

The Laws of Cricket

As amended by the Marylebone Cricket Club, 1884, 1889 and 1894

- 1 A match is played between two sides of eleven players each, unless otherwise agreed to; each side has two innings, taken alternately, except in the case provided for in Law 53. The choice of innings shall be decided by tossing.
- 2 The score shall be reckoned by runs. A run is scored:-
 - 1st. So often as the batsmen after a hit, or at any time while the ball is in play, shall have crossed, and made good their ground, from end to end.
 - 2nd. For penalties under Laws 16, 34, 41 and allowances under 44.Any run or runs so scored shall be duly recorded by scorers appointed for the purpose. The side which scores the greatest number of runs wins the match. No match is won unless played out or given up, except in the case provided in Law 45.
- 3 Before the commencement of the match two umpires shall be appointed; one for each end.
- 4 The ball shall weigh not less than five ounces and a half, nor more than five ounces and three-quarters. It shall measure not less than nine inches, nor more than nine inches and one-quarter in circumference. At the beginning of each innings either side may demand a new ball.
- 5 The bat shall not exceed four inches and one-quarter in the widest part; it shall not be more than thirty-eight inches in length.
- 6 The wickets shall be pitched opposite and parallel to each other at a distance of twenty-two yards. Each wicket shall be eight inches in width and consist of three stumps, with two bails upon the top. The stumps shall be of equal and sufficient size to prevent the ball from passing through, twenty-seven inches out of the ground. The bails shall be each four inches in length, and when in position, on the top of the stumps, shall not project more than half an inch above them. The wickets shall not be changed during a match, unless the ground between them becomes unfit for play, and then only by consent of both sides.
- 7 The bowling crease shall be in a line with the stumps: six feet eight inches in length; the stumps in the centre; with a return crease at each end, at right angles behind the wicket.
- 8 The popping crease shall be marked four feet from the wicket, parallel to it, and be deemed unlimited in length.
- 9 The ground shall not be rolled, watered, covered, mown, or beaten during a match, except before the commencement of each innings and of each day's play, when, unless the in-side object, the ground shall be swept and rolled for not more than ten minutes. This shall not prevent the batsman from beating the ground with his bat, nor the batsman nor bowler from using sawdust to obtain a proper foothold.
- 10 The ball must be bowled; if thrown or jerked the umpire shall call "No ball".
- 11 The bowler shall deliver the ball with one foot on the ground behind the bowling crease, and within the return crease, otherwise the umpire shall call "No ball".

12 If the bowler shall bowl the ball so high over or so wide of the wicket that in the opinion of the umpire it is not within reach of the striker, the umpire shall call "Wide ball".

13 The ball shall be bowled in overs of five balls from each wicket alternately. When five balls have been bowled, and the ball is finally settled in the bowler's or wicket-keeper's hands, the umpire shall call "Over". Neither a "no ball" nor a "wide ball" shall be reckoned as one of the "over".

14 The bowler shall be allowed to change ends as often as he pleases, provided only that he does not bowl two overs consecutively in one innings.

15 The bowler may require the batsman at the wicket from which he is bowling to stand on that side of it which he may direct.

16 The striker may hit a "no ball", and whatever runs result shall be added to his score; but he shall not be out from a "no ball" unless he be run out or break Laws 26, 27, 29, 30. All runs made from a "no ball" otherwise than from the bat, shall be scored "no balls", and if no run be made one run shall be added to that score. From a "wide ball" as many runs as are run shall be added to the score as "wide balls", and if no run be otherwise obtained one run shall be so added.

17 If the ball, not having been called "wide" or "no ball", pass the striker without touching his bat or person, and any runs be obtained, the umpire shall call "Bye"; but if the ball touch any part of the striker's person (hand excepted) and any run be obtained, the umpire shall call "Leg bye", such runs to be scored "byes" and "leg byes" respectively.

18 At the beginning of the match, and of each innings, the umpire at the bowler's wicket shall call "Play"; from that time no trial ball shall be allowed to any bowler on the ground between the wickets, and when one of the batsmen is out the use of the bat shall not be allowed to any person until the next batsman shall come in.

19 A batsman shall be held to be "out of his ground" unless his bat in hand or some part of his person be grounded within the line of the popping crease.

20 The wicket shall be held to be "down" when either of the bails is struck off, or, if both bails be off, when a stump is struck out of the ground.

The **STRIKER** is out-

21 If the wicket be bowled down, even if the ball first touch the striker's bat or person:- "Bowled".

22 Or, if the ball, from a stroke of the bat or hand, but not the wrist, be held before it touch the ground, although it be hugged to the body of the catcher:- "Caught".

23 Or, if in playing at the ball, provided it be not touched by the bat or hand, the striker be out of his ground, and the wicket be put down by the wicket-keeper with the ball or with hand or arm, with ball in hand:- "Stumped".

