



**THE  
LAWS OF CRICKET**

(2000 Code 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition – 2003)

**OFFICIAL**

**Marylebone  
Cricket Club**

**Price £2.50**

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(MCC Book Shop),  
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London NW8 8QN

## **PREFACE**

The game of Cricket has been governed by a series of Codes of Law for over 250 years. These Codes have been subject to additions and alterations recommended by the governing authorities of the time. Since its formation in 1787, the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has been recognised as the sole authority for drawing up the Code and for all subsequent amendments. The Club also holds the World copyright.

The basic Laws of Cricket have stood remarkably well the test of well over 250 years of playing the game. It is thought the real reason for this is that cricketers have traditionally been prepared to play in the Spirit of the Game as well as in accordance with the Laws.

In 2000, MCC revised and re-wrote the Laws for the new Millennium. In this Code, the major innovation was the introduction of the Spirit of Cricket as a Preamble to the Laws. Whereas in the past it was assumed that the implicit Spirit of the Game was understood and accepted by all those involved, MCC felt it right to put into words some clear guidelines, which help to maintain the unique character and enjoyment of the game. The other aims were to dispense with the Notes, to incorporate all the points into the Laws and to remove, where possible, any ambiguities, so that captains, players and umpires could continue to enjoy the game at whatever level they might be playing. MCC consulted widely with all the Full Member Countries of the International Cricket Council, the Governing Body of the game. There was close consultation with the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers. The Club also brought in umpires and players from all round the world.

This latest version, The Laws of Cricket (2000 Code 2nd Edition – 2003) includes several necessary amendments arising from experience and practical application of the Code around the world since October, 2000.

Significant dates in the history of the Laws are as follows:

- 1700 Cricket was recognised as early as this date.
- 1744 The earliest known Code was drawn up by certain "Noblemen and Gentlemen" who used the Artillery Ground in London.
- 1755 The Laws were revised by "Several Cricket Clubs, particularly the Star and Garter in Pall Mall".
- 1774 A further revision was produced by "a Committee of Noblemen and Gentlemen of Kent, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex and London at the Star and Garter".
- 1786 A further revision was undertaken by a similar body of Noblemen and Gentlemen of Kent, Hampshire, Surrey, Sussex, Middlesex and London.
- 1788 The first MCC Code of Laws was adopted on 30th May.
- 1835 A new Code of Laws was approved by the MCC Committee on 19th May.
- 1884 After consultation with cricket clubs worldwide, important alterations were incorporated in a new version approved at an MCC Special General Meeting on 21st April.
- 1947 A new Code of Laws was approved at an MCC Special General Meeting on 7th May. The main changes were aimed at achieving clarification and better arrangement of the Laws and their interpretations. This did not, however, exclude certain definite alterations which were designed to provide greater latitude in the conduct of the game as required by the widely differing conditions in which Cricket was played.
- 1979 After five editions of the 1947 Code, a further revision was begun in 1974 with the aim being to remove certain anomalies, consolidate various Amendments and Notes, and to achieve greater clarity and simplicity. The new Code of Laws was approved at an MCC Special General Meeting on 21st November.

1992 A second edition of the 1980 Code was produced, incorporating all the amendments which were approved during the intervening twelve years.

2000 A new Code of Laws, including a Preamble defining the Spirit of Cricket was approved on 3rd May, 2000.

Many queries on the Laws, which apply equally to women's cricket as to men's, are sent to MCC for decision every year. MCC, as the accepted Guardian of the Laws, which can only be changed by the vote of two-thirds of the Members at a Special General Meeting of the Club, has always been prepared to answer the queries and to give interpretations on certain conditions, which will be readily understood.

- (a) In the case of league or competition cricket, the enquiry must come from the committee responsible for organising the league or competition. In other cases, enquiries should be initiated by a representative officer of a club, or of an umpires' association on behalf of his or her committee, or by a master or mistress in charge of school cricket.
- (b) The incident on which a ruling is required must not be merely invented for disputation but must have actually occurred in play.
- (c) The enquiry must not be connected in any way with a bet or wager.

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8 May 2003

R D V KNIGHT  
Secretary & Chief Executive MCC

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# THE LAWS OF CRICKET

## THE PREAMBLE – THE SPIRIT OF CRICKET

*Cricket is a game that owes much of its unique appeal to the fact that it should be played not only within its Laws but also within the Spirit of the Game. Any action which is seen to abuse this spirit causes injury to the game itself. The major responsibility for ensuring the spirit of fair play rests with the captains.*

1. There are two Laws which place the responsibility for the team's conduct firmly on the captain.

### **Responsibility of captains**

The captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the Spirit of the Game as well as within the Laws.

### **Player's conduct**

In the event of a player failing to comply with instructions by an umpire, or criticising by word or action the decisions of an umpire, or showing dissent, or generally behaving in a manner which might bring the game into disrepute, the umpire concerned shall in the first place report the matter to the other umpire and to the player's captain, and instruct the latter to take action.

### **2. Fair and unfair play**

According to the Laws the umpires are the sole judges of fair and unfair play.

The umpires may intervene at any time and it is the responsibility of the captain to take action where required.

### **3. The umpires are authorised to intervene in cases of:**

- Time wasting
- Damaging the pitch
- Dangerous or unfair bowling
- Tampering with the ball
- Any other action that they consider to be unfair

#### **4. The Spirit of the Game involves RESPECT for:**

- Your opponents
- Your own captain and team
- The role of the umpires
- The game's traditional values

#### **5. It is against the Spirit of the Game:**

- To dispute an umpire's decision by word, action or gesture
- To direct abusive language towards an opponent or umpire
- To indulge in cheating or any sharp practice, for instance:
  - (a) to appeal knowing that the batsman is not out
  - (b) to advance towards an umpire in an aggressive manner when appealing
  - (c) to seek to distract an opponent either verbally or by harassment with persistent clapping or unnecessary noise under the guise of enthusiasm and motivation of one's own side

#### **6. Violence**

There is no place for any act of violence on the field of play.

