

Curling des Collines



Weekly Instructions Manual

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This Instructions Manual is intended for curlers of all levels interested in learning the sport or in mastering their skills. Designed to be offered as weekly sessions, 15 minutes before a game all through the curling season, this encompasses all aspects of the game such as ethics and rules, delivery and sweeping techniques as well as strategy.

Do not hesitate to contact one of the club's instructors if you have questions or if you wish to enhance a certain aspect of your game. This curling training program is designed for you to enjoy playing while improving your game.

Good curling!

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Ethics and Equipment

Week 1 - Ethics, Equipment and Conduct

Curling is a team sport which is exciting to perform provided each player demonstrates good sportsmanship.

Definition of Sportsmanship

Sportsmanship begins by the strict observance of written rules, but it involves something more. Sportsmanship is mostly respecting moral standards within the framework of a competition. At any time, sportsmanship is demonstrating respect towards your teammates and your opponents. Sportsmanship is shown both on and off the ice and includes remaining humble in victory and gracious in defeat.

Equipment

Clothing (pants, sweaters and vests) warm and comfortable, that breathe and prevent moisture while allowing freedom of movement.

Pants extensible, allowing for freedom of movement when delivering a rock (or stone).

Gloves or mittens that keep hands warm and protected when sweeping.

Shoes: To begin, we suggest clean flat running shoes with rubber soles. The club provides sliders if necessary. To enhance stability on the ice as well as the level of play, curling shoes are a great investment. The gripper must be cleaned regularly inside and out with a brush so as to avoid black residue on the ice. We suggest changing the gripper as soon as signs of wear and tear appear.

Brush: It is important to maintain your brush by cleaning the surface of all dirt before and during the game using the small brushes hanging at either end of each sheet, and by changing the fabric when it is worn in order to be effective when sweeping. We suggest you wash the brush with soap and water when it is dirty.

Physical Preparation Before the Game

To play well, and mostly, to avoid injuries, it is very important to proceed with a warm-up period before the game.

Without giving you a complete set of exercises, here are a few stretching exercises and activities to enhance your preparation.

- A warm-up period of 5 to 10 minutes should be planned before a game. It is important to proceed with the warm-up period before entering the ice.
- **First, perform activation exercises**, aerobic in nature, promoting a rapid increase of the flow to your muscles:
 - squats;
 - knee raises;
 - rotation of the torso;
 - shoulder and arm rotations.
- The movement should be repeated 15 to 20 times while slowly increasing the pace.
- Then, it is important to perform **flexibility exercises** on the following muscles, to prepare them for the efforts during the game:
 - quadriceps (front thigh);
 - hamstrings (back of thigh);
 - thigh adductors and abductors (interior and exterior thighs);
 - torso;
 - calves, arms and shoulders.

To warm-up a muscle, get into a stretch position (without it hurting) and hold it for about 15 seconds. Repeat two to three times on each side.

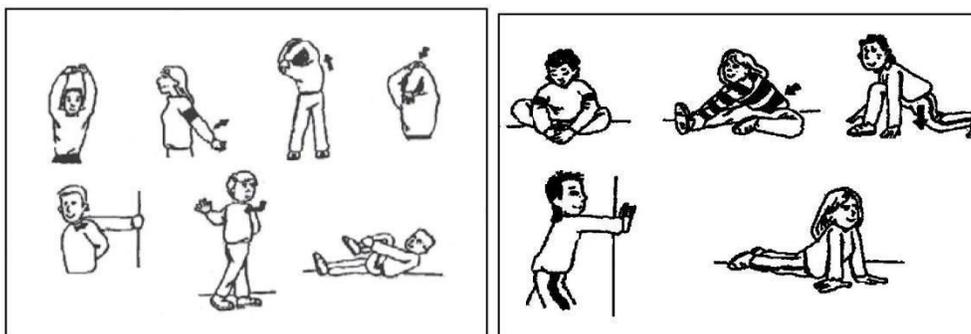


Figure 1 – Warm-up Exercises

Finish off with **simulation exercises**, to remind the body of the sliding position:

- simulate the stationary sliding position, off the ice, and hold this position for about 10 seconds;
- upon entering the ice, slide a few times without a rock.

Ethics and Rules of Conduct

Upon entering the ice, you will find a frame reproducing curling Ethics Rules and principal Rules of Conduct to follow during a game. We suggest you consult them regularly and use them to educate newcomers to the sport on rules to follow.

The Player's Code of Ethics

- I will demonstrate good sportsmanship
- I will act honorably both on and off the ice
- I will never willfully violate a rule of play, but if ever I do, I will declare my mistake
- I will never act in such a way as to intimidate or diminish my opponents, my teammates or the officials
- I will interpret the rules of play in an impartial manner and will never forget that they exist to make sure the game is played in an orderly and fair fashion
- If I violate the Ethics Code or the Rules of Play, I will humbly accept any punishment deemed appropriate by a governing body, regardless of the curling level.

Principal Rules of Conduct to Follow

- Leads on each team draw lots (by turning the wheel provided for that purpose) to determine which team starts the game.
- Players shall be **ready** to deliver their rock when it is their turn and/or sweep when a teammate is delivering a rock.
- When a member of the opposing team is getting ready to deliver a rock, players on the opposing team shall **position themselves on the side** of the sheet, between the hog lines, while being **quiet and still**.
- A delivered or moving stone cannot be touched by any player, equipment or personal belongings.
- When you touch a stone, whether it is moving or not, report it (just say touched stone)!

- Behind the T line, only one player from each team has the right to sweep. It can be any player on the delivering team and either the skip or vice-skip on the opposing team.
- When finished sweeping, players shall return to the other end while walking **on the side** of the sheet.
- Only vice-skips and skips can be in the house. When the opposing team delivers a rock, they should be still behind the back line and hold their broom so as not to hinder or distract the player getting ready to deliver a rock.
- As long as the vice-skips have not determined the score, the other players cannot enter the house or move the rocks. When there is measuring, the players shall stay at the hog line. The vice-skip on the scoring team puts up the score.
- The team having won the end delivers the first rock of the following end.
- Players should be reminded to be cautious when moving rocks towards the corners of the sheet in preparation of the next end. Also make sure everyone is aware of rocks being moved towards them.

Introduction to Sliding

Week 2 – Introduction to Sliding

Sliding is the basis of curling. It is essential to integrate a routine and find your balance.

