

## **BRIEF SURVEY OF CURLING RULES**

What follows is a list of some of the basic rules of curling. For a complete set of rules go to the USCA website (<http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Events/Championships/Rules>).

### **STARTING A GAME**

1. All curlers shake hands with their opponents and teammates with “Good Curling” (etiquette).
2. A coin toss is used to determine which team delivers the first stone. This is customarily done by the thirds.
3. The team that wins the coin toss generally chooses to have their opponents deliver the first stone in that end in which case the opponents choose the color of the stones they will to use. Alternately, the team that wins the coin toss could choose stone color. The color choice is predetermined in some bonspiels.

### **THROWING THE STONE**

1. You must start your delivery with one foot in a hack. Right handed curlers must use the left hack and left handed curlers must use the right hack. This is true for sliding and stick deliveries.
2. The stone must be released from the hand or stick before it reaches the hog line at the delivery end. If the player fails to do so, the stone is immediately removed from play.
3. Each person on a rink delivers two stones. If the rink only has three curlers, the lead and second each deliver three stones and the skip delivers two stones.
4. If the stone does not fully cross the hog line or has not made contact with a stone in play it is removed from play.
5. If the stone touches either edge of sheet lines, it is removed from play.
6. If the stone completely crosses the back line, it is removed from play.
7. A player must choose to deliver stones either via standard sliding or a stick prior to the start of the game and use that method for the entire game.

### **SWEEPING AND TOUCHED STONES**

1. You must sweep across the stone face, deposit no debris in front of the stone and stop sweeping to either side of the stone.
2. A stationary stone must be set into motion before it can be swept, i.e. you cannot “warm the ice” in preparation of your stone or an opponent’s stone being hit.
3. Up to four members of a rink can sweep their stone from the point it is released to the tee line at the playing end. Once the stone reaches the tee line at the playing end, any one member of the team can sweep the stone.
4. No member of a team may sweep an opponent’s stone until it reaches the tee line at the playing end. Only the skip or third can sweep the opponent’s stone after it reaches the tee line at the playing end.
5. Only one member of each team can sweep behind the tee line at any one time. Therefore, if a skip is sweeping an opponent’s stone, no other member of the rink can sweep any stone (their own or their opponent’s) behind the tee line.
6. If a moving stone is touched by a team to which it belongs, or their equipment, before it reaches the hog line at the playing end, the stone is immediately removed from play.
7. If a moving stone (delivered stone or any other stone set in motion) is touched by a team, or their

equipment, after it reaches the hog line at the playing end, the stone is allowed to come to rest; the skip of the opposing team can choose to:

- a) Remove the touched stone and replace all stones that were displaced to their original location,
  - b) Leave all stones where they came to rest, or
  - c) Place all stones where they reasonably believe the stones would have come to rest had the moving stone not been touched.
8. Behind the tee line, a team has first privilege of sweeping its own stone, but it must not obstruct or prevent the opponents from sweeping.

### **DISPLACED STATIONARY STONES**

1. If a stationary stone, which would have no effect on the outcome of a moving stone, is displaced by a player, it is replaced to its original position by the non-offending team.
2. If a stationary stone which would have altered the course of a moving stone is displaced by a player, all stones are allowed to come to rest and the non-offending team has to option to:
  - a) Leave all stones where they come to rest,
  - b) Remove from play the moving stone whose course would have been altered and return all stones to their positions just before the moving stone would have struck the violated stone, or
  - c) Reasonably place stones in the positions they would have come to rest had a stone not been displaced.
3. If a displacement is caused by a stone deflecting off an outer or back wall bumper, the stones are returned to their original positions by the opposing team.

### **FREE GUARD ZONE**

1. Any stone that comes to rest between the hog line and tee line at the playing end, excluding the house, is deemed to be in the Free Guard Zone (FGZ). Also stones that are in play, on or before the hog line, that have struck a stone in the FGZ are deemed to be in FGZ.
2. If, prior to the fifth stone of an end, a delivered stone directly or indirectly causes an opponent's stone in the FGZ to be moved out of play, the delivered stone is removed from play and any displaced stones are returned to their original positions.
3. An opponent can hit and move a stone in the FGZ, but it must stop in play.
4. A team can hit and remove one of their stones in the FGZ.
5. Stones in the FGZ can be removed by the fifth stone or later by either team.
6. A "biter bar" is used if skips cannot agree whether a stone is in the FGZ or in the house and only before the fifth stone in an end is delivered.

