



BOWLS ETIQUETTE

EXTRACT FROM ARTICLE BY JOHN ROBERTS CHAIR OF OFFICIATING AND LAWS COMMITTEE - BOWLS VICTORIA

Friendly and sporting acts towards your team-mates and your opponents should be appreciated and reciprocated. We should all approach our bowls with enthusiasm, friendliness, good company and tolerance.

Etiquette is relevant to attire, politeness and general behaviour and adds to the feel of the game.

Tips for good etiquette:

- *Be punctual and always welcome visitors.*
- *Be polite and friendly to your opponents including not using offensive language.*
- *Introduce each other at the start of play.*
- *Respect the laws of the game and the role of the umpire.*
- *Do nothing to distract the bowler on the mat and make sure you are not standing in front of the view of the boundary pegs.*
- *Do not move at either end of the rink where it may distract the player on the mat.*
- *Watch your bowl until it stops and learns from the shot.*
- *Concentrate on the game and the state of play.*
- *Commend your team-mates, and your opponents, when they play a good shot.*
- *Admit a fluke shot when you play one and remember it when your opponent gets one later in the game. Team members should not clap a "lucky" bowl – remember it's a poor bowl with a great result.*
- *Remain behind the mat and within the confines of the rink and walk up the green, after the player has left the mat and in a direction that allows the player to see the path of their bowl.*
- *Excuses for bad play should not be blamed on the condition of the green, wind or other weather conditions. These conditions are the same for all players.*
- *Keep silent while others are delivering their bowls and remain outside their gaze.*
- *Mobile phones (unless for emergencies) should be in your bowls bag turned off or on silent.*
- *If music is playing it should not impact on how the game is progressing.*
- *Not leaving the green and your opponent to have a cigarette.*
- *Offer refreshments at the end of your game.*
- *Remember that you get out of the game what you are prepared to put into it.*



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John has also provided a brief explanation of people who play an important part of each Pennant Game day.

Key Roles on Game Day:

- *Controlling Bodies – at various levels controlling bodies set regulations, and may be called upon to invoke disciplinary procedures for serious incidents;*
- *Club Officials – are responsible for the overall running of the club, and will be aware of national and State policies club constitutions, club by-laws and other requirements such as venue licensing and the club's policy on smoking. The president or nominated representative on the day should be ready to play their part should an incident occur where they can provide leadership in resolving the issue;*
- *Greens Director – responsibility to make all managers aware of who the greens director is should a decision on continuing or suspending play based on the condition of the green(s) be required;*
- *Umpires – the umpire(s) or measurers of the day should be nominated and made known to all managers and players. The duties of an umpire are clearly set out in Law 43.2, where Law 43.2.5 states the umpire must make sure that all aspects of play are in line with the Laws of the Sport. Remembering the umpire's decision is final in all circumstances except those relating to the meaning or interpretation of a law, Law 43.2.6.*
- *Managers – managers are responsible for their respective teams. As well as looking after the administrative parts of a game, they should be leaders who can effectively manage their team with skips and players should an incident escalate;*
- *Coach – The role of the Coach is covered by Law 44. The important aspects include the umpires being informed of the names of the coach or their delegate as appropriate before the game starts Law 44.1. Any advice given can only occur when their team or side is in possession of the rink Law 44.3 and the person giving the advice must do so from outside the boundaries of the green, Law 44.4.*
- *Spectators (Law 45)– Spectators and anyone else not directly taking part in the game must stay outside the boundaries of the green and not disturb or advise the players in any way. Under Law 45.4, the umpire can take action should spectators act in contravention of this law. If the spectators do not respond to the Umpire's requests, the controlling body needs to be informed so they can take action and manage the concerning behaviour.*



GENERAL BOWLING ETIQUETTE

The following comments and suggestions have been compiled from a variety of sources but all illustrate and address areas of good etiquette in the game of bowls

Etiquette is a code of behaviour whereby individuals treat one another the way they would like to be treated. It means displaying good sportsmanship, thoughtfulness and common sense.

Rules of Etiquette for bowling include but are not limited to:

- Bowls is a very inclusive sport, be sure to treat all opponents with the same amount of respect that you want to be treated.
- Show your opponents a warm greeting by introducing yourself and shaking hands.
- If playing at home, point out drinking fountains, toilets etc to opponents.
- Respect the **laws of the game** and the role of the umpire.
- Be polite and friendly to your opponents including not using offensive language.
- Show respect for all markers and umpires as they are giving up their time so you can enjoy the game.
- Show respect for all club officials and staff when in the club.
- Be **punctual and prepared**, both before the game and following the breaks
- Dress appropriately -Wear the official club uniform – you are representing your club.
- Mobile phones and other electronic devices (unless for emergencies) should be in your bowls bag turned off or on silent.
- If music is playing it should not impact on how the game is progressing.
- Be aware of the rules regarding drinking and smoking and use of offensive language on greens.
- Look after the bowling **green** do not toss your bowls on to the green at the beginning of the game and avoid 'dumping' bowls during play
- Do not stand or sit on the edges of the green and do not litter.
- **Smokers** are required to smoke only in designated areas if provided. Be considerate and do not leave the green or your opponent to have a cigarette.
- Avoid **delaying play** by leaving the rink without the knowledge of the other players or for long periods of time
- Hand your opponent the mat and jack at the **start of play**
- Show respect for every opponent by **not disturbing** them while they are on the mat.
- Remain behind the mat when other players are in possession.
- When it's your turn to bowl it's your mat and head, your opponents should be away from both. If they are not, ask them nicely to move.
- Wait for your Skip to tell you which shot you should play. Keep up with play at all times.
- Keep silent while others are delivering their bowls and remain outside their gaze.
- Don't allow your shadow to fall across the mat or on the green where another player's bowl is to be delivered.



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- **Stay within your rink.** There should be no trespassing into neighbouring rinks; this includes going to or from the clubhouse, moving to better see the jack; and particularly when walking from one end of your rink to the other. Please be aware of others playing. If you are helping your teammate aim, do not infringe on neighbouring rinks.
- Walk up the centre of the rink with minimum delay, not stopping for a chat if you are not in possession of the mat.
- Avoid disturbing players on other rinks by not walking onto their rink or making excessive noise.
- Be careful when following your bowl to not obscure your opponent's view of the run of the bowl.
- Wait until your opponent leaves the mat before heading down the green.
- **Concentrate on the game** and state of play, avoiding lengthy conversations with spectators and be aware when it's your turn to bowl.
- Players and spectators **at the head** end should stand still and keep quiet.
- Avoid straying on to neighbouring rinks.
- Avoid obscuring the boundary pegs and rink numbers.
- Players at the head end should be ready to stop deflected bowls from crossing into the adjacent rink and interfering with neighbouring games. Likewise, be alert to prevent bowls from adjacent rinks from entering your rink. Pay attention!
- No rules prohibit bowlers **running after their bowl** (enthusiasm nor youthful exuberance is not discouraged), however you must arrive at the head before your bowl stops.
- **Commend good bowls** and acknowledge your own fluky or lucky bowls.
- **Spectators** watching a match should try to observe strict neutrality. Advice or criticism must not be given. Barracking is bad form.
- Always show good sportsmanship by acknowledging a display of good skill by another bowler.
- Never applaud **lucky shots**; never complain about lucky shots and admit a lucky shot with good grace. Do not say thanks for a bad shot that goes your way.
- It is a serious breach of etiquette to **applaud a misdirected bowl** from a member of the opposing team which gives your team an unexpected advantage.
- Do not, by gesture, urge your opponent's bowl to run through the head
- If an end is **declared dead** and you need to go back to the other end pick up the bowls and carry them, do not roll them
- Do not criticise the performance of fellow bowlers. No one plays a bad bowl on purpose.
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- Thirds must have chalk, wedges for securing a bowl during measuring and a measuring tape.
- Thirds who are unable to measure should nominate another team member and inform their opposition before the game commences
- Refrain from interfering with the head until the result of the end has been agreed. Do not make comments while 3rds are measuring. If the situation arises where the third has overlooked an obvious counter, other members of the team may draw his attention to it.



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- If an Umpire is called, move away, you're done, his/her decision is final.
- Bowls should not be kicked or raked in until the end has been decided.
- All players should assist in kicking back the bowls at completion of an end.
- **Winning is not everything.** If your opponent overlooks a shot in his favour it is important that you draw his attention to this. Similarly, don't take advantage of any error in measuring by your opponent; don't claim shots that are not earned.
- It is prudent for the score keeper to confer with their opponent regularly to avoid any score dispute later in the game.
- If the skip asks a question of the third, when he is in charge of the head, it is not etiquette for the lead or second to respond or to volunteer their opinion.
- Before going to the head, one of the team (usually the third) should put the skip's bowl on the mat ready for him to bowl, or otherwise make sure that his bowls are close at hand and not in the ditch or on the bank.
- It is a courtesy to hand bowls to your teammates when convenient.
- Excuses for bad play should not be blamed on the condition of the green, wind or other weather conditions. These conditions are the same for all players.
- Never **criticise** a member of your own team to outsiders. If you are not happy with the performance of the team of which you are a member, the best course is to make some constructive suggestion post-match or in the break, as to how the whole team might perform better.
- At the **end of the** game collect mats, jacks and rakes return to the usual distribution point.
- Always shake hands and invite your opposition team into the clubhouse for refreshments after the game has finished
- Remember that you get out of the game what you are prepared to put into it.

All lawn bowlers should familiarise themselves with the current Bowls Australia "Laws of the Sport of Bowls"

If you are not sure about a rule or regulation, please ask your Coach or the Selection Committee

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