- 1) Approach hack from behind.
- 2) Place non-sliding foot in hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm of the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so as feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Place the broom or stabilizer making sure the head, shoulders and knees are aligned towards the target.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Place the sliding foot between the non-sliding foot and the hand holding the rock, giving it a 45-degree open and outward angle while remaining comfortable.
- 8) Slide by pushing with the foot in the hack.

Tips: Keep your right hand, or your left hand if you are left-handed, in front of you near the ice as if you were holding the rock. It will be easier to maintain your balance.

This exercise needs to be repeated many times to find your balance. You can slide a small distance at the beginning and then slowly increase the distance.

Balance Exercise Opposite the sidewalk

Players are on the ice without a rock or broom, opposite the sidewalk. Have players take the final sliding position with both arms on the edge of the sidewalk. The back leg should be extended as far as possible. Once the player is comfortable and balanced, have him or her lift arms 8 to 10 cm away from the edge of the sidewalk and find the balance point in this sliding position.

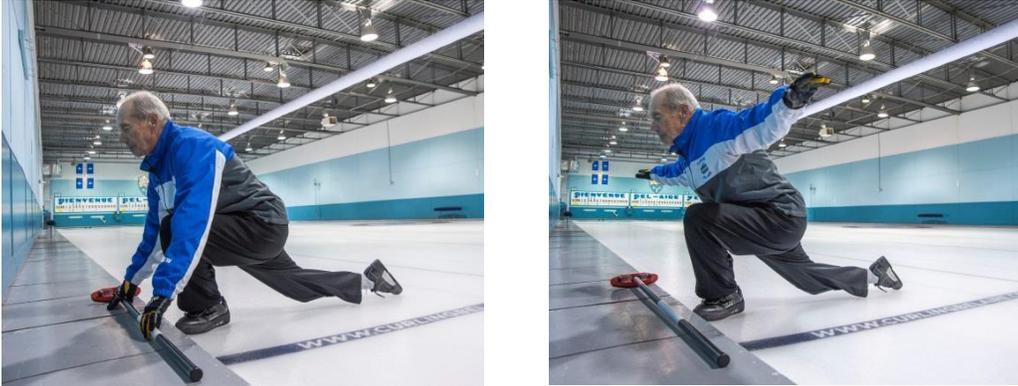


Figure 2 – Balance Exercise

Repeat the sliding technique while concentrating on balance.

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Place non-sliding foot in hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm of the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so as feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Place the broom or stabilizer making sure the head, shoulders and knees are aligned towards the target.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Place the sliding foot between the non-sliding foot and the hand holding the rock, giving it a 45-degree open and outward angle while remaining comfortable.
- 8) Slide by sing with the foot in the hack.

Tips

Make sure your shoulders are straight and parallel. If shoulders lean to one side or another, you will press down on the rock or stabilizer and will lose your balance.

The weight of your body should mostly be on the sliding foot. If the body is too far backward, there will be imbalance.

Week 4 • Balance – Part 2

In Part 2, we continue to practice balance while sliding without a rock. Items 10 and 12 should be done as if the player is holding a rock.

Five Step Delivery Technique

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Place the non-sliding foot in the hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm of the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so as feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Position the arm holding the rock and the one holding the broom or stabilizer. The arm holding the rock should be in front of the body, comfortably extended, the elbow in front of the sternum. The arm holding the broom or stabilizer is extended.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Slide the sliding foot behind in reverse heel-toe position, i.e. the toe of the sliding foot is 6-8 cm behind the foot in the hack. The sliding foot should always be beside the hack, never behind it.
- 8) At this point, hips should move at the same time as the foot. Hips should always be directly above the sliding foot.
- 9) The player should take a small pause or hesitation once in the reverse heel-toe position. During this brief pause, approximately 80% of the body's weight should shift to the sliding foot.
- 10) As the sliding foot changes position, **the hand holding the rock should also be in motion.** it should slide backwards, directly in front of the hack foot, without, however, touching this foot's toe.
- 11) Weight is then shifted again to the hack foot and the player thrusts with the leg of the hack foot (the shift between the sliding foot and the hack foot is what generates a good push, allowing the player to deliver rocks with different weights: draws, take-outs, etc.)
- 12) The hand holding the rock moves forward.
- 13) Move the sliding foot forward.
- 14) Slide with the rear leg extended as much as possible.

Delivery

Week 5 • Delivery – Three Step Technique

Here, we integrate the rock into the three step delivery.

Three Step Technique

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Place the non-sliding foot in the hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm of the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so as feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Place the broom or stabilizer making sure the head, shoulders and knees are aligned towards the target.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Place the sliding foot between the non-sliding foot and the hand holding the rock, giving it a 45-degree open and outward angle while remaining comfortable.
- 8) Slide by pushing with the foot in the hack.

Line of Delivery

This explains the notion “aiming for the broom”. Beginners will tend to slide along the center line. With the line of delivery, they will learn to slide along an imaginary line, running from the toe of the hack foot straight to the broom in the skip’s hand. Two factors should always be considered: the body’s alignment and that of the rock.

Tips

- Keep shoulders straight
- Place the knee in line with the broom
- Place the rock in front of the non-sliding foot
- Stay balanced and keep the arm straight

Grip and Release During Delivery:

- 1) First, get into position
- 2) There exist two starting positions for the rock. (10-o-clock or 2-o-clock)
- 3) Release of the rock is always at 12-o-clock.
- 4) Release of the rock shall be initiated while sliding, before the player loses momentum. At less than a meter from release, the player turns the rock back to the 12-o-clock position. The total release distance should be equivalent to the length of a brush (from 10-o-clock to 12-o-clock). You must learn to synchronize speed and distance to release the rock at the right moment. You should feel that you control the rock without having to push it for lack of speed.



Figure 3 - Delivery

Here, we integrate the rock into the five step delivery.