#### **7. Players**

Captains and umpires together set the tone for the conduct of a cricket match. Every player is expected to make an important contribution to this.

*The players, umpires and scorers in a game of cricket may be of either gender and the Laws apply equally to both. The use, throughout the text, of pronouns indicating the male gender is purely for brevity. Except where specifically stated otherwise, every provision of the Laws is to be read as applying to women and girls equally as to men and boys.*

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## **LAW 1 THE PLAYERS**

### **1. Number of players**

A match is played between two sides, each of eleven players, one of whom shall be captain.

By agreement a match may be played between sides of more or less than eleven players, but not more than eleven players may field at any time.

### **2. Nomination of players**

Each captain shall nominate his players in writing to one of the umpires before the toss. No player may be changed after the nomination without the consent of the opposing captain.

### **3. Captain**

If at any time the captain is not available, a deputy shall act for him.

(a) If a captain is not available during the period in which the toss is to take place, then the deputy must be responsible for the nomination of the players, if this has not already been done, and for the toss. See 2 above and Law 12.4 (The toss).

(b) At any time after the toss, the deputy must be one of the nominated players.

### **4. Responsibility of captains**

The captains are responsible at all times for ensuring that play is conducted within the spirit and traditions of the game as well as within the Laws. See The Preamble – The Spirit of Cricket and Law 42.1 (Fair and unfair play – responsibility of captains).

**LAW 2 SUBSTITUTES AND RUNNERS;  
BATSMAN OR FIELDER LEAVING THE FIELD;  
BATSMAN RETIRING;  
BATSMAN COMMENCING INNINGS**

**1. Substitutes and runners**

- (a) If the umpires are satisfied that a player has been injured or become ill after the nomination of the players, they shall allow that player to have
- (i) a substitute acting instead of him in the field.
  - (ii) a runner when batting.

Any injury or illness that occurs at any time after the nomination of the players until the conclusion of the match shall be allowable, irrespective of whether play is in progress or not.

- (b) The umpires shall have discretion, for other wholly acceptable reasons, to allow a substitute for a fielder, or a runner for a batsman, at the start of the match or at any subsequent time.
- (c) A player wishing to change his shirt, boots, etc. must leave the field to do so. No substitute shall be allowed for him.

**2. Objection to substitutes**

The opposing captain shall have no right of objection to any player acting as a substitute on the field, nor as to where the substitute shall field. However, no substitute shall act as wicket-keeper. See 3 below.

**3. Restrictions on the role of substitutes**

A substitute shall not be allowed to bat or bowl nor to act as wicket-keeper or as captain on the field of play.

**4. A player for whom a substitute has acted**

A player is allowed to bat, bowl or field even though a substitute has previously acted for him.

**5. Fielder absent or leaving the field**

If a fielder fails to take the field with his side at the start of the

match or at any later time, or leaves the field during a session of play,

- (a) the umpire shall be informed of the reason for his absence.
- (b) he shall not thereafter come on to the field during a session of play without the consent of the umpire. See 6 below. The umpire shall give such consent as soon as is practicable.
- (c) if he is absent for 15 minutes or longer, he shall not be permitted to bowl thereafter, subject to (i), (ii) or (iii) below, until he has been on the field for at least that length of playing time for which he was absent.
  - (i) Absence or penalty for time absent shall not be carried over into a new day's play.
  - (ii) If, in the case of a follow-on or forfeiture, a side fields for two consecutive innings, this restriction shall, subject to (i) above, continue as necessary into the second innings but shall not otherwise be carried over into a new innings.
  - (iii) The time lost for an unscheduled break in play shall be counted as time on the field for any fielder who comes on to the field at the resumption of play. See Law 15.1 (An interval).

## **6. Player returning without permission**

If a player comes on to the field of play in contravention of 5(b) above and comes into contact with the ball while it is in play

- (i) the ball shall immediately become dead and the umpire shall award 5 penalty runs to the batting side. See Law 42.17 (Penalty runs). The ball shall not count as one of the over.
- (ii) the umpire shall inform the other umpire, the captain of the fielding side, the batsmen and, as soon as practicable, the captain of the batting side of the reason for this action.
- (iii) the umpires together shall report the occurrence as soon as possible to the Executive of the fielding side and any Governing Body responsible for the match, who shall take such action as is considered appropriate against the captain and player concerned.

## 7. Runner

The player acting as a runner for a batsman shall be a member of the batting side and shall, if possible, have already batted in that innings. The runner shall wear external protective equipment equivalent to that worn by the batsman for whom he runs and shall carry a bat.

## 8. Transgression of the Laws by a batsman who has a runner

- (a) A batsman's runner is subject to the Laws. He will be regarded as a batsman except where there are specific provisions for his role as a runner. See 7 above and Law 29.2 (Which is a batsman's ground).
- (b) A batsman with a runner will suffer the penalty for any infringement of the Laws by his runner as though he had been himself responsible for the infringement. In particular he will be out if his runner is out under any of Laws 33 (Handled the ball), 37 (Obstructing the field) or 38 (Run out).
- (c) When a batsman with a runner is striker he remains himself subject to the Laws and will be liable to the penalties that any infringement of them demands.

Additionally, if he is out of his ground when the wicket is put down at the wicket-keeper's end, he will be out in the circumstances of Law 38 (Run out) or Law 39 (Stumped) irrespective of the position of the non-striker or of the runner. If he is thus dismissed, runs completed by the runner and the other batsman before the dismissal shall not be scored. However, the penalty for a No ball or a Wide shall stand, together with any penalties to either side that may be awarded when the ball is dead. See Law 42.17 (Penalty runs).

- (d) When a batsman with a runner is not the striker
  - (i) he remains subject to Laws 33 (Handled the ball) and 37 (Obstructing the field) but is otherwise out of the game.
  - (ii) he shall stand where directed by the striker's end umpire so as not to interfere with play.

