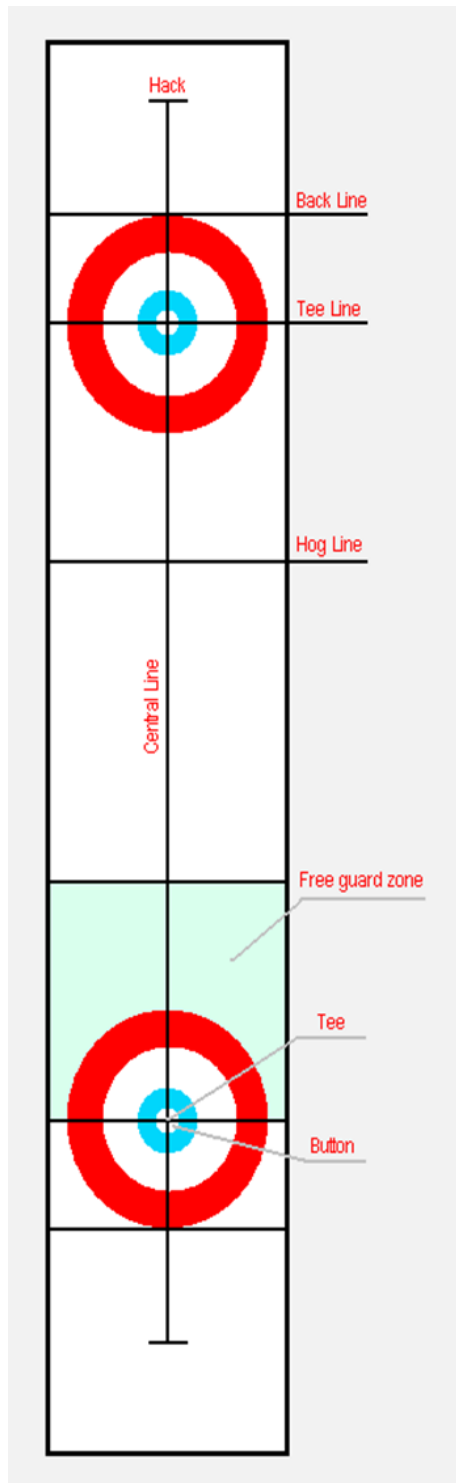


# SWCA Intermediate Guide to Wheelchair Curling



Curling is an enjoyable sport, which combines physical fitness with a social aspect. It is a sport that you can play just for fun or you can become highly competitive – you could even aspire to the Olympics.

**GET INVOLVED IN CURLING**  
**A Sport for All Ages**  
**A Sport for Life**



Curling is a game requiring hand/eye co-ordination – a game of skill, strategy and luck but above all, it is a game of fun.

It is a game that can be played by both males and females from the age of 8 to 88. It can be recreational or competitive depending on how much time you have to devote to the sport.

The only personal equipment required is your wheelchair, a curling cue/stick and warm, comfortable clothing.

Each team has 4 players, called **Skip, Third, Second** and **Lead**.

The Skip is the captain or the leader of the team. The Skip plans the strategy for the team and stands in the far house holding his/her brush to tell the team where to aim their stones.

The Lead throws his/her stones first, then the Second throws his/her stones. The Third throws his/her stones next and holds the brush when the Skip is throwing stones.

It is the responsibility of the Thirds to settle on the score at the completion of each end by looking at where the stones are lying and to mark it on the scoreboard.

Curling is played on a sheet of ice by sliding stones from one end to a target, called the **house**, at the far end. Alternating between the two teams, each player, beginning with the Lead, delivers two stones.. When all 16 stones have been delivered, 8 by each team, an **end** is complete.

Once an end has been played the teams turn around and deliver the stones back – and keep doing this until all the ends have been played.

The number of ends varies depending upon the amount of available time and the level of competition – most games have either 8 or 10 ends and take between 2

and 2½ hours.

The curling rink is long and narrow with a house at each end. The ice is special **pebbled** ice, which makes it easier for the stones to slide.



