

2026 ACS Lawn Bowls Rules

Last updated March 2025

ACS Lawn Bowls games shall be played under the rules of Bowls Victoria unless otherwise stated hereunder or in ACS Competition Rules.

Definitions:

- **Side:** The combined group of 12 – 16 (if including substitutes in each team) players. A side is made up of four teams.
- **Team:** The group of 3 players (with an optional 4th substitute) who play an individual match. Each team plays on a separate rink.
- **Rink:** The individual “lane” that two opposing teams play on. Each rink will be individually numbered. 6 – 8 rinks make up a bowls green.
- **Game:** The contest played between two **teams** on any rink.
- **Match:** The contest played between two **sides**.

1. Rules and Conditions of Play:

- 1.1. Teams can be made up of any combination of boys and girls
- 1.2. Two bowls triples (one side = 4 teams of 3 players on the green with up to one optional substitute per team of 3)
- 1.3. Each rink plays one game of 12 ends or 90 minutes (whichever comes first)
- 1.4. To start a match, the team who wins the toss can place the mat along the centreline and spot the jack on each rink. The jack must be centred.
- 1.5. The team who wins the end has control of the mat for the next end. No jack rolling is required, the jack is to be spotted along the centreline anywhere between the minimum and maximum permissible distances each end.
- 1.6. Players will receive a five minute warning before the end of time.
- 1.7. If the time elapses, the end must be finished.
- 1.8. An end is deemed to be started if the jack has been spotted.
- 1.9. Scoring will be recorded by shots up for the 12 ends.
- 1.10. No “dead ends” – the jack is to be spotted on the ‘T’ at the back if the jack has been hit out of bounds.
- 1.11. If the jack goes into the ditch and inbounds, the jack will remain in the ditch and the remaining bowls will have to be played to where the jack lies.

2. **Format:** One game of 12 ends or 90 minutes per rink. 4 teams of 3 players plus an optional substitute each combine their individual game scores for their respective 12 end games, for a total match scoreboard after 48 ends (or the 90 minute time limit).

- 2.1. **Result if a match is unfinished due to weather etc:** For a result to be declared the match must have reached two thirds (2/3's) of allocated ends, i.e., 2/3's of 48 ends is 32 ends then the score as it stands when play ceased shall be taken as the final result. Should a match not reach two thirds (2/3's) of ends then it is deemed a draw. A draw is recorded as 9-9 ladder points, no shots are recorded.

3. **Scoring:** Each match has 18 ladder points available. Each individual rink matchup (game) counts for ladder points as does the combined overall scoreboard (match result). The aggregate scoreboard earns 10 points for a win, 5 for a draw, 0 for a loss PLUS 2 points for each rink (game) win (1 for a draw, 0 for a loss).

	School A	Match Points	School B	Match Points
Rink 1	15	2	10	0
Rink 2	12	2	10	0
Rink 3	13	1	13	1
Rink 4	8	0	11	2
Overall	48	10	44	0
	Ladder points:	15	Ladder Points:	3

4. **Tiebreakers:** Ladder positions will be determined by the following tiebreakers, in order:
 - 4.1. Total Points (combination of match and game points)
 - 4.2. Shot difference (total +/- score from matches)
 - 4.3. Shot difference percentage
 - 4.4. Head to head matchup result
 - 4.5. If all of the above fail to determine an outcome, a coin toss will be conducted to determine the higher ranked side

5. **Power Plays:**
 - 5.1. Each team will have the ability to use one power play per game.
 - 5.2. The power play entitles a team to double their shots if they win that end.
 - 5.3. If a team plays their power play and loses the end, no double shots are scored.
 - 5.4. If both teams call power play on the same end, the winning team will score double shots only.
 - 5.5. The power play must be called at the start of the end, before the jack is spotted.
 - 5.6. Once a power play has been called and the jack spotted, they cannot cancel or take back the power play.
 - 5.7. If a team does not use their power play, the last end will automatically be their designated power play regardless of if they win the end.

6. **Substitutions:** Teams have the ability to substitute players to ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate.
 - 6.1. Substitutions can be made at the end of each end played.
 - 6.2. Only one substitute will be allowed in a team at any time during a game.
 - 6.3. Substitutions cannot be made after the jack is spotted, for the remainder of that end.
 - 6.4. Teams are to notify the opposition they are making a substitution.

7. **Uniform:** All players must be dressed in uniforms which distinctly show school colours. Flat soled shoes/runners to be worn at all times on the green.

8. **Equipment:**
 - 8.1. It is the responsibility of the schools to organise their own bowls.
 - 8.2. If a school does not have bowls, they need to contact the competition venue or Bowls Victoria at least one week prior to the beginning of competition. Bowls Victoria can facilitate a relationship between schools and nearby clubs for these purposes.

9. **Role of the Coach:** Bowls Victoria has a program called "Coach Force" which can assist schools with the appointment of coaches or contact the local club.
 - 9.1. The coach is permitted to give advice to players during the competition
 - 9.2. The coach is prohibited from giving advice from on the green and must be up on the bank.
 - 9.3. In the event of a measure, it is the students responsibility to work out the distance from the jack to each bowl and deem the winner of that end. Venue helpers can assist with how to undertake this process.