



North Mymms Bowls Club

Bowls Etiquette

The rules of the game are defined in full in the official booklet 'Laws of the Sport'. All bowlers should familiarise themselves with these.

Etiquette in bowls refers to a polite set of rules and common courtesy that all bowlers should abide by whether they are beginners or experienced. The guidelines below should help everyone to play their best in an enjoyable way.

Bowlers and spectators

- ✓ Do not distract bowlers who are bowling towards you, by moving or walking across the end of the rink. Wait until the bowl has been delivered, then move.
- ✓ It is not good etiquette to interrupt other players when they are on the green, particularly during competitive matches. If you need to speak to players, it should be before or after their game.
- ✓ Respect and protect the green, the club's most important asset.
- ✓ Use the wet mats when directed to do so and ensure that they are placed 2m from the ditch.
- ✓ Do nothing in your actions, words or appearance that will reflect badly on your club.
- ✓ Spectators should commend a good shot on both sides and should keep their opinion of a 'bad' bowl or bowler to themselves. It is unsporting and not in the spirit of the game to hear someone openly criticising a player.

Before the game

- ✓ Make sure you know the rules of the game or competition you are playing.
- ✓ Know the correct dress (it will differ for different types of games).
- ✓ Do not arrive in bowling shoes as you may carry harmful fungus on the soles of your shoes.
- ✓ Be early enough to be able to welcome visitors and help get things out on the green.
- ✓ Ensure that jacks, mats, scoreboards and other equipment are in place ready for the beginning of the game.
- ✓ The challenger calls the toss and goes on the top of the scoreboard.
- ✓ Do not drop your bowls on to the green.

During the game

- ✓ Enter and leave the green by your rink number and use the footpaths – do not walk across the green.
- ✓ Do not sit on the bank with your feet on the edges of the green – it causes unwanted damage and more work for the greenkeeper.
- ✓ When you walk to the other end, move in the centre of the rink and do it quickly enough to maintain the continuity of the game. Remember that others have yet to bowl.
- ✓ Never complain about any green, including yours.



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'Possession of the rink' must always be respected.

- ✓ "Possession of the rink shall belong to the team whose bowl is being played. The players in possession of the rink ... shall not be interfered with, annoyed, or have their attention distracted in any way by their opponents."
- ✓ Questions, information or instructions should only be exchanged while you have 'possession of the rink' – as soon as your bowl comes to rest, 'possession of the rink' is transferred to the opposing player or team. This means you should not be giving instructions to your team when an opposing player is stood on the mat and ready to bowl.
- ✓ If you are a skip and changing ends, you must get back to the mat with your opponent if you are not first to bowl. You should not stand in the middle of the rink discussing your next shot when your opposing skip has already returned to the mat to bowl and has to wait for you.
- ✓ Stand well behind the mat or the head, keeping still and quiet while others are delivering their bowls.

Position on the rink

- ✓ When at the head, bear in mind that some bowlers like a clear view of the rink markers. Stand behind the head, inside the rink markers, but not obscuring the central rink number.
- ✓ When at the head in sunny conditions, or as the sun sets, avoid standing where your shadow is cast over the jack, making it difficult to see from the mat.
- ✓ Similarly, standing directly behind a white jack in white shoes can make the jack difficult to see.
- ✓ Players at the mat-end of the rink who are not delivering a bowl should stand at least one metre behind the mat.

Responsibilities

- ✓ Follow the direction given by the skip, no matter whether you agree or disagree.
- ✓ Remember that the directions for the skip are only given by the number three in fours matches, or the number two in triples. Other players should not be involved in this unless asked by the number three or two.

Results of an end

- ✓ The result of each end (including measuring where required) is determined between the threes (or twos in triples). Other players should not be involved unless asked. You should **only** move the shots that you are conceding, not the shots that you are claiming.
- ✓ Do not disturb the head until the result of the end has been agreed.



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General

- ✓ Encourage, rather than criticise – no one delivers a bad bowl intentionally.
- ✓ Avoid stating the obvious – but provide help by indicating how far a bowl is from the jack.
- ✓ You can call or shout at your own bowls – but do not 'call' your opponents' bowls to go through gaps, get wrecked, or to promote your own bowls – wishing misfortune on your opponents' bowls is unsporting.
- ✓ Commend good shots on both sides – more enthusiastically for your own side though! Learn to accept lucky shots or wicks, both for and against you – they will balance out in the long run.

After the game

- ✓ Shake hands. Congratulate the opposing team or player and offer to buy them a drink. Remember that your opponent is a guest of the club.
- ✓ Ensure that jacks, mats, scoreboards and other equipment are returned to the shed.