



Greenhorn (Rookie) Leagues Important Information & Tips

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & TIPS

Welcome Greenhorn participants!

To those who are returning: thanks for re-upping. Clearly you had a good time in the previous session! Please be generous with your newly-acquired understanding of the game and help the newbies! To those who are just starting their curling journeys, welcome to the Garrison Curling Club. We hope that you have a blast in Greenhorn.

Set out below is some important information on the league. Please have a read and don't hesitate to contact us at 403-242-8191 or info@garrisoncurling.com if you have any questions.

Even if you played in GH last year, please review this to re-acquaint yourself with the rules and etiquette.

First things first: registering and paying!

Please make sure [you've gone online to register and pay](#). If you have any questions or problems with that process, please contact the office at 403-242-8191.

Make sure you have access to the website

If you don't already have login credentials, contact us by email at info@garrisoncurling.com. Everything....from schedules, to rosters, to inputting scores, to standings is accessed online.

Where's the schedule?

The draw schedule, roster and standings are all available via the website after you log-in (as noted above). The schedule is also posted on the bulletin board for your league on the wall in the lobby facing the.

About the teams and spares

While many teams came to us fully-formed with four or more players, our crew of match-makers routinely puts together several teams from among singletons and pairs. For registration



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purposes, teams are generally identified by the first person to register: there is no magic in the designation of “skip” or any other position on paper. All the teams are free to establish their own rotation, including trying different positions each week (note: there’s no in-game switching! Once you start at one position, you remain in that position during the game).

Some teams that our match-making service puts together have only three registered players. While we always hope for a foursome, it doesn’t always work out. While you can actually play with three curlers (the first two players throw 3 rocks each and the skip throws two), we *strongly encourage* the use of spares (note that you **MUST** have at least three curlers on the ice). Once logged into our website, members have access to the [Spare List](#). All GCC members (including you) are eligible to spare; but those who have put their names on the Spare List are *particularly* keen to play. We encourage you to not only check it out when you need a player; but also to put your own names on the Spare List when you feel comfortable. It’s a great way to get “called up” to the big leagues a couple of times a year or, more likely, to spare in *one of the other* GH leagues.

So for those teams with just three curlers week-to-week, we recommend you have a team conference and assign one person to recruit a spare. We’d also suggest you pick as many different spares as possible to diversify your connections throughout the club.

What if we can’t ice a team?

From time-to-time, schedules get jammed and a team can’t put at least 3 curlers on the ice. You’ve got a choices:

- As long as there’s at least ONE team member available, we encourage the team to get 2-3 spares. With only a 9 or ten-game season, it’s a shame for anyone to miss a game if they’re available to play; whether it’s the person whose teammates are absent or the other team who are looking forward to an afternoon of curling.
- If spares aren’t in the cards and you simply don’t have numbers, then contact the other team (with as much notice as possible) to advise that you won’t make it. The other team will register that game as a win. **THE OFFICE DOESN’T NEED TO BE INFORMED IF A GAME IS CANCELLED.** If the non-defaulting team still wants to come out and throw rocks or play doubles, they’re free to use their assigned sheet of ice.



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Pre-game prep: arriving at the club and getting ready

Try and arrive ~15 minutes early to get into your duds and find your team. While we prefer that you change in the changerooms, you're free to change in the lobby; but please then bring your personal effects into the changerooms or into the arena. We're trying to keep the lobby clear of people's street shoes, jackets, bags, etc.

Feel free to go to the bar *before the game* and bring a drink down to the ice level, making sure to leave everything (other than water in a closed-mouth bottle) outside the arena on the tables by the doors.

If you haven't already done so, determine your throwing rotation, i.e., who will play Lead, Second, Third or Skip. You can shift these from game-to-game; but once a game has started, you have to stick to your positions.

Your sheet assignments will be on the Greenhorn bulletin board with the other league boards in the lobby outside the arena. They'll also be accessible online.