- (iii) he will be liable, notwithstanding (i) above, to the penalty demanded by the Laws should he commit any act of unfair play.

## **9. Batsman leaving the field or retiring**

A batsman may retire at any time during his innings. The umpires, before allowing play to proceed, shall be informed of the reason for a batsman retiring.

- (a) If a batsman retires because of illness, injury or any other unavoidable cause, he is entitled to resume his innings subject to (c) below. If for any reason he does not do so, his innings is to be recorded as 'Retired – not out'.
- (b) If a batsman retires for any reason other than as in (a) above, he may only resume his innings with the consent of the opposing captain. If for any reason he does not resume his innings it is to be recorded as 'Retired – out'.
- (c) If after retiring a batsman resumes his innings, it shall be only at the fall of a wicket or the retirement of another batsman.

## **10. Commencement of a batsman's innings**

Except at the start of a side's innings, a batsman shall be considered to have commenced his innings when he first steps on to the field of play, provided Time has not been called. The innings of the opening batsmen, and that of any new batsman at the resumption of play after a call of Time, shall commence at the call of Play.

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## **LAW 3 THE UMPIRES**

### **1. Appointment and attendance**

Before the match, two umpires shall be appointed, one for each end, to control the game as required by the Laws, with absolute impartiality. The umpires shall be present on the ground and report to the Executive of the ground at least 45 minutes before the scheduled start of each day's play.

## **2. Change of umpire**

An umpire shall not be changed during the match, other than in exceptional circumstances, unless he is injured or ill. If there has to be a change of umpire, the replacement shall act only as the striker's end umpire unless the captains agree that he should take full responsibility as an umpire.

## **3. Agreement with captains**

Before the toss the umpires shall

- (a) ascertain the hours of play and agree with the captains
  - (i) the balls to be used during the match. See Law 5 (The ball).
  - (ii) times and durations of intervals for meals and times for drinks intervals. See Law 15 (Intervals).
  - (iii) the boundary of the field of play and allowances for boundaries. See Law 19 (Boundaries).
  - (iv) any special conditions of play affecting the conduct of the match.
- (b) inform the scorers of the agreements in (ii), (iii) and (iv) above.

## **4. To inform captains and scorers**

Before the toss the umpires shall agree between themselves and inform both captains and both scorers

- (i) which clock or watch and back-up time piece is to be used during the match.
- (ii) whether or not any obstacle within the field of play is to be regarded as a boundary. See Law 19 (Boundaries).

## **5. The wickets, creases and boundaries**

Before the toss and during the match, the umpires shall satisfy themselves that

- (i) the wickets are properly pitched. See Law 8 (The wickets).
- (ii) the creases are correctly marked. See Law 9 (The bowling, popping and return creases).

(iii) the boundary of the field of play complies with the requirements of Law 19.2 (Defining the boundary – boundary marking).

## **6. Conduct of the game, implements and equipment**

Before the toss and during the match, the umpires shall satisfy themselves that

- (a) the conduct of the game is strictly in accordance with the Laws.
- (b) the implements of the game conform to the requirements of Laws 5 (The ball) and 6 (The bat), together with either Laws 8.2 (Size of stumps) and 8.3 (The bails) or, if appropriate, Law 8.4 (Junior cricket).
- (c) (i) no player uses equipment other than that permitted. See Appendix D.  
(ii) the wicket-keeper's gloves comply with the requirements of Law 40.2 (Gloves).

## **7. Fair and unfair play**

The umpires shall be the sole judges of fair and unfair play.

## **8. Fitness of ground, weather and light**

The umpires shall be the final judges of the fitness of the ground, weather and light for play. See 9 below and Law 7.2 (Fitness of the pitch for play).

## **9. Suspension of play for adverse conditions of ground, weather or light**

- (a) (i) All references to ground include the pitch. See Law 7.1 (Area of pitch).  
(ii) For the purpose of this Law and Law 15.9(b)(ii) (Intervals for drinks) only, the batsmen at the wicket may deputise for their captain at any appropriate time.
- (b) If at any time the umpires together agree that the condition of the ground, weather or light is not suitable for play, they shall inform the captains and, unless

- (i) in unsuitable ground or weather conditions both captains agree to continue, or to commence, or to restart play,  
or (ii) in unsuitable light the batting side wishes to continue, or to commence, or to restart play,  
they shall suspend play, or not allow play to commence or to restart.
- (c) (i) After agreeing to play in unsuitable ground or weather conditions, either captain may appeal against the conditions to the umpires before the next call of Time. The umpires shall uphold the appeal only if, in their opinion, the factors taken into account when making their previous decision are the same or the conditions have further deteriorated.
- (ii) After deciding to play in unsuitable light, the captain of the batting side may appeal against the light to the umpires before the next call of Time. The umpires shall uphold the appeal only if, in their opinion, the factors taken into account when making their previous decision are the same or the condition of the light has further deteriorated.
- (d) If at any time the umpires together agree that the conditions of ground, weather or light are so bad that there is obvious and foreseeable risk to the safety of any player or umpire, so that it would be unreasonable or dangerous for play to take place, then notwithstanding the provisions of (b)(i) and (b)(ii) above, they shall immediately suspend play, or not allow play to commence or to restart. The decision as to whether conditions are so bad as to warrant such action is one for the umpires alone to make.

The fact that the grass and the ball are wet and slippery does not warrant the ground conditions being regarded as unreasonable or dangerous. If the umpires consider the ground is so wet or slippery as to deprive the bowler of a reasonable foothold, the fielders of the power of free movement, or the batsmen of the ability to play their strokes

or to run between the wickets, then these conditions shall be regarded as so bad that it would be unreasonable for play to take place.

