

# LEARN TO CURL



**SPRIT**

**DELIVERY**

**SWEEPING**

**STRATEGY**

**WHEELCHAIR**

**STICK**

**BASIC RULES**



**USA Curling™**  
dare to curl

# Dare to Curl



Curling in the United States has experienced great growth in the past decade, thanks in great part to TV coverage during the Olympic Winter Games. Membership in the U.S. Curling Association has increased from just over 10,000 in 2002 to nearly 16,000 in 2012.

USA Curling currently boasts 165 member clubs in 40 states. Many of these new curling clubs are termed "arena" clubs, meaning that the clubs are housed at facilities where multiple sports are offered as opposed to a dedicated curling rink. Having existing curling arena owners embrace curling has been another significant factor in the growth of curling in the U.S. as it brought the sport to many warmer climates in southern states where curling never was played before, including South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Texas, and Arizona, just to name a few.

## Some Fun Facts about Curling:

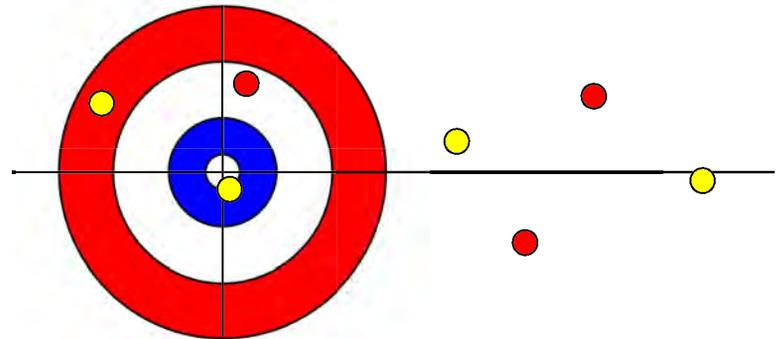
- It is generally agreed that curling was developed in Scotland in the 16th century on frozen marshes
- Curling was first an Olympic medal sport in 1924, but did not obtain full medal status again until 1998
- Curling is played in 48 countries worldwide. Canada leads the way with around 1 million active curlers
- The modern curling stone is round, made of granite, and weighs about 42 pounds
- The first known U.S. curling clubs were located in New York City, Detroit, Milwaukee, and Portage, Wis.
- Sweeping can help a stone slide up to an additional 15 feet
- On average, an athlete can walk up to 2 miles in an 8-end game



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## **GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AND HONORABLE CONDUCT**

Curling is a game of skill and tradition. The spirit of the game demands good sportsmanship and honorable conduct. This spirit should influence both the interpretation and application of the rules and the conduct of all participants on and off the ice. Curlers play to win, but never to humble their opponents. A true curler would prefer to lose rather than win unfairly. A curler should never attempt to distract an opponent or otherwise prevent someone from playing his or her best. No curler deliberately breaks a rule of the game or any of its traditions. If a curler inadvertently breaks a rule, he or she should immediately divulge the breach.



## Curling Etiquette

- **Start with a handshake.** At the beginning of each game, greet the members of the opposing team with a handshake, tell them your name, and wish them “Good Curling!” Make sure everyone knows everyone else.

- **Finish with a handshake.** When the game is over, offer each player a hearty handshake and say, “Good game,” regardless of the outcome. The winning curlers traditionally offer their counterparts some refreshment, with the opponents reciprocating.



