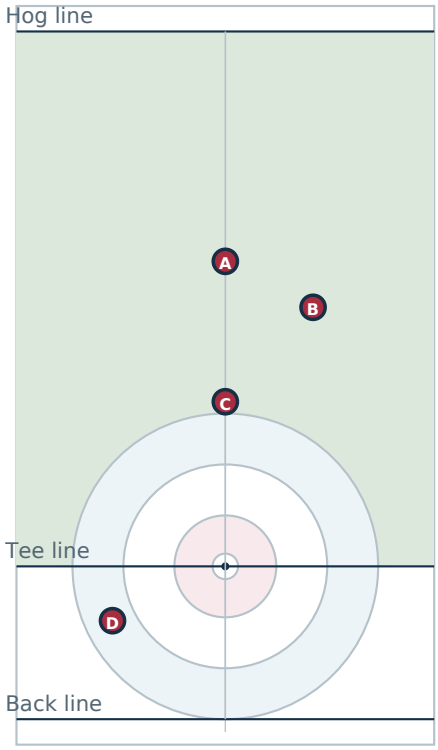
Complex Rules Explained

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A FGZ + no-tick

B FGZ only

C Touches house: not FGZ

D Behind tee: not FGZ

Assume these are opponent stones before delivery 4. The shaded area excludes the house.

Protected stones: FGZ and no-tick

Five-stone protection

For deliveries 1-5 of a four-person end, you cannot send an opponent's free-guard-zone stone out of play, directly or through another stone. Remove the delivered stone; the non-offending team restores every displaced stone. Normal removal is allowed from delivery 6.

Where is the free guard zone?

The FGZ is between the playing-end hog line and tee line, excluding the house. A stone touching the house is a potential counter, not an FGZ guard. A stone still in play on or short of the hog line after hitting an FGZ stone is also treated as in the FGZ.

The extra protection on the center line

During deliveries 1-5, an opponent's FGZ stone touching any part of the center-line marking also has no-tick protection. If it moves off that line or leaves the FGZ while staying in play, the non-offending team chooses: restore all displaced stones and remove the delivered stone, OR accept the whole result. Moving it out of play invokes the FGZ remedy instead.

Mixed doubles uses a different test

During deliveries 1-3, no previously delivered or positioned stone of either color may be removed from play, including stones in the house. A breach means remove the delivered stone and restore displaced stones. Removal is allowed from delivery 4. Positioned stones do not count as deliveries. The World Curling no-tick rule does not apply to mixed doubles or wheelchair curling.

A guard may move legally. FGZ protection prevents removal; no-tick adds a separate restriction for an opponent's center-line guard.

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A moving stone is touched

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The change of procedure is at the playing-end hog line. This sheet is a schematic, not to scale.

First ask: where did it happen, and whose action caused it?

Before the playing-end hog line

Between the delivery-end tee line and the playing-end hog line:
- Touched by its own team or their equipment: that team removes the touched stone immediately.
- Touched by the opposition or affected by an external force: redeliver if it was the delivered stone. If it was another moving stone, its own team places it at its reasonable untouched finishing position.

Inside the playing-end hog line

Let every stone finish moving. The remedy depends on responsibility:
- Its own team caused the touch: the non-offending team chooses (1) remove the touched stone and restore stones displaced after the touch, (2) accept the result, or (3) place all affected stones at their reasonable untouched finishing positions.
- The opposition caused the touch: the non-offending team places affected stones at their reasonable untouched finishing positions. This is not the same three-option menu.
- External force: agree the likely untouched finishing positions. If agreement fails, restore the pre-incident layout and redeliver. If that layout cannot be agreed, replay the end.

Useful distinctions

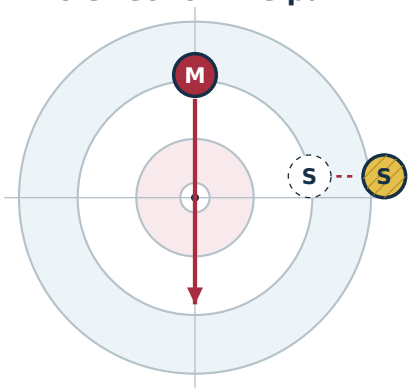
The relevant team is the team that owns the touched stone, which may differ from the delivering team. Causing a touch counts too. A handle re-touch by the deliverer before the delivery-end hog line is not a touched-stone violation; touching granite after the delivery-end tee line is. Release must still occur before the delivery-end hog line.