- (e) When there is a suspension of play it is the responsibility of the umpires to monitor the conditions. They shall make inspections as often as appropriate, unaccompanied by any of the players or officials. Immediately the umpires together agree that conditions are suitable for play they shall call upon the players to resume the game.
- (f) If play is in progress up to the start of an agreed interval then it will resume after the interval unless the umpires together agree that conditions are or have become unsuitable or dangerous. If they do so agree, then they shall implement the procedure in (b) or (d) above, as appropriate, whether or not there had been any decision by the captains to continue, or any appeal against the conditions by either captain, prior to the commencement of the interval.

## **10. Exceptional circumstances**

The umpires shall have the discretion to implement the procedures of 9 above for reasons other than ground, weather or light if they consider that exceptional circumstances warrant it.

## **11. Position of umpires**

The umpires shall stand where they can best see any act upon which their decision may be required.

Subject to this over-riding consideration the umpire at the bowler's end shall stand where he does not interfere with either the bowler's run up or the striker's view.

The umpire at the striker's end may elect to stand on the off side instead of the on side of the pitch, provided he informs the captain of the fielding side, the striker and the other umpire of his intention to do so.

## **12. Umpires changing ends**

The umpires shall change ends after each side has had one completed innings. See Law 14.2 (Forfeiture of an innings).

### 13. Consultation between umpires

All disputes shall be determined by the umpires. The umpires shall consult with each other whenever necessary. See also Law 27.6 (Consultation by umpires).

### 14. Signals

(a) The following code of signals shall be used by umpires.

(i) Signals made while the ball is in play

Dead ball - by crossing and re-crossing the wrists below the waist.

No ball - by extending one arm horizontally.

Out - by raising an index finger above the head. (If not out the umpire shall call Not out.)

Wide - by extending both arms horizontally.

(ii) When the ball is dead, the signals above, with the exception of the signal for Out, shall be repeated to the scorers. The signals listed below shall be made to the scorers only when the ball is dead.

Boundary 4 - by waving an arm from side to side finishing with the arm across the chest.

Boundary 6 - by raising both arms above the head.

Bye - by raising an open hand above the head.

Commencement of last hour - by pointing to a raised wrist with the other hand.

Five penalty runs awarded to the batting side - by repeated tapping of one shoulder with the opposite hand.

Five penalty runs awarded to the fielding side - by placing one hand on the opposite shoulder.

Leg bye - by touching a raised knee with the hand.

New ball	- by holding the ball above the head.
Revoke last signal	- by touching both shoulders, each with the opposite hand.
Short run	- by bending one arm upwards and touching the nearer shoulder with the tips of the fingers.

(b) The umpire shall wait until each signal to the scorers has been separately acknowledged by a scorer before allowing play to proceed.

## **15. Correctness of scores**

Consultation between umpires and scorers on doubtful points is essential. The umpires shall satisfy themselves as to the correctness of the number of runs scored, the wickets that have fallen and, where appropriate, the number of overs bowled. They shall agree these with the scorers at least at every interval, other than a drinks interval, and at the conclusion of the match. See Laws 4.2 (Correctness of scores), 21.8 (Correctness of result) and 21.10 (Result not to be changed).

## **LAW 4 THE SCORERS**

### **1. Appointment of scorers**

Two scorers shall be appointed to record all runs scored, all wickets taken and, where appropriate, number of overs bowled.

### **2. Correctness of scores**

The scorers shall frequently check to ensure that their records agree. They shall agree with the umpires, at least at every interval, other than a drinks interval, and at the conclusion of the match, the runs scored, the wickets that have fallen and, where appropriate, the number of overs bowled. See Law 3.15 (Correctness of scores).

### **3. Acknowledging signals**

The scorers shall accept all instructions and signals given to them by the umpires. They shall immediately acknowledge each separate signal.

## **LAW 5 THE BALL**

### **1. Weight and size**

The ball, when new, shall weigh not less than  $5\frac{1}{2}$  ounces/155.9g, nor more than  $5\frac{3}{4}$  ounces/163g, and shall measure not less than  $8\frac{13}{16}$  in/22.4cm, nor more than 9 in/22.9cm in circumference.

### **2. Approval and control of balls**

(a) All balls to be used in the match, having been approved by the umpires and captains, shall be in the possession of the umpires before the toss and shall remain under their control throughout the match.

(b) The umpire shall take possession of the ball in use at the fall of each wicket, at the start of any interval and at any interruption of play.

### **3. New ball**

Unless an agreement to the contrary has been made before the match, either captain may demand a new ball at the start of each innings.

### **4. New ball in match of more than one day's duration**

In a match of more than one day's duration, the captain of the fielding side may demand a new ball after the prescribed number of overs has been bowled with the old one. The Governing Body for cricket in the country concerned shall decide the number of overs applicable in that country, which shall not be less than 75 overs.

The umpires shall indicate to the batsmen and the scorers whenever a new ball is taken into play.

### **5. Ball lost or becoming unfit for play**

If, during play, the ball cannot be found or recovered or the umpires agree that it has become unfit for play through normal use, the umpires shall replace it with a ball which has had wear comparable with that which the previous ball had received before

the need for its replacement. When the ball is replaced the umpires shall inform the batsmen and the fielding captain.

## **6. Specifications**

The specifications as described in 1 above shall apply to men's cricket only. The following specifications will apply to

(i) Women's cricket

Weight: from  $4\frac{5}{16}$  ounces/140g to  $5\frac{5}{16}$  ounces /151g

Circumference: from  $8\frac{1}{4}$  in/21.0cm to  $8\frac{7}{8}$  in/22.5cm

(ii) Junior cricket – under 13

Weight: from  $4\frac{11}{16}$  ounces/133g to  $5\frac{1}{16}$  ounces/144g

Circumference: from  $8\frac{1}{16}$  in/20.5cm to  $8\frac{11}{16}$  in/22.0cm

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## **LAW 6 THE BAT**

### **1. Width and length**

The bat overall shall not be more than 38 inches/96.5cm in length. The blade of the bat shall be made solely of wood and shall not exceed  $4\frac{1}{4}$  in/10.8cm at the widest part.