Five Step Delivery Technique

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Place the non-sliding foot in the hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm of the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so as feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Position the arm holding the rock and the one holding the broom or stabilizer. The arm holding the rock should be in front of the body, comfortably extended, the elbow in front of the sternum. The arm holding the broom or stabilizer is extended.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Slide the sliding foot behind in reverse heel-toe position, i.e. the toe of the sliding foot is 6-8 cm behind the foot in the hack. The sliding foot should always be beside the hack, never behind it.
- 8) At this point, hips should move at the same time as the foot. Hips should always be directly above the sliding foot.
- 9) The player should take a small pause or hesitation once in the reverse heel-toe position. During this brief pause, approximately 80% of the body's weight should shift to the sliding foot.
- 10) As the sliding foot changes position, **the hand holding the rock should also be in motion.** it should slide backwards, directly in front of the hack foot, without, however, touching this foot's toe.
- 11) Weight is then shifted again to the hack foot and the player thrusts with the leg of the hack foot (the shift between the sliding foot and the hack foot is what generates a good push, allowing the player to deliver rocks with different weights: draws, take-outs, etc.)
- 12) Move the rock forward.**
- 13) Move the sliding foot forward.
- 14) Slide with the rear leg extended as much as possible.

Initial Grip

- 1) It is important for the wrist to be high, i.e. only the fingers are touching the rock and not the palm of the hand.
- 2) Fingers should be slightly bent, so that the handle is in the cup of the fingers.
- 3) Fingers should not be at one or the other end of the handle.
- 4) The handle should rest on the second joint. The thumb and index finger form a V. Fingers are together and the grip is firm.
- 5) The thumb is placed on the opposite side of the handle, with pressure applied between the fingers and the thumb.
- 6) The arm should be bent, the elbow and hand placed before the sternum.
- 7) Upon release of the rock, the arm should be in a “hand shake” position.
 - V between the thumb and index finger pointing towards the opposite shoulder.
 - The handle sits on the fingers’ second joint.
 - Important: The grip shall not be made with the palm of the hand.
 - Keep wrist high.

The index finger, as well as the middle and ring fingers are the main driving force, and these fingers are placed under the handle.

Initial Position of the Handle for Turns

Initial Position for
Rotations (Turns)



Position Upon Release
(12-o-clock)

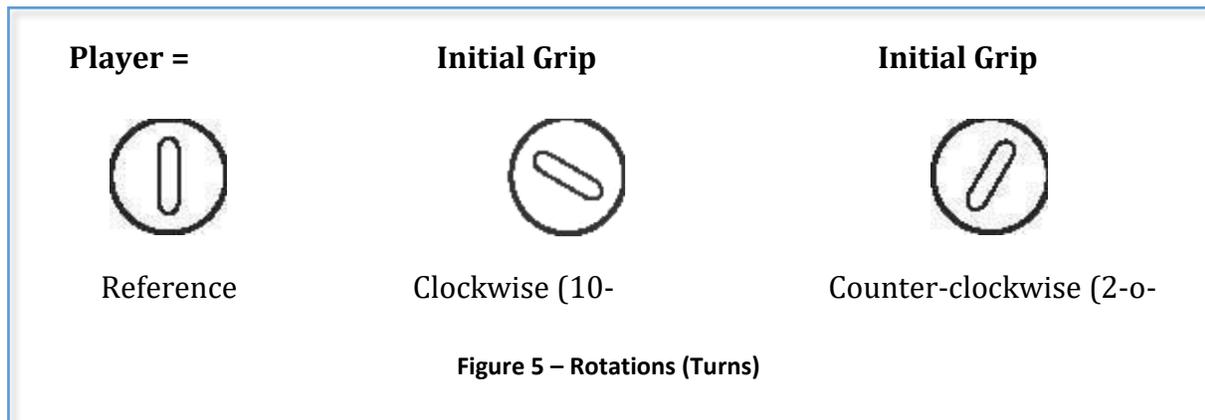


Figure 4 – Rotations (Turns)

The hours on a clock are used to represent the initial position of the handle to get the desired turn.

The player is at 12-o'clock (noon).

- Clockwise turn (curl from left to right): **Handle at 10-o'clock**
- Counter-clockwise turn (curl from right to left): **Handle at 2 o'clock.**



Curl: Why does a rock curl? Because of the pebbles on the ice, those small frozen droplets forming tiny bumps, allowing a rock to curl as it travels along the sheet. A rock would travel in a very different manner if the surface was totally smooth.

Rotations (Turns): Players want their rock to curl in the right direction. To do this, they give the rock a turn in the desired direction.

Release of a Rock

- 1) Release of the rock shall be initiated while sliding, before the player loses momentum. At less than a meter from release, the player turns the rock back to the 12-o'clock position. The total release distance should be equivalent to the length of a brush (from 10-o'clock to 12-o'clock). You must learn to synchronize speed and distance to release the rock at the right moment. You should feel that you control the rock without having to push it for lack of speed.
- 2) When releasing the rock, the player's hand should be in a "hand shake" position. The rock should not be given a spinning effect. A rock thrown consistently with a proper release should make two to three complete revolutions before reaching the house. You must be careful not to catch the rock with your fingers, which might slow it down or make it deviate.
- 3) A correct delivery requires the player to aim for the skip's target, extend the delivering arm towards the front and continue to slide behind the rock. The arm, hand and fingers of delivery continue to point along the line of delivery towards the target (the skip's broom).

Tips

- *Make sure your grip is right, check to see if delivery starts at 10-o'clock or at 2-o'clock and ends at noon.*
- *Is the wrist too high? The palm of the hand should not touch the rock.*
- *Focus on waiting to start releasing the rock **one length of a brush** from the release point.*
- *Players should start releasing the rock before their slide starts losing momentum.*
- *Players should complete their release within one length of a brush.*
- *At least two complete turns should be generated upon delivery.*
- *Keep fingers in the same position until the moment of release.*
- *Keep moves simple.*
- *Remember to never use the wrist.*
- *Release should be flowing and not jerky.*

Week 8 • Position of the Rock for a Three or Five Step Delivery

Once the grip, turn and release of a rock have been well integrated, we examine the position of a rock for a three or five step delivery.

Three Step Delivery

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Place the non-sliding foot in the hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm from the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so that the feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Place the broom or stabilizer making sure the head, shoulders and knees are aligned towards the target.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Place the sliding foot between the non-sliding foot and the rock, giving it a 45-degree angle while remaining comfortable.
- 8) Slide by pushing with the foot in the hack.

As you can see, the arm holding the rock is in front of the body, comfortably extended, the elbow is in front of the sternum. The arm holding the broom or stabilizer is extended at an angle of approximately 120 degrees. The skip provides a target with his or her broom. The player aims for the broom and the rock will follow the desired line, ideally stopping where the skip intended.



