

BEGINNER'S GUIDE



TO LAWN BOWLS

www.bowlsqld.org

Produced by Bowls Queensland
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P.O. Box 476 Alderley 4051 72 Pickering St, Enoggera 4051.
Phone (07) 3355 9988 Fax (07) 3855 0010 email admin@bowlsqld.org

A word from the Chairman...

Lawn bowls is the sort of sport that fits in with your lifestyle.

It can be as competitive or as social as you want it to be and you can find a game just about any day of the week.

You will find the clubhouse facilities comfortable and inviting and bowlers are well known for their hospitality towards newcomers.

Once you join a club you will discover your membership becomes a passport to a friendly welcome and a warm smile at any bowls club in Australia.

And being an international sport, your membership means you will never be without a friend when travelling.

I welcome you to this great sport and wish you all the very best for the future.

***Chairman
Bowls Queensland
admin@bowlsqld.org***

Who controls bowls?

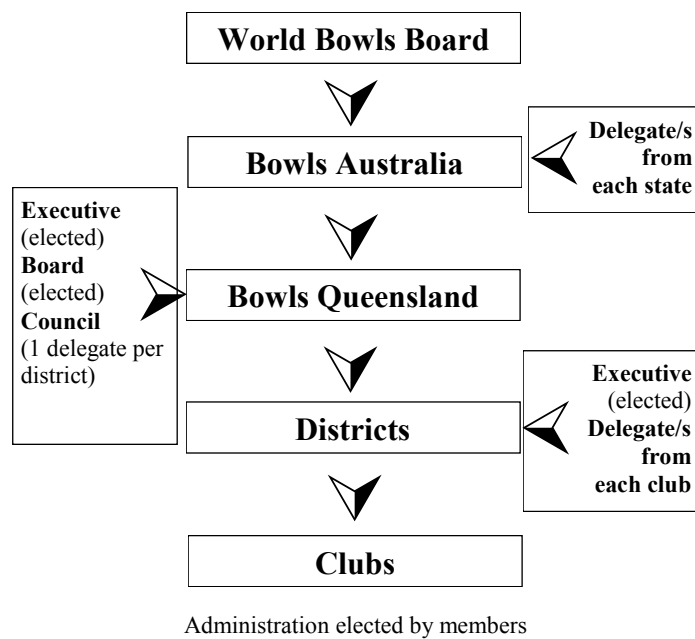
When you consider there are more than 2,200 bowling clubs and approximately 500,000 men and women playing the game in Australia, you must agree that the sport of lawn bowls has a lot going for it.

Such a large sport doesn't run itself. Bowls Queensland is the controlling authority in this state. The organisation maintains a permanent Secretariat and office staff.

The State Council at which all clubs are represented via their Districts, elects a Board and Executive charged with the overall administration and promotion of the sport.

The National organisation is Bowls Australia. Lawn bowls is also very popular in most of the British Commonwealth countries. All these countries are members of the World Bowls Board.

The following flow chart gives you an idea of how it all comes together.



How to get started...

Clubs & Participants

In Australia there are over 2,200 clubs and the game is played by more than 500,000 men and women. Anyone can play this sport regardless of age, gender, disability and religion.

Meet you at the club!

We've found the best way to interest people in lawn bowls is to let them try. Men and women of all ages and degrees of fitness participate successfully in this sport. To get you started we will arrange a meeting date at our club.

Lend you the gear!

Lawn bowls is played with a bowl that is manufactured to roll in a curve (the bias) towards the objective (the jack or another bowl). Several sizes of bowls are available. Our club has extra sets of bowls to lend to new recruits while they learn.

Arrange for free coaching!

It is possible to start the wrong way and everybody will give you helpful advice. To avoid the confusion and teach you the basic skills, objectives of the game, its rules and the etiquette that goes with it, we offer free lessons with our accredited club coaches.

Levels of competition!

Like every sport bowls has many levels of competition. Start by practising by yourself, playing in club roll-ups and social games. As you develop more control and technique you will soon advance to play in inter-club matches and carnivals.

How little it costs!

You will be surprised to find out how little it costs to belong to a bowls club. Once you have joined a club (a minimal fee) your only other expense is your own set of bowls, (they'll last a life time), your clothing, green fees and incidentals.

And now for the basics...

The game

The object of the game is to get as many of your bowls (or your teams bowls) nearer the little white or yellow ball (called the Jack) than your opponent. The game can be played as singles (one against one) pairs, triples, or fours (four players against four). In each game the number of bowls varies, in singles (4), pairs (either 4 or 3), for each player, triples (either 2 or 3) and fours (4) bowls.

A game lasts about two and half hours (although there are shorter & longer versions) and consists of a pre-determined number of ends, (the delivery of all bowls from one end of a rink to the other) or first to a total of shots scored. The green or playing area is a level surface, carefully maintained grass or artificial surface measuring a minimum of 31 metres (102 feet) in each direction. Six or seven games can be played on one green at the same time.

This is just the basics – your coach and other members will teach you more!