- **Compliment a good shot.** One of the nicest curling traditions is that players and spectators compliment a good shot by either side while withholding comment on a poor shot or a competitor’s misfortune.
- **Be courteous.** Avoid distracting movements when a curler is in the hack. When your team is not shooting, keep your distance and stand quietly. Sweepers should stand off to the side between the hog lines. Never walk or run across the ice when an opponent is in the hack. Avoid gathering around the hack at either end of the ice.
- **Be ready.** Get into the hack as soon as your opponent has delivered his/her rock. Keep the game moving—delays detract from the sport. Be prepared to sweep as soon as your teammate releases the rock.
- **Wait for the score.** Vice skips are the players who determine the score for each end. Other players should wait outside the house until the outcome is settled. Once decided, others may help clear the rocks.
- **Keep the ice clean.** The shoes you wear for curling should only be used for curling. Sand and grit from street shoes can ruin the ice surface. Change into a clean pair of flat, rubber-soled shoes that can grip the ice.
- **Practice on a different sheet.** Those who arrive early to throw a few rocks to practice or warm up are encouraged to do so. But, be sure to avoid using the sheet you’ll be playing on.
- **Be on time.** Get to the club in time to change and warm up before the game. When you’re late, you hold up the other players. If you know you’ll be unavoidably late, let your team know in advance.
- **Get a sub.** There may be times when you’re not able to curl as scheduled. It’s your responsibility to get a substitute. Call your skip and give the name of the curler subbing for you.

# Delivery

## KEEPING YOUR EYE ON THE BROOM

Much of the enjoyment of curling comes from delivering a rock consistently well. Once good fundamentals are achieved, any curler will be able to enjoy club-level social games or even top-level competitive play. The degree of competition may change, but the fundamentals remain the same.

A sound curling delivery requires accomplishment in four technical areas: Alignment, Timing, Balance, and Release. The delivery must be straight, the movements properly coordinated, the body in balance, and the release controlled and consistent. As each skill improves, so does accuracy. In addition to the technical aspects, a sound curling delivery requires a delicate “feel” for weight and sound mental skills.



*Patience*

*Focus*

*Timing*

*Success*

# Alignment

Alignment refers to how you set up in the hack. A successful rock will travel down a line of delivery that reaches from the middle of the rock at the delivering end all the way to the skip's broom at the far end. The simplest cause of missed shots is failure to set up properly in the hack.



- Grip your broom a foot or two from the brush head—place the ball of your foot at the back of the hack, and aim it at the broom.



- Square your body's shoulders and hips to the line of delivery.
- Crouch down, staying "square to the broom." Keep your back straight, but relaxed.



- Place your sliding foot flat. The heel of your sliding foot should be as far forward as the toe of your foot in the hack. Body weight is about evenly distributed on both feet.



- Place the broom comfortably under your arm and against your back, with the brush head (brush up) resting on the ice slightly ahead of the sliding foot.

- Place the rock slightly ahead of the sliding foot and centered on an imaginary line between the center of the hack foot and the skip's broom. From this point, everything in the delivery should be either straight back or straight out on this line.

- Grip the rock by placing the middle knuckles of your fingers on the bottom of the handle and wrapping your thumb over the top. The pad of the thumb rests on the side of the handle; the handle is gently pinched between the thumb and the side of the index finger. Grip the stone directly above the middle of the stone. Keep your wrist high and your palm off the handle.



- Turn the rock in toward your body for clockwise turns, and out away from your body for counter-clockwise turns. The position should be at 10:00 or 2:00 depending on the turn.

### Alignment Tips

*Notice that your sliding foot does not start along the line of delivery in the hack position. Some curlers try to force the foot over quickly when coming out of the hack. What they do not realize is that they actually cause a drift problem by trying to correct a situation that would naturally correct itself. The best way for the sliding foot and body to end up along the line of delivery is to simply slide at the broom. By the time the body is extended into its slide position, the sliding foot will be along the line of delivery.*

*Unlike your sliding foot, the rock is always on the line of delivery. It is important to remember that the line of delivery runs from the skip's broom to the middle of the rock, not to the center of the curler's body. It is up to the curler to get the body in behind the rock during the slide. Some curlers' bodies and sliding feet are directly behind the rock; others are running along a line parallel to the stone's line of delivery.*

# Timing

Timing refers to a finely tuned sequence of movements during the delivery. The separate parts are integrated into a continuous, fluid motion essential for accuracy and consistency. There are three major movements during the delivery: Press, Drawback, and Slide.

## **PRESS**

Once you are comfortable with your setup in the hack, the delivery motion begins with a forward press. Simply move the rock ahead a few inches down the line of delivery, basically to initiate motion and get the rock “unstuck” from the ice. Be sure to keep the rock’s “turn” position during the press.



