

FENTONS RINK

WHAT IS CURLING?

Curling originated in Scotland, being played outdoors on frozen rivers and lakes.

Over the years, the game has been refined and is now played mainly on indoor ice rinks. Curling is played in more than 40 countries worldwide, but is most prolific in Scotland, Canada, the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Germany, USA, China, Japan, Holland, Italy and France.

Modern curling is often described as "Chess on ice"; it is a game of skill, precision, fitness and **FUN!**

THE OBJECTIVE

The objective is simple: to slide a granite curling stone (weighing 20kgs) from one end of the ice rink to the other (45m) to a target marked on the ice. The player slides out of a starting block called "The Hack" and releases the stone when it's on the right path. As the player releases the stone, the handle is twisted to the left or right, thus making the stone spin slowly as it travels down the ice. This makes it 'curl' as it travels towards its target, giving the game its name of "Curling".

HOW TO PLAY

Two teams of four play against each other using two stones per player and playing in turn. ALL players in the team are involved in EVERY stone played, taking turns to deliver the stone, to sweep (two players) or as "Skip", who guides the delivery and tells the sweepers when to sweep. Sweeping can help to keep a stone on the right trajectory and make it go further than it otherwise would have done.

After everyone has played, the "End" is finished and the team whose stone(s) is/are nearest the middle of the target wins the end; one point for each stone nearer the centre than the opposition. A stone must be within the outer (12 feet in diameter) circle to count.

A game typically lasts eight ends over a two-hour session, but we have had to temporarily shorten sessions a little to enable equipment to be cleaned between session due to Corvid-19. **Currently to conform to the 'Rule of Six' we are playing an adapted version of three rather than four per team.** Special shoes are worn to enable the player to slide over the ice. Skates are definitely NOT used, as the surface must be perfectly flat and smooth. A single hair or piece of fluff is enough to make a stone go completely off course!

LEAGUES & COMPETITIONS

Fenton's Rink hosts several leagues and junior club sessions, as well as regular tournaments for both experienced and novice curlers. Weekend competitions (called "Bonspiels" in curling parlance) are also organised where the competition involves several games over a weekend, interspersed with a liberal helping of partying! The social side of curling is very important and Fenton's Rink also host birthday, hen and stag parties...for those who are looking for something a little different.

If you are an experienced player, or are thinking of taking up the game as a regular sport, why not get in touch with [The South of England Curling Club](#) They handle all the leagues and many of the other competitions hosted at Fenton's Rink. They also hold beginners' sessions for those who might like to have a go, but don't want to book a full curling session.