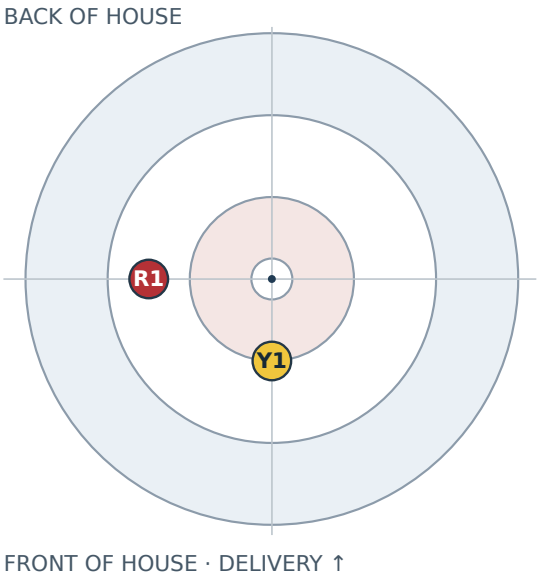
HOUSECALL

Skip School Workbook

A practical workbook for curling clubs

Learn the game. Love the game.

Build a clear plan, make a realistic call and learn from the result. This workbook is for new skips and teammates learning standard four-player curling together.



A clearer plan starts here

Read the score and the house.

Choose a shot your team can play.

Explain the target and the miss.

Work through it together.

Name or team

Club and facilitator

Five modules • Three discussion scenarios • Four practice drills

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START HERE

How to use this workbook

Bring a pencil and a teammate. Make your own call before reading the discussion notes. You can work at a table, beside a practice sheet or with a paused curling broadcast.

Module	You will practise	Pages
1 The skip role	Give a clear call and agree who communicates what.	3
2 Hammer and score	Choose a useful end result before choosing a shot.	4
3 Read the house	Count counters and compare three last-stone situations.	5–8
4 Plan the miss	Compare realistic outcomes and the skills you have.	9–10
5 Work as a team	Communicate, reflect and build a practice habit.	11–16

A simple club session

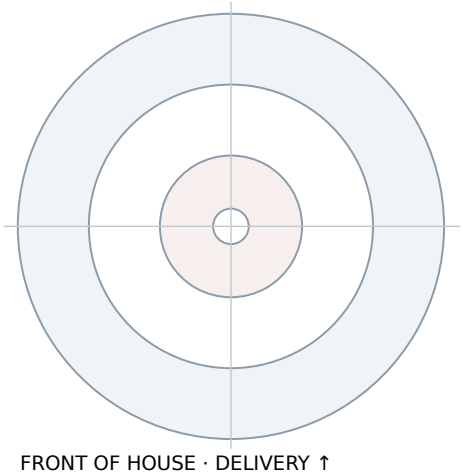
Allow about 60 minutes off ice: 10 minutes for pages 3–4, 20 for pages 5–8, 15 for pages 9–11 and 15 to choose a drill and a next step. Spread the on-ice work over several practices. The times are suggestions, not game-clock rules.

What these examples assume

The three scenarios use four players per team, eight stones per team per end and an eight-end game. Red has the final stone of end 8; yellow has no reply. A tie leads to an extra end. All unshown stones are out of play. Your league may use a different game length or tie procedure.

The pages are learning activities, not official certification, a substitute for your event rules or validated AI shot recommendations. Several calls can be reasonable. The job is to explain the result, risk and execution you are choosing.

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

One thing I want to get better at

Club rules or access needs to check

Warm up by sketching a house you have seen or a shot you want to learn.

MODULE 1

Make the call clear

The skip directs play and helps the team choose a plan. The vice-skip takes charge of the house when the skip delivers. The skip does not have to throw fourth. Everyone supplies useful information.

Before the player settles in the hack

1 Result. What should this stone accomplish? Name the stone to remove or the place to finish.

2 Shot. Agree on the turn, target and weight in words your team understands. Confirm that the player sees the same shot.

3 Miss. Say which small miss can still help and which miss creates trouble. Recheck the call if the player is not comfortable.

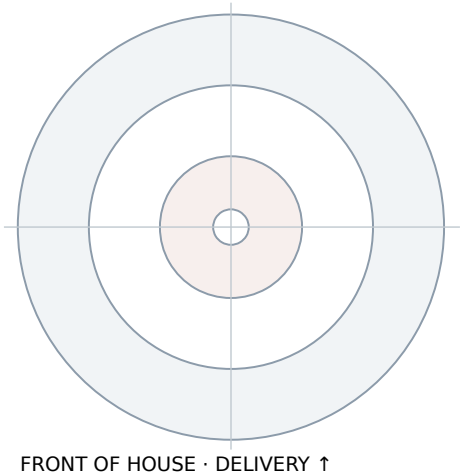
Example: “Draw to the open four-foot on this side. Use the turn we just played. Tee-line weight. A little short still helps; through the house does not.” The broom is an aiming reference, not always the finishing point.