## **DRAWBACK**

Pull the rock straight back on the imaginary line from the hack foot to the skip’s broom. Make sure that the stone does not touch the hack foot. Simultaneously elevate your hips and draw them back behind the hack. At the peak of the drawback, the majority of your body weight has shifted to the hack foot and the slider foot has moved back to a point where the toe is about even with the heel of the hack

foot. Your shoulders remain square to the skip’s broom and the rock’s turn position is held at either 2 or 10 o’clock.

## **SLIDE**

The transition from the drawback to the forward slide involves a significant weight transfer as your hack foot pushes out of the hack. Forward movement is initiated by the rock, followed closely by the sliding foot. Your hack foot thrusts you forward and your body weight shifts almost entirely onto your sliding foot during the slide. Your hack leg trails directly behind your body. By keeping the timing and movement controlled as the sliding foot gets centered, one fluid motion is created. Your sliding foot position is the key to balance.

## **Timing Tips**

*Many curlers kick out of the hack as soon as the forward slide begins. Leg drive should begin after the rock and your sliding foot have started forward so that body weight can be shifted smoothly from hack leg to sliding foot. To improve leg drive timing, practice delivering without the rock. Allow the sliding foot to move in gradually. As body weight is shifted to the sliding foot, initiate leg drive. Delivering without a rock is also a good way to check to see if your delivery is balanced.*

# Release

The rock is released during the last few feet of the delivery. Until that time, the throwing arm remains slightly bent and the position of the rock handle is still turned as it was



during setup. Using the grip established at setup, turn the handle from the turned position to 12:00 as you simultaneously extend your arm. Release the rock cleanly and follow through so that your hand finishes in the “handshake” position. The rock should rotate about two-and-a-half to three times during a draw shot.

## Release Tips

*The point of release should follow completion of timing and balance. A release is too early if it occurs simultaneously with, or prior to, achieving a balanced position over the sliding foot. Too late of a release point will present more opportunities to inadvertently take the rock off line, or crowd the hog line. Establishing a comfortable release point greatly increases consistency.*

*Take-outs will generally be released earlier than draws. A draw shot released at the top of the house will travel a different path and will have more time to curl than a rock released near the hog line. If the release point varies too dramatically from one shot to the next—or one curler to the next—the skip will have a tougher job reading the ice. The same is true for rock rotation. A more rapidly rotating rock will travel a straighter path. A slow turning rock (if it doesn't “lose its handle”) will tend to curl more. Consistent rotation makes it easier for the skip to read the ice.*