The players

Men, women and juniors are equally welcome in the world of bowls. It is a great game for everyone. While there are separate men's, women's and junior competitions, all share the same club facilities and participate in many bowls competitions.

You can never be too young to start. Many top bowlers are younger aged players.

A team of four consists of a skip (or captain), a third (in charge of the head while the skipper is bowling), the second and the lead (who delivers the jack and the first bowls). Bowls are delivered alternately by the players in each team until all bowls are played.

It is normal for new players to start as leads. You will get the chance to play in other positions but remember, a good lead is very important. Some bowlers specialise in this position.

Areas of participation

To start with, most of your bowls will be played at your home club. You'll find its members to be good friends and very helpful during your learning period.

There will be opportunities for informal "roll-ups" when you can practise by yourself or with other club members. This is the time to improve your skills and enjoy an informal game. Your coach will advise you when greens are available for "roll-ups".

Club social games provide the first level of competition. Usually all you have to do is put your name down on club social days and you will be included in a team.

There are numerous club competitions in which you can participate. There are also many opportunities to visit other clubs and play in their carnivals or tournaments.

The most popular game is the weekly pennant

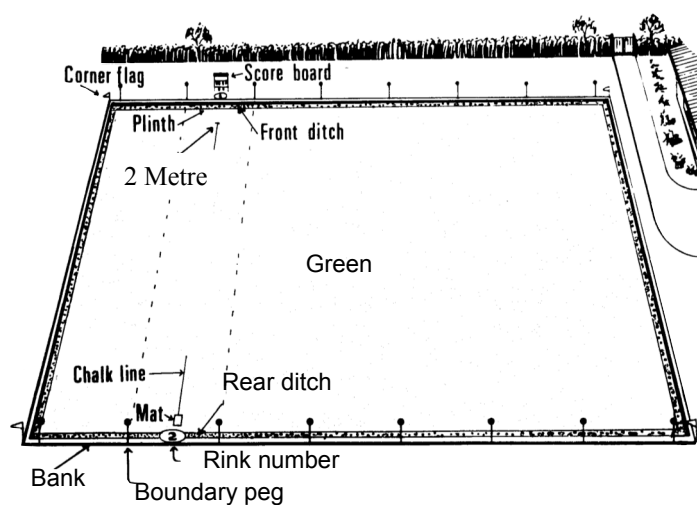
competition when teams from various clubs play one another in a series of home and away matches.

Low annual cost

No two clubs are the same in their annual membership fees but they are alike in that the amount required is low.

Compared to other major sports and activities, bowls is inexpensive. Your set of bowls are a one time expense and it is possible to purchase used bowls at a reduced price. A tube of polish and a polishing cloth in addition to your clothing and bowls bag are the only other additional requirements.

For this comparatively small outlay you obtain for yourself the lifetime privilege of participating in an outdoor sport, providing you with exercise and much sociability in very pleasant conditions.



The technical stuff...

The green

The green or playing area is a square, flat surface of grass (although there are some artificial greens in Queensland and indoor complexes). The green measures 31 – 40 meters and each game is played on a rink.

The green comprises:

Corner Flags: They indicate wind direction at green level.

Bank: Outside wall of ditch above green.

Ditch: Excavated area between edge of green and bank (usually filled with sand). Bowl entering here is dead unless a toucher (you'll learn about these later).

T-Piece: Is 2 metres from the ditch.

Rink Boundary Pegs: The pegs are at each end of the green and denote the outside boundary of the rink. The bowl can travel outside this line, but must finish inside when comes to rest.

Rink Numbers: Indicate the number of rinks on each green and are situated on the bank at the centre of each rink. This number also indicates which rink to play a game on.

The Game: The game is started by the skip or captain tossing a coin to see who wins the right to play first. The lead then rolls the jack to a predetermined length. The lead then rolls a bowl to finish as close to the jack as possible. The game is made up of ends:- 15,21,25, the first to score a predetermined number of shots, or the ringing of a bell. Sets play has also been introduced into the sport, especially for televised games. The game is usually played in an east-west direction in the morning and a north-south direction in the afternoon.

The Score: After each end has been played the player/team with the closest bowl scores. Scoring varies according to conditions of play set down.

Commonly Played Games are

Singles; Pairs, Triples and Fours

Frequently Asked Questions

What size bowls do I need?

The theory to choosing the right size bowl is to play with the largest and heaviest bowl you can comfortably handle. A size four bowl for example, has the advantage that they are less wind affected and its easy for you to move your opponents bowls and harder for your opponent to move yours. The bowl should also feel comfortable in your hand. The cost for a set of new bowls is normally up to \$700 but may vary from retailer to retailer.

Do I need special shoes to play bowls?

Yes, you need flat soled shoes to walk on the green. Even running shoes with a small amount of tread can damage the green.

Are there second hand bowls available?

Yes, you can buy fully reconditioned and tested by licensed tester (all four bowls are tested and adjusted to have the same bias). The cost for a reconditioned set can vary from retailer to retailer.

Do I have to use black bowls?

No, there are now many colours available for selection, ranging from blue, green, red, teal, maroon and many more.