Rewrite this vague call: “Put it somewhere useful”

What will the player repeat back to confirm the call

Agree before the game

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Who makes the call and checks the score

Our words for weight and sweeping

Draw your target, then have a teammate explain the same shot back to you.

MODULE 2

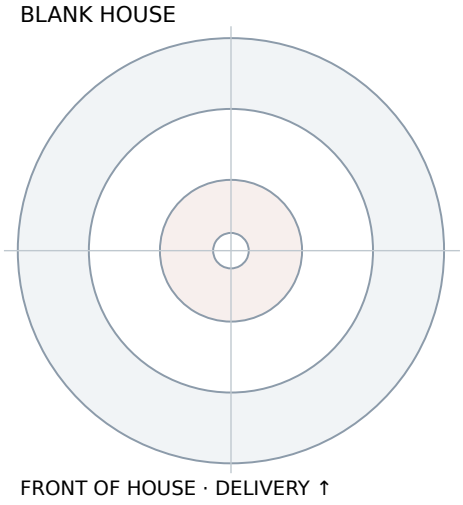
Let the score set the goal

Hammer means your team delivers the final stone of the end. In standard four-player curling, the team that scores delivers first next end. After a blank, the delivery order stays the same.

Situation	A common starting goal	Ask before committing
With hammer	Build a chance for two or more; keep a usable final shot.	Is a safe one or a blank better in this game?
Without hammer	Steal, or limit the opponent to one.	How much risk does the score justify?
Leading late	Reduce the chance of a big opponent score.	Which stones or guards create the danger?
Trailing late	Keep realistic ways to score enough points.	What happens if we get only one?

A force means the team without hammer holds the hammer team to one point. A steal means scoring without hammer. A blank means neither team scores. These are outcomes; they are not automatic goals in every situation.

Choose a goal before a shot



Tied in end 3 with hammer: our goal

Up two, final end, no hammer: our danger

Down one, final end, hammer: one or two

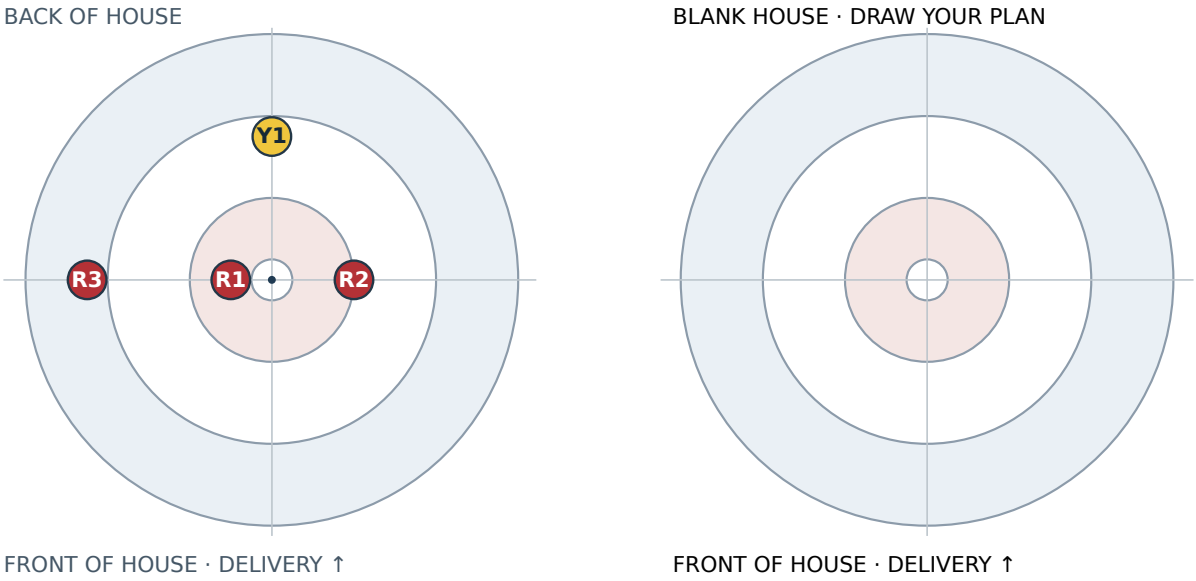
Sketch a house that fits one of these situations. Explain the result you want.