### **2. Covering the blade**

The blade may be covered with material for protection, strengthening or repair. Such material shall not exceed  $\frac{1}{16}$  in/1.56mm in thickness, and shall not be likely to cause unacceptable damage to the ball.

### **3. Hand or glove to count as part of bat**

In these Laws,

(a) reference to the bat shall imply that the bat is held by the batsman.

(b) contact between the ball and

either (i) the striker's bat itself

or (ii) the striker's hand holding the bat

or (iii) any part of a glove worn on the striker's hand holding the bat

shall be regarded as the ball striking or touching the bat, or being struck by the bat.

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## **LAW 7 THE PITCH**

### **1. Area of pitch**

The pitch is a rectangular area of the ground 22 yards/20.12m in length and 10ft/3.05m in width. It is bounded at either end by the bowling creases and on either side by imaginary lines, one each side of the imaginary line joining the centres of the two middle stumps, each parallel to it and 5ft/1.52m from it. See Laws 8.1 (Width and pitching) and 9.2 (The bowling crease).

### **2. Fitness of the pitch for play**

The umpires shall be the final judges of the fitness of the pitch for play. See Laws 3.8 (Fitness of ground, weather and light) and 3.9 (Suspension of play for adverse conditions of ground, weather or light).

### **3. Selection and preparation**

Before the match, the Ground Authority shall be responsible for the selection and preparation of the pitch. During the match, the umpires shall control its use and maintenance.

### **4. Changing the pitch**

The pitch shall not be changed during the match unless the umpires decide that it is unreasonable or dangerous for play to continue on it and then only with the consent of both captains.

### **5. Non-turf pitches**

In the event of a non-turf pitch being used, the artificial surface shall conform to the following measurements:

Length – a minimum of 58ft/17.68m

Width – a minimum of 6ft/1.83m

See Law 10.8 (Non-turf pitches).

## **LAW 8 THE WICKETS**

### **1. Width and pitching**

Two sets of wickets shall be pitched opposite and parallel to each other at a distance of 22 yards/20.12m between the centres of the two middle stumps. Each set shall be 9 in/22.86cm wide and shall consist of three wooden stumps with two wooden bails on top. See Appendix A.

### **2. Size of stumps**

The tops of the stumps shall be 28 in/71.1cm above the playing surface and shall be dome shaped except for the bail grooves. The portion of a stump above the playing surface shall be cylindrical, apart from the domed top, with circular section of diameter not less than  $1\frac{3}{8}$  in/3.49cm nor more than  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in/3.81cm. See Appendix A.

### **3. The bails**

(a) The bails, when in position on the top of the stumps,  
(i) shall not project more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  in/1.27cm above them.  
(ii) shall fit between the stumps without forcing them out of the vertical.

(b) Each bail shall conform to the following specifications. See Appendix A.

Overall length:-	$4\frac{5}{16}$ in/10.95cm
Length of barrel:-	$2\frac{1}{8}$ in/5.40cm
Longer spigot:-	$1\frac{3}{8}$ in/3.49cm
Shorter spigot:-	$1\frac{3}{16}$ in/2.06cm

### **4. Junior cricket**

In junior cricket, the same definitions of the wickets shall apply subject to the following measurements being used.

Width:-	8 in/20.32cm
Pitched for under 13:-	21 yards/19.20m
Pitched for under 11:-	20 yards/18.29m
Pitched for under 9:-	18 yards/16.46m
Height above playing surface:-	27 in/68.58cm

Each stump Diameter:-	not less than 1¼ in/3.18cm nor more than 1⅜ in/3.49cm
Each bail Overall:-	3⅓ in/9.68cm
Barrel:-	1⅓ in/4.60cm
Longer Spigot:-	1¼ in/3.18cm
Shorter Spigot:-	¾ in/1.91cm

## 5. Dispensing with bails

The umpires may agree to dispense with the use of bails, if necessary. If they so agree then no bails shall be used at either end. The use of bails shall be resumed as soon as conditions permit. See Law 28.4 (Dispensing with bails).

## LAW 9 THE BOWLING, POPPING AND RETURN CREASES

### 1. The creases

A bowling crease, a popping crease and two return creases shall be marked in white, as set out in 2, 3 and 4 below, at each end of the pitch. See Appendix B.

### 2. The bowling crease

The bowling crease, which is the back edge of the crease marking, shall be the line through the centres of the three stumps at that end. It shall be 8ft 8 in/2.64m in length, with the stumps in the centre.

### 3. The popping crease

The popping crease, which is the back edge of the crease marking, shall be in front of and parallel to the bowling crease and shall be 4ft/1.22m from it. The popping crease shall be marked to a minimum of 6ft/1.83m on either side of the imaginary line joining the centres of the middle stumps and shall be considered to be unlimited in length.

#### 4. The return creases

The return creases, which are the inside edges of the crease markings, shall be at right angles to the popping crease at a distance of 4ft 4 in/1.32m either side of the imaginary line joining the centres of the two middle stumps. Each return crease shall be marked from the popping crease to a minimum of 8ft/2.44m behind it and shall be considered to be unlimited in length.

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### LAW 10 PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE PLAYING AREA

#### 1. Rolling

The pitch shall not be rolled during the match except as permitted in (a) and (b) below.

##### (a) Frequency and duration of rolling

During the match the pitch may be rolled at the request of the captain of the batting side, for a period of not more than 7 minutes, before the start of each innings, other than the first innings of the match, and before the start of each subsequent day's play. See (d) below.

##### (b) Rolling after a delayed start

In addition to the rolling permitted above, if, after the toss and before the first innings of the match, the start is delayed, the captain of the batting side may request to have the pitch rolled for not more than 7 minutes. However, if the umpires together agree that the delay has had no significant effect on the state of the pitch, they shall refuse the request for the rolling of the pitch.

