending from the hog line to the outermost edge of the nearest circle, with the outside edge of each line being 18 in. from the center line.

(d) A center hole (tee) is placed at the intersection of each tee line and center line. With the tee as center, there are four concentric circles placed at each end of the rink, with the outer edge of the outer circle having a radius of 6 ft., the next circle a radius of 4 ft., the next circle a radius of 2 ft., and the innermost circle having a minimum radius of 6 in.

(e) Two hacks are placed on the hack line, on opposite sides of the center line, with the inside edge of each hack 3 in. from the midpoint of the center line. The width of each hack is not to exceed 6 in. The hack is attached to suitable material, and the inside edge of that material is placed on the inside edge of the hack line so that the hack does not extend more than 8 in. in front of the hack line. If the hack is recessed into the ice, this is not to be more than 1.5 in. in depth. (USCA Interpretation: There shall be no obstruction behind the hack structure.)

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, the teams use the “Spirit of Curling” to decide where the stone(s) should be placed. If agreement cannot be reached, the end will be replayed.
- (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 positions prior to the incident taking place.
- (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, third, fourth or fifth stone of an end, to determine if a stone is in the Free Guard Zone.
- (j) 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) A team declares its delivery rotation, and the skip and vice-skip positions, prior to the start of a game and maintains that rotation and those positions throughout that game subject to (d)
 - (i). A team that deliberately changes its delivery rotation, or positions, during a game will forfeit the game, unless it was done when bringing in an alternate player.
- (c) 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
 - (ii) start the game using a qualified alternate.
- (d) 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 only at the start of an end.
 - (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 (the revised rotation of play applying for the remainder of that game), and the replaced player may not re-enter the game.

Definition of a player leaving a game: A player that delivers fewer than two stones in an end is considered to have left the game, except where rule R5 (i) applies.
- (e) A team may not play with fewer than three players, all players delivering all their allocated stones in each end.
- (f) In competitions where alternates are allowed, only one alternate can be registered and used in that competition. If there is a violation, the offending team will forfeit the game.

(g) If a player delivers the first allocated stone of an end and is unable to deliver the second allocated stone, the following is the procedure for the remainder of that end. If the player is the:

- (i) first player, the second player delivers the stone
- (ii) second player, the first player delivers the stone
- (iii) third player, the second player delivers the stone
- (iv) fourth player, the third player delivers the stone

(h) If a player whose turn it is to deliver is unable to deliver both of the allocated stones during an end, the following is the procedure for the remainder of that end. If the player is the:

- (i) first player, the second player delivers three stones, then the third player delivers three stones, then the fourth player delivers the last two stones
- (ii) second player, the first player delivers three stones, then the third player delivers three stones, then the fourth player delivers the last two stones
- (iii) third player, the first player delivers the first stone of the third player, then the second player delivers the second stone of the third player, then the fourth player delivers the last two stones
- (iv) fourth player, the second player delivers the first stone of the fourth player, then the third player delivers the second stone of the fourth player.

R4. POSITION OF PLAYERS

(a) Non-Delivering Team:

(i) During the process of delivery the players take stationary positions along the sidelines between the courtesy 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.
- 2) The player who is to deliver next may take a stationary position to the side of the sheet, 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 positions prior to the violation taking place.

(b) Delivering Team:

(i) The skip, or the vice-skip when it is the skip's turn to deliver, or when the skip is not on the ice, is in charge of the house.

(ii) The player in charge of the house is positioned inside the hog line, with at least one foot/wheel 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 positions to sweep.

(iv) Any improper position of players will result in the delivered stone being removed from play, and any displaced stones shall be replaced, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

R5. DELIVERY

(a) Unless predetermined, or decided by the LSD (last stone draw), the teams opposing each other in a game use a coin toss 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) Unless predetermined, 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, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

(d) A stone must be clearly released from the hand before it reaches the hog line at the delivery 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, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

(f) A stone is in play, and considered delivered, when it reaches the tee line (hog line for wheelchair curling) at the delivery end. A stone that has not reached the relevant line may be returned to the player and redelivered.

