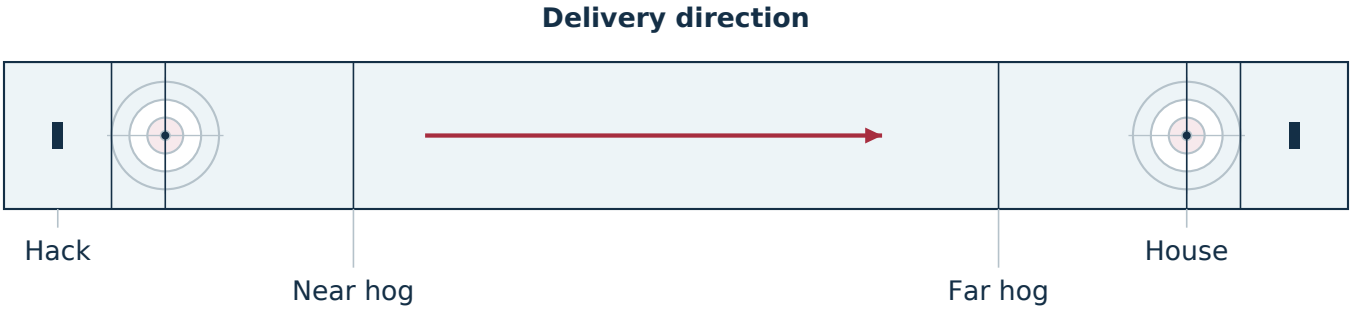
Easy Curling Rules

World Curling baseline: 1 September 2026 | Checked 8 October 2026

Your first four-person game

Send your stones toward the target, called the house. At the end of each round, score with stones closer to the center than your opponents' closest stone.



Simplified overhead sheet. Both ends have a house, tee line, back line and hack.

One end is one round

Two teams alternate deliveries. Each team has eight stones; each player delivers two. After all 16 stones are played, agree on the score. The next end is played toward the other house.

The hammer is the last stone

The team with hammer delivers second, fourth and so on, including the final stone of the end. When a team scores, its opponents get hammer next end. After a blank end in four-person curling, hammer stays with the same team.

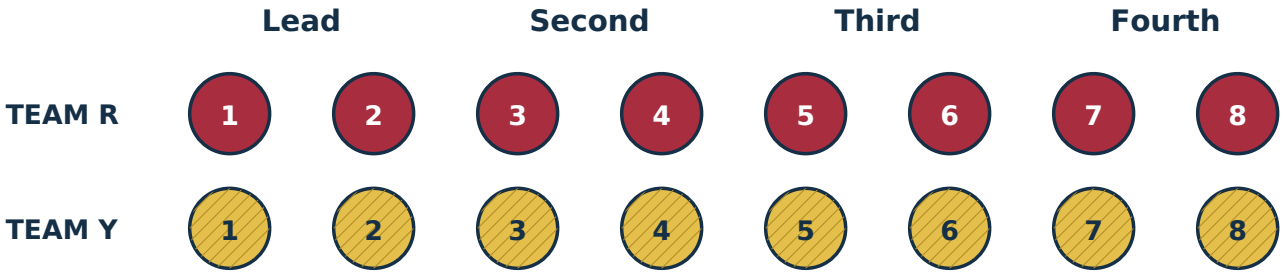
Before you start: Ask your club about game length, first-end hammer, tie-breaking, delivery aids and local rules. This booklet explains the ordinary four-person format; mixed doubles has different rules.

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Four people, one team

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Delivery order and team jobs are related, but they are not the same thing. The skip can play in any delivery position.



Teams alternate: R1, Y1, R2, Y2 ... R8, Y8.

Delivery positions

Lead delivers your team's stones 1 and 2; second delivers 3 and 4; third delivers 5 and 6; fourth delivers 7 and 8. Numbers here mean each team's delivery sequence, not the number on a stone handle.

Skip and vice-skip

The skip directs the team's play and holds the target broom at the playing end. The vice-skip takes charge of the house when the skip delivers. A common club lineup puts the vice third and the skip fourth, but that order is not required.

