Instructor Study Companion

A practical learning guide for aspiring club learn-to-curl instructors

Prepare to explain the game, plan a welcoming session, notice what a learner needs, and work confidently alongside a qualified club instructor.

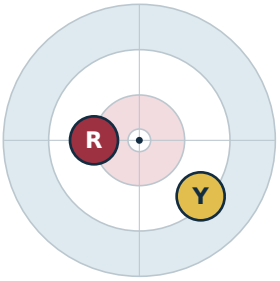
Independent educational companion

This is an independent educational companion, not an official certification course or exam and not a substitute for qualified club instruction. It is not affiliated with or endorsed by USA Curling, Curling Canada, or World Curling. Completing it does not award a credential or authorize anyone to lead a club session.

How to use it

- Work through the explanations and written exercises off the ice.
- Rehearse short teaching segments with a mentor before trying them with new curlers.
- Use the answer key to improve your reasoning, then follow the club's training, supervision, safeguarding, and safety requirements.

For club volunteers, assistant instructors, and curlers taking their first steps into teaching.



Four-person curling is the default throughout. Other formats and delivery methods have their own rules.

Original HouseCall teaching exercises. Official references checked 8 October 2026; see page 16.

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Build your learning route

Use this as preparation for supported practice and official training.

What you should be able to show

- Explain an end and a score without relying on jargon.
- Plan one achievable learning goal and a simple way to check it.
- Describe who supervises each activity and when to stop.
- Give feedback based on an observation rather than a guess about the learner.
- Offer a suitable next step without pressuring someone to try a movement.

A suggested sequence

Read and solve, pages 3-5. Explain the basics aloud and complete the scoring lab. Look up rules you cannot support.

Plan and rehearse, pages 6-11. Walk through your club's arrangements with the session lead. Practice one short explanation and one feedback conversation.

Discuss and reflect, pages 12-15. Answer the scenarios before reading the reasoning. Ask a mentor which parts of a session you are ready to assist with.

Choose formal training, page 16. Verify the provider's current requirements and your club's expectations.

Your starting point

One part of teaching I already feel comfortable with:

One question to take to my session lead or mentor:

Study progress is personal reflection. There is no pass mark, assessment credential, or automatic sign-off.

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Explain the game simply

Keep the first explanation short enough that people can remember it.

A first explanation to rehearse

Two teams take turns sliding stones toward the target, called the house. An end is one round of deliveries. In four-person curling, each player delivers two stones, giving each team eight. When the end is over, compare which stones are closest to the centre. Then play the next end in the other direction. [1]

Explain the score in three steps

- Look only at stones in or touching the house.
- Find the stone nearest the centre. Its team may score.
- Count that team's eligible stones that are nearer than the opponent's nearest stone. Each counts one point; the ring colours do not have different values. [1, 3]

Add only the terms the activity needs

Hammer: the last delivery of an end. After a team scores, the other team has hammer next end. A blank end (no points scored) keeps the four-person delivery order. [1]

Draw: a shot intended to stop in a chosen area. **Guard:** a stone used to protect an approach. **Takeout:** a shot intended to remove a stone. **Weight:** the speed given to the stone. [3]

Check understanding with a task

Instead of asking, "Does that make sense?", ask a learner to point to a stone that could count. Have another person explain why a stone farther out does not count. Invite a question before adding more detail.

Teaching exercise: Explain an end in your own words. Which two terms can you leave until later?

Basics: [1] World Curling, What is curling; [3] USA Curling, Intro to Curling. Links on page 16.

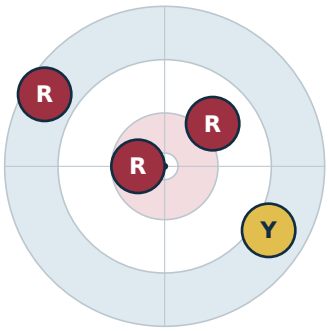
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Scoring lab

Use the pictures to rehearse an explanation. Answers and reasoning are on page 13.