Opening ideas such as a corner guard with hammer or a centre guard without it are useful patterns. Check the current rules, score and your team’s skill before treating any pattern as a plan.

MODULE 3

Read the house before calling

A counter is a stone that would score if the end finished in its present position. Count only eligible stones closer to the tee than the opponent’s closest eligible stone. During an end, that count is provisional.



Starting house: R1 is 1 ft left of the tee; R2 is 2 ft right; Y1 is 3.5 ft behind; R3 is 4.5 ft left. The blank house is for your own plan.

Diagram key: circles are 12 ft, 8 ft and 4 ft across; the small centre circle is shown 1 ft across. Distances describe stone centres. Stones use a consistent approximate size. Rings are guides, not different point values.

Which stone is closest and how many red stones currently count

Why does R3 count or not count

Then check the whole sheet

Look for guards, open routes, possible jams and stones behind the target. Count deliveries still available to each team. Then name the result the scoreboard needs. Do not move stones before the score is agreed; use the event’s measuring procedure when the finished end is too close to call.

One thing I should check before trusting a diagram or a quick glance

MODULE 3 · SCENARIO A

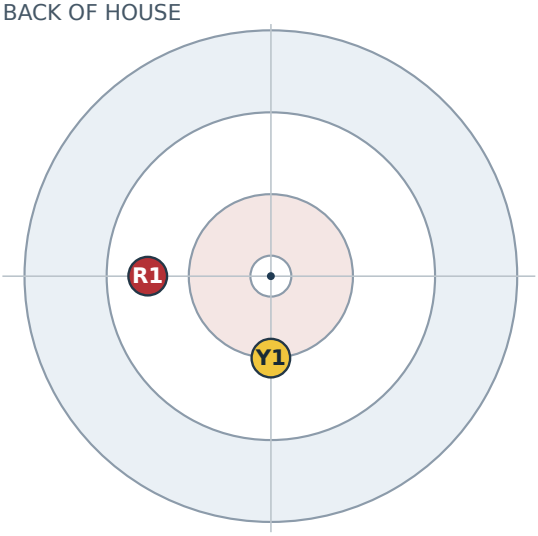
Tied with the last stone

SCORE BEFORE END: Red 4, Yellow 4 | END: 8 of 8

HAMMER: Red | STONES LEFT TO DELIVER: Red 1, Yellow 0

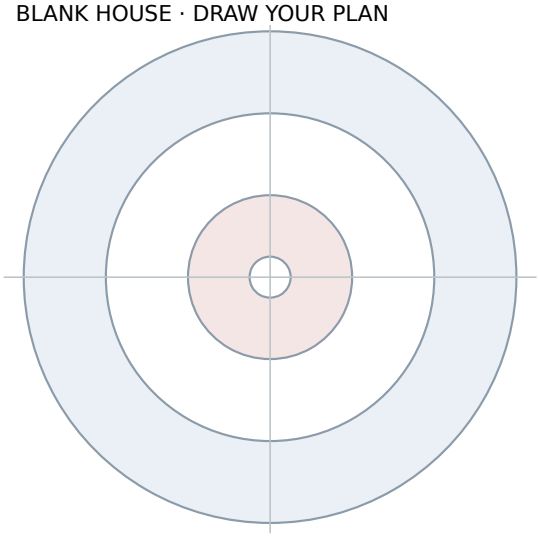
COLOURS: Our team is red. Opponent is yellow. Red delivers now.

BACK OF HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

BLANK HOUSE · DRAW YOUR PLAN



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Starting positions: R1 is 3 ft left of the tee; Y1 is 2 ft in front. Use the blank house to plot your call.

Standard four-player curling. All other delivered stones are out of play. This is the final shot, so yellow has no reply. A tie goes to an extra end.

Yellow currently lies one. One red point wins the game. A draw and a takeout can both have useful outcomes; you are choosing for the player and ice in front of you.

Option A: describe a draw target that wins without moving other stones

Option B: describe a takeout result that wins even if the shooter rolls out

Our call, useful miss and reason we trust this shot

Test your explanation: which stone must remain for a hit-and-roll-out to win? Discussion notes: page 17.