Figure 6 – Position of the foot in the hack and of the sliding foot



Figure 7 - Position of the knees, hips and thighs

No pressure should be exercised on the rock when sliding because this slows it down. The rock is not used as a stabilizer to keep your balance. To acquire stability, we recommend learning to slide without a rock. In the beginning, you can practice with two stabilizers.

When sliding, the rock stays in the target line until it is released. To do this, good balance is essential.

Five Step Delivery

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Place the non-sliding foot in the hack, toe at approximately 2-6 cm from the end of the hack.
- 3) Step forward, sliding foot beside the non-sliding foot in heel-toe position (about 30 cm apart) so that the feet are parallel and offset to allow a stable and comfortable position.
- 4) Squat down.
- 5) Position the arm holding the rock and the one holding the broom or stabilizer. The arm holding the rock should be in front of the body, comfortably extended, with the elbow in front of the sternum. The arm holding the broom or stabilizer is extended.
- 6) Hips should be raised so that the back is parallel to the ice.
- 7) Slide the sliding foot behind in reverse heel-toe position, i.e. the toe of the sliding foot is 6-8 cm behind the foot in the hack. The sliding foot should always be beside the hack never behind it.
- 8) At this point, the hips should move at the same time as the foot. The hips should always be directly above the sliding foot.
- 9) The player should take a small pause or hesitation once in the reverse heel-toe position. During this brief pause, approximately 80% of the body's weight should shift to the sliding foot.
- 10) As the sliding foot changes position, **the hand holding the rock should also be in motion.** It should slide backwards, directly in front of the hack foot, without, however, touching this foot's toe.
- 11) Weight is then shifted to the hack foot and the player pushes with the leg of the hack foot (the shift between the sliding foot and the hack foot is what generates a good thrust, allowing the player to deliver rocks with different weights: draws, take-outs, etc.)
- 12) **Move the rock forward.**
- 13) Move the sliding foot forward.
- 14) Slide with the rear leg extended as much as possible.

As you can see, the only thing different in the five step delivery is the fact that the player slides the rock and the sliding foot backwards before moving the rock forward as in the three step delivery.

Tip

Be careful not to put weight on the rock. Work on your balance.

Week 9 – Delivery with a Stick

For those players unable to squat in a traditional sliding position, the use of a stick allows them to enjoy curling while respecting their limits. The steps are the same as those of regular curling except that the rock is delivered with a stick while walking. Walking replaces sliding. The stick must be released before the hog line and the same stick shall be used for each delivery. For more safety and control, we recommend not using the slider when walking.

Steps:

- 1) Approach the hack from behind.
- 2) Put your foot in the left hack if you are right-handed and in the right hack if you are left-handed.
- 3) Determine the line of delivery and align the rock with it, the stick firmly attached to the rock's handle with a 10-o-clock or 2 o-clock turn, depending on which is requested.
- 4) The rock should be in front of you, and the handle of the stick should be at waist level (see photo).
- 5) To deliver the rock, walk along an imaginary line towards the skip's target. Keep your eyes on the target.
- 6) The walking speed varies according to the requested delivery. Slower for a guard, normal for a draw and quicker for a take-out.
- 7) When the speed seems right, release the rock by rotating the handle back to the 12-o-clock position without jerking or letting the delivery stick remain on the handle. Remember to release the rock before it reaches the hog line.
- 8) At the end of the delivery, the body should be aligned with the target.



Figure 8 – Delivery with a Stick

Sweeping

Week 10 - Sweeping

Purpose: Reduce Friction Between the Rock and the Sheet of Ice

- Polish the pebbles.
- Eliminate the frost and debris from the sheet's surface.
- Generate a quick melting of the pebbles to create a thin layer of moisture acting as a lubricant between the ice and the rock.

How Do You hold a broom?

Players shall hold approximately 2/3 of the broom with the non-dominant hand and place the dominant hand a bit lower (1/3) on the broom handle (much like a hockey stick).



Figure 9 - Position of Hands on the Broom

What Position Does One Take?

- Place hips to form a 45 degree angle with the line of the rock. Position yourself in front of the rock's center.
- The player bends forward at waist level so that most of his or her weight is over the sliding foot. In this way, the broom's head touches the ice. In this position, known as open, the player's shoulders are in the travelling direction and no obstacle prevents him or her from seeing the other end of the sheet. The player is facing the house.
- Sometimes a player is more comfortable sweeping on one side rather than another. It is important to agree with your partner on the preferred side and to decide who will be sweeping closest to the rock. Ideally, a player should be able to sweep on both sides of the rock.

How Does One Proceed?

- Rhythmic and quick motions on the line of delivery in front and in the middle of the rock, not on the sides. Remember that only 6 to 8 inches of the rock's surface touch the ice.
- Press down on the broom.
- Keep the broom's angle high, the applied pressure will be more effective.
- If you apply pressure on a scale with your broom, you will see the difference depending on the angle of the broom.
- Stay as close as possible to the rock to get maximum efficiency. But, be careful not to touch the rock! And breathe!
- By combining speed, consistency and pressure in front of the rock, you will gain maximum efficiency.

Repetitive Exercise

When a member of your team delivers rocks, practice sweeping very close, alternating with your partner.

Week 11 • Sweepers' Roles and Responsibilities

A good sweeper is not content with only applying pressure on the ice according to his skip's instructions. His role is much more complex and strategic. Here are the sweeper's principal functions.

- 1) A sweeper shall be clear on the delivery called for by the skip and make sure both he and his partner are aware of it or of the plan B, if necessary.
- 2) A sweeper shall judge as best he can the weight and the line of the rock as soon as it is released by the delivering player.
- 3) A sweeper shall inform the skip of his perception and take into account his partner's comments.
- 4) A sweeper shall follow the rock and pay attention to the moment where it will lose speed or start to curl.
- 5) A sweeper shall react quickly to the skip's request for sweeping and adjust to it. A sweeper shall always follow the rock and be ready to sweep on demand.
- 6) If needed, a sweeper shall work with the skip to evaluate a possible alternative plan and avoid any negative impact of the delivered rock for his team.
- 7) When the rock comes to rest, sweepers shall return to their position close to the hog lines on the other side of the sheet.