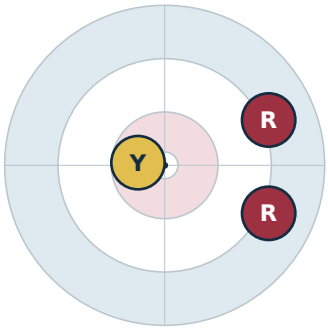
R and Y identify the teams as well as their colours. Diagrams are schematic; judge the clear illustrated ordering, not a measurement from this page. All stones are at rest after the final delivery.

A



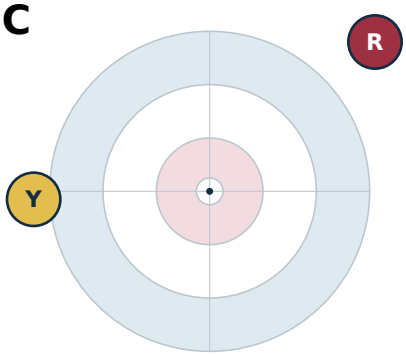
A Which team scores, and how many? Explain where you stop counting.

B



B A learner says red wins because it has more stones in the house. What would you say?

C



C Yellow overlaps the outer edge; red is entirely outside. Does yellow count? Does the outer ring change its value?

Original diagrams applying the scoring principles in [1] and [3]. Close real positions require the club's measuring procedure.

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Know when to check a rule

Teach the essentials and model how to resolve uncertainty.

Line checks worth learning accurately

For standard hand delivery, release before the delivery-end hog line. At the playing end, a stone must finish wholly beyond the inside edge of the hog line, unless it has struck another stone. A stone is out when wholly beyond the outside edge of the back line, or when touching a sideline or divider. [2: R2, R5]

Recognize the rules that need a closer look

The five-rock rule protects opponents' free guards from removal before stone six. No-tick protection concerns opponents' centre-line free guards during that same period; it does not apply in mixed doubles or wheelchair curling. Learn the definitions, exceptions, and remedies from the adopted rulebook. [2: R6-R7]

Use a calm uncertainty routine

- Pause before anyone resets the stones. Describe what you saw without assigning blame.
- Ask which format and rule set apply. A teaching modification should be named as a modification.
- Consult the session lead, applicable rule, or official. Explain the decision in plain words and continue when ready.

A touched stone is not handled by one universal rule. Report the contact; use the applicable procedure. For a doubtful score, keep stones in place until agreement or a proper measure. [2: R9-R10, R12]

A useful phrase to practice

"Let's leave the stones where they are while we check. I want to give you the correct explanation."

For worked examples, use HouseCall Complex Rules Explained and Mixed Doubles Explained. Keep the first explanation short.

Baseline: [2] World Curling Rules of Curling, 1 September 2026. The club or event determines which rules apply.

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Prepare a safer session

Review these prompts with the club lead before anyone enters the ice.

Confirm the arrangements

- Identify the session lead, first-aid contact, emergency plan, communications method, and who supervises the rest of the group if help is needed.
- Check access, clear routes, equipment condition, footwear and grippers, head-protection policy, and the club's process for recording incidents. [4]
- Agree where participants wait, where demonstrations happen, who controls stone movement, and how adjoining sheets are protected. Ask the lead to approve staffing for the people and activities present.

Teach the movement rules before the activity

Follow the club instructor's demonstrations for stepping onto ice, using grippers and delivery aids, and moving around stones. Never step over stones or hacks. Curling Canada recommends helmets for new curlers. Keep activity within each person's ability. [4]

Stop and involve the right person

If footing, space, supervision, equipment, or a participant's comfort is uncertain, pause the activity and involve the lead. For an injury or suspected concussion, follow the club emergency and concussion procedures and qualified medical guidance. This guide does not provide medical assessment or return-to-play clearance. [4]

Walk through a disruption

A participant needs attention while stones are being delivered. Who stops the activity? Who calls for help? Who stays with the remaining group? Rehearse the communication off the ice.

Our stop signal and waiting place:

Our session lead and emergency plan location:

Safety reference: [4] Curling Canada, Safety First. Club policy and trained personnel govern the actual session.

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Make participation welcoming

Ask what helps the person learn. Avoid assumptions about ability or experience.

