CLUB GUIDE | FOUR PLAYER CURLING

Curling strategy experiment workbook

Draw versus hit and stay

Find out which call gives your player the better range of results in one repeatable last-stone situation. Try both calls, reset the board, and record what actually happens, including the misses.

This is a proposed HouseCall club experiment, informed by existing coaching and analytics work. It is not a published finding or a validated game-win prediction tool.

The situation to test

Use four-player curling: tied entering end 7 of an 8-end game, your team has hammer, and you are delivering the final stone. Place one opposing counter in the back half of the four-foot with an open approach. All other stones are out of play.

Call A Draw for one. Finish closer to the button than the opposing counter.

Call B Hit and stay. Remove the opposing counter and keep your delivered stone scoring.

Record actual positions and end scores, not an official shot grade. With no opponent shot left, the end score is: +1, 0 or -1 from your team's perspective. This avoids having to guess the opponent's next reply.

Run a fair test

1 Plan first. Set the layout, targets, turns, weights and number of pairs before throwing. Aim for 20 pairs across two practices: a pilot, not a promise of enough evidence.

2 Use paired attempts. The same shooter, crew, delivered stone and sheet direction try A and B close together. Reset the photographed, measured layout before each attempt.

3 Randomize order. Flip a coin before each pair: heads = A first; tails = B first. Give both calls equal warm-up, with normal sweeping and line calling.

4 Keep every attempt. Count picked, hogged and badly missed stones. Describe what happened. Flag interference or equipment issues; never quietly discard a poor result.

5 Stop as planned. Do not stop when a favourite call pulls ahead. Identify a new block if the player, crew, turn, direction or layout changes. Note changing ice.

6 Repeat and review. Compare full score distributions and paired results. Keep player and session records separate; a few outcomes can change a small-sample conclusion. Keep the original records.

What to print and bring

Bring a coin, tape measure, pencil and optional camera. Complete page 2 once per setup. Pages 3 and 4 hold 10 pairs per session; print both again for a second session. Use page 5 to compare results. Page 6 explains the math and sources.

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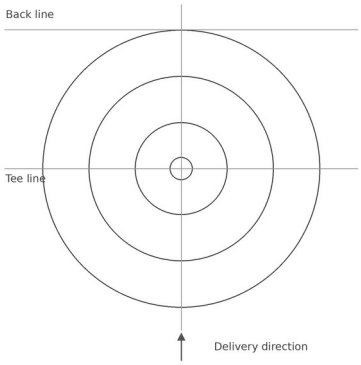
PRACTICE 01

Set the board and calls

Fix this setup before the first pair. The blank house is for your own layout sketch; record measured stone positions and keep a setup photo when possible.

Club / team _____ Player _____

Layout ID _____ Rules / format _____ Session dates _____



Sketch the opposing stone and both targets.

Opposing stone centre relative to tee / centre lines:

_____

Setup photo ID _____

Sheet / direction _____

Delivered stone ID _____ Opposing stone ID _____

House ring diameters: 12, 8 and 4 feet; small button shown. Sketch aid only. Confirm actual positions on the ice.

Keep the game situation fixed	**Record the plan**
Score / end / hammer	Tied entering end 7 of 8; our team has hammer
Stones left before trial	Our team: 1. Opponent: 0. Other stones are out of play.
Call A Draw	Target: _____ Turn: _____ Weight: _____
Call B Hit and stay	Contact / target: _____ Turn: _____ Weight: _____
Same crew and conditions	Sweepers / line caller: _____
Planned stopping point	_____ pairs this session; _____ total across _____ sessions

A and B may use different turns, but keep the chosen turn fixed within each call. Give both calls comparable warm-up and ice exposure.

Agree on recording and exceptions

Main outcome: signed end score (+1 / 0 / -1). Also record both stones' final positions, miss pattern and photo ID. Use NR for a result that cannot be resolved; do not turn missing data into a blank end.

Predefined exception, if any	**How it will be flagged and reported**

Keep all assigned attempts in the main record. If you also show results without a predefined exception, report both versions and the reason.

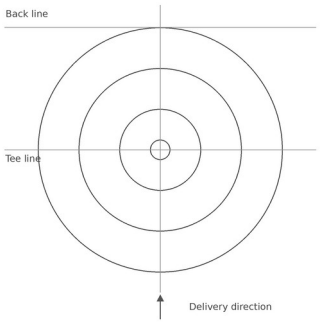
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PRACTICE 02

Record paired trials

Session / date _____ Layout ID _____ Player _____

Sheet / direction _____ Crew unchanged? _____ Pair numbers _____ to _____



Sketch the fixed board or one labelled result.

Sketch is for pair _____ Call _____ Before / after _____

Ice, crew, setup or equipment changes:

_____

_____

A = draw. B = hit and stay. Flip a coin for every pair; write AB or BA. Log both calls, even if the first shot missed badly. Reset before each attempt.

Pair / order	Call	End score	Both stones' final positions / miss	Photo ID	Flags / notes
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				

End score: +1 = we score; 0 = blank; -1 = opponent scores; NR = unresolved. For a draw, note short / long and left / right relative to target. For a hit, note contact and stay / roll / out.

Record what you saw before guessing why. A pick, hogged stone, interference or changed setup belongs in Flags / notes. Keep every assigned trial and photograph before resetting.

