



ORIENTATION GUIDE

2025-2026

Welcome to the Riverdale Curling League! We're glad you're a part of our great Canadian sporting tradition. Riverdale Curling League was established in 1983 and has enjoyed a tradition of sportsmanship, camaraderie and friendly competition ever since. The rules for each section are found below. Good curling to all!

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Dates & Times

First day of curling

Sunday, October 19, 2025

Final day of curling

Sunday, April 19, 2026

[Full Season Calendar](#)

The draw (game schedule) will be available on our [website](#) in the Riverdale section (password "8ender") at least a week before the start of the season. There are 7 games in a round, with each team having a bye one week of the round (meaning the team does not have a game scheduled that week). Often, the final round of the season is not a full 7 weeks, so your team may not get a bye in that final round. If your team has a need to be away a certain week, you can request a bye from the Drawmaster here: <https://toronto.pridecurl.ca/request-a-bye/>

Please note, while the Drawmaster makes every effort to accommodate bye requests, there is no guarantee that your bye request can be accommodated.

Games take place at the Royal Canadian Curling Club (RCCC), [131 Broadview Avenue](#) Toronto, ON.

New to Curling?

Two-minute intro to the sport: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOk9SVzqHsk>

Five-minute closer look at rules: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TjxcZhbVSVQ>

Eight-minute coaching video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cROXAFs970M>

Player Roles

Remember first and foremost that you are a TEAM, and you need to work as one to be successful and have fun. Team communication on and off the ice is essential.

Skips

You are the team leader. You are generally the executive's point of contact for passing along information and your team's point of contact for receiving information. Please be sure to keep your team informed of all changes and developments throughout the year. Encourage communication on ice and teach them preferred methods of calling or signaling weights & plays.

Vices

On the ice, you are the liaison between the front-end (lead and second) and back-end (you and the skip) of the team. You are the main facilitator for making sure that everyone knows what's going on, as well as being the primary coach for your front end. Vices do the coin flip at the beginning of the game, choosing hammer or stone colour. **Vices from the winning team will communicate the game result and any spares/fifth players present to the Drawmaster using the submission form on the website at <https://toronto.pridecurl.ca/result/> (QR code at right will be posted on the bulletin board at the club).**

Seconds

As the senior member of the front end, you tend to be the main judge of the weight of rocks and should try to help leads wherever possible (especially for new curlers). You should also take responsibility for clearing rocks at the completion of an end so the lead can prepare to throw.

Leads

You set the pace of the game. Be prepared to throw your rock as soon as possible at the beginning of an end or after the opposing team has released its rock. **If your team is first to throw in an end, let your teammates clear the rocks at the completion of the previous end while you prepare to throw.** Don't be afraid to ask questions of your teammates.

All positions

To ensure prompt game play, be ready to throw your rocks as soon as your skip is ready to call the shot, and remember to clear the ice promptly after throwing and sweeping (**by walking down the sides of the sheet and not down the centre**). For safety, speed, and etiquette reasons, please do not pull out the opposition rocks for them.

Club Rules & Etiquette

A few standard “rules” of etiquette you should observe, and encourage others to observe:

1. Smoking and vaping are not allowed in the club.
2. If you are bringing a beverage into the ice area, please make sure it's in a plastic cup and never carry it on the ice itself.
3. It is usual practice to shake hands (or other non-contact alternative!) with all opponents before the game. A compliment is not uncommon: “Good curling.” “Good game.” “You’re cute — are you single?”
4. We all want to get in a complete game in the 2 hour timeframe, so we encourage you to:
 - a. prepare yourself in the hack immediately after your opponent has released their rock; (if you’re throwing first in the end, let your teammates clear the stones)
 - b. be ready to deliver the rock the moment your opponent’s rock has come to a stop;
 - c. be in position and ready to sweep when it’s your turn to do so; and
 - d. please clear the ice right after your shot or after sweeping a teammate’s shot.
5. When it is the opposition’s turn to throw, all team members should be outside the house, standing in the designated spaces at the edge of the ice surface. After the stone, and the thrower, have traveled past the hog line, you may prepare for your shot in the house.
6. The front end should generally stand outside of the hog line, and not behind the far house at any time during an end.
7. Talking is fine but don’t let socializing slow the game. There are seven other people on your sheet, so save the good stuff for the lounge — it has more impact there anyway.
8. If a team wishes to concede the game early, the vice and/or skip will offer to “shake hands” with the winning team to signal this.
9. It is usual practice to shake hands after every game too, often with a compliment again, such as: “Thanks for the game.” “You curled well.” “Love your outfit!”
10. Winning team members buy the first round of drinks, and the teams sit together to discuss the game and get to know each other better. Frequently, the losing team will reciprocate with a second round.
11. Tell your skip if you are going to miss a game so they can try to find a spare.
12. Exchange phone numbers and email addresses with all your teammates.

