

2–Person Stick (Sturling) Curling Rules

Sturling is a two-player curling format designed to keep the game quick, accessible, and strategic. It is often associated with stick curling, but the core format is useful for anyone who wants a shorter game with fewer players and less sweeping.

The main idea is simple: two players form a team, one player stays at each end of the sheet, and the delivering player throws six stones while the teammate skips from the playing end. On the next end, the roles reverse as play comes back the other direction. All genders are welcome to play.

Team Format

Each team has two players. One player is positioned at each end of the rink, and players do not travel up and down the sheet in the same way as traditional four-player curling.

For a normal end:

- the two delivering players alternate shots;
- each team delivers six stones;
- the teammate at the playing end skips the end;
- roles reverse for the next end.

This means every player is involved on every shot. One player delivers while the other reads the house, calls line, and judges the result.

Game Length

Sturling games are six ends. Because each team throws six stones per end instead of eight, games move quickly while still giving both teams enough stones to build guards, draw around cover, and make tactical hits.

If the game is tied, Sturling rules allow an extra end. Extra-end formats can vary by organizer, but the common rule set has each player deliver three stones with roles changing at the midpoint.

Sweeping Restrictions

The biggest Sturling difference is sweeping. Sweeping is only allowed from the hog line to the back of the house at the playing end.

That restriction changes shot calling. You cannot rely on sweepers to hold a stone straight through the middle of the sheet or drag a light stone all the way down. Weight, line, and release matter more because sweeping help arrives late.

In practical terms:

- early path and weight must be judged from the delivery;
- sweeping can still help as the stone enters the house;
- late sweeping decisions around the button remain important;
- the game is fairer for players who cannot sweep the full sheet.

Early No-Removal Rule

No stone may be removed from play before the delivery of the fourth stone of an end. If a delivered stone removes another stone too early, the delivered stone is removed and the other stones are returned to their original positions.

This makes Stirling more offensive. With only six stones per team, early guards and draws need protection so the end can develop.

Delivery

Stirling rules support both traditional and stick-style delivery. The published rule set allows delivery from the hack or from inside the near hog line with the stone touching the center line, as long as the stone is released before reaching the hog line.

For online play, the important point is not the delivery device. It is the tactical effect: fewer stones, late sweeping only, and a protected early end.

Scoring

Scoring follows regular curling. After all stones in the end have stopped, only one team scores. The team with the closest stone to the button scores one point for each stone closer than the opponent's nearest stone.

The shorter end makes each scoring chance feel larger. A missed guard, a heavy draw, or one perfect freeze can decide the end because there are fewer stones left to repair the situation.

Useful ideas:

- protect early guards because they cannot be removed before the fourth stone;
- call draw weight carefully since full-sheet sweeping is unavailable;
- use freezes and taps to make the house difficult to clear;
- avoid panic hits early unless the rule allows the removal;
- remember that six-stone ends leave fewer chances to recover.