## External Wheelchair Competitions

**National Pairs**

**British Open**

**Scottish Championships**

**Friendship Trophy**

## WHEELCHAIR CURLING

This has developed rapidly to allow wheelchair users to participate in this exciting sport.

Curling is now a world and paralympic sport and offers ambitious players the opportunity to progress to world ranking level.

Qualified coaches will deliver the skills required to play the game for all levels of participation.

**Give it a Go**

## Discipline

Have a teammate or helper brace your chair when throwing. When the target is placed by your skip, move your chair to the stone, always keeping your wheels in the same position relative to the stone for every throw.

## A totally different game



Wheelchair curling is not regular curling without the sweeping; it is a completely different game. Excellent wheelchair curlers will shoot around 70%. If you can ignore your inevitable misses, consistently draw into the rings, make the occasional up-weight hit and have a little luck, you too can succeed.

The stones are made of granite and weigh approx. 44 lbs. but with the cue delivery, they are not difficult to throw.

Little stones weighing half as much are available for young children. The stones used during a game have two different colours of handles to allow each team to know which are theirs.

The house has four different sized circles – the **12' circle**, the **8' circle**, the **4' circle** and the **button**, which is the small circle in the middle. Sometimes the house is also called the **rings**.

In order to score points, your stones must be all the way in or just touching the house, which is called **biting**. Stones that go over the **back line** are removed from play as are stones that don't go over the **hog line**.

To score points, each team tries to get its stones closer to the centre of the house than the opposing team. Only one team can score in any end.

You score **one point** for every stone closer to the centre than the closest opposition stones

To score the stones must be on or inside the circles. If there are no stones on or inside the circles, no one scores and that is called a **blank end**.

The team that wins the end delivers the first stone in the next end. When an end is blanked, then the same order of play is kept as in the previous end.

The team with last stone has the advantage and this is referred to as having the **hammer**. Curling stones don't travel in straight lines, but **curl** or bend as they travel down the ice.

In order to make the stones curl in the right direction, you must put a **turn** on the stone, either a **clockwise turn** or a **Anti-clockwise turn**.

When the Skip indicates where the stone you are about to deliver is to go, he/she will also indicate which turn you must put on the stone.

The Skip will also indicate to you how hard you are to throw the stone. You may be asked for **takeout weight** in order to remove an opposition stone(s) or for **draw weight** if the Skip wants you to put the stone gently into a particular spot.

Once you deliver your stone towards the Skip, one player on your team will hold and anchor your wheelchair. This is known as the Budding System.

Sometimes frost, dirt or hairs can cause a stone to go off course so the any debris on the ice should be cleared immediately.

The area between the hogline and the rings at each end is called the **Free Guard Zone**. If a stone lands in this area it cannot be removed from play by the opposition until the fifth stone of the end is thrown. It can be moved within that area or moved into the house but if removed from play, it has to be returned to its original position.

On the fifth stone, any stone can be removed from play. This rule makes the game more interesting and stops teams from just **peeling/hitting out** the other teams stones off for the whole game.

## Learning to curl from a chair

### Delivery



Develop a repeatable delivery that can be made with different levels of force. Find a motion that works for you: pendulum, piston, three-quarters, side, front.

There are no right and wrong ways to push a stone. Choose the one that works best for you.

Try different lengths of delivery stick and different chair positions in relation to the stone.

Start by throwing 20 feet from the target and as you become more accurate, gradually move back.

### Stone Rotation

This is what makes stones curl, clockwise for left to right, and anti-clockwise for right to left. Putting rotation on the stone takes practice and is best learned when not throwing hard.

### Weight Control

This is the toughest skill to master. A repeatable delivery motion is key to weight control.

Throwing a particular weight relies on muscle memory and takes lots of practice, so always have a plan when you throw a stone. Don't throw a stone, throw a particular shot. That way you'll know whether the weight you threw was too light for your plan, or too heavy, or just right.

Every stone thrown with a purpose adds to that memory bank and will help you know how hard to throw the next stone.