



DBC Bowls Etiquette Guidelines

2nd Feb 2026

The game of Lawn Bowls has developed over many years and its etiquette has evolved to help players enjoy the game. It is a combination of good manners and sportsmanship. The following is a list of key elements of bowls etiquette and is often described as. the unwritten rules of play.

1. Be punctual for all matches and come appropriately attired (see dress code policy)
2. Keep quiet and refrain from moving when players are on the mat. Stand behind the player delivering their bowl.
3. Stand still at the head when a player is on the mat about to deliver a bowl.
4. When standing at the head, stand behind the jack and to one side.
5. When walking to the head, walk close to the centre of the rink without delay. Do not delay play by inspecting the head.
6. Keep track of play and be ready to play your bowl with the minimum of delay. When on the mat delivering your bowl no rush to deliver it.
7. Never deliver a bowl before the previous bowl has come to rest. In fact as part of the rules of lawn bowls such a delivery will be removed from the rink before it reaches the head.
8. Generally the lead of the team who lost the end takes charge in collecting the bowls, with the assistance of the rest of the team, while his opponent collects the mat for the next end.

9. In a team game the skip or number three in rinks or number two in triples is in charge of the head during play. They take charge of the head when the opposing bowl comes to a halt. The opposing team should leave the head so that it can be freely inspected and instructions given to the next bowler. Other members of the team may offer advice to those in charge of the head but only they should instruct the bowler on the mat.
10. Don't applaud lucky bowls and don't complain about your bad luck. It is best not to comment on your opponents bowl except to applaud a good shot.
11. Win or lose shake hands and thank opponents for the game. Generally the home team will offer refreshments.
12. When spectating, do not walk on paths that cross the head if a player is on the mat.
13. Remember that no one likes a bad loser or an arrogant winner in bowls.