Deliver, sweep, communicate

The other two players normally sweep. Sweeping influences distance and curl. Learn safe footwork first, listen to the shot call and tell your teammates how fast the stone is traveling. Be ready when your turn comes.

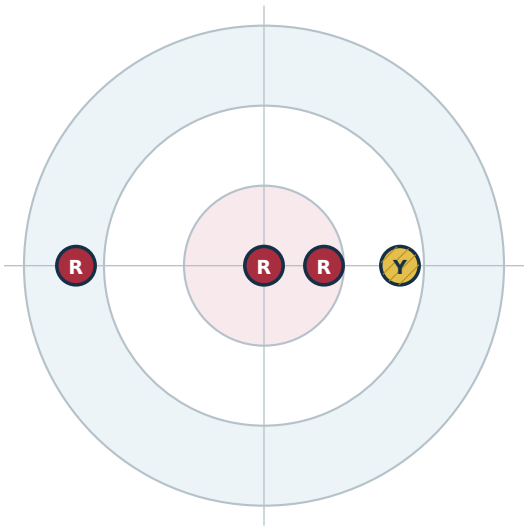
Club tip: Learn everyone's names and agree on simple sweep calls before playing. Ask for an explanation whenever a call is unclear.

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Count the closest stones

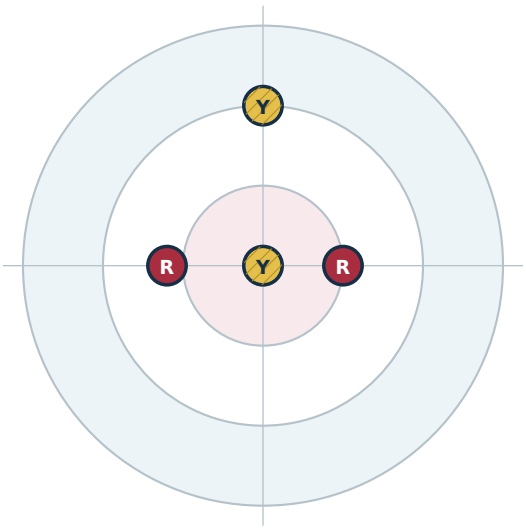
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Only one team can score in an end. Each counting stone is worth one point, wherever it lies in the house.



RED SCORES 2

Two R stones are closer than the nearest Y. The farther R does not count.



YELLOW SCORES 1

The central Y is closest. The farther Y is behind a closer R, so it does not count.

A stone can just touch the house

A stone touching the outside edge of the 12-foot circle can count. This is a biter. The rings have no different point values. Compare the nearest edges of stones to the exact center, called the tee.

Wait before moving anything

The skips or vice-skips agree on the score. If it is too close to call, use the proper measuring device. Do not move stones first. If no stone can score, the end is blank. An unresolved tie for closest also blanks the end.

Try it: In the left diagram, what happens if the nearest Y is closer than the second R? Red scores 1. More stones in the house does not automatically mean more points.

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The rules to remember

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Release before the near hog line

Use the handle. Do not touch the granite after the stone passes the delivery-end tee line. Clearly release the handle before the stone reaches the delivery-end hog line.

Finish beyond the far hog line

A stone must stop completely beyond the inside edge of the playing-end hog line, unless it hit another stone. A stone is out once it completely crosses the back line's outside edge, or immediately if it touches a side line or divider.

Early guards have protection

On the first five deliveries of an end, you cannot remove an opponent's free-guard-zone stone from play. The zone is between the playing-end hog and tee lines, outside the house. The no-tick rule also protects opponent guards touching the center line. Ask your instructor before calling an early takeout.

Own the mistake, keep the ice safe

Tell both teams if you touch a moving stone or move a resting stone. The remedy depends on where, when and who; do not assume every touched stone is removed. Keep shoes and equipment clean. Stay clear of moving stones and of another player's delivery.

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

USA Curling: Introduction to Curling

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