If your sheet is available (it's been "prepared" by our Ice Crew), feel free to go onto the ice early. But no practice shots! You can take a practice slide with the rock in your hand but never let the rock go. Observing the curl and speed of a rock before the game is prohibited, as it will give you an unfair advantage. But more practically, if everyone "practiced", the game would likely go longer than the allotted 1h30m time.

Getting on the Ice

Go into the arena to your designated sheet **before** your start time and have team introductions. State your name, do a fist bump or handshake and always say "good curling". Do your coin toss to determine first end "hammer" (i.e., the team with last rock). If you don't have a coin to toss, a smart phone with a stopwatch is a great way to end up on "evens or odds". Whichever team wins the hammer, the other team has pick of rock colour and goes first.

Starting the Game

If you have four team members, each will throw two rocks. They're numbered 1-8, so the leads throw 1 & 2, Seconds 3 & 4, Thirds 5 & 6 and Skips 7 & 8. If you only have three curlers (see above) the lead and the second each throw 3 rocks while the skip throws two. Throws alternate from team-to-team.



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Get into position *before* your game's designated start time and be prepared to go! Skips to the end; seconds and thirds of the sweeping team at the ready near the t-line; seconds and thirds of the opposing team between the hog lines; and the next thrower on the carpet immediately behind the current thrower.

Alternate shots: Lead One throws Rock 1 of their colour; Lead Two throws rock 1 of their colour. Etc.

In-Game Pointers and Etiquette

This stuff is very important. When you graduate from GH, it's expected you'll know this cold, so might as well get into the habit now...

- When your team is NOT throwing, stay still and quiet so as to not distract the opponents. Skips at the far end: remain behind the opposing skip who's "putting down the broom". Rest of the team: remain between the hog lines or behind the thrower. Under no circumstances, while the other team's thrower is in the hack, should an opposing player walk past them. As soon as the other team is in the hack, stop moving.
- When going back to the hack, please walk as far along the boards as possible. Walking down the middle may obscure the view of both the Skip putting down the broom and/or the thrower.
- The conventional strategy is for the team without hammer (i.e., throwing the first rock), to play their rocks down the center line to "clog-up" the middle. Conversely, the team with hammer generally plays to the wings, so as to have a clear view of the button with the last shot. Practically speaking - particularly at the beginning of your Greenhorn careers - the goal should be to get as many rocks in play as possible!
- It's important for the thrower and the sweepers to know exactly what shot the skip is calling. Make sure you say it out loud, i.e.,: "DRAW TO THE BUTTON!!".
- Don't worry about "in-turn" and "out-turn". Focus on rotation, i.e., clockwise or counter-clockwise.
- Curling has a free-guard zone (the "FGZ") where any opponent's rocks NOT in the rings above the T-line can't be removed until the 6th rock of the end is thrown (they can be displaced, but not put out of play). If the rule is offended, all the rocks are returned to their spots and the thrown rock is removed from play. It's like the shot never happened but you lose a turn.



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- Only the third of the scoring team puts up the score on the board. The thirds are also the ones who resolve any measurements, should there be any doubt about who's closer to the button. The rest of the team should remain a few paces away and let the thirds do their thing.
- Each end should take no more than 15 minutes; so a six-end game should be completed in 1h30 minutes. That being said, you'll likely fall behind your 15-minutes-per-end pace in your first couple of games; but please try and practice "ready curling".
- In order to foster a reasonable pace of play, the GCC has a "Buzzer Rule". For Greenhorn, the buzzer will sound 70 minutes after your designated start time. Once that sounds, complete the end you've started (determined by whether the first rock of that end has crossed the near T-line) and complete one more end. At first, you may struggle to finish even 5 ends; but don't worry, you'll pick up the pace.
- In "regular" league play, it's common for opponents on the wrong end of a lopsided score to concede if the game is out of reach with only one or two ends to go. For example, in a conventional 8-end game, if a team was up 8-2 after 6 ends, the game would be conceded by the team losing by such a wide margin. Ditto if a team was "run out of rocks", i.e. there's no mathematical way to score enough points in the last end to win. *But... this is Greenhorn* and almost everyone is out to get the max experience; so no worries if you want to continue - unless you're materially running behind the 15-minutes-per-end pace, in which case do consider conceding. In any event, if you're getting smoked after 5 ends and there's no mathematical way to get back into it, it's good form to say to the other team, "I know we can't win but are you OK playing the last end?"
- Games may finish in a tie; there are no "extra ends".
- Always shake hands at the end of the game.