##### (c) Choice of rollers

If there is more than one roller available the captain of the batting side shall have the choice.

##### (d) Timing of permitted rolling

The rolling permitted (maximum 7 minutes) before play begins on any day shall be started not more than 30 minutes before the time scheduled or rescheduled for play to begin. The

captain of the batting side may, however, delay the start of such rolling until not less than 10 minutes before the time scheduled or rescheduled for play to begin, should he so desire.

**(e) Insufficient time to complete rolling**

If a captain declares an innings closed, or forfeits an innings, or enforces the follow-on, and the other captain is prevented thereby from exercising his option of the rolling permitted (maximum 7 minutes), or if he is so prevented for any other reason, the extra time required to complete the rolling shall be taken out of the normal playing time.

**2. Sweeping**

(a) If rolling is to take place the pitch shall first be swept to avoid any possible damage by rolling in debris. This sweeping shall be done so that the 7 minutes allowed for rolling is not affected.

(b) The pitch shall be cleared of any debris at all intervals for meals, between innings and at the beginning of each day, not earlier than 30 minutes nor later than 10 minutes before the time scheduled or rescheduled for play to begin. See Law 15.1 (An interval).

(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of (a) and (b) above, the umpires shall not allow sweeping to take place where they consider it may be detrimental to the surface of the pitch.

**3. Mowing**

**(a) The pitch**

The pitch shall be mown on each day of the match on which play is expected to take place, if ground and weather conditions allow.

**(b) The outfield**

In order to ensure that conditions are as similar as possible for both sides, the outfield shall be mown on each day of the match on which play is expected to take place, if ground and weather conditions allow.

If, for reasons other than ground and weather conditions, complete mowing of the outfield is not possible, the Ground Authority shall notify the captains and umpires of the procedure to be adopted for such mowing during the match.

**(c) Responsibility for mowing**

All mowings which are carried out before the match shall be the responsibility of the Ground Authority.

All subsequent mowings shall be carried out under the supervision of the umpires.

**(d) Timing of mowing**

(i) Mowing of the pitch on any day of the match shall be completed not later than 30 minutes before the time scheduled or rescheduled for play to begin on that day.

(ii) Mowing of the outfield on any day of the match shall be completed not later than 15 minutes before the time scheduled or rescheduled for play to begin on that day.

**4. Watering**

The pitch shall not be watered during the match.

**5. Re-marking creases**

The creases shall be re-marked whenever either umpire considers it necessary.

**6. Maintenance of footholes**

The umpires shall ensure that the holes made by the bowlers and batsmen are cleaned out and dried whenever necessary to facilitate play. In matches of more than one day's duration, the umpires shall allow, if necessary, the re-turfing of footholes made by the bowler in his delivery stride, or the use of quick-setting fillings for the same purpose.

**7. Securing of footholds and maintenance of pitch**

During play, the umpires shall allow the players to secure their footholds by the use of sawdust provided that no damage to the pitch is caused and that Law 42 (Fair and unfair play) is not contravened.

## **8. Non-turf pitches**

Wherever appropriate, the provisions set out in 1 to 7 above shall apply.

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## **LAW 11 COVERING THE PITCH**

### **1. Before the match**

The use of covers before the match is the responsibility of the Ground Authority and may include full covering if required. However, the Ground Authority shall grant suitable facility to the captains to inspect the pitch before the nomination of their players and to the umpires to discharge their duties as laid down in Laws 3 (The umpires), 7 (The pitch), 8 (The wickets), 9 (The bowling, popping and return creases) and 10 (Preparation and maintenance of the playing area).

### **2. During the match**

The pitch shall not be completely covered during the match unless provided otherwise by regulations or by agreement before the toss.

### **3. Covering bowlers' run ups**

Whenever possible, the bowlers' run ups shall be covered in inclement weather, in order to keep them dry. Unless there is agreement for full covering under 2 above the covers so used shall not extend further than 5ft/1.52m in front of each popping crease.

### **4. Removal of covers**

- (a) If after the toss the pitch is covered overnight, the covers shall be removed in the morning at the earliest possible moment on each day that play is expected to take place.
- (b) If covers are used during the day as protection from inclement weather, or if inclement weather delays the removal of overnight covers, they shall be removed promptly as soon as conditions allow.

## **LAW 12 INNINGS**

### **1. Number of innings**

- (a) A match shall be one or two innings of each side according to agreement reached before the match.
- (b) It may be agreed to limit any innings to a number of overs or by a period of time. If such an agreement is made then
  - (i) in a one innings match it shall apply to both innings.
  - (ii) in a two innings match it shall apply to either the first innings of each side  
or the second innings of each side  
or both innings of each side.

### **2. Alternate innings**

In a two innings match each side shall take their innings alternately except in the cases provided for in Law 13 (The follow-on) or Law 14.2 (Forfeiture of an innings).

### **3. Completed innings**

A side's innings is to be considered as completed if

- (a) the side is all out
- or (b) at the fall of a wicket, further balls remain to be bowled, but no further batsman is available to come in
- or (c) the captain declares the innings closed
- or (d) the captain forfeits the innings
- or (e) in the case of an agreement under 1(b) above,
  - either (i) the prescribed number of overs has been bowled
  - or (ii) the prescribed time has expired.

### **4. The toss**

The captains shall toss for the choice of innings on the field of play not earlier than 30 minutes, nor later than 15 minutes, before the scheduled or any rescheduled time for the match to start. Note, however, the provisions of Law 1.3 (Captain).

### **5. Decision to be notified**

The captain of the side winning the toss shall notify the opposing

captain of his decision to bat or to field, not later than 10 minutes before the scheduled or any rescheduled time for the match to start. Once notified the decision may not be altered.

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## **LAW 13 THE FOLLOW-ON**

### **1. Lead on first innings**

- (a) In a two innings match of 5 days or more, the side which bats first and leads by at least 200 runs shall have the option of requiring the other side to follow their innings.
- (b) The same option shall be available in two innings matches of shorter duration with the minimum required leads as follows:
  - (i) 150 runs in a match of 3 or 4 days;
  - (ii) 100 runs in a 2-day match;
  - (iii) 75 runs in a 1-day match.

