

Curling Etiquette

The following excerpt is from the Canadian Curling Association Rules of Play:

Curlers' Code of Ethics

- *I will play the game with a spirit of good sportsmanship.*
- *I will conduct myself in an honourable manner both on and off the ice.*
- *I will never knowingly break a rule, but if I do, I will divulge the breach.*
- *I will take no action that could be interpreted as an attempt to intimidate or demean my opponents, teammates or umpires.*
- *I will interpret the rules in an impartial manner, always keeping in mind that the purpose of the rules is to ensure that the game is played in an orderly and fair manner.*
- *I will humbly accept any penalty that the governing body at any level of curling deems appropriate, if I am found in violation of the Code of Ethics or rules of the game*

Let's break this down a bit and give you some specifics.

Starting the game:

- Arrive at the rink at least 10 minutes before your game starts. Be on the ice 5 minutes before the game starts so you can flip the coin to determine who gets last rock in the first end, stretch, and introduce yourself to the opposing team and wish them all a "good game" or "good curling". In pre-Covid times, a handshake was customary. When the clock strikes the game time, the first rock should be delivered.
- In Apollo (and in other leagues) there are rules about teams who do not show up on time. If a team is late by 10 minutes, the late team will relinquish hammer and give up one point; 10 - 20 minutes late will result in another point lost. Any game delayed by more than 20 minutes is deemed to be forfeit by the late team.

Keep the game moving:

If your team consistently only ever plays 6 or 7 ends before the buzzer goes, the slow team is probably you. You need to increase your speed of play. It really comes down to three things:

1. Play MUST start on time.
2. Do what you know you need to do, and count on your teammates to do their parts as well.
3. Be ready to go by the time your opponent's rock comes to rest.

The assumption is that a single end can be completed in under 15 minutes, thus an 8-end game can be completed in 2 hours. To ensure each end is completed in under 15 minutes, all teams should refer to the following:

- When it's Team A's turn to throw, the players from Team B should not be in the area between the backboard and the hog line where Team A is throwing. That area is considered the territory of Team A. As soon as Team A's rock has crossed the first (nearer) hog line, that area now belongs to Team B. They need to get into position and be ready to throw their rock once Team A's rock has come to rest at the other end. All players need to be ready to throw their rock when it's their turn.
- If you're shooting, once you've finished your slide, get up and follow your shot. Use this opportunity to learn from the shot – what is the ice doing? Is it changing as the game progresses? How was your weight? When that shot is done, get over to the side, out of the way, and start working your way to between the hog lines, near or on the sideline.
- When your teammate is throwing, as a sweeper, you should start by standing near the tee-line, but also near the sidelines so you don't impede the thrower's line-of-sight, or their movement when they slide out of the hack. Likewise, if you are a sweeper from the other team (i.e., you just finished sweeping and are heading back to the throwing end of the ice) stay near the edges. Do not walk down the middle of the ice or walk side-by-side with your sweeping partner. Keep the sightlines of the throwing player clear.
- Strategy and decision making is the job of the Skip. When it's the Skip's turn to throw, the Skip and the Third can make decisions. It is not the job of the Lead or Second to get involved in those discussions. Decisions need to be made quickly in order to keep the game going. If these decisions are made by a committee, that slows the game down.
- When it is the Skip's turn to throw, the sweepers should have the hack area ready for the Skip. The rock should be pulled out, cleaned and placed in or near the hack. If the Skip uses a

stabilizer, it should be placed nearby so the Skip can simply get into the hack and throw the rock.

- After the last rock of the end has come to a stop, it is acceptable to start clearing stones that will not be considered in the scoring. In fact, it makes the Third's job easier. Just be sure to not bump or clear any stones that are in the house.
- Stay out of the house while the score is being determined. It is the job of the Thirds to determine the score. Help clear stones from the house after the score is set, and then get ready for the next end. It's also the Third's responsibility to put the score up on the scoreboard.
- At the conclusion of each end, rocks don't need to be put back in numerical order. That takes a long time. Every player should know which rock they are throwing, and that rock can be pulled out at the right time.
- If you are the lead of the team that throws first, do not help to put the rocks back. Find your first rock and begin your pre-throwing routine (get in the hack, clean the rock, etc.).

During the game

- If you break a rule, like burning a rock (touching a moving stone with your broom or foot, for example), own up to it.
- Do not distract the opposition. When they are throwing, stand still and be quiet. Non-throwing Skips should stand still near the back of the house, and not place their broom on the ice, as it could confuse the throwing player.
- Pay attention to the game on your sheet, not the game on the next sheet. There will be time for socializing in the lounge after the game.
- This is a social, recreational league. Keep that in mind if you miss a shot. Displays of poor sportsmanship only reflect poorly on you.

Be kind to the ice

- Clean your shoes before going onto the ice
- Clean brooms over a garbage can so debris doesn't go on the carpet or the ice
- Don't put your hands on the ice, or kneel on the ice, or lay on the ice. Your body heat will melt the ice and create problem areas. Touching the ice while you are moving is OK, but not while you are stationary.
- Keep the ice clean. If you notice any fluff or debris on the ice, pick it up or sweep it off to the side.

- Clean your rock. Turn it over while you're in the hack, meticulously clean the running surface, then sweep away any debris that may be on the ice before setting the rock back down.
- If you notice a moving rock heading toward the hack, stop it before it hits the hack. A moving rock that hits the hack can damage the ice and or the hack.

Completing the game

- If the buzzer sounds, you complete the end you're playing when the buzzer sounds. That becomes the last end, and the game is over. This ensures that the ice crew has time to prepare the ice for the next draw so that they can start on-time. Be aware of what time the buzzer will sound.
- If the score is very lopsided, it is the choice of the team with the lower score to concede the game prior to completing all the ends.
- After the completion of the last end, you should put the rocks away in order. Number 1 rock closest to the backboard. All rocks need to be at the end of the ice closest to the lounge area, not left at the far end.
- Congratulate your opposition on a good game. In pre-Covid times it was customary to shake hands.
- The winning team should offer to buy the losing team a round of drinks in the lounge.