

Introduction to Green Bowling and Basic Rules



Bowling is a social, non-contact, competitive sport attracting both male and female players from the age of 9 years upwards. It is a game of skill, tactics and luck. These qualities limit the benefits of physical strength and agility and permit competition for all. The standard of play varies from Professional, County to Social and all need to co-exist on the same green. The 'Laws of the Game' and 'Bowls Etiquette' have been drafted to allow

compatibility of players, allowing all to obtain the maximum enjoyment and pleasure from the game. The information below is an attempt to inform beginners and remind new and existing bowlers of these requirements. The information is sufficient to start with, but there is much more to be learned from other sources.

The object of the game of bowls is to score more shots than your opponent(s) to win the game. This achieved by bowling nearest to the Jack (small yellow or white ball) over a given number of ends. Each player bowls in turn from the mat from one end of the green to the other, along the rink. The green is marked out in rinks with numbers at each end.

To start the game the Jack is rolled from the mat (minimum distance the Jack must roll is 23 meters), which is then lined up with the number on the rink. Each player then delivers their bowls alternatively until all the bowls have been played with the nearest bowl to the Jack deemed the winner; this is called an end. If a player or team has more than one bowl nearer the Jack these are counted up and awarded the 'shots'. Once this has been decided, the Jack is rolled up the green again, in the reverse direction, by the person (or the team) that won the end. In the event of a tied end, the person who rolled the Jack on the previous end will roll again.



A game can consist of 18 or 21 ends and the player (or team) with the greatest number of shots at the end will be the winner(s).

A game can be played as:-

Singles	(1 against 1) - with each player using 4 bowls.	(21 shots up)
Pairs	(2 against 2) - with each player using 4 bowls.	(21 ends)
Triples	(3 against 3) - with each player using 3 bowls.	(18 ends)
Fours	(4 against 4) - with each player using 2 bowls.	(21 ends)

Experienced players will realise this is a simplified explanation of the game - there is a lot more to it, but this is written for the benefit of people who are just beginning our wonderful game, which we hope you will enjoy for many years to come.



Basic laws of the game

The following are abbreviated extracts from the 'Laws of the Game', which will be sufficient to get you playing the game. It is recommended that you obtain a copy of this publication from the English Bowling Association who are the governing body for the sport, or contact the Club Secretary.

Footwear

Players, Umpires and Markers shall wear white, brown or grey smooth soled heel-less footwear while playing on the green or acting as umpires or markers.

The Bowls

Bowls are made and should be bought in sets of four.

The set should be a matched set and each bowl should have a stamp to certify that the WBB or approved governing body has passed the set.

The Mat

At the beginning of each end the front edge of the mat shall be placed not less than 2 metres from the rear ditch and not less than 25 metres from the front ditch and must be on the centre line of the rink. ([World Bowls Law 6.1.1.](#))

If the mat is moved during play it should be replaced as near as possible to its original position. ([World Bowls Law 6.2.1](#))

The Jack

To start the game a toss of the coin shall decide who bowls first. ([World Bowls Law 5.2.1](#))

In all ends subsequent to the first, the winner of the preceding scoring end shall play first. ([World Bowls Law 5.4](#))

If the Jack is delivered to a distance of less than two metres from the opposite ditch, it shall be moved out so that there is a distance of two metres in the centre of the rink. ([World Bowls Law 9.2](#))

If the Jack is delivered into the ditch, or outside the rink, or less than 23 metres from the front edge of the mat, the opposing lead player delivers the Jack. The player may then move the mat in line of play, (subject to the first Mat rule shown above), and deliver the Jack, but shall not play the first bowl. Should the Jack be improperly delivered for the second time, the mat shall be placed at the option of

the first player and the Jack entered at 2 metres from the front ditch. ([World Bowls Law 10.3 & 6.1.1](#))



Live Bowl

- A bowl that travels 14 metres or more from the front of the mat and comes to rest within the boundaries of the rink is called a “Live” bowl. (([World Bowls Law 17.1.3 & 17.2](#))
- A bowl on its original course on the green which touches the Jack is called a “Toucher”. It remains a live bowl even though it passes into the ditch, provided it comes to rest in that part of the ditch within the boundaries of the rink. ([World Bowls Law 14.1](#))
- If the Jack should be driven into the ditch by a toucher and comes to rest there, NO subsequent bowl in the end being played can become a toucher. ([World Bowls Law 18.1](#))
- A toucher shall be clearly marked or indicated with a chalk mark by a member of the player’s side. If a bowl is not marked before the succeeding bowl comes to rest it CEASES to be a “toucher”. ([World Bowls Law 18.2](#))
- If the Jack has been played into the ditch and should be displaced from its position in the ditch by a non-toucher, it is restored to its former position in the ditch and the “non-toucher removed from the rink. ([World Bowls Law 18.4 & 38.5.3](#))
- If a later bowl drives a toucher”still lying on the green into the ditch, displacing the Jack lying in the ditch, the Jack is NOT restored to its former position. (([World Bowls Law 18.3.1](#))

Dead Bowl

- A dead bowl is one that travels less than 14 metres from the front of the mat, or finishes in the ditch not having touched the Jack, or comes to rest so that the whole of the bowl is outside the boundaries of the rink. ([World Bowls Law 17.1.3](#))
- A toucher becomes a dead bowl if it is hit by another bowl and comes to rest so that the WHOLE of the bowl is outside the boundaries of the rink([World Bowls 17.1.4](#)). Should a player carry a bowl to the Jack end of the rink it does not become a dead bowl([World Bowls 17.2.1](#)). A bowl travelling beyond the side boundary of the rink and returns again to the rink is NOT a dead bowl([World Bowls 17.2.2](#)).

Re-bounding Bowl

- Touchers that re-bound from the bank back onto the rink REMAIN LIVE bowls. ([World Bowls 17.2.3](#))
- Non-touchers re-bounding from the bank back onto the rink become DEAD bowls. ([World Bowls 17.1.2](#))

- Non-touchers re-bounding from the Jack or bowl in the ditch become DEAD bowls. ([World Bowls 17.1.2](#))

Players Duties ([World Bowls 40](#))

- LEAD - Places the mat, delivers and centres the Jack and played the first bowl.
 - * Skills - playing the draw shots to lay a good foundation for the development of the head.
- SECOND - Records and keeps the score card each end. Records the progress of the game on the scoreboard. Checks the score each end with his opponent and at the end of the match obtains the signature of the opposing skip and hands the card to his skip.
 - * Skills - capable and versatile player. He may be called upon to play all types of shots.
- THIRD - Acts as the measurer to determine the shot. Directs the skip the shot to play when requested.
 - * Skills - He/she requires a good knowledge of the laws of the game, be versatile and experienced player. Possess loyalty to the skip and team.
- SKIP - Has sole charge of his team, introduces the opposing players, tosses a coin with his opponent for the right of possession of the mat at the start of the game. Directs the development of the head. Agrees disputed points with the opposing skip.
 - * Skills - he/she needs to have a good knowledge of the laws and a sound knowledge of the game, be a natural leader and be a good tactician. Realise that the basis of good teamwork is accepting leadership. He/she should be capable, experienced and a versatile exponent of the game since he is in charge of the four.