MODULE 3 · SCENARIO B

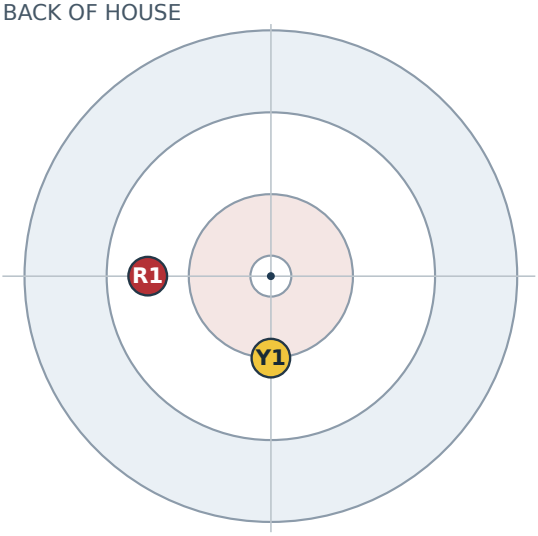
Down one in the same house

SCORE BEFORE END: Red 3, Yellow 4 | END: 8 of 8

HAMMER: Red | STONES LEFT TO DELIVER: Red 1, Yellow 0

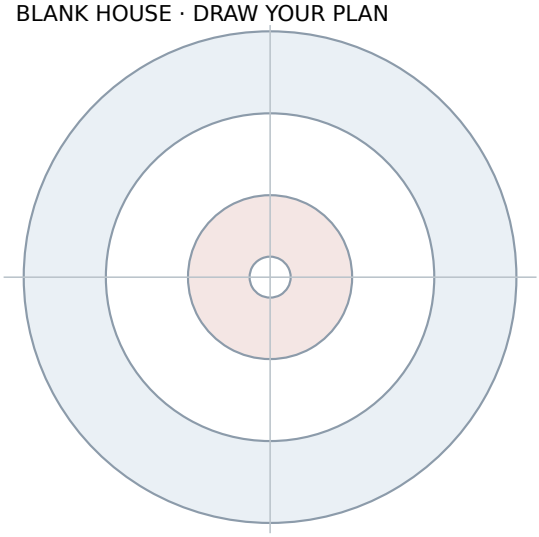
COLOURS: Our team is red. Opponent is yellow. Red delivers now.

BACK OF HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

BLANK HOUSE · DRAW YOUR PLAN



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Starting positions: R1 is 3 ft left of the tee; Y1 is 2 ft in front. Use the blank house to plot your call.

Standard four-player curling. All other delivered stones are out of play. This is the final shot, so yellow has no reply. A tie goes to an extra end.

The stones have not changed from Scenario A. The score has. Red needs two points to win now; one red point ties the game and leads to an extra end.

What must a takeout leave behind to score two

What does a successful draw for one achieve and who has hammer next

Our choice and the execution evidence that supports it

A perfect-looking shot is not automatically the best choice. Compare a chance to win now with the chance of reaching an extra end. Discussion notes: page 17.

MODULE 3 · SCENARIO C

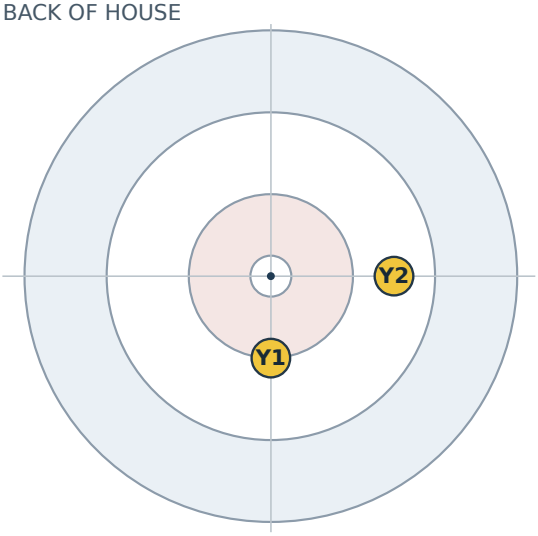
Up one and facing two

SCORE BEFORE END: Red 5, Yellow 4 | END: 8 of 8

HAMMER: Red | STONES LEFT TO DELIVER: Red 1, Yellow 0

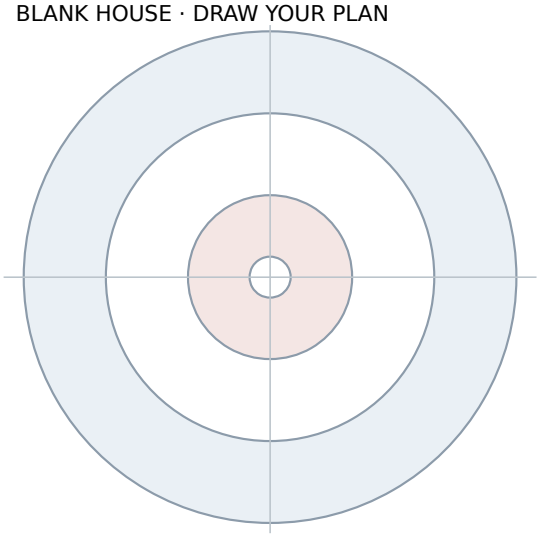
COLOURS: Our team is red. Opponent is yellow. Red delivers now.