Sweeping: weight and line call

Sweeping breaks down the pebble and allows the rock to go straighter (i.e., curl less) and travel further. Remember to apply as much downward pressure as possible and to sweep close to the rock.

There are two reasons to sweep: to drag the rock further; and to manoeuvre a rock to a certain spot. Ultimately, **it's the sweepers' jobs to judge weight** (light, heavy or good); and the **skip's job to judge line** (tight, wide, good).



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Sweepers should take a position at the near t-line and well off to the side, so they don't obscure the thrower's line. Start moving with the thrower as they leave the hack and watch their release to potentially identify anomalies that might impact the expected weight and line of the rock. You may start sweeping the rock as soon as it leaves the thrower's hand.

It may take many games for sweepers to confidently predict if the weight is correct. We encourage all sweepers to get into the habit of saying - audibly - to their sweeping partner and their skip at the other end what they think the weight is. "IT'S HEAVY!!!" or "WEIGHT'S GOOD!!!" It's only through trial and error and carefully watching the path of rocks that you will acquire that skill. When the other team is throwing, try to challenge yourself by predicting where *their* rock will finish.

Skips (or the person putting down the broom) are tasked, among other things, with judging how the rock is curling and whether it looks like it will end up in the desired spot. Like sweeping, only experience will allow you to develop a better understanding of the angles and how much the rock will curl with different weights.

If a skip calls off sweeping because they want it to curl, stay with the rock, as it might be an on/off situation that might require sweeping a few seconds later.

Another note on sweeping - but applicable to skips: *resist the urge to come out and help sweep*. If you already have 2 sweepers going hard the efficacy of your third broom in the mix is minimal. You're far more valuable standing at the back of the house, calling line.

In-Game teaching resources

The roving instructor

A member of our instruction team attends all Greenhorn games during the first half of the fall and winter sessions, moving from sheet to sheet to provide advice on everything from technique to strategy to etiquette. They are there to answer questions; but will often gratuitously make a comment if they observe something where the curler or team would benefit from an expanded understanding of a particular aspect of the game.

Spares

Many experienced GCC curlers are pleased to put their names on the Spare List. If you recruit one of them, please don't hesitate to ask them questions. They have been specifically told to be generous with their knowledge!



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The Garrison 'House Team'

While we aspire to have a full program, we sometimes end up with an odd number of teams in one of our Greenhorn sessions. When that happens (and to avoid creating a bye and having one team side-lined every week), we insert a GCC House Team composed of veteran curlers. This team is intended to be an in-game resource for you and supplements the Roving Instructor. If you're ever scheduled against a GCC House Team, **you** will have the option to either play them straight-up and test your mettle; or else split into mixed teams with two of each. The result for all these games will be an automatic tie, regardless of which way you allocate the curlers.

Après curling

Although *not a rule*, it's common at the GCC for the two teams to sit together in the lounge, with the winning team buying the first round. Even if you have to dash, popping up and quickly buying the other team a jug of beer before heading back down to your car is a lovely touch.

The lounge will be open after all Greenhorn games, and will either feature our after-hours or daily menu.

Recording game results

We don't worry about scores; only the game results: win, loss or tie. We record all results online. Any member of the winning team may record a game result by logging-in and navigating to their dashboard, where they will see an option to record a game result. Please ensure that you record the result for BOTH your winning team and the losing team. It's not enough to just give yourself the "W".

While we do keep track of game results and reflect that in standings, this is just so teams can track their progress. We don't have playoffs in GH. But we do have the fabulous Rock & Roller Bonspiel, which is restricted to our curlers with 6 or fewer years' experience!

