| **Term** | **Definition** |
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| Affiliated Played | A player who is registered with a state or territory bowls association as a member of an affiliated club. |
| Aiming line | An imaginary line the player aims along to allow for the bias of the bowl. |
| At Rest | Jack or bowls that have stopped travelling to the head. A bowl can fall over within 30 seconds of stopping travelling and subsequently be deemed at rest. |
| Backhand | Delivery along a line to the Ieft of the jack is called a backhand shot for a right-handed bowler. |
| Back-swing | Refers to the backward movement of the bowling arm prior to delivering the bowl. The depth of the backswing can affect the distance the bowl travels. |
| Bank | The area above the ditch, not part of the green. |
| Bias | Refers to the asymmetrical shape of the bowl and its effect whereby the bowl will curve in its path to the side of the bowl's slightly more rounded side (identified by the smaller set of rings). Bias describes the amount of curve that a bowl will take during its course to the jack. Bowls are available with several different biases for use in different conditions and competitions. As part of the manufacturing process all bowls are tested against "Master Bowl", which defines the limits of this bias. |
| Blocker | A blocker is a bowl played to a position that restricts the opposition from getting to the target.  |
| Boundary pegs | White, orange or yellow pegs, situated on the bank which indicates the boundary of each rink. |
| Bowling Arm | An artificial device for the delivery of the jack and bowls, approved by Bowls Australia. |
| Centre line | Line marked at each end of the rink indicating the middle of the rink. The mat is placed on the centre line. After being rolled, the jack is also straightened to rest on the centre line. |
| Controlling Body | Responsible for the competition of the day. At various levels controlling bodies set regulations, and may be called upon to invoke disciplinary procedures for serious incidents. |
| Dead End | When the jack is 'dead" the end is declared dead. A jack is dead if it is moved by a bowl in play and it is knocked outside the boundaries of the rink, or comes to rest on the rink at less than the minimum distance. The end may also be declared dead under other situations that are described in the laws. In normal competition dead ends must be replayed. |
| Dead Bowl | A bowl that has come to rest in the ditch without touching the jack or has come to rest outside the boundaries of the rink. |
| Delivery | Deliver is the word used to describe rolling a bowl or jack. The delivery is the action of delivering a bowl or jack. A bowler with a good delivery can be compared to a golfer with a good swing. |
| Displaced Jack or Bowl | A jack or bowl which is moved in a way that is not approved within the Laws. This includes accidental kicking, being hit by a bowl from another rink, or being hit by a bowl played out of turn. Where possible the jack or bowl is returned to its former position, otherwise the end may be declared dead. |
| Disturbing the Head | Altering the position of the jack or a bowl in the head through the delivery of a bowl. |
| Ditch | The gutter around the outside edge of the green, usually filled with sand. |
| Division | In Australian Pennant competition, Division refers to the level or grade of the competition. Divisions generally range from 1 to 6, with a Premier Division in metropolitan areas. |
| Draw | The term Draw can have several meanings in bowling. As a noun it can refer to the type of shot being played. A "dead draw" is an attempt to deliver the bowl as close as possible to the target (generally the jack). It can also be used as a verb. You may hear a skip issuing an instruction such as, "Just draw to the jack". |
| Drive | A Drive is type of shot in bowling where the player delivers the bowl with maximum force toward the target.  |
| Dumping | A dump is defined as a bowl that when delivered is likely to cause heavy impact to the bowling surface. This heavy impact causes damage to the greens. Players can be removed from a game for repeated dumping. |
| End | Bowls are played from one end of the green to the other alternately. An "end" of bowls comprises the placing of the mat, the delivery of the jack and the delivery of all the bowls of all the players in one direction on the rink. |
| Follow- through | The movement of the body following the release of the bowl during delivery. Ideally, the palm of the hand should follow the bowl in a natural follow through. |
| Forehand | Delivery along a line to the right of the jack is called a forehand shot for a right-handed bowler. |
| Forfeit | A game that is awarded to the opposing player or team as a penalty for the defaulting player, team or side not meeting the requirements or one or more Laws. |
| Fours | Format of play with a team of four against four, each player using two bowls alternately against an opposing team player. The names of the players are lead, second, third and skip. This is the format used in pennant. |