BACK OF HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

BLANK HOUSE · DRAW YOUR PLAN



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Starting positions: Y1 is 2 ft in front of the tee; Y2 is 3 ft right. Use the blank house to plot your call.

Standard four-player curling. All other delivered stones are out of play. This is the final shot, so yellow has no reply. A tie goes to an extra end.

Yellow currently lies two. Red scoring wins the game. Yellow scoring one ties it. Yellow scoring two wins it. Both a draw and a takeout can reduce the danger.

Describe a draw that wins and a shorter or wider finish that still ties

Describe a hit-and-stay that wins and a clean hit-and-roll-out that ties

Our call and the miss we most want to avoid

Do not assume every partial make helps. A changed angle, unexpected contact or roll can change the count. Discussion notes: page 17.

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MODULE 4

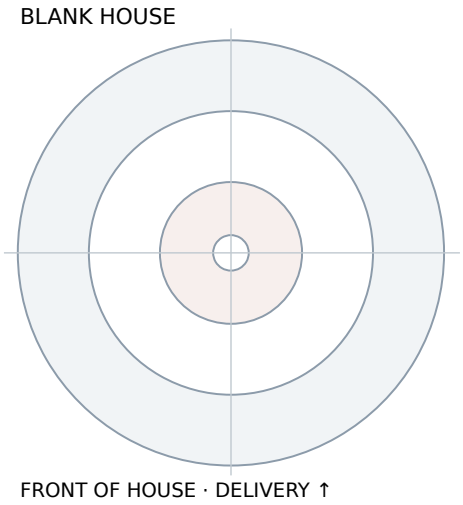
Plan the useful miss

A useful miss falls short of the exact target but still gives an acceptable result. A bad miss makes the position worse. These depend on the score and the stones left in play.

Use Scenario B to separate the outcomes

What happens	End score	Game result
Remove Y1; R1 and the shooter both stay in the house.	Red 2	Red wins 5–4.
Remove Y1 and the shooter; R1 stays.	Red 1	Tied 4–4; extra end.
Draw closer than Y1 without contact; Y1 stays.	Red 1	Tied 4–4; extra end.
Miss everything and leave Y1 closest.	Yellow 1	Yellow wins 5–3.

These are specific outcomes, not a complete prediction. A hit that moves R1, a draw that taps Y1 or a tied measure needs its own explanation. “Full” and “partial” are practice labels, not official shooting grades.



Our exact intended finish

Our useful miss and why it helps

Our bad miss and how to reduce it

Mark the target, useful miss and bad miss in the blank house. Label them clearly.

Do not invent confidence. Ask what this player has made on this turn, at this weight and on comparable ice. A handful of practice shots gives a clue, not a reliable win probability.

MODULE 4 · COPY THIS PAGE

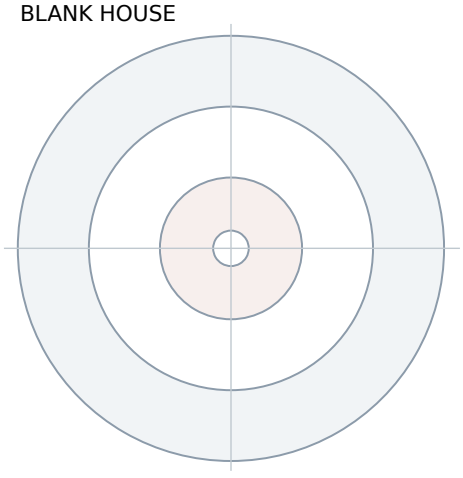
Compare two realistic calls

Situation or scenario _____ Player _____ Date _____

Result we need _____

Decision question	Call A	Call B
Shot, turn, target and weight		
Full make and resulting count		
Useful miss and resulting count		
Bad miss or unexpected contact		
Comparable shots we have actually made		
What we do not know about ice or execution		

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Our choice and most important reason

What would make us change the call

Sketch either option in the blank house. Use arrows only for routes you have checked.

For a separate exercise using explicitly invented probabilities, use HouseCall's Last Rock Decision Cards and the decision calculator. Links are on page 18.

MODULE 5

Use the whole team

Good information is short, early and specific. Agree who calls the line, who reports weight and which words or signals everyone understands. When the skip throws, the vice-skip runs the house.

