



***Special  
Olympics***  
*British Columbia*

**Curling Sport Drill Book  
Updated August 2012**

## STEPS IN TEACHING A DRILL

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1. Introduce
2. Demonstrate
3. Explain
4. Organize
5. Execute
6. Correct
7. Practice

## GENERAL PRINCIPLES

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- Drills should relate specifically to what you are teaching.
- Athletes should be made aware of how drills relate to the sport.
- Drills should only be a part of your practice.
- Drills should be introduced at a slow pace and then gradually increased
- Drills should be accommodated for fitness, age and abilities.
- Drills should move from simple to complex. First perform drills that will help keep the interest of athletes.
- Drills should relate to the system of play that the athletes will use.
- Perform a variety of drills to prevent monotony.
- As fatigue sets in, technique deteriorates so provide frequent rest periods.

## EXECUTION PRINCIPLES

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- Review the drill procedure before practice so you know how it works.
- When introducing a new drill, walk a group of athletes through it so others can see how it is performed.
- Avoid talking too much, get the athletes performing, they will learn by doing.
- When errors occur, the drill should be stopped momentarily to correct errors.
- Praise those athletes doing the drill well and encourage those having difficulty.
- If equipment is necessary, ensure it is set up before so that progression from one drill to the next can progress smoothly.

# Curling Warm Ups

**Making warm ups a regular part of practice is important to warm up their bodies and muscles before beginning to play. Follow up these exercises with 5-10 minutes of stretching before moving into the basic motor skills.**

## **Step:**

- Jumping on the spot
- Jogging around the room
- Step ups onto stairs
- Lunges forward

Performing a variety of stepping exercises warms large muscles groups used and helps elevate the hear rate.

## **Knee Stepping:**

- Lift knees up and down while holding the broom.
- Lift knees up and down while holding broom horizontal out in front of body.
- High knee ups while gradually raising the height of the broom up.

## **Stretch:**

- Include stretches from the pages included.
- Be sure to emphasize on the arm and leg muscles.

## **Slide:**

- Practice the delivery stance off the ice.
- Have athletes perform the slide with eyes closed, with hands by their side, with hands in the air etc...
- Then move on to the ice and practice the sliding movements.

## **Basic Motor Skills**

- Stand on one foot
- Rock back and forth
- Lunges; lunges with eyes closed

## **Arm Movements:**

- Circles
- Shoulder rolls

# Curling Technique

## Stance:

- Body including hack foot, sliding foot, head shoulders and hips are positioned towards target.
- Hack foot in the center of the hack.
- Sliding foot is flat on the ice, parallel but slightly ahead of the hack foot. Shoulders are square.
- Throwing arm is extended, while brushing arm is at the side.
- Upper body is mostly upright.
- Brush head is “bristles up”.

## Starting Position:

- From starting stance, lift hips into a semi crouched position.
- Keep head and shoulders low.
- Pull stone back towards hack foot.
- Stone remains on the ice
- Simultaneously, bring sliding foot straight back about 25-30 cm behind the hack.
- Body weight should be shifted from the back foot to the sliding foot.

## Forward Slide: Propels stone towards target.

- Push with the hack foot to initiate the forward movement of the stone and body towards the target.
- Gradually, move sliding foot in line with the stone.
- The sliding foot should be completely flat on the ice.
- Once clear of the hack, body weight is shifted to the sliding foot increasing the momentum of the forward movement.
- Arm is extended forward.
- Trailing leg extends straight back.
- Remember to not push the stone, proper weight distribution will drive the stone forward.

*The stone always leads  
the way!*

## Curling Delivery Tips

### Turns, Release and Follow Through.

Learning to properly release a stone will allow athletes to control the direction. Think: Grip, Turns, Release!

#### **Grip:**

Grip stone with the index and middle finger close to the neck of the handle.

#### **In Turns:**            **Used to rotate stone clockwise and curl.**

- As the player releases the stone, a turn is executed.

To begin:

- For a right handed player:
  - The handle should be angled at 10 o'clock (palm down).
- For a left handed player:
  - The handle should be angled at 2 o'clock (palm down)
- Maintain this position through the start up, step back and forward slide.
- **Just prior to release**, turn the handle to 12 o'clock.

#### **Out Turn:**            **Used to rotate stone counterclockwise and curl.**

To begin:

- For a right handed player:
  - The handle should be angled at 2 o'clock (palm down)
- For the left handed player:
  - The handle should be angled at 10 o'clock (palm down)
- Maintain this position through the start up, step back and forward slide.
- **Just prior to the release**, a turn is applied by rotating the handle to 12 o'clock.

#### **Release:**

- The in turn and the out turn should finish with the handle at the 12 o'clock position.
- The curler's hand should come off the handle in a "handshake" position.

# Curling Delivery Tips

## **Brushing:**

Brushing/sweeping reduces the friction between the stone and the ice surface. This allows the stone to move in a continuous line of travel and maintain its momentum.