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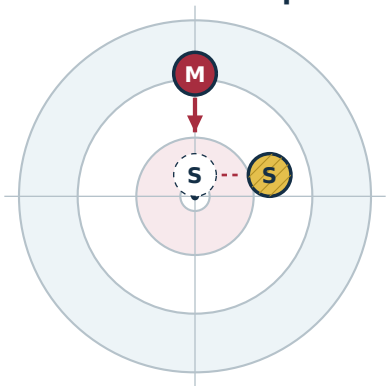
A stationary stone is displaced

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No effect on the path



Would alter the path



M = moving stone. S = stationary stone accidentally moved sideways. Dashed outline = S before the incident.

Was it going to affect the moving shot?

No effect on a moving stone

If a player or their equipment shifts a stationary stone that would not affect a moving stone's outcome, the non-offending team restores its original position. If an external force caused the displacement, the teams agree the original position and restore it.

It would have changed the moving stone's path

If a player or their equipment displaces a stone that would have altered a moving stone's course, let the shot finish. The non-offending team chooses:

1. Accept the final layout.
2. Remove the moving stone whose course would have been altered, and restore stones displaced after the violation.
3. Place all affected stones at the reasonable positions they would have reached without the displacement.

If an external force caused that interference

Let the shot finish and agree the result that would have occurred. If agreement fails, restore the pre-incident layout and redeliver. If that layout cannot be agreed, replay the end.

Two easily missed cases

A stationary stone displaced by a stone rebounding off a divider is restored by the non-delivering team. At the end of an end, keep all potentially counting stones still until the skips or vice-skips agree the score: premature displacement can give the non-offending team the benefit of a possible measurement.

In the second remedy, remove the moving stone whose path was affected. Do not automatically remove the stationary stone that somebody bumped.

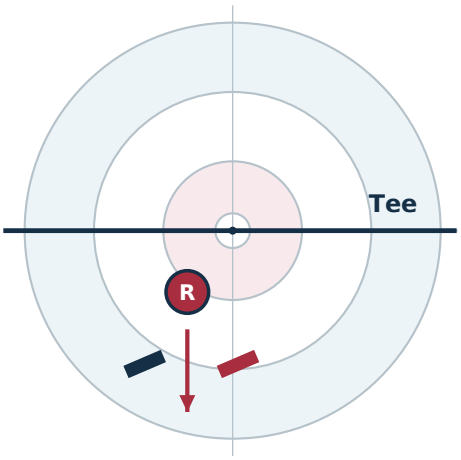
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Who may sweep, and where?

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IN FRONT OF TEE

Own moving stones



BEHIND TEE

One sweeper per team

Sweeping-rights schematic. Broom heads are behind the tee and ahead of the moving stone. It does not prescribe a player’s stance.

Ownership and the tee line both matter.

In front of the playing-end tee line

Any one or more of the delivering team may sweep their stone. When another stone is set in motion, its own team may sweep it here, including when that is the non-delivering team. Do not sweep an opponent's stone in this area. A stationary stone must first be set in motion.

Behind the tee line

Only one player from each team may sweep at a time behind the playing-end tee line. For the delivering team, this can be any player. For the non-delivering four-person team, it must be the skip or vice-skip. A player may start sweeping an opponent's stone once it reaches the tee line; the sweeping itself must be behind that line. The stone's own team has first sweeping privilege, but must not obstruct the opponent.

Technique and remedies

Sweeping may go in any direction and need not cover the whole stone width. Keep the brush head down in front of a moving stone, do not deposit debris, and finish to a side. In officiated play, an observed R8(a) violation while sweeping your own stone first brings a team warning. A later violation in that event gives the opponent a game choice: accept the stone, or remove the delivered stone and restore displaced stones. For rights/position violations under R8(b)-(g), the opponent can accept the result or set affected stones where they would reasonably have finished without the violation.

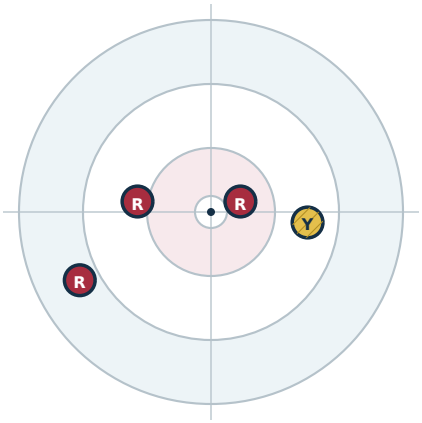
Format note

Mixed doubles: either or both teammates may sweep their own moving stones in front of the tee; the behind-tee restriction still applies. Wheelchair curling has no sweeping. Everyone may clean the surface before the next delivery.

