

Rules Summary

Qualification

The PFA website has the 2017, 10 page official Rules, see [PFA](#) under their 'Documents' menu. The main rules, though not all the rules, are summarised below, expressed as simply as possible and are for TIMED games only. These notes have been checked by a well qualified umpire. If there are unusual exceptions, check with your games umpire. The numbers in brackets refer to the PFA documents.

At The Start Of The Game

Placing The Circle

At the first end the circle can be placed anywhere on the piste so long as a

- (i) A valid throw can be made i.e. min 6m + 1m to the dead boule line(7&8) and
- (ii) the circle must also be 2m from any other circle in use (6). Or 1m from any obstacles i.e. score poles.

The circle's location must be marked. The circle must be inside edge down. Your feet mustn't touch it nor may either lift completely off the ground before your boule lands. Measure from the inside front edge of the circle when checking the distance to the cosh.

Throwing The Cosh

A valid throw of the cosh is between 6 and 10m from the circle, 1/2m from a side line and 1 metre from the dead boule line. If the throw is invalid the opposing team places the cosh where they want subject to the above rules and they also have the option to move the circle back up to a max 11m from the dead boule line. If any part of a cosh or boule is inside the line then it's in. If lines are thick, the outside edge is the line.

Challenging The Validity Of The Throw

If the cosh might have been thrown to an invalid length (<6m or >10m) that team can still choose to play their first boule without interruption from the opposition. Only after this are the opposition allowed to measure whether the cosh was valid. If it's invalid, the opposition place the cosh validly. The first team then plays its first boule again.

Ongoing Play

Placing The Circle

The circle must be placed over the cosh after the previous end. It must also be moved sideways to be 2m from any other adjacent circle in use or 1m from any obstacle. The circle may never be moved forwards.

However the first player of the new end may move the circle back in line with the previous end's play to provide up to 10m plus 1m to the dead boule line. They don't have to do this, it's their choice.

Where Not To Stand

The team waiting its turn to play should stand off the piste at one or other end and well behind the player whose turn it is. They should be still and quiet so as not to distract (17).

One Minute To Play

In timed games you have only 1 minute to play your boule after your opponent's last boule stops (21).

Filling A Hole

A team can fill one hole made by a previous boule before throwing the cosh and also before throwing each boule (10 & PFA 2.4.0.0, #5). You can't smooth the piste you can only return the hole to what it would have been before the boule landed there.

The Cosh Goes Out Of Play So It's Dead (14)

- If only one side has boules left they earn as many points as boules in hand, aka "shooting the cosh".
- Otherwise the end is dead. The team who won the previous end plays again from a new end.
- Unusual situation: If the cosh is hit and bounces back to within 3m of the circle it is dead.

2 Boules Are Equidistant From The Cosh (29)

- If both teams have boules in hand the last team plays again because they didn't actually win that point.
- If only one team has boules in hand it plays them all.
- If no team has boules it's a dead end. The team who won the previous end plays again from a new end.

If boules beyond those initially holding the point are equidistant from the cosh neither gain a point.

At the End of each End

When Does An End Finish (PFA timed rule 2)

An end finishes when all boules and the cosh have stopped moving. The next end starts the moment the previous end finished, there is no time gap. 2 examples will help

- The last boule has been thrown and all boules have stopped moving. That end is over therefore the next end has started. A moment later the bell goes. So you finish this new end and play one more end (+ a tie breaker if a draw)
- The last boule has been thrown but hits another boule which is still moving when the bell goes. So that end hasn't finished. Finish that end and play one more end (+ a tie breaker if a draw)
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Who Measures And Awards The Points

Contrary to many peoples' belief, measuring is not done by the losing team but by the team who last played that end (26). One point is scored for every one of the winner's boules that are closer to the cosh than their opponent's nearest boule. The other team must stand well clear and not intervene while measuring is taking place. However at least one player should be watching to make sure no boule or cosh were moved. This team may then check the measuring, getting an umpire if necessary.

Don't do the Wrong Thing!

Late Arrival

If you arrive after the start of the game, defined as the cosh has been thrown, validly or not, you cannot play until the next end starts (33).

Playing In Sandals

Open toed shoes are not allowed. Shoes must cover toes and heels for safety reasons (39).

Smoking, Drinking and Mobiles

Effectively, smoking, drinking alcohol and using mobiles during a game are against the rules (39 and local rules).

Standing In The Circle

As mentioned above it is against the rules to stand with your foot touching the circle or to lift a foot fully off the ground before your boule has landed (6).

Standing In The Wrong Place

When your opponents are playing you must stand off the piste, at one or other end, and not move or distract (17). Specifically you must not talk when a player is in the circle.

Playing With Someone Else's Boule

Some boules look very similar. If you accidentally play with someone else's boule it should be replaced with your boule at the first opportunity, possibly after measuring has been done. The rules don't say but it may be polite to offer your opponents to do it so they can take care to not disadvantage themselves (23).

Picking Up The Circle Before All Boules Played

The circle is replaced but only the opponents can play their remaining boules (6).

Picking Up Your Boule Before The End Is Scored

The boules you picked up are dead. If your partners still have boules in hand they are not allowed to play them (27).