When brushing:

- Feet are shoulder width apart.
- Hands positioned comfortably on the brush.
- Sweep across the entire surface in front of the stone.
- Emphasize brushing faster and with more pressure as confidence increases.
- Move feet along in a “push and glide” fashion.
- Push with grip foot and slide alongside on sock foot.

*Be sure all sweepers have a clear line of vision towards the target!*

Practice progression:

Grip and stance, add sweeping motion, add footwork, introduce stone, sweep with partner.

## **Line of Delivery:**

Training ideas:

- 1) Stand out on the ice, about 2 meters from the hack while holding a broom. Have athlete perform a full slide movement and attempt to slide right to and grab the handle of the broom stick.
- 2) Have athletes aim between two cups placed on the ice to practice keeping with the line of delivery.
- 3) Tie a colored string from one rock to another.

# Curling Delivery Tips

**For perfect delivery, remember these 6 words:**

**Press:** The delivery begins with the forward press; that is the slight, forward motion of the rock, arm and upper body.

**Rock:** As the curler raises the hips, the stone moves slowly into the backswing; body weight supported on both feet.

**Foot:** As the stone begins to leave the ice, the sliding foot moves straight back with nearly all weight on the hack leg.

**Rock:** Forward movement of the rock always precedes the forward movement of the sliding foot.

**Foot:** Approximately when the rock reaches the ice, the sliding foot moves forward.

**Slide:** When the sliding foot passes the hack, leg drive begins and the forward slide follow.

Things to watch for when teams are playing a game of curling:

## **Delivery:**

- Balance
- Line of Direction
- Weight thrown for shot called
- Release and release point
- Amount of turn

## **Sweeping:**

- Power
- Length of stroke
- Speed of stroke
- Proximity to rock

## **Communication:**

- Between all players
- Between sweepers
- Between sweepers and skip
- Between sweepers and thrower.

# Curling Drills

## **Hands Behind Back:**

### **Purpose: Improve balance and stretching**

- On a rug or non slippery surface, have the athlete get into the sliding position, hands behind the back.
- Slowly, reach head toward the floor.
- Hold this position for at least 10 seconds and repeat 3-5 times.
- Switch legs.
- The curler is forced to keep the center of gravity 10 inches above and six inches behind the sliding foot.

## **Flat Broom Slide:**

### **Purpose: To initiate the slide**

- Keep normal stance but the broom lies in front of the body and flat on the ice.
- Hold broom with both hands throughout the slide
- From squat position, push back the gripper foot, extend and slide
- Keep heel of sliding foot in contact with ice surface at all times
- Keep arm inside knee of sliding leg.

## **Verbal Counting Drill:**

### **Purpose: Reinforce correct timing**

- Drill involves going through the complete delivery (without a rock) and verbalizing the timing by saying:
- Press-Rock-Foot-Rock-Foot-Slide.

## **Walking Slide Drill:**

### **Purpose: Improve balance and correct foot placement**

- Start at the center line behind the house.
- Take three steps beginning with the non sliding foot to develop some momentum then lower and extend the body into a forward sliding position
- Do not stand up until you have come to a complete stop
- Repeat. 5-6 of these practice slides can be done on the length of the curling sheet.
- Use the broom to assist with balance if needed.



# Curling Drills

## **Rope Direction:**

**Purpose: Improve line of direction.**

- Tie a string to a broom or brush.
- Someone hold the broom in the house.
- Another team mate holds the string between the hacks at the other end.
- Each one visualizes the line of delivery before throwing.
- String may be held over the thrower during the entire delivery at the beginning.

## **Gateway:**

**Purpose: Teach correct alignment on wide shots.**

- Set up a target well off the center line.
- Set up parallel lines of strings or streamers.
- Have players deliver through “gateway” to target.

## **Release Point:**

**Purpose: Obtain a consistent release point**

- The curler slides from the hack with a rock aiming to perform a shot (draw or take cut)
- When the rock is released, the point of release is marked along the side of the sheet.
- Once the point of release has been identified, the object is to have the curler repeat the delivery several times, releasing the rock at the same point.

## **Double Do:**

**Purpose: Check line of direction and release**

- Place two cones on the Hog line, about ½ feet apart.
- The curler lines up using an imaginary line running through the two cones at the hog line.
- Deliver the stone and release it through the two stationary cones with a designated turn.
- Change the position of the cones to make the thrower adjust to a new line of direction, as shown in the diagram.
- Record the number of correct releases out of ten attempts. Correct direction means no touching of the cones.

# Curling Drills

## Reach for It:

### **Purpose: To bring the hand up and off the rock**

- At least two people are needed; one holds the broom while the other throws.
- The thrower takes the position in the hack and aligns the body with the broom.
- The delivery is executed with a specific turn.
- When the release is completed, EXTEND THE ARM out and reach for the broom; drawing an imaginary line from the broom to the point of release.
- The hand should be in a hand shake position.
- Repeat this exercise ten times.