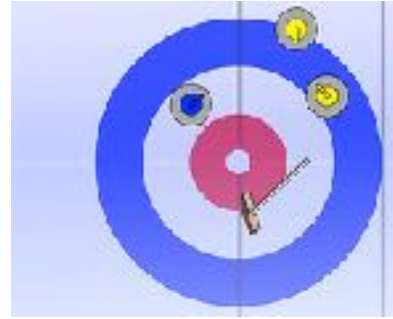
### **SCORING**

After all 16 stones have been thrown in an end, the score is determined.

1. Only one team can score points in any particular end.
2. The team whose stone is closest to the center of the house is the team that scores point(s). That team receives one point for each stone closer to the center of the house than the opponent's stone which is closest to the center of the house.
3. It is illegal to use any device or aid (e.g. broom or shoe) to judge relative locations of two stones unless the end is over and points are being determined and then only the official measuring device (see below) can be used.



*Two points for Yellow*



*One point for blue*

4. After all 16 stones have been thrown, the lead and second must stay out of the house and should be outside the hog line until the score is agreed upon.
5. The thirds are responsible for determining the score. They must agree on a score. They must determine this by simply looking (see rule 3 above).
6. If thirds cannot decide which of two or more stones are closer to the center of the house; a measurement device is used to determine which stone is closest to the center of the house.



***Official measurement bar used to determine relative locations of stones that are too similar to be determined by visual inspection. Either third can request that the measurement bar be used.***

7. If there is a stone very close to the edge of the house and it would count as a point if it were in the house, a “biter bar” is used to determine if that stone is in the house. This simple bar with a pin on one end for the center of the house is swung past the stone. If it hits the stone, the stone is in the house otherwise it is not.

## **CURLING TERMS**

### **TERMS ABOUT THE CURLING TEAM**

**RINK or TEAM** A curling team that consists of four players: skip, third or vice-skip, second and lead.

**BALANCED TEAM** Teams put together with goal of creating teams that have overall equal skill levels so that no one team is more likely to win than another.

**LEAD** The player who delivers the first two rocks in each end for their team, alternating with the opponent's lead. His or her rocks are swept by the second and third on his/her team. New members generally start here. The lead will sweep stones thrown by the second, third and skip.

**SECOND** The player who delivers the second two rocks for their team alternating with the opponent's second. These rocks are swept by the lead and third of his/her team. The second will sweep stones thrown by the lead, third and skip.

**THIRD OR VICE** The player who throws the third pair of rocks for their team alternating with the opponent's third. These rocks are swept by the lead and second of his/her team. The third then goes to the house and holds the broom while the skip throws his/her rocks. The thirds are also in charge of (1) the coin toss at the start of the game to determine order of throw for the first end, (2) determining score in each end, and (3) hanging the score after each end. The third will sweep stones thrown by the lead and second.

**SKIP** The player who holds the broom as the target for the first three players on the team, calls sweeping and determines the end strategy. The skip usually throws the last two shots of the end alternating with the opponent's skip. These rocks are swept by the lead and second of his/her team.

### **INDIVIDUAL PIECES OF CURLING EQUIPMENT**

**ROCK or STONE** A polished circular piece of granite that weighs about 42 pounds, eight rocks per team per end are delivered.

**BROOM** Used for sweeping which makes the rock go farther and curl less. Newer brooms have aluminum, fiberglass or graphite fiber handles with a nylon sweeping surface. Always have the broom lead you down the ice as you sweep so you can see the rocks in play.

**SLIDER** A Teflon surface worn on the sliding foot during delivery.

**GRIPPER** A rubber cover worn over the sliding foot when not delivering a stone to prevent slipping on the ice.

**STICK**

An alternate rock delivery tool used by curlers unable to deliver in the traditional sliding style.

