



Instructor's Corner

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I'm a new curler and find that I am really enjoying the game, and would like to be more competitive. What equipment would help me improve my game more quickly?

The most important investment you can make as a new curler is in a pair of good curling shoes. Dedicated curling shoes will help you get a better, longer, more effortless slide that will allow you to deliver the stone more easily. We recommend that new curlers start with shoes with a teflon slider with at least 5/32" thickness. Thicker sliders are faster than thinner sliders. It is possible to buy "beginner" shoes with thinner sliders, but we find that new curlers quickly outgrow these. If you find your shoes too fast to handle initially, apply smooth duct tape to the heel of your slider until you get more comfortable with your shoes. Most folks can remove this tape after only a few games and enjoy the full benefits of the thicker slider. We don't recommend any particular brand—we have curled on Asham, Goldline, and Balance Plus shoes—but can give advice about which shoes fit wide or narrow feet, and are durable. Balance- Plus 200 and Goldline Podium Bronze shoes are good entry level shoes for the league curler, and are priced at \$140-\$160. Don't forget to buy a pull-on gripper, and also a spare if you curl more than 50 games a year. Toe-coating is recommended to get a faster slide. The second item to consider purchasing is curling broom. Most competitive curlers use a "Performance"-style broom with an articulated, narrow, oval-shaped head. You can purchase a good quality curling broom from \$80-\$150. The less expensive brooms have a fiberglass handle, while the most expensive have lightweight composite or carbon fiber handles. Although the composite and carbon fiber models are only slightly lighter, they are noticeably worthwhile if you curl a lot. If you ever use a carbon fiber broom in a game, you will never want to go back to fiberglass. Handles come in two sizes and a plethora of finishes: most men purchase the 1 1/8 inch diameter handle; the 1 inch diameter handle is favored by many women and those with smaller hands. BalancePlus also makes a tapered handle that is 1 inch in diameter at the top and 1 1/8 inch in diameter at the bottom. Any of these choices will allow you to sweep more effectively and closer to the stone than the club brooms. Don't forget to buy an additional broom head. If you curl more than 50 games a year you will wear out 2-4 heads a season.

*Good curling! Have a question for Instructor's Corner?
Send an email to curlingschool@uticacurlingclub.org*