Visit the [Riverdale FAQ](#) page on the Riverdale & Rotators website for additional information regarding rules and etiquette.

Gameplay

The judge of play is the Drawmaster or their designate. Questions regarding rule interpretation and disagreements arising during play should be directed to the Drawmaster. If they are not available, such questions should be directed to any other available executive member, who will act as the judge of play. The decisions of the judge of play are final. The [Curling Canada Rules of Curling for General Play](#) will be used, except where modified in this Orientation Guide.

Draw and Bell Times:

Draw	Start Time	Bell - Finish Current End + One More (at 1:35 elapsed)	Game End
1	9:00 am	10:35 am	11:00 am
2	11:15 am	12:50 am	1:15 pm
3	1:30 pm	3:05 pm	3:30 pm
<i>Ice maintenance</i>			
4	4:30 pm	6:05 pm	6:30 pm

Notes on Gameplay:

1. Our number one rule is always to HAVE FUN!
2. If you don't know — ask! The executive is happy to answer any questions you may have about the game. Ask your teammates, ask someone you respect in the clubhouse, ask your bartender. Don't worry if you think it's a dumb question — next year someone will ask you the same question anyway.
3. Games are 2 hours long and start at the designated time according to the clock in the ice shed. You should start on time and be able to complete your game in that time.
4. The vices will conduct a "coin toss" using the wheels in the ice shed. The team that wins gets the choice of hammer or rock colour. If hammer is chosen, the opposing team has the colour choice. To save time, you can also do this by tossing a coin before you hit the ice.
5. The Five-Rock Free Guard Zone rule is in effect. The Free Guard Zone is the area between the hog line and the "house" (the painted rings in the ice). This means that the opposing team's first rocks delivered in each end cannot be removed from play (directly or indirectly) by the opposing team — if they are in the free guard zone — until after the fifth rock has come to rest. A team may, however, take out its own stones, provided that the opposition stones in the free guard zone are not removed from play in the process. **Additionally, any guards that come to rest touching the centre line may not be moved off of the centre line until the sixth rock of the end is delivered.**
6. The bell will ring to signal the approach of the end of your game. See Dates & Times on page 1 for specific times. Ends are considered complete when the final rock has been

released by the thrower. The official time will be according to the clock in the ice shed, therefore, all teams are encouraged to start their games as quickly as possible if there are no other delays on your sheet of ice.

7. If a team does not commence play at the designated start time, it shall be assessed a penalty of one point and one end shall be considered completed. This penalty is repeated for each subsequent fifteen minute delay. When play does start, the non-offending team shall also have the choice of hammer. If a team cannot commence play after 30 minutes, the game shall be declared a default. The non-offending team will record a win, the other a loss.
8. There must be at least three players on a team for that team to play, and at least two must be regular team members. Any fewer than three players and/or two regular team members will result in a default.
9. Games may be rescheduled at the mutual agreement of both skips. To reschedule, you must speak with the club manager to secure available ice time (if any), and advise our Drawmaster when the game is to be played and what the outcome of the game is. The Drawmaster is **not** responsible for finding your team ice time for make up games. All games must be played **before the end** of the round.

Playoffs:

10. All teams participate in the playoffs, over the last two scheduled curling days of the season (a Saturday and Sunday). Playoffs are conducted in a single-knockout format, with the top team in each division earning a bye to the semi-finals. Teams will be seeded in divisions based on their aggregate point total.
11. If a playoff game ends in a tie, it is broken by playing a full extra end toward the glass.
12. The team with the highest aggregate point total each season is awarded the Harcourt Cup.

Brooms:

13. Hairbrushes, and Hardline brooms **with their plastic inserts, cannot** be used for sweeping. If you wish to use a Hardline broom for sweeping, the plastic insert must be removed. **You may be challenged by the opposing team to prove that you have done so before or during the course of play.** Hairbrushes may be used for sliding purposes only.

Standings & League Structure

Subject to final registration numbers, the league will consist of 56 teams divided into 8 divisions of 7 teams each. Each team in a division will receive one bye (i.e., no curling) in each round. Depending on the number of game days, teams may not be scheduled for a bye in the final round.