Before during and after the shot

Before. The caller names the shot and acceptable miss. The player confirms. The sweepers know the intended finish and the weight words being used.

During. Sweepers give clear weight updates. The person in the house watches the line and calls the team's agreed response. Use permitted sweeping and follow your event rules.

After. Wait for the result. Briefly compare the plan with what happened. Save a long discussion for after the end or practice.

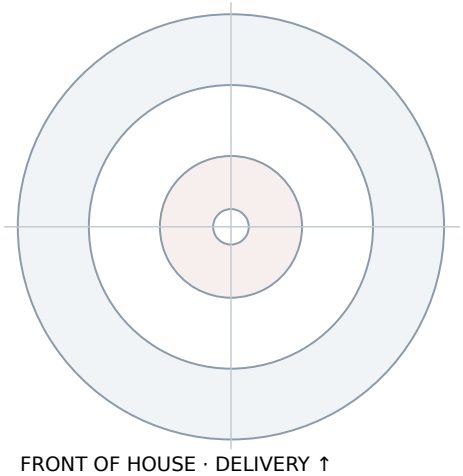
Our weight words and what they mean

Our line or sweeping words and who says them

A helpful response after a teammate misses

Two minute team reflection

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

A sound decision even if the shot missed

One thing to keep or change next end

Sketch the position you are discussing so everyone is reflecting on the same shot.

COPY THIS PAGE

One shot decision worksheet

Team _____ Date _____ Player _____

SCORE: Us _____ Them _____ END: _____ of _____ HAMMER: _____

COLOURS: Us _____ Them _____ NEXT TO DELIVER: _____

DELIVERIES LEFT: Us _____ Them _____ TIME LEFT IF USED: _____

Current counters and any close stones that may need a measure later

Desired result and why it helps this game

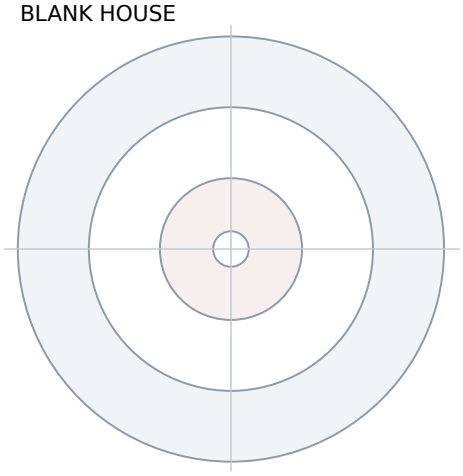
Option A and option B including target turn and weight

What could go wrong including useful miss bad miss and possible contact

What this player and team can realistically execute today

Our call and the message the player repeats back

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Opponent reply and our next shot or no reply

Actual result and one thing to learn

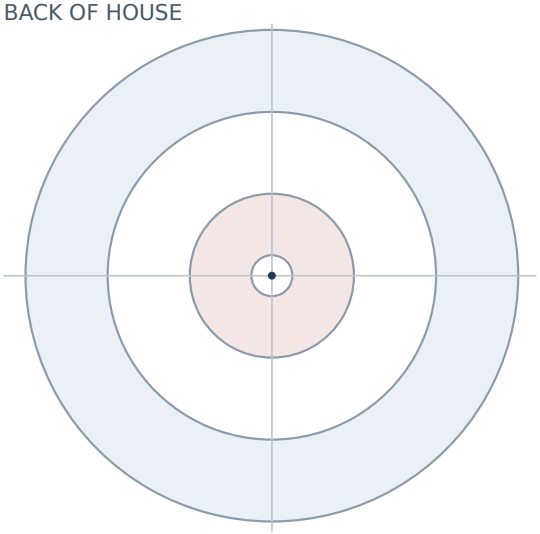
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COPY THIS PAGE

Draw the house and the next shot

Add the score, end, hammer and stones remaining on page 12. Label every stone and show the delivery direction. A target circle shows a desired finish, not a guaranteed route.

BACK OF HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

DRAW YOUR PLAN

Our colour _____

Their colour _____

Shot stone _____

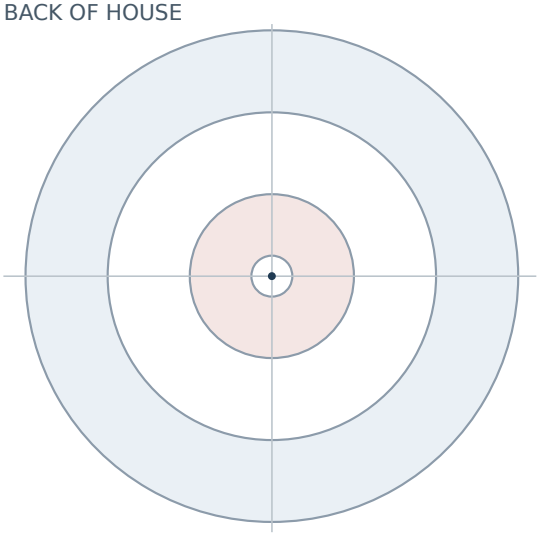
Counters _____

Target _____

Label stones R1, Y1 and so on.