# Strategy

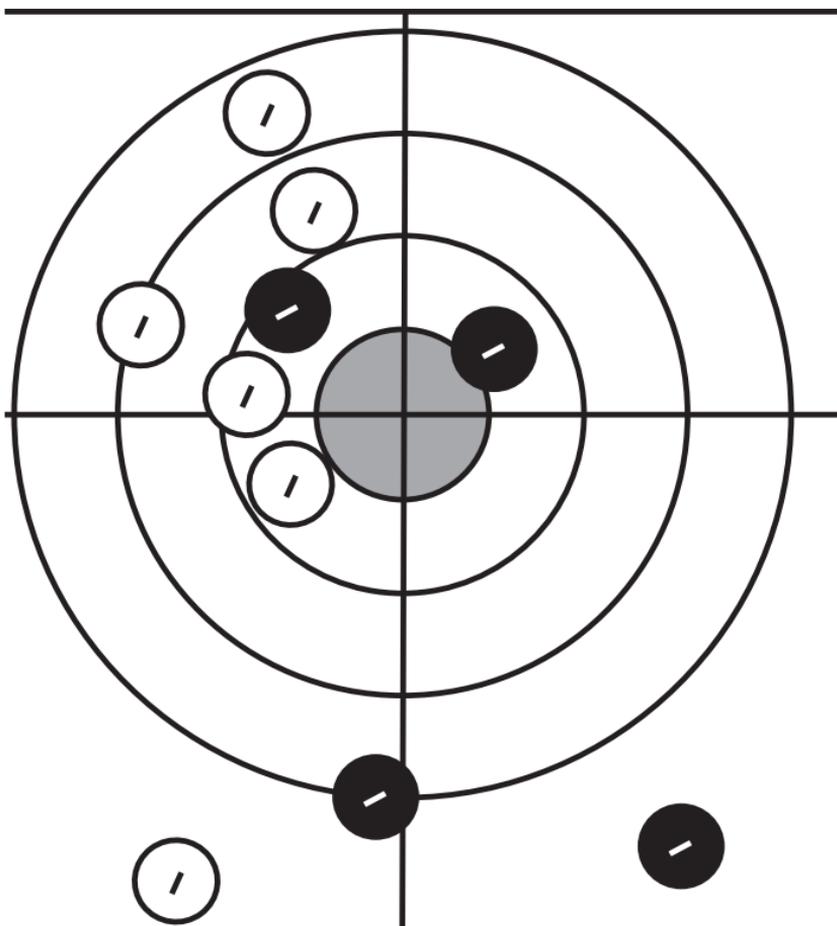
Strategy is the approach a team takes to curling, either on a specific shot, during a game, or over an entire season. Whatever the circumstance, have a plan and attempt to implement it. It is not enough to “play the situation.” Have a game plan and be patient—but also be flexible, as teams are often faced with having to change tactics.

## Styles of Play

The **draw game** is characterized by offensive or aggressive play. Guards, raises, come-arounds, and freezes are all designed to score more than one point or to steal. The shots required are generally more difficult and riskier, requiring more finesse. Strategy becomes more complicated as more rocks are in play.

The **take-out game** is a defensive style of play in which the house is kept free of opposition rocks and the front is kept as open as possible. Conservative play is designed to keep the game close, hold a lead, or keep the opposition to one point when they have the hammer. As a result of few rocks being in play, most shots are relatively simple.





## *Types of Shots*

There are two basic shots in curling—a **draw** and a **take-out**. A draw stops in front of or in the house. A take-out involves hitting and removing another rock from play.

There are several variations on these two basic shots:

- **Guard.** A draw typically between the hogline and the house to prevent the opposition from hitting a rock in the house.

- **Come-around.** A draw that curls around a guard into the house.

- **Freeze.** A draw that finishes immediately in front of another rock.

- **Raise.** A draw shot that raises another rock into the house or a take-out that promotes a stone into another rock in an attempt to remove it from play.

- **Hit and Stick.** A take-out that remains very close to the position of the removed rock.

- **Hit and Roll.** A take-out that rolls some distance from the removed rock, often behind a guard.

# Strategic Factors

There are a number of factors to consider when formulating strategy—both on the ice and off. Make sure all team members know these factors going into every situation.

## **ATTITUDE**

Your team's attitude toward the game can influence strategy. If they prefer a cautious approach, you may opt for a take-out game leaving few rocks in play.

## **ABILITY**

Make an objective analysis of each team member's ability to draw, take-out, and sweep before your team formulates an overall strategy. Attempt to force situations that accentuate your strengths.

## **YOUR OPPONENT**

If your opponent prefers shooting take-outs to draws, set up situations calling for draws. If your opponent has a tendency to flip out-turn take-outs wide, try to exploit it.

## **THE FREE GUARD ZONE**

The Free Guard Zone (FGZ), the area in front of the house, emphasizes the importance of a game plan more than any other factor. Simply put, if a lead's rock is in the FGZ, an opposing lead cannot remove it from play until the second is shooting. Thus, the position of lead rocks will dictate play. If the rocks are not placed properly, the end will develop largely on situational execution.

## **THE END**

Early in the game, it is important to keep the score close as you build your team's confidence. The early ends are generally played defensively. As the game progresses, a number of interesting and complex strategy situations will arise. Keep your game plan in mind, but be prepared to be flexible.

