

Bocce Ball

What kind of equipment do you need?

- (1) A set of 8 balls, four for each team, with at least two different colors.
- (2) A target ball, called a “pallino”
- (3) A measuring device, like a tape measure (helpful but not necessary – can always use the eye test!)

How many people are on a team?

Games can be played one-on-one (singles), in pairs (doubles), in triples or even foursomes. If there are three players on each team, the players will rotate positions so there are always two players from each team on the same end. If there are four players on each team, two players from each team will be placed at each end.

Rules

- (1) Begin the game with a coin flip. The winner of the coin flip will determine the end from which play will start and also has control of the pallino. The loser of the coin flip chooses the color of balls it wants to use (when playing multiple games, or “frames,” the winner of the previous frame tosses the new pallino).
- (2) Coin toss winner tosses the pallino (underhand).
 - a. The toss is valid if the pallino passes the center line and does not touch the back wall on the opposite end. If the toss is not valid, the player will be given a second toss. If the player still fails to make a valid toss, the opposing team then tosses the pallino. If the opposing player also fails to make a valid toss, attempts will alternate until the pallino is in a valid position.
 - i. Players may step on, but not have their foot completely over, the Pointing Foul Line (five feet from the back wall) before releasing the pallino or the ball. After release, a player’s momentum may carry him / her past the Pointing Foul Line.
 - ii. The pallino must be at least one foot from the sides or end of the court on the first roll.
- (3) The team that originally tossed the pallino will play the first ball.
 - a. **Lofting the ball high in the air (above the chest), throwing overhand like a baseball, and Volo shooting (lofting the ball over the center line in the air trying to hit a target) are not allowed at Pictona. Please release Bocce Balls at ground level, like a bowling ball, or loft slightly into the air (no higher than the chest) in a forward motion. All tosses on a Bocce court should be underhand.**
 - b. The first ball will be rolled by any member of the team that originally threw the pallino.
 - c. Should the rolled ball hit the back wall without touching the pallino, it is a dead ball and removed from the court. The same team rolls again and continues rolling until a valid point is established.

- d. Once the point is established, the opposing team rolls until it makes a new (closer) point. Subsequent rolls are made, in turn, by the team *not closest* to the pallino. When one team is out of balls, the other team rolls its remaining balls until all eight balls have been rolled.
 - i. Balls may be bounced off or played against sideboards.
 - ii. If the ball hits the back wall without first touching another ball or the pallino, it is a dead ball and removed from the court.
 - iii. If a ball is rolled, hits the backboard illegally, and then strikes a stationary ball(s), the rolled ball is removed from the court and the stationary ball(s) is placed in its approximate original position.
 - iv. A player, after informing his / her opponent, may choose to roll a ball from the Hitting Foul Line (marked at nine feet from the backboard) for the purpose of moving the opponent's balls or the pallino. The thrown ball is removed from play if it hits the backboard without touching the pallino or another ball.
 - v. The pallino is always a valid target and remains in play even if it strikes the back wall after being struck by any valid ball during a frame.
 - vi. A ball that hits the back wall as a result of being struck by a valid shot remains in play.
 - vii. A player who is not rolling should not stand on the court in harm's way of a rolling ball.

Scoring

Only one team scores in a frame (unless there is a tie). One point is awarded for each of a team's balls that is closer to the pallino than the opponent's closest ball (1 to 4 points possible per frame). Games are usually played to 12 points; a typical Match is best 2 out of 3 games (or best 3 out of 5 games).

*** These rules are adapted from the United States Bocce Federation (<https://usbf.us>). Feel free in recreational play to adjust them as you see fit to achieve maximum fun!