



# STRATEGIES



There are several ways of building a head in a game of indoor bowls. This is an art and not easily taught like playing a shot. There is much to learn from watching experienced players perform. Study their strategies, directions, communication and encouragement to their teammates.

If you see something you do not understand approach them after the game/tournament. Ask them why they played the certain shot – even set up the head the way it was. Most are only too happy to share their experience and knowledge

The skill of head building also raises the issues of

- An appreciation of the state of the game and the time left on the clock.
- The need to impose a pattern on the game
- An assessment of the skills of your opponents – don't leave an open invitation to a good draw bowler, likewise maybe a block is an option for someone that plays an accurate run shot (never block a shot early in a game, it may come back to haunt you!!!)

All players should do as the skip requests. They are at the other end of the mat and generally have a good concept of how the game is proceeding, and what shot is the best to play to your teams advantage.



## Unspoken rules

Support your Skip in their decision. If it comes down to a last bowl in an end there needs to be unanimous approval of the shot selected by the skip. There is nothing to be gained with one player supporting the shot selection and another player against it. This does not give the skip a lot of confidence.

## Some basis guidelines

- Draw to the jack to score
- Draw to the closest bowl to save
- If down on the head be up
- If holding the shot don't be narrow
- If not holding the shot don't be wide

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## In general

Attacking options should be taken by or from

- In singles the 3rd bowl
- In pairs the 3rd or 4th bowl
- In triples the 3rd to 5th bowl
- In fours the 4th to 7th bowl

**Singles** is the best drawing game. If you want to hone in on your draw skills play singles. For new or junior bowlers this is the best game to learn from. Play in as many singles events as you can. Even on club nights arrive early and have a few ends with a club mate. Always draw close or just behind the jack. As a rule, try not to have more than two bowls around the jack at any one time. 3 or 4 bowls can create a target for your opposition, something you want to avoid particularly if you're playing someone with a good run shot.

**Pairs** is widely known as a leads game. Many a good skip has commented if the lead lays the foundation, it makes the skips job that much easier. Ideally leads bowls should be on or just behind the jack.



**Triples** is one of the most popular games especially for tournaments, but it is also the game the jack generally gets moved around the mat the most. Team members need to play to all parts of the mat. It is also a good game to rotate players so they get used to all positions. This also enables them to gain an understanding of why the skip asks them to bowl a certain shot.

**Fours** is undoubtedly the best team game. To be successful all team members must get along well together and be encouraging to each other even if someone is not having a great day at the mat. "don't leave it up to the skip" its important to play well for each other, and to play what the skip wants. Longer ends and bowls just behind the jack are always the best option in a game of fours.



## Communication is Key!

Skips, let your leads know your preference for the first bowl or the last bowl if they win the toss.

Visa versa

Leads, ask the skip for their preference, 'Do you want the last bowl?'