During the later ends, teams will have their greatest opportunity to take control of the game. By this time, you should know the ice and the opposition's ability. Implement the tactics that play to your team's strengths and your opponent's weaknesses. If you have a comfortable lead, play your rocks into (or even through) the house. Remove opposition rocks in front of the house as soon as possible. If you are behind, use the Free Guard Zone to your advantage and get as many rocks in play as possible.

The last end of a close game provides teams with their greatest strategic challenges. If they have a narrow lead, teams without the last rock advantage (the "hammer") will be faced with some interesting choices as the end unfolds. The same is true for teams with the hammer that are trailing by one. Everyone on the team should know what the objective is—to steal, to win, or to play for the extra end.

## THE HAMMER

The last rock advantage gives you the opportunity to become more aggressive, especially after the first few ends. Skips will attempt to implement a strategy that will result in scoring more than one point.

Without the hammer, play tends to be more conservative. Skips will try to limit the opposition to scoring only one point.

## ICE CONDITIONS

Strategies to deal with various types of ice include:

- On heavy ice, draw rocks into the house. Let your opponent try the upper-weight take-outs.
- On fast ice, establish your team's draw weight as soon as possible and keep take-outs on the quiet side. Get ready for a lot of sweeping.
- On swingy ice, take-outs are more difficult because weight and line of delivery are critical. An aggressive style of play is called for. Get your rocks in play and let your opponent shoot at them.
- On straight ice, a take-out game is encouraged. Offense must be generated with freezes and raises.

# Rock Placement

## THE SCORE

If your team trails by more than two points late in the game, you need rocks in play. Go to the draw game. If you lead by three or more, your objective is no longer scoring multiple points, but preventing the opposition from scoring a big end. With that in mind, keep it clean. With fewer rocks in play, you are less likely to give up more than one point in an end. When deciding where to place rocks, the most important strategic factors are the Free Guard Zone, the score, the end, and who has the hammer. The team without the hammer will tend to place rocks toward the middle of the sheet to control access to the four-foot. The team with the hammer will tend to place rocks away from the middle of the sheet to keep access to the four-foot open and create opportunities to score multiple points by "splitting the house."

Conservative strategy largely ignores the FGZ and lead rocks are placed in the house. This is often done early in the game, or when your team leads by more than two points. Aggressive strategy utilizes the FGZ, and lead rocks are placed in front of the house. This is often done once lead players have established their draw weight or when your team trails by more than two points. It's important to remember that each team's strategy is aimed at both placing rocks where they want them and preventing their opponent from doing the same.

# Sweeping

Curling ice is swept in front of a moving rock. Strong, effective sweeping can significantly affect the distance a rock travels on a draw shot. Good sweeping can make a stone travel an extra ten feet or more. Sweeping can also keep a take-out traveling on a straighter path. Sweeping is what makes curling a team sport, and is often the difference between winning and losing.



## Sweeping Rules

- Sweepers must keep clear of the rock at all times. A sweeper who touches a rock with the broom has “burned” the rock, and the sweeper must remove it from play.
- A team may sweep its rocks at any time.
- Behind the tee line, only one player from the playing team may sweep a rock.
- The opposing skip or acting skip may also sweep an opponent’s rock behind the tee line.
- The sweeping motion is in a side-to-side direction (it need not cover the entire width of the stone), deposits no debris in front of a moving stone, and finishes to either side of the stone.

# Effectiveness

Sweeping effectiveness is a function of three elements: coverage, speed, and pressure.

## **BODY POSITION & COVERAGE**

Sweepers should position themselves behind the back line and to the outside of the sheet before the shooter begins the delivery; ideally, one sweeper is on one side and one is on the other. This position promotes pre-shot communications with the shooter and minimizes contact between sweepers. It also puts sweepers in the position to sweep immediately, if necessary. Efficient sweepers pay attention to the rock's running path. Only a portion of the rock—the five-inch running edge—is actually in contact with the ice. Any excessive movement of the broom outside of the rock's path is wasted energy. Visualize which area of the ice the rock will travel, then make sure your sweeping motion covers that area. A brush head that swivels into a position perpendicular to the rock is most effective.

