

## CRICKET STUDY GUIDE

**Cricket** is a **bat-and-ball sport** contested by two **teams**, usually of eleven players each.<sup>[1]</sup> A cricket match is played on a grass field, roughly **oval** in shape, in the centre of which is a flat strip of ground 22 **yards** (20.12 **m**) long, called a **cricket pitch**. A **wicket**, usually made of wood, is placed at each end of the pitch.

The **bowler**, a player from the fielding team, **bowls** a hard, fist-sized **cricket ball** from the vicinity of one wicket towards the other. The ball usually bounces once before reaching the **batsman**, a player from the opposing team. In defense of the wicket, the batsman plays the ball with a wooden **cricket bat**. Meanwhile, the other members of the bowler's team stand in various positions around the field as **fielders**, players who retrieve the ball in an effort to stop the batsman scoring runs, and if possible to get him or her **out**. The batsman — if he or she does not get out — may run between the wickets, exchanging ends with a second batsman (the "non-striker"), who has been waiting near the bowler's wicket. Each completed exchange of ends scores one **run**. Runs are also scored if the batsman hits the ball to the **boundary** of the playing area. The match is won by the team that scores more runs.

### Overview

The aim of the batting team is to score as many **runs** as possible. A run is scored when both batsmen successfully move to their respective opposite ends of the **pitch**. (The batsmen will usually only attempt to score runs after the striker has hit the ball, but this is not required by the rules—the batsmen can attempt runs at any time after the ball has been bowled.) Runs are also scored if the batsman hits the ball to the boundary of the playing area (this scores six runs if the ball crosses the boundary without having touched the ground, or four runs otherwise), or if the bowler commits some technical infringement like bowling the ball out of reach of the batsman.<sup>[3]</sup>

The aim of the bowler's team is to get each batsman **out** (this is called a "taking a wicket", or a "dismissal").<sup>[4]</sup> Dismissals are achieved **in a variety of ways**. The most direct way is for the bowler to bowl the ball so that the batsman misses it and it hits the **stumps**, dislodging a **bail**. While the batsmen are attempting a run, the fielders may dismiss either batsman by using the ball to knock the bails off the set of stumps to which the batsman is closest before he has grounded himself or his bat in the **crease**. Other ways for the fielding side to dismiss a batsman include **catching** the ball off the bat before it touches the ground, or having the batsman adjudged "**leg before wicket**" (abbreviated "L.B.W." or "lbw") if the ball strikes the batsman's body and would have gone on to hit the wicket.<sup>[5]</sup> Once the batsmen are not

attempting to score any more runs, the ball is "dead", and is bowled again (each attempt at bowling the ball is referred to as a "ball" or a "delivery").<sup>[6]</sup>

The game is divided into **overs** of six (legal) balls. At the end of an over another bowler from the fielding side bowls from the opposite end of the pitch. The two umpires also change positions between overs (the umpire previously at square-leg becomes the bowler's umpire at what is now the bowling end, and *vice versa*). The fielders also usually change positions between overs.

Once out, a batsman is replaced by the next batsman in the team's line-up. (The batting side can reorder their line-up at any time, but no batsman may bat twice in one innings.) The **innings** (singular) of the batting team ends when the tenth batsman is given out, leaving one batsman not out but without a partner. When this happens, the team is said to be "all out". (In **limited overs cricket** the **innings** ends either when the batting team is all out or a predetermined number of overs has been bowled.) At the end of an innings, the two teams exchange roles, and the side that has been fielding bats.

A team's score is reported in terms of the number of runs scored and the number of batsmen that have been dismissed. For example, if five batsmen are out and the team has scored 224 runs, they are said to have scored 224 for the loss of 5 wickets (commonly shortened to "224 for five" and written 224/5 or, in Australia, "five for 224" and 5/224).

The team that has scored more runs at the end of the completed match wins. Different varieties of the game have different definitions of "completion"; for instance there may be restrictions on the number of overs, the number of innings, and the number of balls in each innings.

## **Match structure**

### **The toss**

The two opposing captains **toss a coin** before the match, and the captain who wins chooses either to bat or bowl first. The captain's decision is usually based on whether the team's bowlers are likely to gain immediate advantage from the pitch and weather conditions (these can vary significantly), or whether it is more likely that the pitch will deteriorate and make batting more difficult later in the game.

### **Overs**

Each innings is divided into **overs**, each consisting of six consecutive legal deliveries bowled by the same **bowler**. For the definition of illegal deliveries, see

**Extras.** No bowler may bowl two consecutive overs, so at the end of the over the bowler takes up a fielding position and another player bowls.

Overs are bowled from alternate ends of the pitch; at the end of each over the umpires swap, the umpire at the bowler's end moving to square leg, and the umpire at square leg moving to the new bowler's end. The fielders also usually change positions.

### **Run Scoring**

To score a **run**, a striker must run to the opposite end of the pitch, while his non-striking partner runs to his end. To register a run, both runners must touch the ground behind the crease with either their bats or their bodies (the batsmen carry their bats as they run). If the striker hits the ball well enough, the batsmen may double back to score two or more runs. However, no rule requires the batsman to run upon striking the ball. The decision to attempt a run is ideally made by the batsman who has the better view of the ball's position, and this is communicated by calling: "yes", "no" and "wait" are often heard. The batsmen swap ends every time an odd number of runs are scored.

If a fielder knocks the bails off the stumps with the ball while no part of the batsman is grounded behind the **popping crease**, the batsman nearer the broken wicket is **run out**. The batsman may ground the bat, provided he or she is holding it.

If the ball reaches the boundary, then runs are automatically scored: six if the ball goes over the boundary without touching the ground, four if it touched the ground. These are scored instead of any runs the batsmen may have already run (unless they have run more, which is unlikely), and they return to the ends at which they started.