(g) All players must be ready to deliver their stones when their turns come, 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. If the player delivering the last stones of an end is the player that inadvertently delivers too many stones, the last delivered stone will be removed from play and any displaced stones are replaced, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

(k) If a team delivers two stones in succession in the same end:

(i) The second stone is removed and any displaced stones replaced, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place. The player, who delivered the stone played by mistake, redelivers it as the last stone for the team in that end.

(ii) If the infraction is not discovered until after the delivery of a subsequent stone, the end is replayed.

(l) If the wrong team delivers the first stone of an end:

- (i) if the error is discovered after only the first stone has been delivered, the end shall be replayed.
- (ii) if the error is discovered after the 2nd stone of the end has been delivered, play continues as if the error had not occurred.

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 ~~fourth~~ fifth 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, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

R7. SWEEPING

- (a) The sweeping motion can be in any direction (it need not cover the entire width of the stone), must deposit no debris in front of a moving stone, and must finish 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 ever sweep an opponent's stone except behind the tee line at the playing end, and may not 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.

R8. TOUCHED MOVING STONES

- (a) Between the tee line at the delivery 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 their equipment, the touched stone is removed from play immediately by that team. A double-touch by the person delivering the stone, prior to the hog line at the delivering end, is not considered a violation.
 - (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 positions prior to the violation taking place; 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 positions prior to the violation taking place. If agreement on those positions cannot be reached, the end is replayed.
- (c) Last Stone Draw (LSD) Stones:
- (i) If a member of the delivering team touches a moving stone, or causes it to be touched, the stone will be removed and recorded as ~~6 ft. 6.6 in.~~ 199.6cm (6 ft. 6.6 in.).
 - (ii) If a member of the non-delivering team touches a moving stone, or causes it to be touched, the stone will be redelivered.
 - (iii) If an external force touches a moving stone, or causes it to be touched, the stone will be redelivered.
- (d) If a moving stone is touched by a stone deflecting off the sheet dividers, the non-delivering team shall place the stone where it reasonably considers the stone would have come to rest had the moving stone not been touched.

R9. DISPLACED STATIONARY STONES

- (a) If a stationary stone, which would have had no effect on the outcome of a moving stone, is displaced, or caused to be displaced by a player, it is replaced, by the non-offending team, to its position prior to the violation taking place.
- (b) If a stationary stone, which would have had no effect on the outcome of a moving stone, is displaced, or caused to be displaced, by an external force, it is replaced, with agreement of the teams, to its position prior to the violation taking place.
- (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 from play the stone whose course would have been altered, and replace any stones that were displaced after the violation to their positions prior to the violation taking place; or
 - (iii) place all stones in the positions the team reasonably considers 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 positions prior to the violation taking place. If agreement on those positions cannot be reached, the end is replayed.
- (e) If a displacement is caused by stones deflecting off the sheet dividers, the stones are replaced, by the non-delivering team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.
- (f) Last Stone Draw (LSD) Stones:
- (i) If a member of the delivering team displaces a stationary stone, or causes it to be displaced, before the Official completes the measurement, the stone will be removed and recorded as 199.6cm (6ft. 6.6 in.).
 - (ii) If a member of the non-delivering team displaces a stationary stone, or causes it to be displaced, before the official completes the measurement, the stone is replaced, by the delivering team, to its position prior to the violation taking place.
 - (iii) If an external force displaces a stationary stone, or causes it to be displaced, before the official completes the measurement, the stone is replaced, by the delivering team, to its position prior to the violation taking place.

R10. EQUIPMENT

- (a) No player shall cause damage to the ice surface by means of equipment, hand prints or body prints. The procedure will be:
- 1st incident = 1st official on-ice warning, repair damage
 - 2nd incident = 2nd official on-ice warning, repair damage
 - 3rd incident = repair damage and remove player from the game
- (b) No equipment shall be left unattended anywhere on the ice surface.
- (c) Teams must not use electronic communication equipment, or any device to modify the voice, during a game. With the exception of stopwatches that are limited to providing 'time' data only, the use of electronic devices during the games, which provide information to players on the field of play, are forbidden.
- (d) When a properly functioning electronic hog line device is being used:
- (i) The handle must be properly activated so that it is functioning during delivery, or it will be considered a hog line violation stone.
 - (ii) A glove or mitt must not be worn on the delivery hand during the delivery of a stone. If there is a violation, the delivered stone shall be removed from play, and any displaced stones shall be replaced, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.