| Grass | A reference is sometimes made to delivering the bowl wide enough, or with 'enough grass' to allow for the bias of the bowl. |
| Green | The rectangular playing surface covered in grass or synthetic grass, between 31 and 40 metres lonq. Greens usually have between 6 and 8 rinks. An 8-rink green allows for play from all directions. |
| Greenkeeper | The person responsible for the maintenance of the green and for the set-up of the green for competition. |
| Greens Director | The person responsible for the greens on the day of play. Will be consulted by the Umpire should a decision on continuing or suspending play based on the condition of the green(s) be required. |
| Grip | Grip can refer to the way a player positions their fingers to hold the bowl, or can refer to grooves or dimples on the sides of a bowl, intended to assist the bowler in holding the bowl. |
| Grippo | Whilst Grippo is a registered brand name, the term is colloquially used to refer to any form of cream used sparingly on the bowls to assist the bowler in holding the bowl. Often not permitted on indoor greens. |
| Groundsheet | A rectangular sheet of canvas temporarily placed on the surface of the green to protect it from damage caused by the delivery of bowls. |
| Head | The Head refers collectively to the jack and the bowls that have been delivered and have come to rest within the boundaries of the rink. |
| Heavy | When a player unintentionally delivers a bowl beyond the jack or the intended target it is described as being “heavy”. The term “heavy” can also refer to a slow green. |
| In Course | A jack or bowl is in its original course from the delivery until it comes to rest, no matter how many times it comes into contact with the jack or other bowls before it comes to rest or is declared dead. |
| In Motion | A jack or bowl which is moving during play after it has been at rest as part of the head. |
| Jack  | The jack is the small white or yellow unbiased ball that is the target in bowls. You may also hear it referred to colloquially as the "kitty". |
| Jack High | If a bowl is “jack high” it means that it has reached a position such that its nearest part is laterally aligned with the jack. Effectively it means that the bowl and jack are precisely equidistant from the mat. |
| Laws of Bowls | The Laws of the Sport of Bowls drawn up by World Bowls, and supplemented by any National Bowling Authority, such as Bowls Australia. The Laws and Domestic Regulations are updated regularly. |
| Lead | A lead is the person who plays first in pairs, triples, or fours games. The lead is responsible for setting the mat and delivering the jack to start the end (when their team won the previous end), or raking up the bowls after losing the end.  |
| Lifter | An artificial device to assist a bowler in lifting the jack or bowl to allow them to deliver it. Lifters must not be left on the green at the head end or penalties may apply. |
| Line | The line (or path) is the curved route taken to the jack. e.g. "You are a metre short but your line was good." |
| Live Bowl | A bowl that has come to rest within the boundaries of the rink beyond a minimum distance. A bowl that has touched the jack and comes to restin the ditch or is knocked into the ditch within the boundary markers of the rink. |
| Manager | Managers are responsible for their respective teams. As well as looking after the administrative parts of a game, they should be leaders who can effectively manage their team with skips and players should an incident escalate. |
| Marker | An independent person who records the score, marks any touchers, centres the jack, and answers any specific questions from the players during the game. They also act for the Umpie in the absence of an Umpire. At a senior level the marker will be accredited by Bowls Australia. |
| Mat | A non-slip area from where players must deliver their bowls, with some part of their foot on or over the mat upon release. |
| Mat Line | The edge of the mat nearest to the front ditch. All measurements involving the mat and a jack or bowl will be taken from the centre of the mat line. |
| Measure | As a verb, Measure refers to the action of determining which bowls are closer to the Jack. As a noun, Measure refers to a string or metal tape used to determine distance. |
| Measurer | The person designated in a team to undertake the measure. May also be an independent person or the role may be filled by the Marker. At a senior level the marker will be accredited by Bowls Australia. |
| Minimum Length | The legal minimum length for the delivery of a jack or bowl. In Australia, the minimum length for a jack is 21m from the Mat Line. For a bowl, the minimum length is 14m from the Mat Line. |
| Narrow | When a player has insufficiently allowed for the bias, the bowl will curve too far. This is referred to as being 'too narrow'. |