## **SPEED AND PRESSURE**

Broom speed and pressure create friction and warm the ice, thereby, affecting the ice surface. This change in ice condition impacts both the speed and the curl of a stone. Focus on putting as much pressure as possible on the broom and keep your body as erect as possible with all of your upper body weight being applied down the shaft of the broom and onto the ice. Combining this pressure with maximum side-to-side sweeping velocity will produce maximum friction and positive results.

# Communication

## **SWEEPING TIPS**

- *Look up when sweeping. Be aware of where you are and what the situation is at all times.*
- *Removing your slider and putting a gripper over your sliding foot while sweeping is safer and can be more effective since it promotes better balance and allows the sweeper to apply more pressure.*
- *Sweep constantly to keep the ice clean but only apply pressure when necessary to make the shot. Stop sweeping completely when the skip calls you off. Also clean the line of delivery before every shot, especially from the hack to just beyond the near hog line.*
  - *Stay with the rock until it comes to a complete stop.*
  - *Be prepared for alternate shot calls from the skip.*

# Judgment

Effectiveness is a crucial component of sweeping, but it is even more important to be able to judge when to sweep. After all, sweeping a draw shot right through the house does not make a person a capable sweeper. Those who know when to sweep are valuable members of a team. The skip is typically the person who calls for sweeping on takeouts since they are in the best position to read the line of the shot (wide or narrow) and the amount of curl that is taking place. Shooters may also assist in calling for sweeping for the line.

Sweepers are usually in the best position to judge the speed or weight of a draw and to know if a shot is too light and should, therefore, be swept. The shooter should communicate their “feel” of the shot upon release. As a rock nears the house, the skip’s position as a judge of weight improves and they also become able to call for sweeping on draw shots. Sweepers must be assertive and should not wait for sweeping instructions on draw shots.

Judge the weight (speed) of the rock as early as possible, in some cases before it is released. Study all shots—your team’s and your opponent’s—so you’ll get a better “feel” for the ice.

A sweeper must observe the distance the rock needs to travel, the speed of the rock, and—most importantly—the rate at which the rock is slowing down. Sweepers have the best perspective on the weight of the stone. It is their responsibility to judge weight and sweep draws to the spot the skip called for.

## **TIMING ROCKS**

An important aid in developing weight control is using a stopwatch during the game to time shots. A common method of timing rocks is to start the stopwatch at the moment the rock crosses the near hog-line and let it run until the rock comes to rest at the far tee-line. The longer it takes for the rock to reach its destination, the keener the ice is and less weight is needed. On the other hand, the less time it takes for the shot to get there, the heavier the ice, and the rock will have to be thrown harder. Timing shots gives all team members a shared idea of draw weight. Typical times range from 22 to 24 seconds.

An alternative method—called interval timing—gives feedback for a shot in progress. It measures the time from the rock passing over the near back-line to the near hog-line. The shorter the time interval, the faster the rock is traveling, and sweeping may not be required. Conversely, the longer the time interval, the slower the rock is traveling, and sweeping may be required. Typical times range from 2.7 to 4.0 seconds.

Timing take-outs during practice, typically from hog-line to hog-line, can also be beneficial. If all team members are able to throw similar take-out weights, a skip’s job is much easier.

Sweepers and the skip should maintain communication on every shot. Use a few routine words to cover the types of sweep calls (hurry, whoa, yes, no, line, room, light, heavy, etc.). Know what shot is called and where the broom is placed. Skips are usually very good at letting sweepers know if the rock needs to be swept for line. Likewise, sweepers should call out the weight of the shot upon release and as it progresses down the ice.



# Wheelchair

Organized wheelchair curling in the United States began in the 1990s at the Granite Curling Club in Seattle. The sport relies upon skill and strategy with minor rules modifications from the original sport. Wheelchair curling athletes can play in leagues or compete to represent the United States at the World Wheelchair Championships and the Paralympic Winter Games. While many clubs are wheelchair functional, others still need modifications on and off the ice to become wheelchair accessible.

