



Welcome to the Granite Curling Club!

We're glad you've decided to join us for your first year of curling. Since you're new to the club and perhaps the sport we've put together this little guide to answer some common questions. If you have additional questions or suggestions for changes to this guide, mail us at membership@curlingseattle.org.

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How do I learn to be a better curler?

Practice. It's really hard to get consistently better just curling one day a week: all that you learn in your game is quickly forgotten.

We have daily practice ice available for about an hour before each league starts, and it's a great way to throw some extra rocks. All practice ice times are listed at www.curlingseattle.org. We also have a packet of curling drills that are useful for building skills. Printed and electronic copies are available by mailing membership@curlingseattle.org.

Sign up for a bonspiel. There's nothing like curling four games in a weekend to really solidify skills like judging the weight of rocks. When you sweep 200 rocks in a weekend you learn very quickly which ones were thrown hard enough.

Ask experienced people in your league to take you out for a bit of practice. Some of the leagues wind up with an unused sheet for the second draw and the experienced curlers will often be glad to give you a few pointers while you throw some rocks.

Participate in the 5-and-under hot shots competition. It's a couple of hours on the ice, along with some food and really stupid prizes, but most importantly you get to see the same shot thrown 8 times in a row. You get a lot of practice on basic draws and takeouts in a very short period of time. Plus it's a lot of fun!

Is it ok to warm up on the ice before a game?

Yes! Many people in the club will do this. However, it is considered bad etiquette to warm up on the sheet you'll be playing on. Make sure to check the schedule, and if for example you're curling on sheet 5, practice on any sheet but that one. If all the sheets are already filled with people practicing just ask if you can join in!

How early should I get to the club prior to my game time?

The draw times listed for your league (6:30pm, for example) are the times the games **start**, not the time you should show up at the club. You'll have a bunch of people waiting somewhat patiently for you if you are not ready to go on the ice at the listed start time. Give yourself about 10-15 minutes extra time prior to the game time to change, put your shoes on, chat with your team, stretch, etc.

How do I know what team I'm playing against? Or on what sheet?

Each league has its schedule, team listings, and sheet assignments posted on the corkboard on the right as you walk into the club. You'll also receive a copy of the schedule from your league manager the 2nd or 3rd week of play.

I can't make a game, what do I do?

If you can't make a game it's your responsibility to find a substitute to play for you. Each league has a sub list that you'll receive from the league manager the 2nd or 3rd week of league play. Don't leave looking for a sub until the day of the game! If you have trouble finding someone to play, let your skip know as soon as possible and they can assist as well.

How do I find out more about rules and strategy?

One good way is to buy a copy of *Curling for Dummies*. It's a great way to learn about the basics of rules, strategy for different situations, and types of shots. You can buy a copy from the club store, or order it from your favourite on-line bookstore.

You can also learn from other people on your team. This is particularly helpful when you're curious about strategy. Don't understand why your skip made a certain decision? Ask! Similarly, you can learn a lot just by chatting with your teammates while the opposing team is throwing. One of the fun parts of curling is standing at the side trying to second-guess the skips on both teams 😊 If you're playing "front-end" (first or second) this is a great way to pass the time between shots.

What kind of shoes should I buy?

If all you've ever curled in are sneakers and a slip on slider you'll be amazed at how much more stable you feel in real curling shoes. They're a whole lot warmer too. Shoes are very much personal preference, and it's much more important to get a pair that are comfortable than it is to worry about fancy removable Teflon disks. We have many different shoes in the store, so feel free to ask to try a pair on and take them out on the ice for a spin.

What kind of broom should I buy?

Broom selection is pretty subjective. There are all sorts of options: bristle, synthetic, carbon fiber, twisty head, fixed head, etc. Some people will tell you that bristle brooms work better on frosty ice, and synthetic work better on less frosty ice. The reality is for regular league play nobody will be able to tell the difference 😊 Get a broom that feels good to you. Before you buy try them all. Just ask around the club and borrow someone's broom for an end to see how you like it.

How do I buy something from the club store?

Each league has someone who has a key to the store. Their names and photos are posted on the store window, so look for them on the night you curl and ask them for help.

Where are some other places to buy curling gear?