Points will be awarded as follows:

Division	Win	Loss	Tie
A	25	20	22.5
B	23	18	20.5
C	21	16	18.5
D	19	14	16.5
E	17	12	14.5
F	15	10	12.5
G	13	8	10.5
H	11	6	8.5

1. Defaulted games receive the regular points for a win or loss.
2. If a game ends in a tie, both teams receive tie points as indicated above. No extra ends are played unless it's a playoff game.
3. The schedule will be divided into rounds, and teams will be promoted or relegated from division to division at the end of each round. In all divisions, two teams will be moved up (except A – nowhere to go) and two teams will be moved down (except H – nowhere to go). The number of points accumulated in the round will determine which teams move up and which teams move down. The number of teams in each division will remain constant: the top two teams from "C" promoted to "B", replaced by the bottom 2 teams in "B" relegated to "C".
4. Each team will complete a team draw to the button before the end of the first round (as indicated on the first round schedule). The points earned in the team draw to the button will help break ties at the end of the round: If teams are tied at the end of a round of play, promotions or relegations will be determined by the following methods (as needed, in the following order): (1) head-to-head records for the round, (2) team draw to the button totals, and (3) a coin toss (or equivalent method).
5. Normally, teams will be scheduled to play once each week.

Visit the [Riverdale FAQ](#) page on the Riverdale & Rotators website for additional information regarding seeding of teams, points and league structure.

Prizes

At the end of each season, the playoff winning and runner-up teams in each division will be awarded an equal monetary prize to be shared among the team members. The exact prize amount is dependent on the annual budget as approved by the Executive Committee. This season, each division playoffs winning team will receive \$460 and the runners up \$220.

Sparing

A team must have at least 3 players, and a minimum of 2 registered team members (including fifth players if applicable) must play, or the game is forfeit. There are many instances when a team member cannot attend a scheduled game. For these circumstances a team can call upon spares. **We are all here to play and have fun, so it is expected that teams should accept all opponent spares unless there is an extreme concern with the appropriateness of the spare.**

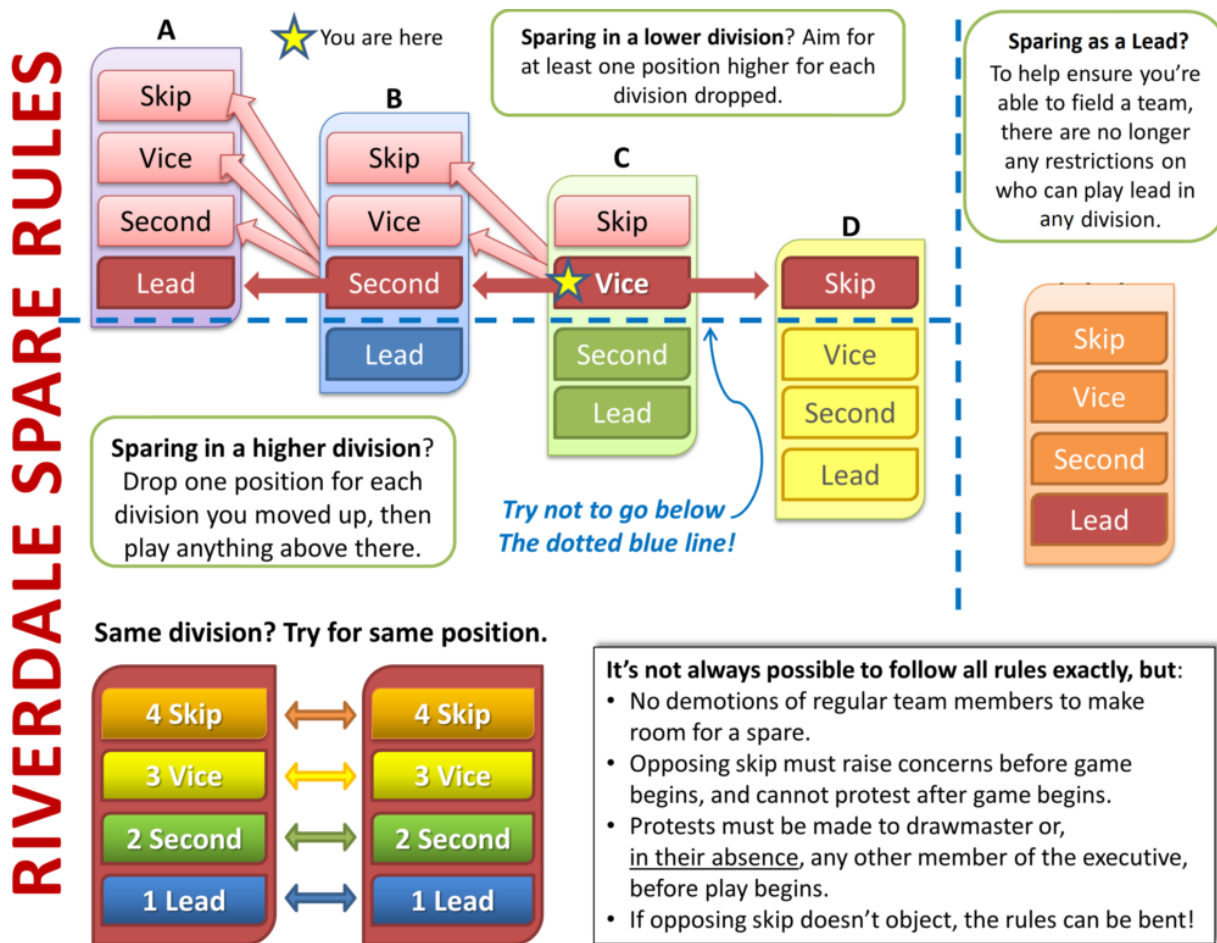
Rules for sparing have been established to help choose players that have an appropriate skill level for the position required and do not provide undue advantage to the team. Skips or vices are asked to prearrange spares and advise the opposing skip in advance, where possible.