## Equipment & Rules

**Wheelchair:** Each curler must supply his or her own wheelchair with a functional set of wheel locks. The locks are critical for the safe delivery of the rock. The wheels and footrests need to be wiped clean prior to going on the ice.

**Seatbelt:** For some curlers a seat belt may be necessary to anchor the curler's upper body in the chair. A 3-inch wide regular tie-down seatbelt is best. The curler may be the best judge in determining the necessity of a seat belt.

**Wheels:** In addition to cleaning the wheels, it is important to let the wheels cool down before beginning play. Move the wheelchair to the ice surface between the backboard and the back line and let the wheels cool to ice temperature for about five minutes.

**Delivery stick:** Wheelchair curlers should use a delivery stick for throwing the stone. There are several models available. Most wheelchair curlers prefer the buddy system when delivering the stone. However, a rubber throwing mat or wedge also may be used.

**Rules:**

- The WCF rules of play shall apply.
- Each game shall be played over eight ends with an extra end to be played should the teams be tied.
- No sweeping is permitted.
- At the World Wheelchair Curling Championships, teams must be made up of mixed gender.
- Stones must be clearly released from the hand or cue before the stone reaches the nearer hog line.

# Instruction

After you have cleaned the wheels, moved the wheelchairs to the cool-down area, and conducted a brief on-ice orientation of the ice sheet, lines, scoring and basic etiquette, the last step is teaching how to deliver the stone from a wheelchair. There are three types of deliveries that a person in a wheelchair can use:

- The **one-handed delivery over the side** of the wheelchair.
- The **two-handed delivery with the delivery stick** held right in front of the wheelchair.
- The **one-handed delivery with the delivery stick held to the side** of the chair.

**One-handed delivery:** This delivery has the curlers grasping the handle of the rock in their hand while leaning over the side of the wheelchair. Since the arm thrust generates the rock's momentum, this technique is only for the athlete with a long, strong arm and good control of the hand. Only a few wheelchair curlers will have success with this type of delivery; however, it should be demonstrated as an option. Delivery with a stick is the recommended method.

**One-handed delivery with the stick:** In this delivery method, the curler delivers the stone using a delivery stick held in one hand at the side of the wheelchair in a manner similar to the stand up delivery with a stick. Most individuals find the most consistency using this technique. It allows for better line of delivery, better weight control and smoother release of the rock. The delivery with this method is similar to the stand up stick delivery with the exception that the wheelchair curler does not move forward while delivering. Pulling the rock back slightly and pushing it forward generates the momentum or force.

**The two-handed delivery with the stick:** The curler grasps a delivery stick in both hands. The rock is in front of the chair, centered with the curler's body. The delivery is then a two-handed "thrust" of the rock with the delivery stick, imparting the turn at the point of release. This technique may work for those curlers who do not have the strength to use the one-handed delivery. This delivery is constantly changing the angle

between the stick and the ice. It makes a smooth delivery difficult and line of delivery is very inconsistent.

Each curler should try all three delivery techniques to see which best suits his or her physical abilities. The one-handed delivery will usually give the most consistent results.





The "stick" was introduced to allow curlers to deliver the rock without using a sliding delivery. The stick is a term used to identify any device that extends from the curler's hand to the rock while delivering. Sound curling delivery with the stick requires correct aim and "weight," just like the sliding delivery.

### **RULES**

- Right-handed players shall play from the hack on the left of the center line, and left-handed players from the hack on the right of the center line.
- The delivery stick may not be used in any USCA national championship or any qualifying event, except wheelchair events.
- Players choosing to deliver with a delivery stick must use that device for the delivery of all their stones during the entire game.
- The stone must be delivered along a straight line from the hack to the intended target and must be clearly released from the delivery stick before the stone has reached the hogline at the delivering end.
- A delivery stick shall not convey any mechanical advantage other than acting as an extension of the arm/hand.

### **ALIGNMENT**

Alignment refers to how you set up in the hack. Think of the stick as an extension of your arm and deliver the stone with a straight release like the sliding delivery.