### **2. Notification**

A captain shall notify the opposing captain and the umpires of his intention to take up this option. Law 10.1(e) (Insufficient time to complete rolling) shall apply.

### **3. First day's play lost**

If no play takes place on the first day of a match of more than one day's duration, 1 above shall apply in accordance with the number of days remaining from the actual start of the match. The day on which play first commences shall count as a whole day for this purpose, irrespective of the time at which play starts.

Play will have taken place as soon as, after the call of Play, the first over has started. See Law 22.2 (Start of an over).

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## **LAW 14 DECLARATION AND FORFEITURE**

### **1. Time of declaration**

The captain of the batting side may declare an innings closed, when the ball is dead, at any time during a match.

## **2. Forfeiture of an innings**

A captain may forfeit either of his side's innings. A forfeited innings shall be considered as a completed innings.

## **3. Notification**

A captain shall notify the opposing captain and the umpires of his decision to declare or to forfeit an innings. Law 10.1(e) (Insufficient time to complete rolling) shall apply.

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## **LAW 15 INTERVALS**

### **1. An interval**

The following shall be classed as intervals.

- (i) The period between close of play on one day and the start of the next day's play.
- (ii) Intervals between innings.
- (iii) Intervals for meals.
- (iv) Intervals for drinks.
- (v) Any other agreed interval.

All these intervals shall be considered as scheduled breaks for the purposes of Law 2.5 (Fielder absent or leaving the field).

### **2. Agreement of intervals**

- (a) Before the toss:
  - (i) the hours of play shall be established;
  - (ii) except as in (b) below, the timing and duration of intervals for meals shall be agreed;
  - (iii) the timing and duration of any other interval under 1 (v) above shall be agreed.
- (b) In a one-day match no specific time need be agreed for the tea interval. It may be agreed instead to take this interval between the innings.
- (c) Intervals for drinks may not be taken during the last hour of

the match, as defined in Law 16.6 (Last hour of match – number of overs). Subject to this limitation the captains and umpires shall agree the times for such intervals, if any, before the toss and on each subsequent day not later than 10 minutes before play is scheduled to start. See also Law 3.3 (Agreement with captains).

### **3. Duration of intervals**

- (a) An interval for lunch or for tea shall be of the duration agreed under 2(a) above, taken from the call of Time before the interval until the call of Play on resumption after the interval.
- (b) An interval between innings shall be 10 minutes from the close of an innings to the call of Play for the start of the next innings, except as in 4, 6 and 7 below.

### **4. No allowance for interval between innings**

In addition to the provisions of 6 and 7 below,

- (a) if an innings ends when 10 minutes or less remain before the time agreed for close of play on any day, there will be no further play on that day. No change will be made to the time for the start of play on the following day on account of the 10 minutes between innings.
- (b) if a captain declares an innings closed during an interruption in play of more than 10 minutes duration, no adjustment shall be made to the time for resumption of play on account of the 10 minutes between innings, which shall be considered as included in the interruption. Law 10.1(e) (Insufficient time to complete rolling) shall apply.
- (c) if a captain declares an innings closed during any interval other than an interval for drinks, the interval shall be of the agreed duration and shall be considered to include the 10 minutes between innings. Law 10.1(e) (Insufficient time to complete rolling) shall apply.

### **5. Changing agreed times for intervals**

If for adverse conditions of ground, weather or light, or for any

other reason, playing time is lost, the umpires and captains together may alter the time of the lunch interval or of the tea interval. See also 6, 7 and 9(c) below.

## **6. Changing agreed time for lunch interval**

- (a) If an innings ends when 10 minutes or less remain before the agreed time for lunch, the interval shall be taken immediately. It shall be of the agreed length and shall be considered to include the 10 minutes between innings.
- (b) If, because of adverse conditions of ground, weather or light, or in exceptional circumstances, a stoppage occurs when 10 minutes or less remain before the agreed time for lunch then, notwithstanding 5 above, the interval shall be taken immediately. It shall be of the agreed length. Play shall resume at the end of this interval or as soon after as conditions permit.
- (c) If the players have occasion to leave the field for any reason when more than 10 minutes remain before the agreed time for lunch then, unless the umpires and captains together agree to alter it, lunch will be taken at the agreed time.

## **7. Changing agreed time for tea interval**

- (a) (i) If an innings ends when 30 minutes or less remain before the agreed time for tea, then the interval shall be taken immediately. It shall be of the agreed length and shall be considered to include the 10 minutes between innings.
- (ii) If, when 30 minutes remain before the agreed time for tea, an interval between innings is already in progress, play will resume at the end of the 10 minute interval.
- (b) (i) If, because of adverse conditions of ground, weather or light, or in exceptional circumstances, a stoppage occurs when 30 minutes or less remain before the agreed time for tea, then unless
  - either there is an agreement to change the time for tea, as permitted in 5 above
  - or the captains agree to forgo the tea interval, as permitted in 10 below

the interval shall be taken immediately. The interval shall be of the agreed length. Play shall resume at the end of this interval or as soon after as conditions permit.

- (ii) If a stoppage is already in progress when 30 minutes remain before the time agreed for tea, 5 above will apply.

## **8. Tea interval – 9 wickets down**

- If either 9 wickets are already down when 2 minutes remain to the agreed time for tea
- or the 9th wicket falls within these 2 minutes or at any later time up to and including the final ball of the over in progress at the agreed time for tea

then notwithstanding the provisions of Law 16.5(b) (Completion of an over) tea will not be taken until the end of the over in progress 30 minutes after the originally agreed time for tea, unless the players have cause to leave the field of play or the innings is completed earlier.

