

HOW TO MEASURE IN LAWN BOWLS



Deciding who has won shot at the completion of an end can be tricky. It can depend on where you stand! In these cases it's always best to measure. When done properly it removes all doubt.

When to measure

It's often not necessary to measure on each end. Sometimes it's pretty obvious which bowls are "shot", and to ask for a measure at these times isn't in the spirit of the game.

However, if you either can't agree, or you're not 100 percent certain then always ask for a measure.

Don't be embarrassed to ask, even if your opponent doesn't think it's needed. The more experience you get seeing which is closer the better you will read them in the future.

What to measure with

The box measure is a common piece of bowls equipment. It acts just like a tape measure with a retractable string, instead of the marked tape. It's made with plastic outer and usually string for the measuring and a small button or switch on top to allow the string to come out.

How to measure a bowl

Firstly work out which bowls to measure. This can vary on the situation, but usually consists of measuring one bowl against another.

To do this you would measure the distance between the jack and one of the bowls. Once you have this done accurately you "lock" the string in place and use that to see if the other shot is closer to the jack.

If the string doesn't reach the second bowl, then the first bowl is closer.

We cover other common scenarios later, and how they should be handled.

Placing the measure against the jack

Place the hard plastic end of the bowls measure against the jack. The end with the string should be pointing towards the bowl you want to measure.

Be careful to not move the jack

Placing the measure against the bowl

Once the measure is against the jack, press the release button on top of the measure to allow the string to be pulled out.

Pull the string directly out towards the bowl. Once it reaches the bowl you should place the string against the centre of the belly of the bowl. This will be the point closest to the jack.

Once you are happy you are touching the bowl, and the string is taught, release the button on top of the measure.

Measuring against another bowl

By this point you should have your measure set to the distance on the first bowl.

Simply repeat the first step of placing the measure against the jack with the string pointing directly towards the second bowl.

Pull the string towards the bowl. If it doesn't reach the first bowl is closer. If the string reaches over the bowl - even by the tiniest amount, the second bowl is closer.

Other common scenarios

Above we covered the simplest situation. Just the two bowls, and we measure to see which is closest.

However there are many other situations where you will need to measure, and this will affect how you do so.

Counting multiple shots

One of the most common situations is the shot bowl is easily identified, however it isn't clear if the team/ player has more.

In this event the shot bowl is removed from the head. The player who lost the end then selects their closest bowl. This will then be the first bowl measured, and to which the winner's bowls are measured against.

The "all around" measure

In this scenario it is unclear which bowl is shot and could be one of 3 or 4 bowls.

Similarly to the "counting multiple shots" scenario it is made simple by identifying a single bowl from either player which you feel is closest for that player.

Once you have this you can measure this against the bowls from the other player. If the original bowl is shot, then you can repeat the steps for "multiple shots" to see if any more will count.

Common errors

Accidentally moving a bowl, or the jack.

Measuring too low/on the bowl.

Etiquette when measuring bowls

It's important not to come confuse your opponent in anyway, or try to cheat them. Your job as the measurer is to get a fair result, not to try and gain an advantage.

Always agree what is going to be measured before you start. This makes things clear on exactly how you will be measuring, making it easy for you.

It can be good to confirm exactly what the current situation is, and what the possible outcomes of measuring will be e.g. "I am holding 2 shots, shall we measure these two (identifying the two bowls) to see if I have a 3rd?"

Always allow your opponent to see what you are doing, and how you are measuring. Again, this is to prevent any issues with accusations of cheating.

Always ask your opponent if they are happy for you to measure, or if they want a marker/umpire to do it (if one is present). This can work both ways. If a game is coming to a tight finish, you may not feel comfortable doing the measuring. Umpires and markers are there to handle these disputes, so make the most of them if they're there.

Measuring is an important skill that any player must learn. The only way to get better at it is to practice, and to keep communicating with your teammates and opposition to check what you are doing. We can all accept mistakes made in good faith, so get out there and try it out.