When sensor handles are in use, players should be familiar with their operation. Each sensor handle is equipped with two green LED lights and two red LED lights. The red LED's flash when the rock is tilted with a bare hand touching the coated handle grip. When the rock is returned

to the playing position and the grip is released, the green LED's flash quickly for 10 seconds and then slowly for 2 minutes. If the grip is not touched, the electronics will turn off after the slow flashing stops. If the grip is touched, the LED's turn off to prevent distracting the curler during delivery. When the grip is released before the hog line, the green LED's flash until the center of the rock crosses the center of the hog-line magnet; then, the green LED's turn on steady for 5 seconds to indicate a valid delivery. If the grip is not released before the center of the rock crosses the center of the hog-line magnet, a violation is indicated for 25 seconds by flashing red LED's. The touch sensor remains on for a short interval after the hog line is crossed. If the grip is touched in this interval, indication will switch from valid (solid green) to violation (flashing red). A low battery is indicated by alternating red and green LED's. There are two LED's of each color in case of bulb failure, thus, a single LED (red or green) has the same meaning as two LED's. The coated handle grip and the LED's can be damaged by brushes and shoes. Do not push on the handle with brushes or shoes. Do not invert the rock on the ice with the grip contacting the ice. The grip coating can be damaged.

If a handle becomes loose, do not attempt to tighten it by rotating the handle. This can damage the battery carrier. Have an Official notify the Ice Crew to properly torque the mounting screw.

(e) The use of a delivery stick shall be restricted as follows:

- (i) May not be used in any USCA National Championship or any qualifying event, except wheelchair events.
- (ii) Players choosing to deliver with a delivery stick must use that device for the delivery of all their stones during the entire game.
- (iii) For non-wheelchair curling: The stone must be delivered along a straight line from the hack to the intended target.
- (iv) For non-wheelchair curling: The stone must be clearly released from the delivery stick before the stone has reached the hogline at the delivering end. A stone is in play, and considered delivered, when it reaches the teeline at the delivery end. (NOTE: The WCF rule requires release before either foot has reached the tee line. The USCA has delayed implementation of the WCF rule.)
- (v) For non-wheelchair curling: A delivery stick shall not convey any mechanical advantage other than acting as an extension of the arm/hand.
- (vi) If a stick delivery violation occurs, the delivered stone shall be removed from play, and any displaced stones shall be replaced, by the non-offending team, to their positions prior to the violation taking place.
- (vii) All delivery sticks must conform to the Wheelchair Curling Policy.

R11. SCORING

(a) The result of a game is decided by a majority of points at the completion of the scheduled ends of play, or when a team concedes victory to its opponent, or when one team is arithmetically eliminated, provided the minimum number of ends have been completed. A team that has been arithmetically eliminated may finish the current end but no new end may be started. However, if a team is arithmetically eliminated in the last end of a game, the game should stop when this occurs and the end will not be finished. If the score is tied at the

completion of the scheduled ends, play continues with extra end(s) and the team that scores first wins the game.

(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. Any one player on the ice 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) If an external force should 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) A team concedes a game only when it is the delivering team. When a team concedes the game before the completion of an end, the score of the end is determined at that time, in the following manner:

(i) If both teams still have stones to be delivered, "X"s are placed on the scoreboard.

(ii) When only one team has delivered all of its stones:

(1) If the team that delivered all its stones has the stone(s) counting, no points are given, "X's" are placed on the scoreboard unless the points are required to determine the outcome.

(2) If the team, that did not deliver all its stones has stone(s) counting, these points are given and placed on the scoreboard.

(3) If no stones are counting, "X"s are placed on the scoreboard.

(i) 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 1-15 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 15-30 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 after 30 minutes, then the non-offending team is declared the winner by forfeit.

(j) The final score of a forfeited game is recorded as “W – L” (win – loss).