## **9. Intervals for drinks**

- (a) If on any day the captains agree that there shall be intervals for drinks, the option to take such intervals shall be available to either side. Each interval shall be kept as short as possible and in any case shall not exceed 5 minutes.
- (b) (i) Unless both captains agree to forgo any drinks interval, it shall be taken at the end of the over in progress when the agreed time is reached. If, however, a wicket falls within 5 minutes of the agreed time then drinks shall be taken immediately. No other variation in the timing of drinks intervals shall be permitted except as provided for in (c) below.
- (ii) For the purpose of (i) above and Law 3.9(a)(ii) (Suspension of play for adverse conditions of ground, weather or light) only, the batsmen at the wicket may deputise for their captain.
- (c) If an innings ends or the players have to leave the field of play

for any other reason within 30 minutes of the agreed time for a drinks interval, the umpires and captains together may rearrange the timing of drinks intervals in that session.

#### **10. Agreement to forgo intervals**

At any time during the match, the captains may agree to forgo the tea interval or any of the drinks intervals. The umpires shall be informed of the decision.

#### **11. Scorers to be informed**

The umpires shall ensure that the scorers are informed of all agreements about hours of play and intervals, and of any changes made thereto as permitted under this Law.

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### **LAW 16 START OF PLAY; CESSATION OF PLAY**

#### **1. Call of Play**

The umpire at the bowler's end shall call Play at the start of the match and on the resumption of play after any interval or interruption.

#### **2. Call of Time**

The umpire at the bowler's end shall call Time on the cessation of play before any interval or interruption of play and at the conclusion of the match. See Law 27 (Appeals).

#### **3. Removal of bails**

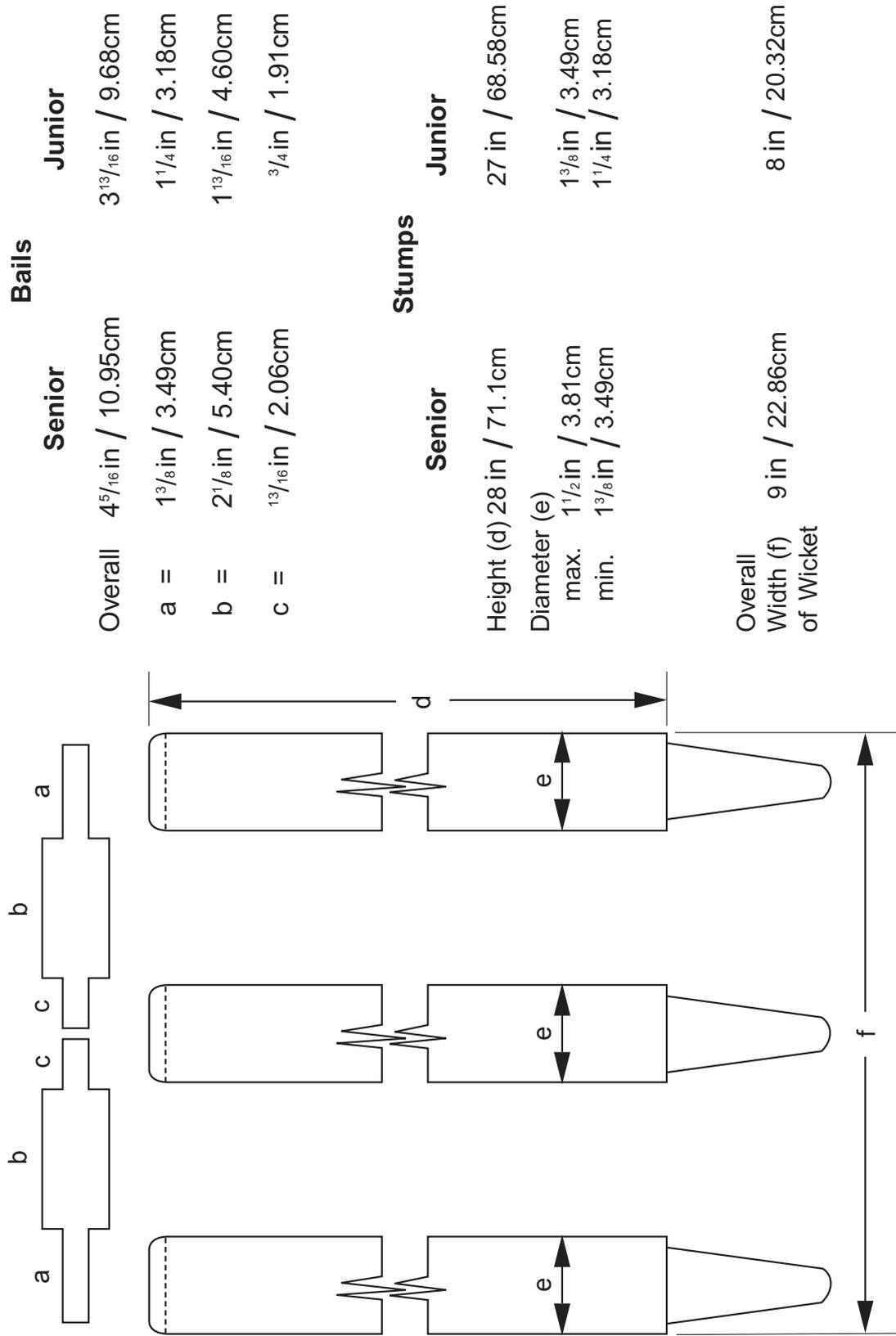
After the call of Time, the bails shall be removed from both wickets.

#### **4. Starting a new over**

Another over shall always be started at any time during the match, unless an interval is to be taken in the circumstances set out in 5 below, if the umpire, after walking at his normal pace, has arrived at his position behind the stumps at the bowler's end before the time agreed for the next interval, or for the close of play, has been reached.

# APPENDIX A

## Law 8 (The wickets)



**APPENDIX B**  
**Laws 7 (The pitch) and 9 (The bowling, popping and return creases)**