Plan A and its useful miss

BACK OF HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

DRAW YOUR PLAN

Our colour _____

Their colour _____

Shot stone _____

Counters _____

Target _____

Label stones R1, Y1 and so on.

Plan B and its useful miss

House rings: 12 ft, 8 ft and 4 ft diameter; small circle shown 1 ft across. Sketches support discussion. Judge real distances and legal play on the ice.

PRACTICE · DRILLS 1 AND 2

Make the plan easy to hear

Drill 1 Call and repeat

Off ice, 10 minutes. Use a scenario or a blank house. One person gives a call in about 20 seconds. A teammate repeats the shot, target, weight and useful miss. A third person checks whether they agree. Rotate roles for four turns.

Track clarity, not speaking speed: was the same target understood, was the weight clear and was the dangerous miss named? Let the player ask a question before confirming.

One phrase that was clear and one phrase we changed

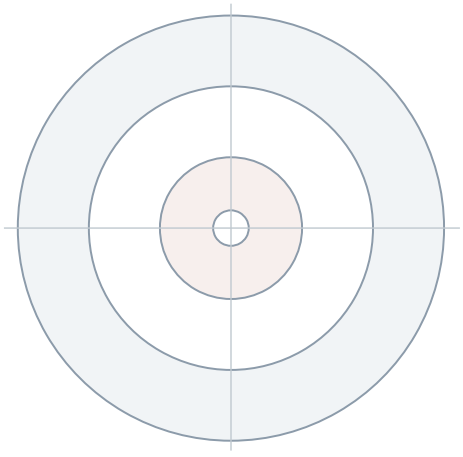
Drill 2 Draw to a useful area

On ice, about 15 minutes after your club warm-up. Use a qualified club helper for safe setup. Start with an empty house and an open route. Choose one turn and a finish within the four-foot circle. Deliver six stones, resetting the house between attempts.

Before starting, define full make as the stone centre inside the four-foot circle. Define useful partial as outside that circle but still in the house. Record every other result separately. These are drill labels only; a game may need a different result.

Attempt	1	2	3	4	5	6
F full / P partial / O other						

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Turn target and ice conditions

What we noticed from the six shots

Use the blank house to mark your target and observed finishing positions.

Count the results, but do not turn six shots into a confident prediction. Repeat later on comparable ice. Follow club safety guidance and keep people clear of moving stones.

PRACTICE · DRILLS 3 AND 4

Connect the call to the result

Drill 3 Same house different score

Off ice or on ice, 15–20 minutes. Use the house from Scenarios A and B. Discuss the tied score first, then the one-point deficit. Give each player one reason for a draw and one reason for a hit before choosing.

For on-ice practice, reset R1 three feet left of the tee and Y1 two feet in front. Play six last-stone trials. Record the actual count and whether it wins, ties or loses in each scenario. Include unexpected contacts instead of forcing them into “make” or “miss.”

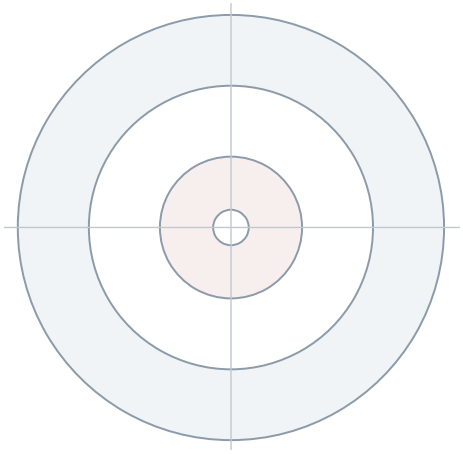
Trial	Final count	Scenario A result	Scenario B result
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

Drill 4 Weight report and reset

On ice, about 15 minutes. Throw six comfortable open draws. The player repeats the call; sweepers report weight early and update it; the house caller manages line. After each stone, take 30 seconds to compare the call, reports and finish. Rotate practice roles safely.

After a miss, name what happened and choose one calm adjustment for the next stone.