Other than sweeping vigorously, the most difficult aspect of a sweeper's role is to judge the rock's weight. To attain this, the use of a stop-watch can help. However, this needs for the delivery to be flawless, without restraining the rock or weighing it down. You can also count in a rhythmic fashion to calculate the weight of the rock in accordance with the speed of the ice. You can also judge according to your pace as you follow the rock. To achieve a certain level of skill in judging the speed of a rock, you must first stay focused on the game and develop your own reference points.

Finally, when the other team is playing, we sometimes ask a sweeper of the team to stand on the hog line to make sure the delivering player does not cross it.

Rules

Week 12 • Rules

Curling, as is the case for most sports, is regulated. In Canada, this set of rules is presented in a document entitled “Rules of Curling for General Play” and is available on the Curling Canada website. All players should consult this document to ensure curling is played correctly.

Here are a few recaps of the Rules for General Play affecting player positions, touched stones, sweeping and the Free Guard Zone:

Position of Players

Members of the non-delivering team:

- Only skips and vice-skips may be positioned inside the hog line at the playing end. They shall position themselves behind the back line when the delivering team is in the process of delivery.
- The player who is next to deliver may take a stationary position to the side of the sheet behind the hacks at the delivery end. The player shall remain silent and motionless when the delivering player is in the process of delivery.
- The other players shall position themselves between the hog lines and to the extreme sides of the sheet when the opposing team is in the process of delivery. The non-delivering team members shall not take any position or cause such motion that would obstruct, interfere or distract any member of the delivering team.

Touched Moving Stones

A stone in motion shall not be touched by any player, equipment or personal belongings.

Between the tee line at the delivery end and the hog line at the playing end:

If a moving stone is touched by the team to which it belongs or by its equipment, the touched stone is removed from play immediately by that team.

Inside the hog line at the other end:

If a moving stone is touched by the team to which it belongs, all stones are allowed to come to rest, after which the non-offending team has the option to:

- remove the touched stone and replace all stones that were displaced after the infraction to their original positions; or
- leave all stones where they came to rest; or
- place all stones where it reasonably considers the stones would have come to rest had the moving stone not been touched.

Displaced Stationary Stones

If a stationary stone that would have had no effect on the outcome of a moving stone is displaced or caused to be displaced by a player or external force, it is replaced to its original position to the satisfaction of the non-offending team. If there is any question as to which stone was counting, the displaced stone shall be positioned in favour of the non-offending team.

If a stone which would have altered the course of a moving stone is displaced, or caused to be displaced by a player, all stones are allowed to come to rest and then the non-offending team has the option to:

- leave all stones where they came to rest; or
- 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
- place all stones in the positions the team reasonably considers they would have come to rest had a stone not been displaced.

Sweeping

- A stationary stone must be set in motion before any sweeping may occur.
- Only the skip or vice-skip of the non-delivering team may sweep their team's stone(s) when set in motion.
- 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.
- Behind the tee line, a team has **first** privilege of sweeping its own stone, but it must not obstruct or prevent their opponent from sweeping.
- An opponent's moving stone shall not be swept until the front end of the stone reaches the farther tee line and sweeping shall only take place behind the tee line.

Free Guard Zone (FGZ)

- The FGZ is the area between the hog line and the tee line, excluding the house.
- Any stationary stone belonging to the opposition located in the FGZ shall not be removed from play by the delivering team prior to the delivery of the sixth stone of the end. When an opposition's stone(s) is removed from play from the FGZ prior to the sixth stone of the end, directly or indirectly and without exception, the delivered stone must be removed from play and any other displaced stones replaced as close as possible to their original position(s). Any stone previously in the FGZ whose location is now not in the FGZ may be removed at any time without penalty.
- A delivered third, fourth or fifth stone of an end may hit an opposition stone(s) located in the FGZ on to a stone(s) not in the FGZ providing that any opposition stone originally located in the FGZ remains in play.
- A team may remove their own stone from the FGZ providing its removal does not cause an opposition stone to be removed from play from the FGZ.

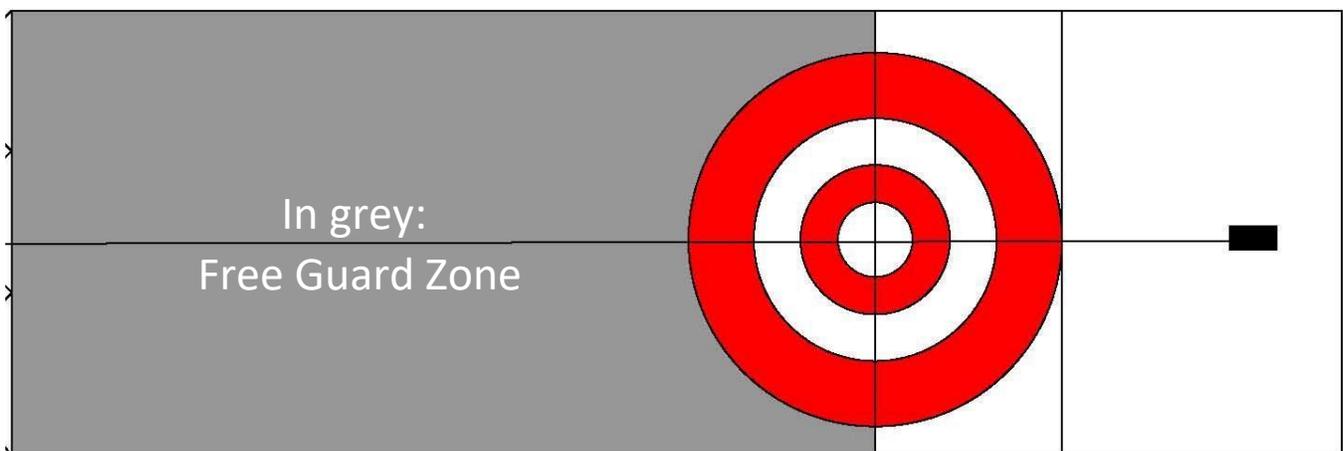


Figure 10 – Free Guard Zone (FGZ)

Roles and Communication Between Players

Week 13 – Roles and Communication Between Players

Players' Roles

All members of a curling team have an important role to play. That's the beauty of this sport.

Players shall act in a manner so as to successfully deliver the requested shots but also to make sure the game is played quickly according to the rules of curling.