**SCORING TERMS****END**

When all 16 rocks (8 per team) have been thrown to the opposite end of the sheet. A regular club game is 8 ends although skips may choose to end a game before all 8 ends are played.

**BLANK END**

An end resulting in no score for either team.

**EXTRA END**

An additional end played to break a tie at the end of regulation play.

**HAMMER**

The last rock of an end. For the first end, it is determined by a coin toss and thereafter it belongs to the team that did not score in the previous end.

**EIGHT ENDER**

The Holy Grail of curling. An end in which one team scores eight points. All of that team's stones are in the house and are all closer to the center of the house than any of the opponent's stones. This is a once in a lifetime experience if you are very lucky. Look for the Eight Ender patches worn by a few of the club members.

**TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE THE ICE****STRAIGHT**

Ice conditions that do not cause the stones to curl very much.

**SWINGY OR CURLY** Ice conditions in which the rocks curl more than normal.

**FALL**

A spot on the ice in which the rock moves away from the anticipated finishing spot rather than curling towards it.

**FAST**

Ice where little effort is needed to travel the length of the sheet.

**SLOW or HEAVY**

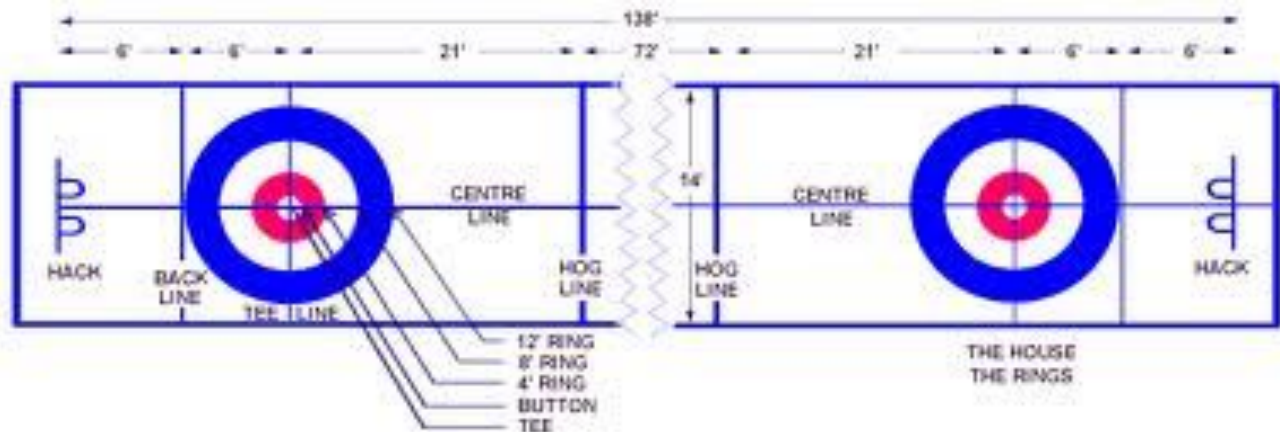
More effort is needed to move the rock the length of the sheet.

**UGLY**

Ice on which you cannot make a shot. **USUALLY NOT THE ICE'S FAULT.**

**TERMS THAT DESCRIBE THE PLAYING SURFACE OR ITEMS ON IT**

- SHEET** The 150 feet-long (back line to back line) X 15 feet-wide ice playing surface.
- HOUSE** The round scoring area, 12 feet in diameter, with inside concentric circles of one, four and eight feet.
- BACK RINGS** The portion of the house behind the tee line within the eight and 12 foot rings.
- BUTTON** The exact center of the house, also known as the tee or pot.
- TEE LINE** The line that bisects the house from side to side.
- CENTER LINE** The line down the center of the sheet from hack to hack.
- HOG LINES** The thick lines 21 feet from and parallel to the tee lines.
- TOP OF THE HOUSE** The portion of the house in front of the tee line.
- FREE GUARD ZONE** The area between the tee line and the hog line excluding the house. See rules section on page 24.
- HACK** The rubber foothold used by a curler to start the delivery of a rock.
- BACKBOARD OR BOARD** The boards behind the hack at either end of the playing area.
- BUMPER** The foam or rubber backstop that rests against the backboards to protect them and the stones
- COURTESY LINE** The lines or marks parallel to the hog line located about 3 feet beyond the hog lines which mark the acceptable regions for sweepers to wait while the opponents are delivering their stones.
- PLAYING END** The end of the sheet towards which stones are being thrown.
- DELIVERY END** The end of the sheet from which the stones are being thrown.