24 Or, if with any part of his person he stop the ball, which in the opinion of the umpire at the bowler's wicket shall have been pitched in a straight line from it to the striker's wicket and would have hit it:- "Leg before wicket".

25 Or, if in playing at the ball he hit down his wicket with his bat or any part of his person or dress:- "Hit wicket".

26 Or, if under pretence of running, or otherwise, either of the batsmen wilfully prevent a ball from being caught:- “Obstructing the field”.

27 Or, if the ball be struck, or be stopped by any part of his person, and he wilfully strike it again, except it be done for the purpose of guarding his wicket, which he may do with his bat, or any part of his person, except his hands:- “Hit the ball twice”.

Either BATSMAN is out-

28 If in running, or at any other time, while the ball is in play, he be out of his ground, and his wicket be struck down by the ball after touching any fieldsman, or by the hand or arm, with ball in hand, or any fieldsman:- “Run out”.

29 Or, if he touch with his hands or take up the ball while in play, unless at the request of the opposite side:- “Handled the ball”.

30 Or, if he wilfully obstruct any fieldsman:- “Obstructing the field”.

31 If the batsmen have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down is out; if they have not crossed, he that has left the wicket which is put down is out.

32 The striker being caught no runs shall be scored. A batsman being run out, that run which was being attempted shall not be scored.

33 A batsman being out from any cause, the ball shall be “Dead”.

34 If a ball in play cannot be found or recovered, any fieldsmen may call “Lost ball”, when the ball shall be “dead”. Six runs shall be added to the score; but if more than six runs have been run before “Lost ball” has been called, as many runs as have been run shall be scored.

35 After the ball shall have been finally settled in the wicket-keeper’s or bowler’s hand, it shall be “dead”; but when the bowler is about to deliver the ball, if the batsman at his wicket be out of his ground before actual delivery, the said bowler may run him out; but if the bowler throw at that wicket and any run result, it shall be scored “No ball”.

36 A batsman shall not retire from his wicket and return to it to complete his innings after another has been in, without the consent of the opposite side.

37 A substitute shall be allowed to field or run between wickets for any player who may during the match be incapacitated from illness or injury, but for no other reason, except with the consent of the opposite side.

38 In all cases where a substitute shall be allowed, the consent of the opposite side shall be obtained as to the person to act as substitute, and the place in the field which he shall take.

39 In case any substitute shall be allowed to run between wickets, the striker may be run out if either he or his substitute be out of his ground. If the striker be out of his ground while the ball is in play, that wicket which he has left may be put down and the striker given out, although the other batsman may have made good the ground at that end, and the striker and his substitute at the other end.

40 A batsman is liable to be out for any infringement of the laws by his substitute.

- 41 The fieldsmen may stop the ball with any part of his person, but if he wilfully stop it otherwise, the ball shall be “dead” and five runs added to the score; whatever runs may have been made, five only shall be added.
- 42 The wicket-keeper shall stand behind the wicket. If he shall take the ball for the purpose of stumping before it has passed the wicket, or, if he shall incommode the striker, by any noise, or motion, or if any part of his person be over or before the wicket, the striker shall not be out, excepting under Laws 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30.
- 43 The Umpires are sole judges of fair or unfair play, of the fitness of the ground, the weather, and the light for play; all disputes shall be determined by them, and if they disagree, the actual state of things shall continue.
- 44 They shall pitch fair wickets, arrange boundaries where necessary and the allowances to be made for them, and change ends after each side has had one innings.
- 45 They shall allow two minutes for each striker to come in, and ten minutes between each innings. When they shall call “Play”, the side refusing to play shall lose the match.
- 46 They shall not order a batsman out unless appealed to by the other side.
- 47 The umpire at the bowler’s wicket shall be appealed to before the other umpire in all cases except in those of stumping, hit wicket, run out at the striker’s wicket, or arising out of Law 42, but in any case in which an umpire is unable to give a decision, he shall appeal to the other umpire, whose decision shall be final.
- 48A If the umpire at the bowler's end be not satisfied of the absolute fairness of the delivery or any ball he shall call “No ball”.
- 48B The umpire shall take especial care to call “No ball” instantly upon delivery; “Wide ball” as soon as it shall have passed the striker.
- 49 If either batsman run a short run, the umpire shall call “One short”, and the run shall not be scored.
- 50 After the umpire has called “Over” the ball is “dead”, but an appeal may be made as to whether either batsman is out; such appeal however, shall not be made after the delivery of the next ball, nor after any cessation of play.
- 51 No umpire shall be allowed to bet.
- 52 No umpire shall be changed during a match, unless with the consent of both sides, except in case of violation of Law 51; then either side may dismiss him.
- 53 The side which goes in second shall follow their innings if they have scored 120 runs less than the opposite side in a three days’ match, or 80 runs in a two days’ match.
- 54 That on the last day of a match, or if a day match, at any time, the in-side shall be empowered to declare the innings at an end.