- Place foot in hack with shoulders square to the skip's broom. Using the broom in opposite hand for balance is a personal preference; some find it unnecessary.
- Extend the stick straight out from body with arm slightly bent or relaxed.

### **DELIVERY**

The delivery is the walk from the hack to the release point, an arm extension to impart additional speed on the stone (if necessary), and putting a turn on the handle. As in sliding, the shooter should attempt to eliminate any side-to-side movements and deliver the stone straight toward the skip's broom. The speed of the stone at the point of delivery is determined by a combination of walking speed plus some amount of arm extension during the last few feet of the delivery. The shooter's walking speed increases slightly for takeouts versus draws but arm extension is also a primary speed generator on "heavy" ice or when shooting a takeout. As is the case for non-stick curlers, the release is critical to shot-making. Care must be taken to impart the turn strictly with the wrist rather than by an arm twist which will cause the rock to be turned off-line rather than continuing to travel straight up the imaginary line from the starting point toward the skip's broom.

## RELEASE

The rock is released during the last few feet of the delivery. Until that time, the throwing arm remains slightly bent with the stick in the 2 o'clock or 10 o'clock position.

### Counter-clockwise turn:

For this turn, align stick to the 2 o'clock position.



**Clockwise turn:** For this turn, align stick to the 10 o'clock position.

**\*Counter-clockwise turn:** At the release point, turn the handle from the 2 o'clock position to 12 o'clock and simultaneously extend the shooting arm and gently roll the wrist counter-clockwise with the hand finishing in the "handshake" position.

**\*Clockwise turn:** At the release point, turn the handle from the 10 o'clock position to 12 o'clock and simultaneously extend the shooting arm and rotate the wrist clockwise with the hand finishing in the "handshake" position.

## WEIGHT CONTROL

Weight control is the key to mastering the use of the stick. Many stick users will say that it is easier to hit the skip's broom using the stick than finding the correct weight, especially draw weight.

### ***Tips:***

- *Move with a continuous fluid forward motion with a smooth release.*
- *Avoid coming to an abrupt stop and then pushing the stone.*
- *Walk more quickly on a takeout to avoid the need for excessive arm extension to generate rock speed, thereby reducing the tendency to push the rock and miss the broom.*



# Important Rules

## **Teams:**

A team is composed of four players. Each player delivers two stones in consecutive order in each end, while alternating with an opponent.

## **Scoring:**

At the completion of an end, 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.

## **Stones:**

- A rock must finish inside the inner edge (closest to the rings) of the hogline to be in play, except when it has hit another rock in play.
- A rock that completely crosses the backline or touches the sideboard or sideline is taken out of play.

## **Delivery:**

- A stone must be clearly released from the hand before it reaches the hogline at the delivering end. If the player fails to do so, the stone is immediately removed from play by the delivering team.
- A stone that has not been released from the player's hand may be returned to the hack and re-delivered as long as it has not reached to the teeline at the delivery end.

## **Free Guard Rule:**

Until four stones have been played (two from each side), stones in the Free Guard Zone (those stones left in the area between the hog and tee lines, excluding the house) may not be removed by an opponent's stone. If the stones are removed, they are replaced to where they were before the shot was thrown, and the opponent's stone is removed from play and cannot be replayed.

## **Measuring:**

- Measurements shall be taken from the button to the nearest part of the stone.
- No physical device may be used in measuring stones until the last rock of the end has come to rest, except to determine if one of the first two stones of an end is in the rings or the Free Guard Zone.
- If there is any doubt between the two opposing skips as to whether one of the first two stones of an end finishes in the Free Guard Zone, then a measuring device may be used to device the matter.

## **Equipment:**

- No player shall cause damage to the ice surface by means of equipment, hand prints, or body prints.
- No player shall use any footwear or equipment that may damage the surface of the ice.
- At the start of the game, each curler must declare which broom or brush he or she will be using for sweeping. Brushes may be exchanged between players on the same team.

**\*\*See [www.usacurl.org](http://www.usacurl.org) for a complete list of rules.\*\***