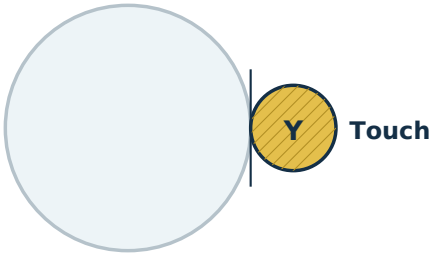
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Scoring and close measures

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RED SCORES 2



Biter edge detail (not to scale): the stone touches the outer house edge. It is eligible to score, but must still beat the nearest opponent stone.

Agree the score before moving any stones.

Count from the center out

At the end of an end, only one team can score: count its stones in or touching the house that are closer to the tee than the opposition's nearest stone. A stone touching the outside edge of the house, a biter, can count. The running surface does not have to be inside the rings. Mixed doubles positioned stones can score too.

When a measure is needed

If visual inspection cannot settle relative distance or whether a stone touches the house, use a measuring device. Distance is from the tee to the nearest part of the stone, not the handle or center. One on-ice player from each team may observe. If stones are too close to the tee to use the instrument, decide visually.

An unresolved equality is a tie

If neither visual inspection nor a measure can separate opposing stones:
- If they determine which team scores, the end is blank.
- If they determine additional points, count only the stones closer than the tied pair.

Example: Red has one clear shot stone; the next red and nearest yellow are equal. Red scores one.

Measurement before the end is limited

Normally, only visual assessment is permitted until the last stone stops. Exceptions: checking whether a stone is in play, and checking FGZ/no-tick status before deliveries 2, 3, 4 or 5. Do not make a tactical closest-to-the-button measurement midway through an end.

A touching stone is eligible to score, not automatically a point. It must still beat the opponent's nearest stone.

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Lines, limits and a calm ruling

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HOG



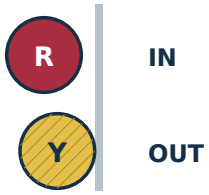
Whole stone beyond the house-side edge. *Unless it hit another stone.

BACK



Still touching the outside edge: in. Completely past it: out.

SIDE



Any touch of a side line or divider means out.

Different lines use different tests.

Playing-end hog line

A delivered stone must stop completely beyond the house-side edge of the hog line. If any part remains over that line, remove it, unless it struck another stone. That collision exception can keep a short stone in play.

Back line and side lines

Back line: remove a stone as soon as it completely crosses the outside edge. A stone still touching that edge has not completely crossed. Side line or divider: any touch means the stone is out immediately. Do not wait for the whole stone to cross.

Delivery-end hog line

The deliverer must clearly release the stone before it reaches the delivery-end hog line. A late-release stone is removed. If it hits other stones before removal, the non-offending team restores those displaced stones.

A four-step club routine

1. Call the incident promptly and honestly.
2. Identify the location, stone ownership and cause.
3. Keep the layout intact; let moving stones stop unless immediate removal is required.
4. Use the correct rule and decision-maker. In officiated play, call the umpire when needed; in club play, consult the league's designated rules lead rather than inventing a compromise.

Line memory aid: hog line = fully through; back line = fully over; side line = any touch. Apply the stated hog-line collision exception.

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Find the right ruling

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Start with the facts

Which stone was moving or stationary? Where did the incident happen? Who owns that stone? Who caused the touch or displacement? Did the incident affect the shot? Those answers select the rule and who decides the remedy.

An early guard moves

Check R6 and R7. Removal and a sideways tick have different tests and, sometimes, different remedies. Mixed doubles uses R17(e), with protection on deliveries 1-3 and no no-tick rule.

A stone is touched or accidentally moved

R9 covers moving stones; R10 covers stationary stones. Last Stone Draws have separate procedures in R9(c) and R10(f). For rebound cases, use R9(d) and R10(e).

A score is disputed

Use R12(b)-(h). A close measure and an external-force displacement are different problems. Do not clear the house before the correct decision.

Sources and scope

HouseCall is an independent learning resource, not a governing-body publication or endorsement. The event rulebook and the official ruling control. Local leagues may adopt different procedures.

Primary rules: World Curling, *The Rules of Curling and Rules of Competition*, 1 September 2026 edition, checked 8 October 2026. Open the official rulebook | Current rules page

Print-friendly source: worldcurling.org/rules/
Read R2-R12 for ordinary play, R14-R15 for wheelchair formats, and R17 for mixed doubles. The current rules page also links the September 2026 Competition Policy & Procedure Manual.

Local play: Confirm your league’s adopted rules, equipment policy, roster/substitute arrangements and tie procedure. This is a learning guide for ordinary ends, not a complete competition manual.

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