For ease of access the different **MATCH FORMATS** are explained on a separate page, click [here](/content/match-formats)

**Qualification**

The 2021 International Rules of Petanque and also the PFA Local Rules for Timed Games are can be seen in the PFA website under the ‘Documents’ menu, [here.](https://1316b8db-3bf4-ac69-55be-f2367680bd87.filesusr.com/ugd/0c41e1_7d8c0416bce1425b951cdba8903bc9d0.pdf) The rules covering the majority of normal situations are summarised below, expressed as simply as possible for Club members' benefit, . These are for TIMED games only. These notes have been checked by an umpire. If there are unusual exceptions, check with your games umpire. The numbers in brackets in the text refer to the PFA International Rules document.

You can download a copy of these rules to print by clicking [here](/sites/default/files/Copy%2C%20Rules%20only_1.pdf).

**At The Start Of The Game**

**1. 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. a minimum 6m + 0.5m to the dead boule line (7) and

(ii) the circle must also be 1.5m from any other circle or jack in use or 1.0m from any obstacles e.g. for CPC shelter or light poles. (6)

The circle’s location must be marked. The circle must be placed inside edge down. Your feet mustn’t touch the circle nor may either lift completely off the ground before your boule lands.

**2. The Initial Throw Of The Jack (7)**

A valid throw is between 6 and 10m from the inside edge of the circle. The jack must be a minimum 0.5m from the end dead boule line, some part remaining inside the outer edge of the side lines. It must also be 1.5m from any other games' circle or jack and 0.5m from an obstacle. If the throw is invalid the opposing team places the jack where they want subject to the above rules They have the option to move the circle back up to a max 10.5m from the end dead boule line. If any part of a jack or boule is inside the line then it’s in. If lines are thick, the outside edge is the line.

**3. Challenging The Validity Of The Throw (8)**

If the jack might have been thrown invalidly, see above, 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 jack was valid. If it’s agreed invalid, the opposition place the jack validly. The first team then plays its first boule again.

**Ongoing Play**

**4. At the start of each end**

The circle must be placed over the jack after the previous end. If necessary the circle must be moved to be 1.5m from any nearby circle or jack in use or 1m from any obstacle. The circle may never be moved forwards. However the first player of a new end may move the circle back in line with the previous end’s play to provide up to 10.5m to the dead boule line. They don’t have to do this, it’s their choice. The same rules regarding the validity of the throw as in paragraph 3 apply to all ends.

**5. 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).

**6. One Minute To Play**

In timed games you have only 1 minute to play your boule after all boules and the jack have stopped moving and any measuring has been done (21).

**7. Filling A Hole**

A team can fill one dip made by a previous boule before throwing the jack and each boule (10). You can’t smooth the piste you can only return the dip to what it would have been before that boule landed there.

**8. The Jack 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 jack”.

- Otherwise the end is dead. The team who won the previous end plays again from a new end.

- Unusual situation: If the jack is hit and bounces back to within 3m of the circle it is dead.

**9. Two Boules Are Equidistant From The Jack (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 jack neither gain a point.

**At the End of each End**

**10. When Does An End Finish (PFA timed rule 2)**

An end finishes when all boules and the jack 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)

**11. Who Measures And Awards The Points**

Contrary to many peoples’ belief, measuring is not done by the loosing 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 jack 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 jack were moved. This team may then check the measuring, getting an umpire if necessary.

**See below about misbehavior!**

**12. 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).

**13. Playing In Sandals**

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

**14. Smoking, Drinking and Mobiles**

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

**15. 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).

**16. 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.

**17. Playing With Someone Else’s Boule**

Some boules look very similar. If you accidentally play with someone else’s boule the throw is valid but the bolule 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).

**18. Picking Up The Circle Before All Boules Played**

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

**19. 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).

**SO THE MESSAGE IS SIMPLE - GET ALL THIS UNDER YOUR BELT AND YOU'LL BE THE PERFECT PLAYER!**