

Lawn Bowling Glossary

Absolute: The bowl closest to the jack, often in relation to another bowls surrounding the head, also referred to as the "absolute shot"

Back Bowl: A bowl that comes to rest beyond the Jack.

Best Back: This is the bowl at rest beyond the jack nearest the ditch than any opposition bowl.

Be Up: Instruction from Skip to bowl longer (don't be short of Jack).

Bias: Bowls are not round, they are very slightly egg shaped and one side has a bias. This side is offset to make the bowl curve. The bias side of the bowl is noted by the smaller round ring. Bias is correct when the bowl curves towards the Jack.

Blocker: A bowl that blocks someone (usually an opponent) from reaching the desired target.

Bowling arm: A device that enables players, who have an inability to bend as part of a standard delivery action, to bowl in an upright position. Bowling arms are licensed and approved by Bowls England and may require the bowler to have a medical certificate to verify the need for use for County level matches.

Callipers: A piece of equipment used by an umpire or a player, to judge the relative distance between the jack and one or more bowls, at the conclusion of an end, which will determine the number of shots held by a player or team.

Centre Line: This is the line marked at both ends of the rink to determine where the jack and mat is centred.

Dead End : When the Jack has been knocked out of bounds. The end is not counted and is played again.

Draw Shot: Shots where the bowl is rolled to the jack without disturbing the bowls already at the Head. The classic shot in the game of bowls.

Drive/Fire: This involves bowling with considerable force/speed with the aim of knocking either the Jack backwards into the ditch or to disrupt the head. Only usually used when the team you are playing for a several shots down or no draw is available.

Dead Bowl: When a 'none toucher' bowl either goes in the ditch or any bowl rests outside the rink field of play. (See Touchers).

Down: When your team does not have the Shot Bowl, you are considered to be Down. You may be down by one or more shots.

End: Means playing of the Jack and all bowls of both opponents in the same direction on a Rink. The number of Ends played is decided by Club Rules. A typical game has 21 ends, or 18 in triples games.

Foot Fault: A foot fault occurs when the bowler does not have one foot on or over the mat on release of the bowl. The foot may be on the mat or in the air.

Forehand Draw: When the bowl is delivered to the right of the Jack, and curves to the left (for right-handed bowlers). Or, **Backhand Draw** when the bowl is delivered to the left of the Jack, and curves to the right (for left-handed bowlers).

Grass: Apart from the surface, the directional line the bowl takes in order for it to curve towards the Jack. So a bowl with "too much grass" will be too wide. (See Green).

Green: Lawn bowls is played on a square "Green" of grass, with directions being alternated to protect the bowling surface. Also this term can be used to indicate the directional line the bowl takes in order for it to curve towards the Jack. So a bowl with "too much green" will be wide. (See Grass).

Hand: The side on which the bowl is delivered: either Forehand or Backhand.

Head: A group of bowls constitutes a Head, which means the bowls that have been played and have come to rest within the boundary of the Rink and have not been declared dead.

Holding Shot: Team with their bowl(s) closest to Jack (see also Shot Bowl).

Hook: the direction a bowl takes when it is slowing down and has just about a metre or two left to roll. Some bowls hook more than others, especially older Classic bowls with extreme bias.

Jack: White ball or "kitty" used as a target to play to, which determines point scoring (see Points).

Lead: The person who starts off the play. Also places the Mat and rolls the Jack if their team "has the mat".

Mat: The actual mat that is placed by the team winning the last end, in preparation to start the next end. This is also known as having the Mat. The team with the mat always rolls the Jack.

Measure: When it is uncertain which bowl is closest to the jack, a tape measure is used to determine which bowl(s) is nearer than the opposition's nearest bowl. Players carry a special lawn bowls tape measure to do this.

Narrow: The bowler didn't deliver the bowl far enough from centreline to the Jack. It runs too narrow. (Also called not taking enough "Grass/Green").

Pairs: Bowls games in which each team has a pair of players (a Skip and a Lead)

Promoting a Bowl: Pushing up one of your team's bowls to a better position.

Rink: The lane(s) on the bowling green playing surface. Each Rink is defined by markers on the edge to clearly define the edge of each rink. Most bowling greens have 6 rinks, but some can have less.

Rinks game: A bowling game in which there are 4 players per team a Skip, a Three, a Two and a Lead. Each player uses 2 bowls each.

Skipper/Skip: Team captain or Skip who always plays last. This person is usually the most experienced player, who also guides the strategy.

Shot Bowl: The bowl closest to the Jack.

Tied end: When the two closest bowls are both exactly the same distance from the jack and belong to opposing teams, even after measurement, the end is declared a tie.

Touchers: Bowls that hit the Jack. These bowls are marked with chalk and remain "live" even if they are knocked into the ditch.

Trailing the Jack: The jack is moved by a bowl with the bowl staying with the jack to score. Often used to move the jack to a favourable position scoring several shots.

Trial Ends: Formal practice ends. Only allowed at the start of a game in which each team rolls 2 bowls down and back to get a feel of the green. Such ends do not count in the scoring.

Triples: A game in which each team has 3 players on their team - a Skip, a Two and a Lead. Typically each player then only uses 3 bowls each, but some triples matches are with 2 bowls each.

Up: When your team does have the Shot Bowl, you are considered to be 'Up'. You may be 'Up' by one or more points.

Weight: The amount of speed applied in delivering the bowl from the mat to the Jack. "Heavy" weight means that the bowl stops beyond the Jack, while "Light" means that it stops short of the spot desired.

Wide: The bowler delivered the bowl too far from centreline to the Jack. It runs too wide. (Also called taking too much "Grass/Green").

Wick: When a bowl bounces off another bowl. (This term is derived from curling).

Woods: An old term for bowls. They used to be made of wood so were mainly brown in colour. These days they are made of a dense plastic composite material and are in various colours, although the most common is black.

Yard On: A shot delivered with an extra degree of speed to displace or disturb other bowls in the head or trail the jack. (See Trailing the Jack).