

CRICKET RULES: COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

1. THE BASICS

Objective: Score more runs than the opposing team while dismissing their batsmen.

Teams: 11 players per side (with substitutions only for fielding injuries)

Format: Match can be:

- Test Cricket (5 days, 4 innings)
- One Day International (50 overs per side)
- Twenty20 (20 overs per side)
- Other limited-overs variations

2. PLAYING AREA & EQUIPMENT

Field:

- Pitch: 22 yards (20.12m) long, 10 feet (3.05m) wide
- Creases: Bowling, popping, and return creases
- Boundary: Typically 50-90 yards from pitch center

Equipment:

- Ball: Red (Tests), White (limited overs)
- Bat: Maximum width 4.25 inches, length 38 inches
- Stumps: 3 wooden posts, 28 inches high
- Bails: Two small pieces on top of stumps
- Protective gear: Helmets, pads, gloves, boxes

3. PLAY STRUCTURE

Innings:

- Team either bats or bowls during an innings

- In two-innings matches, teams bat twice each
- In limited-overs, each team bats once (unless D/L method applies)

Overs:

- 6 legal deliveries constitute an over
- Bowlers alternate ends after each over
- No bowler may bowl two consecutive overs

4. SCORING RUNS

Methods:

- Running between wickets (both batsmen must ground bats behind crease)
- Boundary: 4 runs (ball touches ground before boundary)
- Boundary: 6 runs (ball clears boundary on full)
- Extras: Byes, leg byes, wides, no-balls

Additional runs: Penalty runs awarded for various fielding offenses

5. DISMISSALS (10 WAYS TO GET OUT)

1. Bowled: Ball hits stumps
2. Caught: Fielder catches ball before it touches ground
3. LBW: Ball hits batsman's body when it would have hit stumps
4. Run Out: Fielder breaks wicket while batsman is out of crease
5. Stumped: Wicketkeeper breaks wicket while batsman is out of crease
6. Hit Wicket: Batsman breaks own wicket while playing shot
7. Handled the Ball: Batsman intentionally touches ball with hand
8. Obstructing the Field: Batsman deliberately obstructs fielder
9. Timed Out: New batsman takes >3 minutes to arrive
10. Hit Ball Twice: Batsman hits ball twice except to protect wicket

6. BOWLING RULES

Delivery must:

- Be bowled with straight arm (no throwing)
- Not be a wide (too far from batsman to hit)
- Not be a no-ball (front foot over crease, full toss above waist, etc.)

No-ball consequences:

- 1 run penalty
- Free hit in limited-overs cricket
- Must be re-bowled

Wide ball:

- 1 run penalty
- Must be re-bowled

7. FIELDING RESTRICTIONS

Test Cricket: No restrictions except 2 fielders behind square leg maximum

ODIs:

- Powerplay 1 (overs 1-10): Max 2 fielders outside 30-yard circle
- Powerplay 2 (overs 11-40): Max 4 fielders outside circle
- Powerplay 3 (overs 41-50): Max 5 fielders outside circle

T20s:

- First 6 overs: Max 2 fielders outside circle
- Overs 7-20: Max 5 fielders outside circle

8. UMPIRES & DECISIONS

On-field umpires: 2 umpires make decisions

Third umpire: Reviews TV replays for referrals

Match referee: Oversees conduct and penalties

Decision Review System (DRS):

- Teams get limited reviews per innings
- Used for dismissals, boundaries, and other close calls

- Must be reviewed within 15 seconds

9. WEATHER & LIGHT RULES

Bad light: Umpires can suspend play if light is dangerous

Rain: Matches can be shortened using Duckworth-Lewis-Stern method

Wet pitch: Play suspended if pitch becomes dangerous

10. TIE-BREAKERS

Tied match: Scores level at end of match

Super Over: Used in T20s and ODIs for knockout matches

Boundary count: Previously used, now largely replaced

11. PLAYER CONDUCT

Code of Conduct:

- Levels 1-4 offenses with match fee fines to suspensions
- Includes dissent, inappropriate language, dangerous play
- Spirit of Cricket expected at all times

12. RECENT MAJOR RULE CHANGES (2023+)

- Batters can now be out for hitting ball twice if trying to score runs
 - Running pitch damage results in 5-run penalties
 - Stricter over-rate penalties with player suspensions
 - New concussion substitute rules
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