Start with an invitation

"What would help you take part comfortably today?" Offer a choice of watching, asking a question, practicing a simpler task, or taking a break. Speak to the participant directly. Discuss accommodations discreetly with them and the lead; do not ask for a public explanation of a medical condition.

Keep the goal while changing the task

- **Communication:** face the group, use short instructions, point to the relevant area, and demonstrate from a position everyone can see. Check meaning with a task rather than asking people to repeat jargon.
- **Confidence:** begin with tabletop scoring or an off-ice explanation. Give time to observe before joining an ice activity.
- **Physical access:** ask the qualified lead about suitable delivery aids, stick delivery, wheelchair instruction, shorter approved practice tasks, and access arrangements. Use a method you are trained to support.
- **Pacing:** offer rest and a useful alternate role. Observing the target, describing a result, or practicing a call can support the same lesson goal.

Adapt without making promises

A delivery stick or wheelchair route needs appropriate instruction. Ask the lead which equipment and playing rules apply to this session. Curling Canada links specific wheelchair instruction resources to support further learning. [8]

Your adaptation exercise

Goal: recognize whether a stone finishes short or long of the intended target. Plan two ways to participate, including one that does not involve delivering a stone.

Original inclusion prompts. See [8] for wheelchair instruction resources; confirm club arrangements with the lead.

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Plan one achievable lesson

Use this worksheet with the HouseCall Club Lesson Plans rather than copying a whole plan.

Choose one goal you can see or hear. "Understand weight" is broad. "Describe whether a practice stone finished short, in, or beyond the intended zone" gives you an observable check. A successful plan includes waiting and transitions as well as deliveries.

Participants and access needs to plan for

One observable learning goal

What learners will do and what I will say or show

Where people wait and how movement is controlled

How I will check learning before adding difficulty

A simpler option and a supported next challenge

Before approval: What equipment, lead support, time, and supervision does this require? What would make you shorten or stop it?

Planning partner: HouseCall Club Lesson Plans at thehousecall.org/resources. Timing is set locally, not by this worksheet.

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Explain and demonstrate clearly

Use one teaching point, one example, and one check.

A short teaching sequence

1. State the purpose. "We're learning to recognize which stone is closer."

2. Show a clear example. Use two tabletop markers or a diagram. Make the difference obvious before introducing a close comparison.

3. Ask for an action. "Point to the one you think counts, and tell me what you compared."

4. Let the learner respond. Give time. If the answer is unclear, change the example rather than repeating the same words more loudly.

5. Summarize one takeaway. "We compare distance from the centre; we don't count every stone in the rings."

When the lesson includes movement

Arrange a clear viewing area approved by the lead. Explain where everyone waits and what signals the start. Ask a qualified instructor to demonstrate any technique outside your competence. Learners should know the goal and boundaries before they try the task.

Rewrite for a first-time learner

Starting phrase: "Control your weight and communicate the line." Rewrite it for a single activity without using either technical term.

What will you ask the learner to do so you can tell whether your explanation helped?

Original teaching sequence. For technical demonstrations, use the club's qualified instructor and official training resources.

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Observe before giving feedback

Separate what happened from your explanation of why it happened.

Use an observation you can support

Observation: "The last two stones stopped beyond the marked target zone."
Unconfirmed explanation: "You pushed too hard with your leg."

The finish is visible. The cause may involve several things you have not checked. Ask what the learner noticed and involve the qualified instructor before prescribing a technical change you cannot justify.

Try this feedback conversation

Ask: "Where were you trying to stop the stone?"
Describe: "It finished beyond that area."
Choose: "What is the one adjustment the instructor has asked you to practice?"
Retry: let the learner attempt that same task again under the agreed supervision.
Review: compare the new result with the goal. Keep, simplify, or ask for help.

Make encouragement specific

"You waited for the clear signal before starting" reinforces an observable habit. "You're a natural" offers little information. Recognize attention, communication, and a useful adjustment as well as a successful shot. Avoid comparing learners to each other.

Practice the distinction

A learner's stone finishes wide of the target. Write one neutral observation, one question, and the fact you would need before offering a correction.