Roles for Players on the Delivering Team

- The delivering player shall quickly get ready to execute the delivery and comply with the skip's instructions.
- Sweepers must understand the skip's instructions, and their responsibility is to judge the speed of the stone. They must be able to sweep the rock if they estimate its speed is insufficient, even though the skip may not ask for it.
- The skip determines the strategy and requests shots accordingly. The skip shall judge the line of delivery and request sweeping if needed. The skip shall quickly react to establish a plan B if the shot requested might not be made.

Roles for Players on the Non-delivering Team

- All players on the non-delivering team should observe the opponent's shot to store important information: ice speed, line of delivery, etc.
- The skip shall pay attention to the rock's course and be prepared to sweep if needed.
- The next delivering player shall quickly prepare to do so in order to speed up play.
- Sweepers may time the opponent's rock to enhance their knowledge of judging weight.

General Roles for Players

- Once an end is played, players shall quickly set up the rocks appropriately and the team delivering the first rock of the next end shall quickly get ready.
- The score of an end is determined by each team's vice-skip. A measure may be used in case of doubt.

- Players are responsible for the smooth execution of a curling match. As such, it is important for a player having violated a rule to declare it. Healthy relations are always a priority and players should always act with respect for their opponent.

Players' Skills

Depending on their order of delivery, players have roles requiring specific skills.

We're assuming here that the skip is the fourth player and the vice-skip is third.

Lead

The lead's role is crucial to the development of the end's strategy. The success or failure of the lead's delivery will typically influence the style of the end (defensive or offensive).

Required Qualities:

- Precision and good weight control
- Good sweeper

Second

In addition to the lead's qualities, the second should be able to regularly perform take-outs.

Third

In addition to the qualities of the lead and second, the third is often the player who sets the scene for the skip. This player is able to perform all types of shots, sometimes in more difficult conditions than those of the first two players.

The third is also usually the player who replaces the skip in the house when it is time for the skip to deliver rocks. The third then shall be able to effectively read the ice.

Fourth

The fourth player, often the skip, shall display the third's qualities as well as being a skillful strategist.

The fourth shall be able to make decisions with respect to the chosen strategy and adapt to all unexpected situations during the game.

Communication Between Players

Communication between a team's players is vital to curling. All members of a team have an important role to play, and effective communication will facilitate decision-making and performing shots.

New Team

Especially with a newly formed team, it is important for members to meet and discuss their strengths and weaknesses as well as their expectations within the team and with respect to the game of curling.

More experienced players can provide advice assisting with their teammates' development.

Before the Game

Team members may wish to discuss different aspects of the game they are about to play.

- General strategy during the game
- Strengths and weaknesses of the opposing team
- Ice conditions

During the Game

Before Delivery

The skip communicates orally and with the help of signals, gives instructions pertaining to the required delivery.

It is essential for the delivering player and the sweepers to make sure they understand these instructions. If needed, they will validate among themselves and with the skip their comprehension of the required shot.

The delivering player and the sweepers will benefit from discussing the speed of the ice, particularly for draws.

During Delivery

Once the stone is moving, constant communication should take place between the sweepers and the skip.

The sweepers will be responsible for judging the weight of the stone and will regularly communicate their estimation to the skip. Various codes exist to describe the weight of the stone.

The skip is responsible for judging the stone's course and should regularly inform the sweepers of that course and their need to sweep or not.

At any time, if a player identifies an alternative shot to the one requested, the player shall tell the skip who will then decide to change the strategy or not.

At Any Time During the Game

It is important for team members to communicate all through the game to assess its progress and the strategy to choose thereafter.

Members of the non-delivering team should always observe the opponents' shots and share their impressions with respect to the ice (speed and curl).

After the Game

Once the game has ended, a curling team will generally share feedback on the game. The game's good and bad shots are discussed. New ways of improving can be identified for the next games.

Another Look at Sliding and Delivery

Week 14 • Sliding – Traps to Avoid

Trap 1: Position of the Foot in the Hack

We sometimes note that the foot is always at the same place in the hack. Yet, a foot set higher in the hack will generate more thrust than a foot covering the entire hack. It is therefore recommended to place the toe 2-6 cm from the end of the hack. The foot's position in the hack varies depending on the type of shot requested.

Trap 2: Position of the Stone Before Sliding

A player often places the stone a little to the side of the body. In doing so during the slide, delivery is often directed outside the target. The arm holding the stone should be in front of the body, comfortably extended, the elbow in front of the sternum.

Trap 3: Position of the Torso

We often note that when in a squat position, the player tends to bend towards the front. This makes it difficult to keep one's balance while sliding. The position in the hack should be stable and comfortable. When the hips are raised, the back becomes parallel to the ice, which helps to keep one's balance.

Trap 4: Shifting One's Gaze

A current problem for beginners is to properly aim for the target, i.e. the skip's broom. When the player looks at the ice or the stone, his or her start position may be a bit too forward. Often, the player looks at the stone or the ice, making it appear as if he or she has achieved better stability. But this is just an impression... By keeping the head straight and eyes on the skip's broom, it is easier to remain balanced when sliding. Furthermore, the chances of the stone deviating are diminished.

Trap 5: Pressing Down on the Stone

A player pressing down on the stone must work on his or her balance while sliding and review the delivery steps. Pressing down on the stone slows it down, and to compensate for the lack of speed, the player might push the stone, thus changing its direction.

Trap 6: Extension of Rear Leg

A poor extension of the rear leg may cause negative effects on the slide. To begin with, the thrust might not be powerful enough, and when sliding, too much weight may be put on the rear leg causing an unwanted deceleration. Wrong positioning of the rear leg may also cause the slide to deviate, preventing the player from properly aiming for the target.

Depending on flexibility, players should try to extend the rear leg as much as possible and maintain the extension all through the slide.

Trap 7: Hasten the Forward Motion

It is important to maintain good rhythm all through the steps of delivery. Players sometimes hasten the forward motion especially when attempting a take-out. The stone and the sliding foot move forward at the same time, which may cause imbalance as the foot may not be correctly positioned. It is important to remember the various steps of delivery and always respect the right sequence of motion, regardless of the attempted delivery.

Trap 8: Vision of the Dominant Eye

We sometimes get the impression of always missing the target by a few inches even though we are convinced that the aim and release of the stone were correct. This might be due to an optic effect relating to the positioning of the eyes with regards to the stone.

To avoid this trap, the player should identify his or her dominant eye and make a few positioning adjustments either in the hack or in the slide (eyes against stone). Through trial and error, the player will quickly find the right position to effectively reach the target.

