

The game of curling explained

Curling is easily among the most curious and obscure of all Winter Olympic events. But while curlers may not enjoy the notoriety of figure skaters and alpine skiers, the event will be hotly contested as the athletes savor the opportunity to compete on the world stage.

How to play

Two teams of four members each alternately slide blocks of stone toward the center of a target known as the **house**. Teams may attempt to block and bump opponent's stones. A match is made up of 10 **ends**.

Ends

In each end, 16 stones are delivered at the house — eight per team, two per player. The team with the stone closest to the house's center — or **button** — wins the end.

Clean sweep

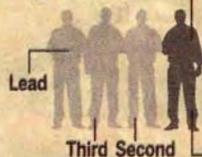
The sweeping action melts the ice, reducing friction on the stone and allowing it to travel farther and straighter.

Stone

Made of a rare, dense granite weighing 38 to 44 pounds.



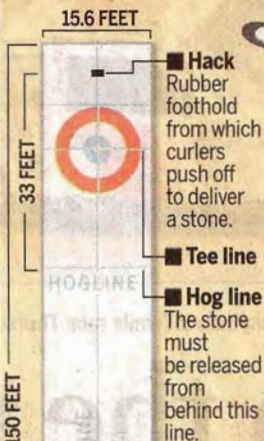
THE TEAM



Skip

Establishes tactics and advises teammates on delivery; throws last.

EQUIPMENT



Hack
Rubber foothold from which curlers push off to deliver a stone.

Tee line

Hog line
The stone must be released from behind this line.

House
Scoring area.

Button
Center ring of the house.



Shoes

One shoe has a Teflon or steel sole for gliding on the ice; the other shoe has a gripper sole for traction.

Keeping score

Only the winner of the end is awarded points. One point is given for each stone closer to the button than the opponent's. The end winner also throws first in the next end.

RED 2
YELLOW 0

RED 0
YELLOW 1

RED 0
YELLOW 3

Brush
Hog hair or synthetic bristles.