| Neutral | A Neutral person is someone who is not a player on the rink of play. This includes the Marker or Umpire. A Neutral object is a jack, bowl, or other object not belonging to any player on the rink of play, or a dead bowl at rest that has not yet been removed. |
| Pace or Speed of the Green | The number of seconds taken by a bowl from its delivery to the moment it comes to rest at approximately 27 metres from the Mat Line. The higher the number of seconds taken, the faster the pace of the green. Pace can be officially determined by an Umpire or Greenkeeper using a Timing Ramp. |
| Pairs | Format of play where a team of two competes against another team of two, each player using two, three or four bowls, each player alternating against an opposing team player. The names of the two players on a pair team are lead and skip. |
| Pennant | The domestic inter-club competition played in Australia between different clubs within a region. A pennant side may comprise 2, 3, or 4 teams, depending on the Division, with each team made up of 4 players. |
| Plinth | The edge of the grass which meets the ditch. |
| Point of Aim (Aiming Point) | A point on the aiming line where the bowler focuses during delivery of the bowl. |
| Re-spotting  | If the format of play allows for the re-spotting of the jack if it goes out of play, the jack is placed at the two-metre mark and play continues. |
| Rings | The 'bias' side of a bowl is identified by a smaller of the circles and logos marked on the bowl than those on the opposite side. As you hold the bowl in front of you, the small circles should always be facing the centre of the rink. This ensures that you roll the bowl with the correct bias. |
| Rink | The playing area for each game indicated by boundary pegs. Usually a green is divided into 7 or 8 rinks. Rinks must be between 4.3 metres and 5.8 metres wide for outdoor play and between 4.6 metres and 5.8 metres wide for indoor play. |
| Running Surface | The running surface is the part of the bowl that runs between the angled edges and the side faces of the bowl. Ideally, the bowl will be delivered smoothly on its running surface. |
| Second | The second in a triples or fours game is the player who plays second. In the fours game the second is normally responsible for marking the score card and maintaining the scoreboard. |
| Set of Bowls | Bowls come in a matched set of four; each bowl in a set is of the samemake and model and is identical in size, weight, colour, bias, serialnumber and engraving.  |
| Short | A bowl that does not reach the jack or the intended target is described as being “short”. |
| Shot | Shot can have several meanings. The shot or shots are the number of points scored in an end. It can also mean the type of delivery, e.g. a drawing shot, and during an end, it can be used to describe the bowl that is currently nearest the jack. |
| Singles | Format of play where one player competes against another, each using four bowls played alternatively. |
| Skip | The skip is the captain of a team in pairs, triples or rinks play. The skip is always last to play and is responsible for directing the play during an end. The other players in a team must follow the skip's instructions. |
| Stance | Refers to the way a bowler positions their feet on the mat prior to delivering their bowl. |
| Step | Refers to the forward step with the opposite foot to the bowling arm. The size of the step can affect the distance the bowl will travel. |
| Substitute | A player who is appointed to take the place of a team member who is unavailable to play at any time, for a reason accepted by the Controlling Body. |
| Third | The third is the third player to play in a fours game. The Third delivers their bowls before the Skip, then assumes the Skip’s role when the Skip bowls. The third is normally responsible, with his corresponding opponent, for deciding the result of an end, i.e. who is lying the shot and how many shots have been scored. The skips however have the final say in this in the event of any dispute. |
| Toucher | A “toucher” is a bowl that during its course touches the jack before finishing within the boundaries of the rink. A toucher remains live even if it finishes in the ditch. A toucher is indicated with a chalk mark drawn on the running surface. |
| Triples | Format of play with a team of three against three, each playing two or three bowls alternately against an opposing team player. Names of the players are lead, second and skip. |
| Umpire | Person accredited by Bowls Australia (or World Bowls) responsible for making sure that all aspects of play are in line with the Laws of the Sport. The umpire’s decision is final in all circumstances except those relating to the meaning or interpretation of a law.  |
| Weight | Weight is the term used to refer to the power applied to a delivery which will determine how far the bowl travels before coming to rest. |
| Wide | When a player has allowed too much for the bias, the bowl doesn’t curve enough and fails to return to the centre line. This is referred to as being 'toowide”. |