Getting better: practice ice & lessons

Did you know that, as members, you have access to free practice ice when it's available? You can even bring a non-member friend for a paltry \$15+GST. Family members living with you can tag along for free!



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Perhaps a private lesson?

[Click here](#) for practice and instruction options.

Curling gear

We understand that many Greenhorners may want to get through a number of games to assess whether they've got the curling bug before they commit to buying their own gear. We've got you covered. "House" brooms, sliders, crutches and delivery sticks can be found in the arena on the sidelines when you enter and can be used for that game (never bring them home). These are *heavily used* (by Greenhorners, Learn-to-Curlers, corporate rentals, school lessons...) and are pretty low-tech. In particular, the difference between the house sliders and curling shoes is huge.

But remember: once a piece of house equipment is claimed for that game, it stays with that person. While teammates or even curlers playing on the same sheet can agree to share gear, don't be playing on sheet 2 and walk over to sheet 3 to use someone's house crutch or stick! Also: note that some GHers have their own sticks and crutches so *really* don't grab those!

Once you're "hooked", you will no doubt consider buying your own gear. Here are some videos to give you an idea of the importance of having [good footwear](#) and a [solid broom](#). If you come back for a second year of Greenhorn, we'd very strongly encourage you to get your own equipment.

The GCC has a great little pro shop and our pricing is the same as all the local retailers; so if you're inclined to make a purchase, why not support the GCC! If we don't have it in the [Pro Shop](#), we can usually get it within 48 hours.

Some curling words and phrases explained

Experienced curlers tend to believe that everyone watches curling on TV and has heard/understand all of these expressions. But for rookies, that's likely not the case. Here are a number of words and phrases explained.

- The rings or the "house" (as a result of their diameter)
 - 12 foot
 - 8 foot
 - 4 foot



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- Button
- Lines
 - Centre line: runs down the middle of the sheet
 - Hog line: the thick black line before which the rock must be released at the near end and beyond which the rock must *entirely* cross at the far end.
 - Tee line: intersects the centre line through the middle of the button.
 - Back line: at the back of the house immediately behind the 12 foot. A rock must be completely behind the back line to be considered out of play.
- Draw: a lighter shot designed to manoeuvre a rock to a very specific place (take more ice for a draw; it curls more).
- Takeout: a harder shot designed to remove an opponent's rock from play (take less ice for a takeout). The ideal club "weight" for a takeout is "board". See below.
- Sweeping
 - To call for sweeping: "Hurry!"; "Hard!"; "Sweep!"; "Yep"
 - To call off sweeping: ""Whoa!"; "Off!"; "Never!"
- Weight (where the rock should stop or, once it's in motion, how fast it's travelling):
 - High guard: just past the hog line (draw)
 - Half-way guard: half-way between the hog line and the rings (draw)
 - Tight guard: just in front of the rings, but not touching (draw)
 - Top 12: in the top portion of the 12 foot (draw)
 - Top 8: in the top portion of the 8 foot (draw)
 - Top 4: in the top portion of the 4 foot (draw)
 - Button (draw)
 - Back 4, 8, 12: the reverse of above (draw/light bump)
 - Back line: almost out but not quite (draw/light bump)
 - Hack: the rock will stop at the far hack (takeout)
 - **Board: the rock will stop at the end boards (takeout). Perfect this weight!!!**
 - Control: board + 6 feet
 - Normal: control + 6 feet
 - Peel: normal + 6 feet
- How much ice: the spot where you "put the broom down" (the target) relative to where you want the rock to finish or hit another rock. Skips should first tap the area where they



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want the rock to end-up and say it out loud “Top 4!” or “Board weight take out!” and *then* put the broom down. At the GCC, you should be prepared to see:

- For a draw: 4.0-6.0 feet of curl
- For a board-weight hit: 1.5-2.5 feet of curl.

For anything in between, moderate how much ice you give. Remember: your target is the broom and NOT where the skip taps the ice!