

BOWLING ETIQUETTE

Etiquette is a code of behaviour whereby individuals treat one another the way they would like to be treated. Breaches of etiquette can sometimes be wilful, and sometimes be inadvertent.

Particularly in the latter, injured parties should avoid overreacting, or a breach of etiquette even more objectionable than the original could occur.

Etiquette is an important part of Bowls, and all bowlers should not only practice it, but inform new members about the proper and always expected behaviour.

Thoughtfulness and common sense are the keys to good etiquette.

Rules of etiquette for bowls include, but are not limited to:-

1. Players and spectators at the head end should stand still and keep quiet when a bowler is on the mat.
2. When it's your team's turn to bowl it's your mat and head. Your opponents should be away from both. If they are not, ask them politely to move. Have your bowl ready just before it's your turn.
3. If your skip tells you which shot you should play, try to play that shot. Decisions on shots should come from your skip. Always keep up with play.
4. Do not trespass into neighbouring rinks. This includes going to or from the club house, moving to see the jack, and particularly when walking from one end of your rink to the other. Always be aware of others playing.
5. Walk up the centre of the rink with minimum delay if it is not your team's turn to bowl. **DO NOT STOP TO CHAT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RINK, IT'S NOT YOUR MAT OR HEAD.** It wastes time, stops play and is very annoying.
6. Try to avoid colliding with other players as you leave the mat after bowling.
7. Always show good sportsmanship by acknowledging a display of good skill by another bowler.
8. Never applaud lucky shots, never complain about lucky shots, and admit a lucky shot with good grace. Do not say thanks for a bad shot that goes your way.
9. Do not criticize the playing surface however bad it might be. It's the same for all on your rink.
10. Do not criticize the performance of colleagues. No one plays a bad bowl on purpose.
11. Avoid delaying play by leaving the rink without the knowledge of the other players.
12. Avoid interfering with the head until the results of the end have been agreed by the vices.
13. If an Umpire is called, move away, you're done and their decision is final.
14. Bowlers should shake hands at the end of a game.
15. Be a gracious winner and a good loser.
16. The green is fragile and should be treated with care. This includes, but is not limited to, wearing proper footwear, not dropping, or tossing bowls on the green,
17. Punctuality for all games is a courtesy to the other players.
18. While standing at the head end waiting for the player on the mat to bowl, stand between the markers so the bowler can see and use the markers to aim.
19. Bowlers not raking the bowls after an end should assist by kicking the bowls into an approximate line, thus making raking easier and faster.

20. Players at the head should be ready to stop deflected bowls crossing into an adjacent rink and be alert to prevent bowls from adjacent rinks straying into your own head.
21. No rules prohibit bowlers running after their bowl, but they must not try to arrive at the head before it stops. Shouting after a bowl, as it rolls towards the head, does not make it any more accurate or change its speed and is very annoying, especially for players on other rinks.
22. All bowlers are urged to have chalk and a measure so that bowls that touch the jack can be quickly marked so, at the finish of an end, any measuring can be done without delay.
23. Never quibble if a player asks for a measure, even if you think it is not needed.
24. There is no need to discuss if one bowl is nearer to the jack than another. Just measure it.
25. Leads take no part in marking. They should just “put up and shut up” and no bowls likely to be part of any marking should be moved by a lead until the score has been agreed. A lead who can clearly see they have lost that end, should be ready with a pusher so raking can be done as soon as any measuring is over.
26. Measured or counted bowls should be placed well away from other bowls not yet counted or measured so they are not confused with bowls yet to be counted.
27. All bowlers should help to clear the equipment from their rink after the game.

No laws governing a sport can cope with every situation. Unusual situations not covered can arise. The Laws of the Sport of Bowls have been drawn up in the spirit of true sportsmanship.

Common sense should be used when unusual situations not covered by the Laws arise.