

Curling is more fun when you understand the basic skills of delivery and brushing. These skills require practice. This brochure will outline the basics of the no-lift, flatfoot slide and double gripper brushing. The flatfoot slide is recommended because it provides for optimum balance by allowing the weight of the body to be distributed over the entire undersurface of the sliding foot.

The no-lift delivery frees the new curler from problems associated with swinging a forty-four pound granite stone. This will assist the curler to hit the target at the far end more consistently.

Equipment

Curling, like other sports, requires the correct equipment to ensure safety, success and comfort. To deliver a stone with a flatfoot slide delivery the curler requires a sliding shoe. This shoe should have a slick, low friction material covering the entire sole and heel. There are a variety of materials available. For safety and to allow for easy movement the other shoe requires a surface that will grip the ice surface.

Brushes may be made of hog hair, horsehair or synthetics. Brush handles come in various lengths and diameters. The brush heads also come in assorted sizes and shapes. New curlers are advised to find one that feels right for them.

Clothing should be chosen that allows for easy movement and keeps the curler warm. Layers may be the way to go. When choosing clothing, remember to select clothing that does not shed lint on to the ice surface. Wool sweaters and fleece are discouraged.

The choice of hand wear is another option. Gloves or mitts provide warmth and protection for the hands during brushing.

It is **essential** that curlers inspect their equipment prior to games to ensure that their footwear and brush are clean and in good condition. Brushes and footwear must not damage the ice or leave dirt or debris on the ice surface.

Delivery

Each delivery begins with the correct start-up or stance position. Curlers should approach the hack from behind, taking care to step into the hack with the gripper foot aimed directly at the target at the far end. The ball of the gripper foot is placed firmly against the back of the hack. The sliding foot is positioned slightly ahead and parallel to the hack foot.

The curler should then squat down, taking care that their hips and shoulders are level and square to the target. The brush head rests on the ice. The upper body is positioned erect with the eyes focused on the target at the far end. The stone is then placed directly on the line of delivery (the line from the skip's brush at the far end to the middle of the hack foot.)



The delivery starts with a slight forward press. This is a small motion of the upper body and arm that causes the stone to move slightly along the line of delivery. The stone is then pulled directly back towards the hack foot. As the stone moves back, both legs elevate the hips into a semi-crouch position. The sliding foot then begins to move straight back and the hips move back. When the sliding foot is in the back position, a large amount of body weight is transferred to the sliding foot. There is a definite stop or pause in the motion.

The forward motion begins with the stone moving directly down the line of delivery. The sliding foot then begins to move forward under the body behind the stone. This timing is very important - rock forward and then sliding foot forward. The stone must move first to make room for the sliding

foot to move in under the body on the line of delivery.



The key to balance in the sliding position is the sliding foot. The sliding foot should be positioned flat on the ice under the centre line of the body between the chest and the abdomen.

The foot may be turned out slightly to increase balance. The brush head should rest on the ice and provide an additional source of support for the curler. The trailing leg is extended out behind the curler. The upper body is in an erect position with eyes continuing to focus on the target.

Initially practice the stance, pullback and forward slide without using a stone. When the motion feels balanced and smooth, incorporate a stone into the motion.

Grip the handle of the curling stone firmly with the fingers and thumb. Curlers are advised to place their index finger close to the gooseneck (front part of the handle). The thumb is pressed firmly against the other side of the handle. The wrist should be kept in a high position. The palm of the hand does not contact the handle.

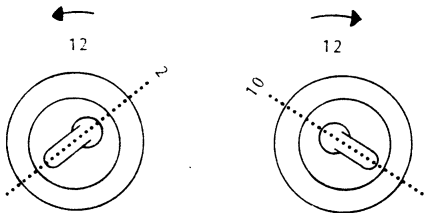


In order to predict in which direction the stone will bend or curl the curler must apply a turn or rotation to the handle just prior to the release of the stone.

Stones will be rotated in either a clockwise or counter-clockwise direction. (These turns will often be referred to as an in turn or an out turn.) A draw shot should rotate 2 ½ to 3 times as it travels the length of the sheet of ice. A stone that has too many rotations will not curl. A stone that has too few rotations may lose or change its turn or curl in an unpredictable manner.

Imagine the stone is a clock. The front of the stone is twelve o'clock. For a clockwise turn, the curler will place the handle so that in the stance position the handle is counter rotated against the turn. The gooseneck will be pointing at 10 o'clock. During the stance, the pull back and the forward slide the handle is kept in this 10 o'clock position. Just prior to release the handle is rotated to the 12 o'clock position and the stone is released. As a check, the curler should look at their delivery hand after release. The hand should be in the handshake position. The stone will rotate in a clockwise direction and will tend to curl from left to right from the curler's view.

For a counter-clockwise turn, rotate the handle so that the gooseneck is pointing at 2 o'clock. Keep the handle at this 2 o'clock position during the stance, pullback and forward slide until just prior to release and then rotate the handle to the 12 o'clock position. At release the hand will be in the handshake position. The stone will rotate in a counter-clockwise position and will curl from right to left.



The line of delivery is a line extending from the skip's brush at the far end to the hack foot. Since the line of delivery will vary from shot to shot, the

curler must ensure that the hack foot is lined up at the target prior to assuming the stance position. The stone is placed on this line of delivery. During the delivery the curler must ensure the stone stays on this line and the sliding foot and body are directed down this line.



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