## Draw the 4 Foot:

### **Purpose: Develop consistent weight control**

- Player throws 8 rocks and sees how many can be made to finish in the 4<sup>th</sup> after all have been thrown
- Competition between players is possible by using adjacent sheets of ice or competing in opposite ends. For intermediate and beginner curlers, draw either to the house or the 8 foot circle.

## Magic Dot Sequence:

### **Purpose: To bring sliding foot under center of gravity**

- Stand up in the hack with the throwing arm extended and make a dot on the ice with the broom handle, directly in front of the hack foot.
- Add two more dots on the same line of direction one foot apart
- At the beginning of the forward slide, slowly move the sliding foot on the first dot and stop.
- Make sure the gliding foot is under the center of gravity and you feel a good balance.
- Then move to the second dot, stop again and finally reach for the third dot.

## Push and Sweep:

### **Purpose: Get use to sweeping motion alone and with partner**

- Start with two people, one sweeping and one pushing the rock down the center line.
- Start at the house and push the rock with the broom at a fairly slow pace to the other house; move slowly enough so the sweeper has no problem keeping up with the rock and his sweeping is effective.
- Switch position and repeat coming back
- Repeat five times increasing the speed slightly each time.
- Add a second sweeper and concentrate on rhythm and sweeping together. Once again, start at a slow pace and gradually work up to a take out weight.

# Curling Drills

## **Throw and Sweep:**

### **Purpose: To initiate new sweepers**

- This drill requires three people to be effective.
- One is designated as the thrower and the other two are sweepers.
- The rock should be thrown with the draw weight the first few times then gradually increasing the weight.
- Alternate positions every four rocks. Each person should throw at least eight rocks.

## **Up and Down:**

### **Purpose: To initiate sweeping**

- Have the entire group or individual sweep on the center line down the sheet and up the next one. Continue this circular pattern several times until the majority of the participants gain good stability and rhythm.
- Start the drill at a fairly slow pace and gradually increase the speed.

## **Hog Line Game:**

### **Purpose: To learn the hitting angles**

- Two teams and 16 rocks.
- Play normal game from the second hog line.
- First four rocks have to be draw or guard weight; if a take out is played, the opponent replaces his stone where he wants.
- Takeouts are allowed for the last 4 rocks or each team.
- Each rock must be thrown from the center line and released before the hog line.

## **Passing the Bucket:**

### **Purpose: To properly learn the release**

- Have curlers face each other across the width of a sheet on their knees or squat position.
- Curlers pass the rock to their counterpart checking the grip and turn. Use correct arm motion only.
- Start with in turn.
- Finish with our turn.
- Check grip, release and hand shake position.

# Practice Plan

## **Unstructured Free Play (10 min)**

Prior to the practice athletes who have arrived early should be encouraged to participate in free play activities.

## **Warm Up (10-12 min)**

Warm up should start with a light jog to get the athletes' heart pumping. Athletes should then gather to stretch, starting slowly and gradually involving all the muscles and body parts to be utilized in the exercise related instruction phase of the practice.

## **Basic Motor Skills (15-20 min)**

Basic Motor Skills are defined as the very simplest movement skills (i.e. running, kicking, jumping, throwing, catching, etc). This phase starts with known content and progresses to the application of skill(s) resembling the game/competition, allowing athletes to fine-tune these basic skills to enhance the acquisition of sport skills. It should focus on one specific skill at a time. The combination of 2 or more skills will be encompassed in the next section.

## **Sport Specific Skills (15-20 min)**

During this phase the athletes will combine several basic motor skills and practice the skills as demonstrated during the instruction. Emphasis should be placed on creating competition-like conditions (through game-like drills) during this phase.

## **Fitness (12-20 min)**

This phase involved physical conditioning activities that are specific to the fitness needs of your sport. This is done by setting continual work/pause ratios (through circuits) for your athletes that stress the correct energy system(s). Fitness encompasses cardio, muscular strength, muscular endurance and flexibility.

## **Simulated Game (10-15 min; for team sports only)**

During this phase athletes will compete in a competition-like setting to incorporate all the skills they have learned as well as the rules of the sport. Infractions should be called so that the athletes learn all aspects of the sport.

## **Cool Down (5-8 min)**

Don't forget this portion. Cool downs are a vital part of a practice as they allow the heart rate to return to normal. Stretching should also be included at this time to prevent sore muscles the next day.

## **Evaluation/Tips (5-10 min)**

Evaluation is used to assess the effectiveness of specific activities or the total practice. It is helpful to spend a few minutes with your athletes at the end of a practice to get some feedback on the practice session. It can take the form of a 5 minute rap session about things that went well and things that the athletes and/or coaches need to work on. The topics discussed can be built into the next week's practice. All around training should also encompass nutrition and/or mental training so it is important to discuss these items with your athletes as well.

\*\*NOTE: for additional resources, go to [www.specialolympics.bc.ca](http://www.specialolympics.bc.ca) and click on Resources\*\*