1. Wherever possible find someone who plays the same position in your division or any division below you.
2. No demotion of regular team players with spares. Players can be moved up to a higher position for spares, but they cannot be moved down for the spare to play in that player's usual position. E.g., can't move the vice to second and have spare play vice.
3. If a spare player is coming down from a higher division, they must spare at least one position higher than their usual role (B vice must play C skip/C second must play D vice or skip).
4. If a spare is coming up from a lower division, they may spare up to one position lower than their usual role. (B vice may play A second or higher, D second may play C lead or higher, etc. See diagram below.)
5. There are no restrictions on who can play lead in order to help ensure teams are able to field a team.
6. Fifth players can play any position on their own team, but must spare at the lead position when playing on other teams.

Any arrangement can be permitted with the express permission of the opposing skip. Once a game has begun, the agreed positions and results of the game must be allowed to stand. Any protests about choice of spare must be made to the Drawmaster or, in their absence, one executive member before the game commences. The decision of the Drawmaster/executive member concerning suitability of the proposed spare(s) is final.

Riverdale members and registered fifth/sixth players can spare as often as they wish with no extra fees.

Spare list players and non-members of the league may spare twice before and twice after New Year's Day without spare fees. Non-members playing more than twice in each half will be allowed, but will be assessed a \$20 fee for each occurrence to a maximum of \$180 per half. Non-members are ineligible to play in the playoffs or win prizes.



Gearing Up

Curling, unlike some winter sports, doesn't require a huge investment in equipment, but there are some items you'll want to have when you start. Here are some tips on what to wear and what not to wear when you come for your first game:

Clothes: Clothing which sheds lint/thread/hair/pills contaminates the ice surface, and is not allowed. Warm stretchy clothing is recommended. It can be cold out on the ice so it's better to layer and be too warm than to be too cold. Wear a sweatshirt, light jacket, or a stretchy jacket over a layer or two of cotton or thermal shirts. Wear stretchy or loose pants, like sweats, yoga or track pants. Jeans and other clothes which restrict movement are not recommended. Curling is not a fashion contest (unless you make it into a televised bonspiel.)

Shoes: The best shoes for the ice surface are clean running shoes or skater shoes, preferably never worn outside. Flat-bottom styles actually give you a bit more grip than runners, and are easier to attach slider tape to. Boots, dress shoes, and heels are not suitable for the ice. Sliding tape is available for you. Once you're ready to invest, slip-on sliders and grippers can be purchased at the club and at many sports stores and curling shoes will take your game to the next level.

Brooms are available to borrow at the club; brooms can be purchased from the club's pro shop or specialty stores. Hairbrushes and Hardline brooms that have the plastic inserts are not permitted for sweeping. Plastic inserts must be removed from Hardline brooms.

Practice Ice

Riverdale is an "Associate League" - not an RCCC club league. Membership in Riverdale does not include membership in the RCCC, so their members have priority over practice ice. Practice ice must be booked with the club manager no more than 10 days in advance by email. Practice ice may be canceled or limited if there are club events (e.g., training clinics or one-day bonspiels) during those times. There may also be time in late afternoon or early evening available on weekdays depending on the club schedule.

For more information, contact the club manager at manager@royalcanadiancurling.com.

Contacts

Riverdale Curling League Executive for 2025-2026:

President	Mark Field	External Relations	Matt Harding
Vice President	Raynie Stubbs	Secretary	Bob Rusk
Drawmaster	Jordan Stewart	Events Coordinator	Ryan Macdonald
Treasurer	Jeff Aschkinasi	Webmaster	Cameron MacLeod
Member Relations	Patrick Tackney		

Website: <http://toronto.pridecurl.ca> (members' area password: 8ender)

Contact the executive:

Speak to us at the club, email riverdale@pridecurl.ca, message us on Facebook, send us a text, or even call!

Mark @ 416-254-9981 Raynie Stubbs @ 506-721-8773 Cameron @ 416-779-5638

[*See website for all member contact info*](#)

Royal Canadian Curling Club Manager: Bill McAnally, manager@royalcanadiancurling.com

2SLGBTQI Curling in Canada

[List of 2SLGBTQIA Curling Leagues in Canada](#)

[List of International 2SLGBTQIA Bonspiels](#)