

HAMILTON AND DISTRICT WOMEN'S OPEN BONSPIEL 2026 RULES OF PLAY

The purpose of this bonspiel is to promote participation by new curlers. Skips are encouraged to bring new curlers out to enjoy the camaraderie and values of curling at our local clubs.

RULES OF PLAY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

All players must be a member in good standing and play at the club they represent.

All players must be 19 years of age or older on the first day of the bonspiel.

The lead must have 7 years or less curling experience (2025-26 is the 7th year or less).

There are no restrictions for second, vice, or skip.

a. Years of experience are defined as follows:

-Any year where a person has played a minimum of 15 games

-Junior and Bantam years of experience count as full years

-University and rental league experience counts as full years if minimum of 15 games were played

b. It is the skip's responsibility to ensure the team meets the eligibility requirements

c. If there is a protest about a team's eligibility, it must take place prior to the 3rd game

4. A team must play 3 of its original members in all games, as set out on the entry form or as specifically registered before the first game, or the game is forfeited. **At least 1 player on the team must have 7 years experience or less and must play lead or the game is forfeited.** In the event of an injury once the game has commenced, and one player, no matter what position cannot continue to play, the team may continue with 3 players, the first 2 players will throw 3 rocks each. In the event of extenuating circumstances, the umpire and/or committee members may use their discretion regarding the team's eligibility.

5. Any rink short a player must secure a substitute from their own club. The substitute must meet the eligibility requirements for the position she will play. The skip must inform the umpire of the name and position of the substitute before the start of the game.

6. If necessary to play with 3 players, the first 2 players will throw 3 rocks each.

7. In the event of a tie during a **non-elimination game**, the winner will be determined by a draw to the button. The delivering team may sweep the stone. If the draw to the button results in a tie (ie., both stones the same distance from the pin, are both touching the pin, or both miss the house), the draw to the button will be repeated with a different player from each team throwing until a winner is determined.

8. In the event of a tie **during an elimination game**, an extra end will be played toward the glass.

9. If a team is more than 15 minutes late, 1 point is awarded to the rink at hand and 1 end is counted as played. The late rink throws the first stone of the second end. If more than 30 minutes late, 2 points are awarded to the team at hand and 2 ends are counted as played. The late rink throws the first stone of the third end. If a team is more than 45 minutes late, the game is forfeited.

10. In the case of a dispute, the skips should notify the umpire. The role of the umpire is to resolve issues as they occur to ensure fairness to both teams. The umpire's decision is final.

11. All games are eight ends, including the finals (unless an extra end is needed). Games are scored win/loss only. Games may be conceded at any time at the losing team's discretion.

12. The 5-Rock Free Guard Zone is in effect, but the "no tick" rule will NOT be used.

13. Hair brushes will NOT be permitted for play, either for delivery or sweeping. Corn brooms are permitted for delivery only and must be wrapped.

14. No games will be cancelled unless the drawmaster formally notifies teams **via email**.

15. OCA rules are in effect unless stated differently here.

16. A player may be suspended by the umpire for inappropriate behavior on or off the ice.

17. There is no time clock in effect. Teams are strongly encouraged to complete their 8-end game in 2 hours or less. **The umpire will monitor pace of play and has the discretion to warn slow teams to speed up.**

18. The use of cell phones on the ice is prohibited. In the event of an emergency, the call must be taken off the ice. The game will continue and the skips will determine order of play.

19. Teams who withdraw from the Hamilton and District Bonspiel after the entry deadline must find a replacement team or they will forfeit their entry fee.

Any breach of the Rules will be reviewed by the Hamilton and District Women's Open Committee. The Committee will, at its sole discretion, and based on the events of the infraction which has occurred, determine the appropriate penalty. Penalties may include the suspension of the team or individual players from the bonspiel for up to 2 years. The Hamilton and District Women's Open Committee decision will be final.

If you have any questions regarding the rules of play, please contact your Club Representative and/or the officiating umpire prior to playing your game.

GOOD CURLING!!