Session note _____

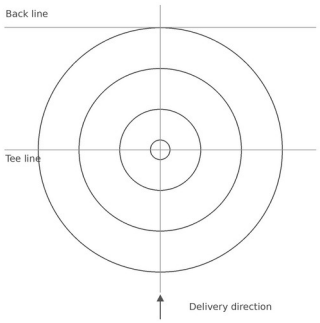
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PRACTICE 03

Continue paired trials

Session / date _____ Layout ID _____ Player _____

Sheet / direction _____ Crew unchanged? _____ Pair numbers _____ to _____



Sketch the fixed board or one labelled result.

Sketch is for pair _____ Call _____ Before / after _____

Ice, crew, setup or equipment changes:

_____

_____

A = draw. B = hit and stay. Flip a coin for every pair; write AB or BA. Log both calls, even if the first shot missed badly. Reset before each attempt.

Pair / order	Call	End score	Both stones' final positions / miss	Photo ID	Flags / notes
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				
No. ____	A				
Order ___	B				

End score: +1 = we score; 0 = blank; -1 = opponent scores; NR = unresolved. For a draw, note short / long and left / right relative to target. For a hit, note contact and stay / roll / out.

Record what you saw before guessing why. A pick, hogged stone, interference or changed setup belongs in Flags / notes. Keep every assigned trial and photograph before resetting.

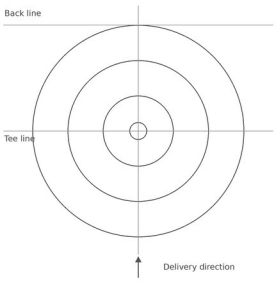
Session note _____

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PRACTICE 04

Read the results cautiously

Player _____ Layout ID _____ Sessions / dates _____



Sketch the tested layout or a recurring miss.

Keep each player's results separate. Summarize each session first, then combine only comparable blocks.

Planned pairs _____ Completed pairs _____

Assigned shots _____ Unresolved results _____

Show the whole score distribution

Call	**+1 We score**	**0 Blank**	**-1 They score**	**NR Unresolved**	**Assigned shots**
A Draw					
B Hit and stay					

For each row: +1 count + blank count + -1 count + NR count = assigned shots. Report counts first, such as "12 scores in 20 trials." Do not hide unresolved results.

Count complete pairs in each category

A higher end score	**B higher end score**	**Same end score**

These are paired end-score comparisons, not game wins. A blank retains hammer in this four-player scenario; scoring or conceding changes the next-end situation.

Decide what the evidence can support

Check repeatability. Did the same pattern recur on another day? If two or three changed outcomes reverse the ranking, call it inconclusive.

Keep the right scope. Results apply to this player, board and conditions. They do not establish game-winning odds or a permanent ability label.

Use uncertainty honestly. A small pilot gives rough evidence. Confidence intervals must account for paired attempts and repeated players / sessions; shots are not all independent.

Review prompt	**Our observation or next step**
Common miss / useful fallback	
Provisional call, or inconclusive	
Next practice target / date	

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COACH REFERENCE

Connect shot outcomes to game value

This separate, entirely fictional example explains the arithmetic. These probabilities are invented teaching inputs, not research estimates, club results or advice for the practice board.

Assume four-player curling: down one, throwing the final stone of the final regulation end. Scoring one ties; scoring two wins. After a tie, assume a 25% chance of winning an extra end without hammer.

Fictional outcome	Easier draw for one	Difficult double for two
Score two and win now	0%	35%
Score one and tie	90%	25%
Concede one and lose	10%	40%

Draw game-win chance 90% × 25% = 22.5%

Double game-win chance 35% + (25% × 25%) = 41.25%

In this made-up example, the double offers the higher winning chance. Yet its expected signed end score is lower: +0.55 versus +0.80 for the draw. Expected points and game-winning chance answer different questions.

Ability can reverse the choice. If this player's double outcomes were 10% win, 25% tie and 65% loss, its game-win chance would be 16.25%. The draw would then be preferable under these assumptions.

What is established and what is proposed

Existing coaching and analytics work already connects the scoreboard, shot difficulty, miss patterns and win probability. The randomized paired club test in this workbook is a proposed way to collect local evidence. It has not itself been shown to improve match-winning rates.

Use this workbook for practice and post-game review. Check your competition's current rules before using electronic aids in play. World Curling R11(c) restricts devices that supply information to players on the athlete field of play.

Sources and further reading

Renée Sonnenberg. Win Probability, Shot Difficulty & Video (2023 handout). Shot difficulty, scoreboard context and makes / partials / misses.

curlingnb.com · 2023 coaching handout

Kevin Palmer, Gerry Geurts and Jason Gunnlaugson. The Evolution of Curling Analytics (2019 MIT Sloan Sports Analytics Conference). Win probability, efficiency and strategy examples.

sloansportsconference.com · The Evolution of Curling Analytics

World Curling. The Rules of Curling (2026), including R11(c). Use the official rules page to check the current edition and event requirements.

worldcurling.org/rules-/

Sources checked 10 October 2026. Historical teaching percentages are not calibrated odds for your team. The fictional example above and the proposed practice protocol are HouseCall teaching material.

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