

**Triples Curling** is an exciting new discipline that has been developed by Curling Canada. As its name suggests, curlers compete in teams of 3 when playing Triples. Each end consists of 6 shots per team, with each player throwing 2 shots per end. Unless otherwise indicated, Curling Canada rules apply to Triples, including those related to the Free Guard Zone.

**Triples Rules:** The following rules apply to all Triples games for curlers U18 and older. Please see Page 2 of this document for Youth Modifications (i.e., for U15 and U9/U12 curlers).

**Pre-Game Practice:** This consists of each player throwing 2 rocks up and 2 rocks back. However, one of the unique features of Triples is that both teams practice at the same time, with one team throwing on the left side of the sheet and the other on the right. A coin toss takes place immediately before practice, with the winner choosing side of sheet or rock colour. Then, the teams throw their practice rocks in alternation, just as they would in a game. This process reduces the time required for Pre-Game Practice to the point that it should take no more than 10 minutes total.

**Game Structure:** Triples games consist of 3 sets of 2 ends each. Each set is effectively a mini-game, with the team with highest cumulative score after 2 ends winning that set. However, if both teams have the same number of points, that set is considered tied.

**Hammer Allocation:** In End 1 of Set 1, hammer is decided by a coin toss. Hammer in End 1 of Set 2 reverses from the End 1 of Set 1. Hammer in End 1 of Set 3 goes to the team that is trailing the game. If the score is tied heading into Set 3, another coin toss is used to determine which team starts Set 3 with hammer.

**Blank Ends:** In Triples, blank ends are not allowed. This means that if a team inadvertently blanks End 1 of a set, hammer for End 2 is awarded to the other team.

**Throwing Order:** One of the defining features of the Triples discipline is that curlers are required to play a different position (i.e., lead, middle, and skip) for each set of the game. Teams can determine which player starts at each position in Set 1. However, from that point onward the rotation of players must be as follows:

**Set 1:** Player 1 = Lead, Player 2 = Middle, Player 3 = Skip

**Set 2:** Player 3 = Lead, Player 1 = Middle, Player 2 = Skip

**Set 3:** Player 2 = Lead, Player 3 = Middle, Player 1 = Skip

**Positional Duties:** The lead is required to throw the first 2 shots of the end for their team, and to sweep the next 4. The middle is required to sweep the first 2 shots of the end, to throw the next 2, and to hold the broom for the last 2. Finally, the skip is required to hold the broom for the first 4 shots of the end, and to throw the last 2.

**Sweeping:** Only 1 player (i.e., the current sweeper) is allowed to sweep rocks until the far hog-line. After that point, 1 of the other curlers (i.e., broom holder or thrower) can join in.

**Set Values:** In order to ensure that a full Triples game is played, the value assigned to Set 3 is greater than it is for Sets 1 and 2. The specific set values are as follows:



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- Set 1:** 2 Points Available (1 Point/Team if Set is Tied)
- Set 2:** 2 Points Available (1 Point/Team if Set is Tied)
- Set 3:** 4 Points Available (2 Points/Team if Set is Tied)

These differing set values ensure that all 3 sets are always required. That is, even if Team A wins Sets 1 and 2, and therefore leads the game 4-0, it is still possible for Team B to tie the game by winning Set 3 outright, since the score would now be 4-4.

**Tied Games:** If the game is tied after Set 3 a 'team shootout' is used. This involves each player throwing alternating draws with the other team. The throwing order and positional duties are the same as in Set 3, with the team that last had hammer throwing first in the shootout. The sweeping rules are also the same, except you cannot sweep opposition rocks behind the t-line. The scoring system is: 5 points (pin), 4 points (button), 3 points (4-foot), 2 points (8-foot), and 1 point (12-foot).

**Youth Rules:** These modified Triples rules have been designed to meet the developmental needs of youth curlers. With this said, it is always possible for younger curlers to 'play up', depending on their skills and experience.

**U15 Modifications:** Although each set is still a mini-game, with the team with highest cumulative score after 2 ends winning that set, the maximum number of points that can be earned in a single end is capped at 3 (i.e., even if a team has 4 or more rocks closer to the button). Note: this modification is designed to keep each set competitive and to reduce the likelihood of lopsided games.

If the game is tied after Set 3 a team shootout is still used. The rules for this shootout are the same as U18+ Triples, except the scoring system changes to: 5 points (button), 4 points (4-foot), 3 points (8-foot), 2 points (12-foot), and 1 point (Free Guard Zone).

In order to give every U15 curler the opportunity to experience 2 ends at each position, both ends of Set 3 must be played, even if the game is already decided mathematically. One way for U15 event organizers to reinforce this modification is to use 'aggregate points scored' to break ties in the standings and/or for playoff seeding purposes.

**U9/U12 Modifications:** Because the pace of play is typically much slower when our youngest curlers are involved, U9/U12 Triples games are only 3 ends in length. With this in mind, positions change each end, which gives every curler the opportunity to play each position.

Another key modification is that ends are simply won or lost, regardless of how many of a team's rocks are closer to the button. The only exception is a blank, when neither team wins the end.

In order to ensure that all 3 ends are needed to decide the game, the value of each end in U9/U12 Triples is as follows: **End 1** = 1 Point, **End 2** = 1 Point, **End 3** = 2 Points.

With this said, if the game is tied at after End 3 a team shootout is used. The rules for this shootout are the same as in U18+ Triples, except the scoring system aligns with U15 Triples: 5 points (button), 4 points (4-foot), 3 points (8-foot), 2 points (12-foot), and 1 point (Free Guard Zone).

**Triples Curling has been created by Curling Canada's National Training and Development Centre.**