Original feedback exercises. No movement diagnosis or standardized technique is implied by these examples.

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Rehearse before you lead

Practice short segments with a mentor, then assist within the role the club approves.

Rehearsal one Explain a score

Use a scoring diagram from page 4. Give a brief explanation, ask your partner to identify a counting stone, and respond to a deliberate misunderstanding. Your observer records the exact words that helped and any term that needed explaining.

Rehearsal two Brief a station

Choose an activity from HouseCall Beginner Practice Stations. Off the ice, explain its goal, where people wait, how turns start and stop, and how the task can be simplified. Ask your mentor to point out a missing transition or supervision detail before using it on ice.

Rehearsal three Give one useful response

Your partner describes a missed target. Ask about the intended result, give a neutral observation, and select a next step that stays within your role. If you need technical help, practice asking the lead rather than filling the silence with a guess.

Observer notes

One explanation that was clear:

One check that showed whether learning happened:

One change to rehearse before working with participants:

Original mentoring exercises. Rehearsal feedback does not replace the club's supervision or formal training requirements.

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Scenario practice

Answer before turning the page. Use a notebook if you want more space.

For each situation, name your first action and explain why. Some have several reasonable responses; the safety boundary and reasoning matter more than matching a script.

1 The crowded start

Extra participants arrive, a volunteer is absent, and two groups would share a delivery area. The advertised start time has passed. What do you do before stones move?

2 The hesitant learner

A learner says the sliding position feels uncomfortable and asks to watch. How do you respond while keeping them included?

3 The sweeping promise

Someone says, "If you sweep hard enough, you can always fix a bad throw." Give a short, accurate response and a useful learning focus.

4 The uncertain score

Two opposite-colour stones appear equally close and the players disagree. A participant reaches to clear the house. What do you say first?

5 The guessed cause

After one stone misses the target, an assistant says, "Your shoulders are the problem." What should happen before a correction is prescribed?

6 The mixed group

One learner asks for more challenge, another needs more time, and a third cannot hear your explanation clearly. How do you adapt without losing supervision?

7 The rules question

A learner asks whether a centre-line guard can be moved on the fourth delivery. You cannot recall the exact rule. How do you handle the question?

8 The rushed finish

Ten minutes remain. Learners are still unsure where to wait, but the plan says to start a mini-game. Do you follow the written plan?

Original HouseCall scenarios. Reasoned responses on pages 13-14; use them for mentor discussion, not an exam score.

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Answer key and reasoning

Compare the principle behind your answer, then discuss differences with a mentor.

Scoring lab from page 4

A: Red scores two. Two red stones are closer than yellow; the farther red does not add a point.

B: Yellow scores one. Its nearest stone beats both red stones. More stones in the house does not automatically mean a higher score.

C: Yellow scores one. It overlaps the house and red is outside. A counting stone at the edge is still worth one point. [1, 3]

1 Resolve supervision before starting

Pause and ask the session lead to adjust grouping, staffing, space, or the activity. An off-ice introduction can be useful while a workable plan is agreed. Being late does not make overlapping delivery paths or unclear oversight acceptable. There is no universal instructor-to-learner ratio supplied by this guide.

2 Respect the choice and offer a route back

Let the learner watch or take another meaningful role without pressure. Ask privately what would help. Consult the lead about a suitable alternative, such as an approved delivery aid or an off-ice task. Do not diagnose the discomfort or promise that a particular movement is safe for them.

3 Describe influence without a guarantee

Sweeping can affect travel and curl, but it cannot guarantee the intended result. [3] Keep the explanation focused on the current activity: noticing whether the stone is approaching the intended zone and communicating what is seen. Leave advanced sweeping technique and equipment questions to trained instruction.

4 Preserve the position

Ask everyone to leave the stones in place and involve the lead for the proper measuring process. [2: R12] A visual impression is not a reason to rush the decision. Your immediate teaching job is to keep the situation calm and explain how uncertainty will be resolved.

Scoring and sweeping: [1, 3]. Measurement: [2] R12. Other responses are original teaching judgments.

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More reasoned responses

The next step should fit the learner, the task, and the instructor's competence.

