# Basic Bowls

## The Game of Bowls

The game of bowls is played on a manicured grass surface, or an artificial (synthetic) surface, known as a 'green' that is divided into playing areas known as 'rinks'

To start a game, a coin is tossed to see which player starts the end by laying the mat down on the green and rolling the jack (small white ball) to the opposite end of the green. When the jack stops, it is aligned to the centre of the rink.

The aim of the game is to roll your bowls as close to the jack as possible.

Each player then takes a turn to roll their bowl from the mat towards the jack to build up the head.

Although the path of a bowl can curve outside the boundary of the rink while it's rolling, it must stop within the boundary of the rink to remain in play.

Bowls that fall into the ditch (at the end of the green) are declared dead and removed from play - with the exception of a bowl that has touched (a toucher) the jack. Touchers are marked with chalk and remain 'alive' in play, even if they fall into the ditch.

When players have delivered all their bowls (up to 4 bowls per player, depending on the type of competition) the distance from the jack to the nearest bowl(s) is measured.

Scoring-1 point (shot) is awarded for each player's bowl that is closer to the jack than their opponent's closest bowl (eg: when a player has 3 bowls nearest to the jack, they are awarded three shots).

## Bowls Format

There are several different formats of lawn bowls that can be played - finding the one that suits you is all you need to do to enjoy the sport of bowls.

Bowling clubs organise novice events, social bowls and corporate bowls, which is a fun way to get into the game.

If you want more of a challenge there are inter-club competitions and competition pennant bowls where teams from different clubs and divisions play-off against each other to determine the overall winner for the season.

## The Bowl

*   The bowl travels in a curved path due to its design (known as the bias).
*   Bowls come in a variety of colours.
*   Each bowl is identified with unique markings.
*   Many of the bowls look very similar and for that reason, sometimes stickers are put on the bowl to identify them.
*   Specific types of stickers are used by teams in pennant, national and international competitions.
*   There are different bowl sizes to suit everyone from size 00 to size 7.  The easiest way to measure a bowl is to make sure that the bowl fits nice and snug into the palm of your hand.
*   Bowls will also vary in weight and can be slim or thicker in diameter.

## Bowls Strategy

Playing lawn bowls takes into account both defensive and offensive strategies.

A delivered bowl gives an additional challenge where the jack can be moved to various areas on the rink.

When bowling there are different types of deliveries that players use:
*   **draw shot** is when the bowl is delivered to a certain location with little disturbance of the other bowls.
*   **upshot** is when the bowl is delivered with a lot of extra force. This is done with the aim of disturbing other bowls and still not killing the end.
*   **block shot** is when the bowl is placed short on purpose to stop an opposing players drive.

## Bowls 'Talk'

BIAS is the amount of curve that a bowl takes during its path to the jack. Bowls are available with several different biases for use in different conditions and competitions. As part of the manufacturing process all bowls are tested against "Master Bowl", which defines the limits of this bias.

DEAD END is when the jack has been moved outside the boundaries of the rink by a bowl in play. In normal competition dead ends must be replayed.

DELIVERY is the action of rolling (releasing) the bowl.

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**DRAW** has several meanings in bowls:
- It can refer to the type of shot being played.
- A "dead draw" is an attempt to deliver the bowl as close as possible to the target (usually the jack).
- You may hear a skip issuing an instruction such as, "just draw to the jack".

**DRIVE** is when a player delivers the bowl with maximum force toward the target.

**END** comprises setting the mat, delivery of the jack, playing all bowls, from all players in the same direction on the rink.

**GUARD** is a bowl played to a position that restricts the opposition from getting to the intended target.

**HEAD** refers collectively to the jack and the bowls that have been delivered and stopped within the boundaries of the rink.

**HEAVY** is when a player unintentionally delivers a bowl past the jack, or the intended target (described as being heavy).

**JACK** is the small white ball that is the target in a bowls game (also known as 'white' 'kitty' or 'sweetie').

**JACK HIGH** means that the bowl and jack are level (the nearest part of the bowl is laterally aligned with the jack).

**LEAD** is the person who plays 1st in a game of pairs, triples, or fours (rinks) game. The lead is responsible for setting the mat and delivering the jack to start the end.

**LINE** is the curved path the bowl takes to the jack. (eg: you're a yard short, but your line was good).

**SECOND** is the player who plays 2nd in a triples or rinks (fours) game.

**SHORT** is a bowl that doesn't reach the jack or the intended target (described as being short).

**SHOT** means:
- the number of points scored in an end or,
- it can also mean the type of delivery; a drawing shot, and during an end, the bowl that is currently nearest the jack.

**SKIP** is the captain of a team in pairs, triples or fours (rink) play (players must follow the skip's instructions).
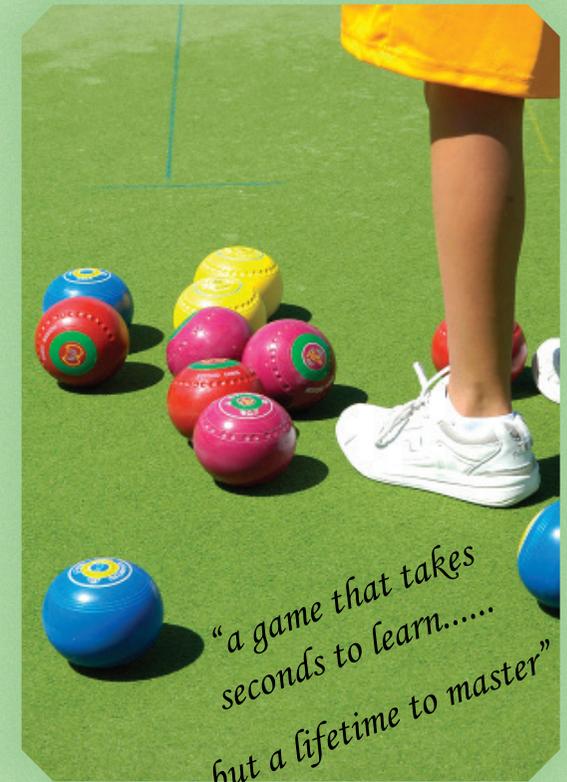
The skip is always -
- last to play ,
- is responsible for directing the play during an end, and,
- marking the score card.

**THIRD** is the 3rd player to play in a fours (rink) game and (with their equivalent opponent) is normally responsible for deciding the result of an end.

**TOUCHER** is a bowl that (during its course) touches the jack before finishing within the boundaries of the rink. A toucher remains live even if it finishes in the ditch.

**WEIGHT** is the term used to refer to the power applied to a delivery, short or heavy.

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*"a game that takes seconds to learn...... but a lifetime to master"*

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BOWLS WA