Our club store has a wide selection of brooms, gloves, sliders, grippers, and shoes, but sometimes the shoe selection can run a little low. We can special order anything, but if you prefer instant gratification

you can drive up to Vancouver, BC, and pick some stuff up at On the Rocks Curling. Their website is <http://www.ontherockscurling.ca/>.

How do I get one of those cool pins with my name on it?

New members of the club get a free pin as part of their membership. We place the order in late October, and pins usually arrive by mid-November. Before the order goes in a list of names will be posted in the club so you can verify them for spelling or other name changes.

How do I get a copy of the club directory?

The club directory is printed towards the middle of the year, and copies will be available in the club once they are printed.

Can I bring friends and family to watch me play?

Absolutely! You are welcome to bring guests to sit downstairs or upstairs to watch you play. Remember, though, that they cannot go on the ice side of the club. If they want to give curling a try, they should come to one of our open houses. The list of open houses is available at www.curlingseattle.org.

How do I sign up for a bonspiel? Am I good enough to play in one?

Yes, you are good enough to play in one! Bonspiels are an incredibly fun and exhausting way to spend a weekend. They are also a **great** way to practice. The tricky part is getting into one, since they fill up very, very quickly.

The bonspiel schedule for the year is posted to www.curlingseattle.org. About a month in advance of the bonspiel start asking people around the club if they are looking for someone to join their team. Good people to ask are your league team members, or the opponents you played that night while you're eating after the game. Many people around the club are happy to form a team with a new curler playing lead for a bonspiel. We also have bonspiels that are dedicated to new curlers: the Evergreen Spiel and the 5-and-under spiel are both good ones to try first. The 5-and-under fills up very, very, quickly, so when you see the signup sheet up go sign up fast!

Who runs the club? Do they get paid?

The club is managed by the board of trustees. They are all unpaid volunteers who sit on the board because they love curling and want to see the club be successful. All the board members curl in regular leagues too, so you've likely seen them around. Their pictures are posted on the board at the top of the stairs, and names are listed in the front of the curling club directory.

We also have a few paid positions: we pay our ice crew (one head icemaker and two assistants), our accountant, and our housekeeper.

Everything else that happens at the club is done by people like you. All the bonspiels, open houses, weekend events, Learn to Curl sessions, cleaning up after league play, changing water in the coolers, taking out the garbage, dealing with recyclables, washing dishes, etc. is all done by club members because they enjoy helping the club run smoothly.

How can I help out?

There are all sorts of events during the year that need help, and all you need to do is keep your ears open during league announcements. We always post messages asking for bonspiel assistance, open house help, etc. Don't be shy about helping out!

In addition, there are some very basic things you can do to help keep the club clean. In particular, after you're done your game on the ice, take the time to throw out any used water cups, bottles, candy wrappers, etc. and put your crutches away. After eating upstairs take your glasses back to the bar, and throw your dirty dishes in the trash. Don't forget to recycle your recyclables!

How does food work after the league games?

Each league runs their food a little differently, but in general you can expect your team to be responsible for food once per half. To find out for sure, just check with your skip. Usually they understand that new curlers haven't figured everything out yet, and will do a good job of either taking care of the food or being clear with you about what you're responsible for and on what week. When in doubt just ask your skip or the league manager and they'd be glad to explain.

Can I take my drink downstairs?

No, and that includes the curling ice, no matter how much a hot toddy might warm you up during a game!

What kind of stuff does the bar sell?

In addition to alcohol, the bar has soft drinks, Thomas Kemper premium soda, tea, hot chocolate, spiced cider, orange juice, pineapple juice, and cranberry juice. For those that prefer plain old water the bar has that too! You can also find stuff to satisfy the munchies like chips, nuts, pepperoni sticks, and microwavable sandwiches.

Note that the bar is a real bar, and that means you have to be over 21 to enter (yes, even babies have to wait outside!) We keep the bar open on league nights and special occasions until everyone from the late draw has had a chance to get their refreshments. As required by state law, the bar closes no later than 2am.

Does the bar take credit or debit cards?

Not currently. Cheques are ok though!

How much are bartenders paid?

All the bartenders are club members who volunteer to take a state bartender's class. The league bartenders receive a discount on one league fee, but that's it. Tips are, of course, appreciated!