## **TERMS FOR CURLING SHOTS**

**DRAW** shot that stops without hitting any other stones.

**DRAW THE HOUSE** – A draw shot that stops in the house

**GUARD** - A draw shot that crosses the hog line but is short of the house

**CORNER GUARD** A rock that is situated about 2 feet on either side of the center line midway between the hog and the house.

**CENTER GUARD** A rock that is in front of the house very close to the center line.

**DRAW BEHIND** – A draw shot that curls around another stone and stops behind that stone

**DOWN TO** - A draw that finishes in front of and just touching another rock.

Two rocks that are touching are termed **FROZEN**

**BE HERE DRAW** A shot in which the skip wants to be sure the stone gets to the desired finishing spot. Better to be a bit heavy than to stop short and guard.

**RAISE**

**TAKE OUT**- A rock that removes another rock from play.

**TAP BACK or RAISE** – A rock that moves your team's rock back into the house.

**BURYING A ROCK** Placing a rock behind a guard or guards making a direct hit impossible or very difficult.

**WEIGHT**

Speed of the stone when it is released by the curler delivering that stone.

UPWEIGHT implies higher speed and DOWNWEIGHT implies less speed. The more weight, the farther the stone will travel before stopping.

**PEEL WEIGHT**

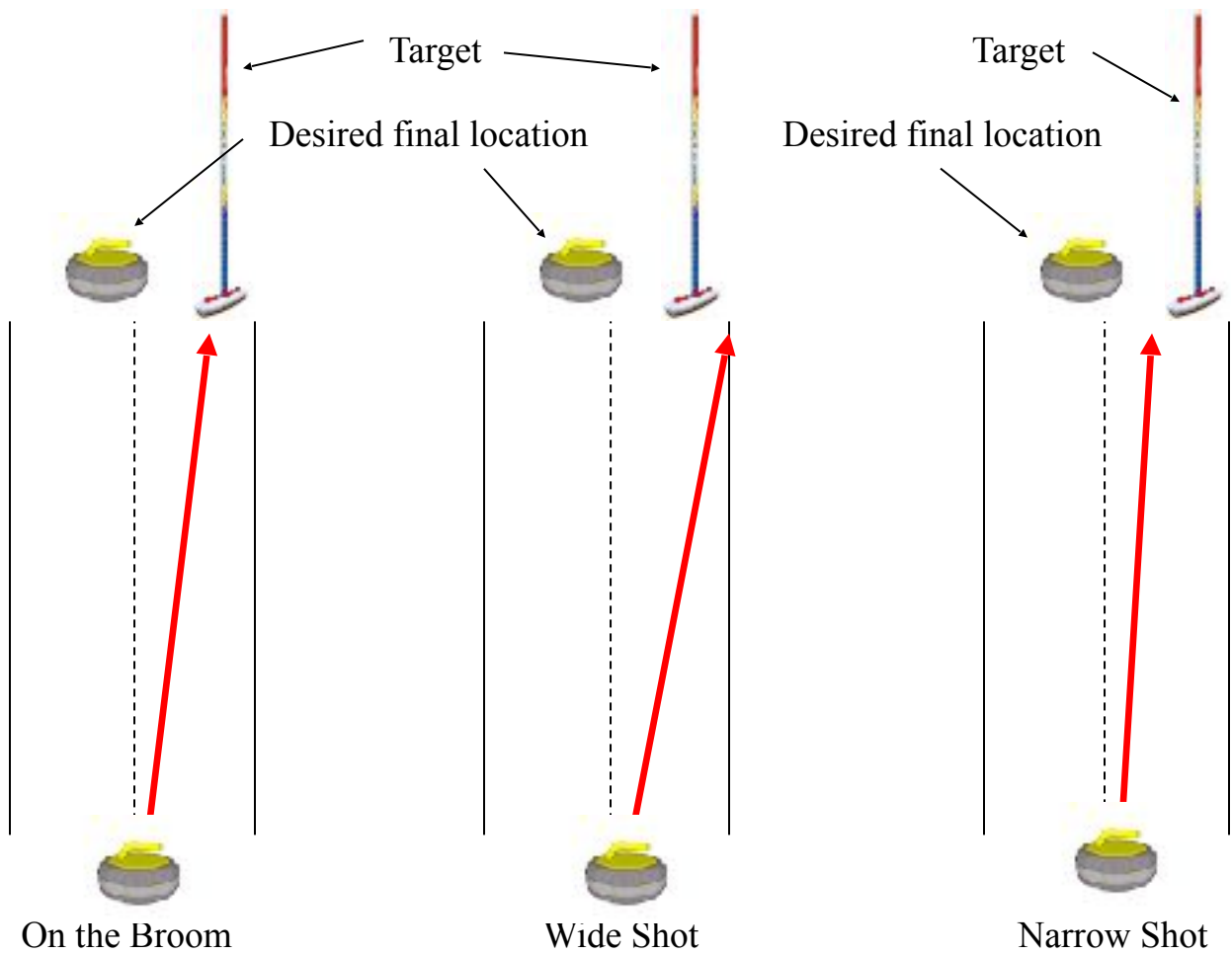
A shot in which the target stone is hit well off-center so it moves mostly to the side rather than back. This usually requires upweight.

**TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE SHOTS OR ROCKS AFTER THEY ARE THROWN**

**ON THE BROOM** A rock that comes out of the thrower's hand on the target line from the hack to the broom (the target). This is a most desirable thing.

**WIDE** A stone delivered outside the skip's broom (the target) and the desired ending place.

**NARROW** A stone delivered between the skip's broom (the target) and the desired ending place.





## **TERMS USED TO DESCRIBE SHOTS OR ROCKS AFTER THEY ARE THROWN**

<b>HEAVY</b>	A rock thrown with more weight or speed than the skip wanted.
<b>LIGHT</b>	A rock thrown with less weight or speed than the skip wanted.
<b>SHORT</b>	A rock that stops before reaching the desired position.
<b>HOG</b>	A stone that does not completely cross the hog line. This rock is removed from play.
<b>WICK</b>	A stone that gently strikes the edge of another stone and glances off at an angle.
<b>WICK IN</b>	A wick on a stone resting near the edge of the house which causes the thrown stone to be deflected into the house.
<b>ROLL</b>	The movement of a stone after it hits another stone off center.
<b>BURNED ROCK</b>	A stone in motion that is touched by a member of the team delivering the rock and/or by any part of that person's equipment. See rules section on page 23.
<b>WRONG TURN</b>	A stone that is rotating the wrong way from what was called.
<b>NO HANDLE</b>	A stone that has no or very little rotation as it moves down the sheet.
<b>GOOD BROOM</b>	The thrower came out on the target line.
<b>NICE WEIGHT</b>	The speed of the stone was what the skip anticipated.

## **MISCELLANEOUS CURLING TERMS**

**SWEEPING** Each skip has a different way to call sweeping. Get used to the terms your skip uses (yes, yup, sweep, hurry, up, stop, no). Regardless of how they call you on or off the sweep, always have the broom lead you down the ice and always sweep as hard as you can. If the rock is moving too fast for you to keep up, stop.

**If the sweepers feel the stone is not heavy enough they should start sweeping or communicate that to the skip as quickly as possible. Communication is an important part of the game.**

**BROOM STACKING** During a game brooms are stacked on the ice and teams go into club house to have a drink before returning to play. This is only done when there is no hurry to finish game.