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

What changed with the scoreboard

One habit we will carry into a game

Plot an actual trial in the blank house. Count the stones before judging the shot.

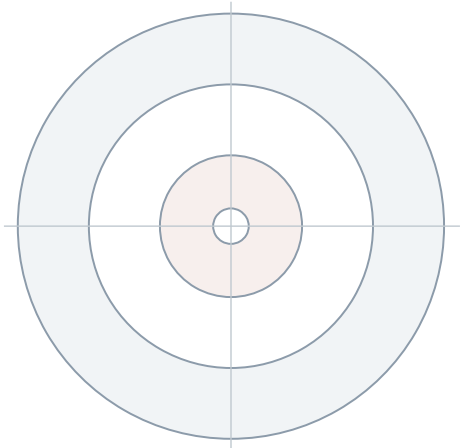
TEAM RECORD

Four weeks of useful practice

Choose one small goal each week. Record conditions and actual outcomes so your next decision has something real behind it. Repeat a drill when that is more useful than adding a new one.

Week and date	Drill goal turn and ice	Actual outcomes and next adjustment
1 Date:		
2 Date:		
3 Date:		
4 Date:		

BLANK HOUSE



FRONT OF HOUSE · DELIVERY ↑

Our strongest improvement

Next practice date and focus

Use the blank house to record one position worth repeating at the next practice.

FACILITATOR DISCUSSION

Check the reasoning together

Ask each player for a call before inviting the loudest voice. Require a score, a useful miss and an execution reason. Accept more than one defensible call. These notes check the count; they do not declare a universal best shot.

Pages 3 to 5

A clear call identifies a result, turn, target and weight. On page 4, a tied early end may invite building two with hammer; being up two in the final end makes giving up a big end the main danger. Down one in the final scheduled end, two wins and one ties. In the page 5 house, R1 is shot stone and red lies two: R1 and R2 are nearer the tee than Y1. R3 is farther away than Y1.

Scenario A Tied

A non-contact draw finishing one foot left of the tee beats Y1 and scores red one: 5–4. Removing Y1 while leaving R1 scores red one even if the shooter leaves the house: also 5–4. If R1 and the shooter both stay, red scores two: 6–4. Compare the player’s draw and hit skills; the extra point is not needed to win.

Scenario B Down one

The same non-contact draw scores red one: 4–4. Yellow has hammer in the extra end because red scored. Removing Y1 while keeping R1 and the shooter in the house scores red two: 5–4, a win. Removing Y1 and the shooter while leaving R1 gives the 4–4 tie. A hit offers a way to win now, but its value depends on the chance of each actual result.

Scenario C Up one

A non-contact draw closer than Y1 scores red one: 6–4. A draw whose centre finishes farther than 2 ft but nearer than 3 ft from the tee leaves yellow counting only Y1: 5–5. A clean hit on Y1 with the shooter also out leaves only Y2: 5–5. In either 5–5 tie, red has hammer in the extra end. A hit leaving the red shooter closer than Y2 wins 6–4. Leaving yellow two loses 5–6.

For these outcomes, other stones stay unchanged and none of the distances are tied. Unexpected contact or a close measure needs a fresh count. In Scenario C, choose a clear side for a draw; “between two and three feet” describes the finish, not a route through Y1.

Questions that deepen the conversation

What would change your call? Which miss are you assuming? Is that miss really useful at this score? What can this player make today? What evidence is missing? Was the decision good before the stone was thrown?

KEEP LEARNING

Sources and permission to share

Rules and source links checked 10 October 2026. The rule reference is World Curling's Rules of Curling effective 1 September 2026. Your club or event may adopt different provisions. Confirm the rules you are actually playing under before applying them.

Primary sources

World Curling Rules of Curling and official documents

https://worldcurling.org/rules-/

Relevant sections: R1 ice dimensions; R3 team roles; R4 house duties; R5 delivery order; R6–R7 protected early stones; R12 scoring. This workbook's scenarios take place on the last stone, with no guards.

World Curling What is curling

https://worldcurling.org/about/curling/

A beginner reference for team roles, hammer, scoring and basic shot types.

USA Curling Intro to Curling

https://www.usacurling.org/intro-to-curling

A primary beginner reference for team communication and why hammer, score and ends remaining affect strategy.

Continue with HouseCall

Skip School Lessons and the last rock decision calculator

https://thehousecall.org/learn/skips-school/

Last Rock Decision Cards Separate 12 page practice pack

https://thehousecall.org/assets/resources/housecall-last-rock-decision-cards.pdf

The card pack uses invented teaching probabilities. They are not measured team performance or validated predictions. This workbook focuses on reading, explaining and practising the decision.

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