5 Replace the guess with an observation

Ask what was intended and describe what actually happened. Observe another suitable attempt if the lead agrees, then ask the qualified instructor to assess technique. A single outcome does not establish a mechanical cause. Avoid giving multiple corrections simply to sound helpful.

6 Change the task without losing oversight

First make the explanation accessible: regroup within the approved area, face the learner, and demonstrate or use a visual. Offer a simpler task and an extension only if the lead can supervise both. A learner may compare results or explain a decision while waiting. Do not create an unsupervised extra station.

7 Check the adopted rule and its remedy

Say you want to verify the exact protection. Identify the format, whose guard it is, its position, and which delivery is being played. Consult the current adopted rules with the lead rather than promising that any centre-line guard can or cannot be moved. Use the question to model a reliable checking habit.

8 Keep the goal and change the schedule

Do not add a moving-stone game while waiting positions are unclear. Rebrief and check the group's understanding. Shorten the activity, use an off-ice finish, or postpone the game with the lead. A written plan is a tool; the actual participants determine what can responsibly happen next.

Apply the answers to your plan

Choose one scenario that could happen at your club. Add a specific change to your page 8 plan. Name the person who must approve it and the evidence you will use to decide whether it worked.

Original scenario responses. The lead's policies and the rules adopted for the session govern real decisions.

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Reflect and choose your next step

Use evidence from a rehearsal or supervised session. This is not a certification checklist.

Mark what you can demonstrate

- ☐ I can explain an end and a simple score in plain language.
- ☐ I can identify the session lead, emergency plan, and my own role.
- ☐ I can describe the goal, waiting area, and start/stop signal for my activity.
- ☐ I can offer an appropriate choice and ask before providing hands-on help.
- ☐ I can give one specific observation and ask a useful question.
- ☐ I can recognize when to simplify, stop, or involve a more qualified person.
- ☐ I can find the current rules and the official training route for my location.

Debrief with a mentor

What did a learner do or say that showed progress?

Where was my explanation, plan, or observation incomplete?

My next practice task and who will support it:

Date to revisit it: _____

Continue with HouseCall Club Lesson Plans, Beginner Practice Stations, and the New Curler Starter Packet. Give learners a suitable take-home resource; keep your next teaching goal small enough to practice well.

Free HouseCall companion resources: thehousecall.org/resources. Official training information follows on page 16.

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Official pathways and sources

Verify current requirements before enrolling or leading a session. Checked 8 October 2026.

United States: USA Curling offers Level 1 Instructor training for introductory experiences and a Level 2 instructor pathway. Its listed instructor base requirements include individual membership, SafeSport, First Aid/CPR, an event waiver, and age 18 or older at the course. Use Member Programs and Upcoming Courses for current details. Coaching is a separate pathway. [5]

Canada: the two-day Club Coach workshop leads to Club Coach Trained status, not certification. Club Coach Youth is a one-day pathway with prerequisites; its listed status is Trained Club Coach Youth. Contact your provincial or territorial Member Association about courses and local requirements. [6, 7]

Elsewhere: ask your national association and club about local instructor training. A course title or requirement from one country does not establish a universal qualification.

Reference links

1. World Curling What is curling
https://worldcurling.org/about/curling/

2. World Curling Rules of Curling 2026 and current rules hub
https://worldcurling.org/rules/

3. USA Curling Intro to Curling
https://www.usacurling.org/intro-to-curling

4. Curling Canada Safety First
https://www.curling.ca/about-us/about-curling/safety-first/

5. USA Curling Member Programs and instructor courses
https://www.usacurling.org/member-programs

6. Curling Canada Club Coach
https://www.curling.ca/coaching/club-coach/

7. Curling Canada Club Coach Youth
https://www.curling.ca/coaching/club-coach-youth/

8. Curling Canada About Wheelchair Curling and instruction videos
https://www.curling.ca/high-performance/about-wheelchair-curling/

Rules edition used: World Curling, 1 September 2026, current clean PDF linked from the rules hub. Use the hub for later editions. The original HouseCall exercises are educational applications, not copied course materials or official exam questions.

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