Week 15 • Rotation and Release of the Stone – Traps to Avoid

Trap 1: The Grip

Players often do not have the right grip. A grip that is too firm is to be avoided. The palm of the hand should not touch the handle and players should pay attention to the position of the fingers. Also, the wrist should be in and kept high.

Trap 2: Position of the Handle (clockwise or counter-clockwise)

Beginners are often confused with the rotation requested by the skip. If in doubt, do not hesitate to ask for details. The player should place the handle in a 10 o'clock or 2 o'clock position according to the skip's request. We sometimes see a handle at 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock, which adversely affects a good release.

Trap 3: Position of the Elbow

When sliding, it is important to keep the arm extended forward. The player's elbow often tends to be out, which will cause the stone to deviate.

Trap 4: The Moment of Release

The release of the stone should be initiated during the slide before the player starts to lose momentum. Less than a meter away from release, the player rotates the stone back to a 12 o'clock position. The player should feel he or she has control of the stone without having to push it for lack of speed. If you press down on the stone, it will be very difficult to release it at the right moment.

Trap 5: Release While Pushing or Giving a Spinning Effect

Delivery problems are often related to a lack of balance when sliding. Players press down on the stone, which slows it down, and then push with the arm in the hope this will do the trick. Players should then work on their balance.

A spinning effect may be avoided if you remember to keep the fingers in the same position until the moment of release and to never use the wrist. Upon release, the hand is open in a fluid and non-jerky fashion.

Different Shots and Signals

Week 16 • Different Shots and Signals

Different Shots

To execute a strategy, the skip will call for different shots. The different shots are mainly defined by the requested weight.

The three main categories of shots are:

- **Guards**
- **Draws**
- **Take-outs**

Guards

Generally, the goal is to place a stone that will come to rest between the hog line and the house. Players aim to place a stone that will ultimately be circumvented, or to protect one or more stones already well positioned. With the Five Rock Rule (FGZ), this type of shot is often used at the beginning of an end.

Draws

Draws are mainly used to position stones in specific areas of the playing surface. These shots are precise, they require good control and the right weight.

Different Types of Draws:

In the house	A stone that will come to rest in a specific area determined by the skip. Examples: button, tee line, 4 foot circle, 8 foot circle, etc.
Biter	Only part of the stone will touch the house (coloured circle).
Come-around	By curling, the delivered stone will come-around one or more stationary stones and hide behind them.
Freeze	Type of draw where the goal is to have the stone come to rest glued (or frozen) onto another stone. The ultimate goal is to make it difficult to take this stone out of play.
Raise	Stone that will hit a stationary stone and move it to a specific area.

Take-outs

Take-outs are used to eliminate from play one or more stationary stones.

Depending on the expected result and the layout of the stones in play, the skip will call for take-outs with different weights.

Different Types of Take-outs:

Take-out and stay	The delivered stone will hit a stationary stone to eliminate it from play and will stay close to the area where the contact occurred.
Take-out and roll	The delivered stone will hit a stationary stone to eliminate it from play and will then move to one side or another while remaining in play.
Raise and take-out	The delivered stone will hit a first stationary stone which will move onto another stone and eliminate it from play.
Multiple take-outs	The intent is to eliminate from play more than one opposing stone. The angles and reactions of the stones must be well analysed.

Take-outs Weights

Light	<p>This type of take-out is often used to maintain good control of the delivered stone in terms of its line of delivery and its reaction after impact (stay or roll).</p> <p>The skip will communicate the desired weight by indicating the area where the delivered stone should come to rest as long as it does not come into contact with any obstacle.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Back line• Hack• Bumper <p>The term “control” is also used to identify a take-out with a bit more weight than a “bumper”.</p>
Normal	<p>Normal take-out weight may differ from one player to another depending on skills. This shot requires more weight than light take-outs, but the player must be able to be precise and repeat this type of shot regularly.</p>

	It is important for the skip to know his players' abilities.
Heavy	<p>A heavy take-out will generally be used to move many stones, which requires more energy.</p> <p>This type of shot is also used to make sure the delivered stone travels a good distance after hitting another stone at a certain angle.</p> <p>Example: to liberate the front of the house; To generate a blank end with the last stone.</p>

Signals

The skip communicates instructions verbally and/or with signals concerning the desired shot.

Generally, the signal sequence will include three steps:

- 1) the expected reaction of the delivered stone and of the displaced stationary stones;
- 2) the weight of the requested shot in the case of take-outs;
- 3) the line of delivery and the desired effect.

Expected Reaction

The skip indicates, first with the broom, the expected reaction of the stones.

Draws

With the broom, the skip indicates the area where he or she would like the stone to come to rest.

In the case of a raise, the skip will indicate, with the broom, the stone to be moved and the area where it should end up.

In the case of a freeze, the skip will place the broom beside the stationary stone on which you want to freeze.

Take-outs

With the broom, the skip indicates the stone(s) to be eliminated from play and the area where the first contact should be made, as well as the expected reaction of the delivered stone after contact (stay or roll to one side or another).

Weight at Delivery

The weight of the desired take-out may be communicated in different ways:

- Verbally
- For light take-outs, by pointing to certain areas of play with the broom: back line, hack, bumper, etc.
- By tapping a part of the body with your hand. The higher the body part, the higher is the weight required. Examples: the ankle for hack weight, the chest for normal weight and the head for heavy weight.

Line of Delivery and Desired Effect

Ultimately, the skip positions the broom head on the ice to indicate the line of delivery and by lifting an arm, identifies which rotation to apply.

- Right arm: clockwise rotation. Left to right effect.
- Left arm: counter-clockwise rotation. Right to left effect.

It is important that all members of the team know the signals used by the skip. In case of doubt, do not hesitate to verbally confirm your understanding.



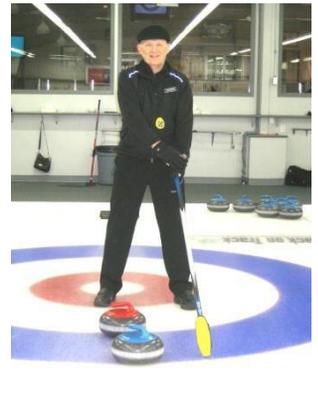
**Figure 11- Signal:
Draw**



**Figure 12 - Signal:
Clockwise rotation of
the stone**



**Figure 13 - Signal:
Counter-clockwise
rotation of the stone**



**Figure 14 - Signal: Take-
out**

Timing

Week 17 • Timing

One of the important features of curling is the sweepers' capacity to quickly judge the weight of the delivered stone and the possible area where it will come to rest. Sweepers shall then communicate their evaluation to the skip and sweep as needed. Timing is one of the techniques used to evaluate the weight of a moving stone.

