

Lawn Bowls Etiquette: A Guide for Bowlers

Lawn Bowls has a set of concrete rules, but like cricket, it also has a softer set of guidelines.

Etiquette simply means displaying good sportsmanship based on the traditions of the game. Applying common sense goes a long way to displaying good sportsmanship.

Here's a guide to some of the finer points of lawn bowls etiquette:

1. Be on time for any game (social, club competition or Zone event) that you have agreed to play in
2. Switch off your mobile phone or other electronic devices before commencing a game
3. Be aware of the fundamental rules of the game and conditions of play for the event being played
4. Always greet your opponent with a friendly handshake at the start of a game
5. Hand your opponent the mat and jack at the start of play
6. Commend good bowls and acknowledge your own fluky or lucky bowls.
It is considered poor sportsmanship to cheer opposition bowls going into the ditch, out of bounds or knocking one of your bowls towards the jack
7. Show respect for your opponents and teammates by not disturbing them while they are on the mat and by standing still at the head end when someone is about to bowl.
8. Avoid disturbing players on other rinks by not walking onto their rink or making excessive noise
9. All players should assist in kicking back the bowls at the completion of an end
10. If the Umpire is called to measure, all bowlers should retreat from the head and not disturb him
11. At the completion of a game the graceful loser should congratulate the modest winner with a handshake and share a drink with them in the clubhouse
12. Bowls is a very inclusive sport, be sure to treat all opponents with the same amount of respect that you would wish to be treated

13. Do not drink excessive amounts of alcohol or use foul or offensive language or gestures
14. Be aware of the rules regarding drinking and smoking on greens
15. If you are a smoker be considerate of non-smokers
16. Look after the bowling green, do not drop your bowls onto the green
17. Show respect for all Markers and Umpires as they are giving up their time so you can enjoy the game
18. When another bowler has marked your Singles game, it is customary for both players to buy a drink for the Marker when the game has finished
19. Show respect for all bowling club officials and EBP staff when in the clubhouse

In a team game:

1. Bowlers should be watching the game as it progresses so they understand the position of the game when they step onto the mat
2. Bowlers should be ready to bowl immediately after the opposition's bowl has come to rest, not sitting on the bench or standing on the bank
3. When stepping onto the mat, players should look to the Skip for directions
4. After the first 2 or 3 bowlers have played, they should move promptly to the opposite end, not stopping to study the head thus allowing the Skips to bowl as soon as they reach the mat
5. Placing the Skip's bowl on the mat is a courtesy and helps to move the game along
6. Only the Thirds should remain at the head while the Skips are bowling and must stand at least 2 metres behind the bowl furthest back (this may mean standing on the bank)
7. The Thirds should only go into the head when the Skip asks them to do so
8. The Thirds should move back from the head once their Skip's bowl comes to rest so that the opposing Third may enter the head if asked to do so by his Skip
9. When measuring for a shot count, only the Thirds should be in the head