Timing:

- Measure the time elapsed before the stone travels a fixed distance between two points
- Use benchmarks in the house close to the area where the player starts delivery (ex. back line and tee line, back line and hog line)
- For the same distance, the shorter is the recorded time, the heavier is the weight and the greater is the distance travelled.

Timing Methods:

- With a stop-watch
- By counting in your head
- Any other personal method used by a player

A Few Reasons Why Players Should Time:

- For the sweepers: quickly judge the weight of the stone, communicate the information to the skip and sweep as needed
- For the delivering player: better evaluate the required weight
- For the sweepers and the skip: better judge the weight of the stone throughout the game
- For all players: compare the speed of your club's ice to that of other clubs

Features to Consider:

- It is useful to exercise judgment regarding the weight of the stone before using a stop-watch
- At the beginning of a game, the ice may be frosty because the pebbles are fresh, therefore the ice is slower
- The pebbles are progressively polished due to sweeping and the ice becomes faster
- If no stone has been delivered in a certain area, the surface will be slower even though you are playing a second end

- The center of the ice always becomes fast because it is used more frequently for delivery and sweeping, but at the end of a game, this area should also be monitored because the stone may come to rest more quickly since the pebbles are worn
- Sweepers are responsible for judging the weight of the stone

Example: Timing between the back line and the hog line:

- The delivering player initiates his or her delivery
- When the stone in the player's hand touches the back line, sweepers activate their stop-watches
- When the stone touches the hog line (at the delivery end), sweepers stop their stop-watches
- Depending on the time elapsed, sweepers can determine the weight of the stone

Elapsed Time Example:	From the back line to the hog line
	3.5 sec. = draw
	3.7 sec. = guard
	3.3 sec. = back line
	3.9 sec. = sweep!

Strategies

Week 18 – Strategies

Strategies – General Principles

One of the important aspects of curling is essentially the strategy chosen by the skip and his or her team. Strategy is a series of decisions and shots made to reach a goal. A curling team will generally opt for a general game plan, but the strategy shall be adapted to each end based on the results achieved.

Strategies can be divided into two general categories:

Offensive

The team will attempt to count points by putting many stones in play. The use of guards, come-around draws, freezes or raises will be preferred. The Five Rock Rule is very useful for teams with this type of strategy.

Although this type of strategy can bring you vital points, it also comprises a certain level of risk that needs to be evaluated since the opponents may also profit from the stones in play.

Defensive

The team will attempt to limit as much as possible the chances for the opponents to count points. Take-outs or unprotected draws in the house will therefore be privileged to keep the game as open as possible.

Strategies – Natural Concepts

To master the various curling strategies and to know how to use them requires experience. However, certain concepts are developed quite naturally.

For example:

- At the beginning of the game: caution
- With the last stone: use this advantage to count points
- Without the last stone: steal the point by complicating the opponent's task on the last delivery
- In the lead: protect or accentuate the lead
- Behind: catch up to your opponent

Strategies – Influencing Factors

Curling strategies are numerous and complex and depend on many factors:

Strengths and weaknesses of both teams	Players' capacity to adequately execute draws or take-outs.
Whether the team has the last stone or not (hammer)	The team with the hammer will attempt to count at least two points whereas the team without the hammer will try to steal or limit the opponent to one point.
The course of the game	The beginning of the game allows you to adapt to the ice and to the opponent's reactions. Depending on results obtained, the team will adjust its strategy according to the course of the game.
Scoring	A team in the lead will try to keep it (defensive) whereas a team that is behind will try to count many points (offensive).
Ice conditions	Ice conditions may favour certain types of shots. If there is not much curl, take-outs or raises are favoured. If ice conditions allow for more curl, guards and come-around draws will be favoured.

Basic Strategies

Having the hammer (last rock) or not will greatly influence the strategy to opt for.

Without the Hammer

The team wants to steal points and will try to fill the front and center of the house. The goal is to make it difficult for the other team by not leaving an easy shot for the last rock.

Giving one point to the opposing team when you do not have the hammer is in fact not a failure.

With the Hammer

The team wants to count numerous points. At the beginning of the end, the team will try to consolidate one or more points before using the advantage of the last rock to count an additional point. They will also try to leave openings for the last rock.

Here are a few guidelines concerning the various strategies to choose from at the beginning of an end:

Without the hammer – Offensive Strategy

Place the first stone in the Free Guard Zone in front of the center of the house. The goal is to use this guard to hide behind in the hope of stealing points.

For example, the next stones to consolidate this strategy would be:

- Another guard
- A come-around draw in the house behind the guards
- Raising a stone positioned in front of the house

Without the Hammer – Defensive Strategy

This option is generally used at the beginning of a game when the ice conditions are unknown or when the team is leading and wants to keep this lead.

The first stone will be in the house. This will incite the opponent to throw take-outs and therefore adopt a defensive style of play.

Depending on the opponent's reaction, the team without the hammer will continue with take-outs or draws in the house. The goal is to not let the other team put many stones in play and try to count numerous points.

With the hammer – Offensive Strategy

If the opposing team puts its first stone in front of the house, the team with the hammer choosing an offensive strategy may:

- Come-around the center guard to occupy the center of the house. This option has certain risks such as the fact that the opponent will also try to use the guard to steal points
- Place a corner guard with the intention of coming around it eventually while avoiding blocking the center for the last rock.

If the opposing team puts its first stone in the house, then an offensive strategy will be preferred:

- Ignore the stone and put up a corner guard
- Freeze to the opponent's stone

The team with the hammer will try to “divide” the house by placing stones on each side of the house. This could lead to counting numerous points.

With the Hammer – Defensive Strategy

Here, the team with the hammer will avoid placing guards and will try to eliminate them whenever possible. The stones will preferably be put in the house, inciting the opponent to execute take-outs.

The team with the hammer will generally decide to count a point or to blank the end on the last rock.

If the opposing team puts its first stone in front of the house:

- Play in the house on the sides
- Try to move the guard without taking it out completely to free the center

If the opposing team puts its first stone in the house:

- Take it out