

Official USQA Rules For Tournament or Formal Play

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1. Quoit Court Layout

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1.1 The Playing Area for a single quoit court with one set of pits should encompass a flat, rectangular piece of ground with minimum dimensions of 30 feet in length and 10 feet in width. Centered in this area shall be two defined areas of clay, dirt, or boxed-in pits.

1.1.a If using wooden boxes set into the ground to define the pits, they shall each be constructed to form a square with an inside dimension of 36 inches (1 Yard) on a side.

1.1.b If pits are made directly in the ground, a defined square area 3 x 3 feet, or a circular area 4 feet in diameter, shall be cleared for each pit, exposing bare clay or soil surface. Additional clay or soil may be added and mixed into the existing material in each pit to improve consistency.

1.2 The Pits shall be centered in the Playing Area and positioned so that their exact centers are 21 feet (7 Yards) apart.

1.3 At the center point of each pit a steel pin, or Hob, measuring between 5/8" - 7/8" in diameter and at least 18" long shall be driven into the ground, until the top surface of the hob measures 4 inches above the pit surface. The "Rule of Thumb" is an acceptable measuring procedure, whereby the hob is set to the height of 4 quoits stacked over the hob plus the width of a person's thumb laid on top of the stack.

2. Beginning Play

2.1 Quoits are pitched by either two or four players divided into two Teams. Two players will compete against each other, and four players will be paired into two teams. When only two players are competing, they shall both pitch their quoits from the same foul line into the opposing pit, then walk to that pit, retrieve their own quoits, and pitch back in the opposite direction. With four players, one player from each team shall pitch from each pit; teammates shall stand at opposite foul lines and pitch towards each other, eliminating the need to walk between the pits.

2.2 Before beginning the first game, it must be determined which team shall throw first. A quoit is flipped up into the air like a coin toss. A designated player from one of the two teams shall call out "He" for the top side of the quoit or "She" for the bottom side while the quoit is spinning in the air. The quoit is then allowed to land on the ground. If the resulting side facing up on the ground matches the called position, the calling team wins the toss. If the resulting side is the opposite from the called position, the opposing team wins the toss.

2.3 The team that wins the quoit toss shall have the choice of pitching first, or allowing the opposing team to pitch first. This is entirely a matter of personal preference. Quoits are pitched ALTERNATELY; The player chosen to pitch first shall pitch one of their quoits at the opposing hob, attempting to either ring the hob or land the quoits as close to the hob as possible. Then, the opponent shall throw one of their two quoits into the same pit, trying to pitch them closer to the hob than the first player, attempting to score the points for their own team. The first player then pitches his second quoit and the opponent follows with his second quoit. Two opponents throwing each of their 2 quoits into the opposite pit is called a Round.

3. Pitching

3.1 The Foul Line is an imaginary line running through each hob and extending out from the sides of each pit, perpendicular to the opposing hob. The throwing area is located behind each foul line. A player may stand anywhere in this area, but the usual stance is on either side of the box with the toe of the forward foot directly behind the foul line, with the foot resting against the outside edge of the wooden box. Standing inside the box to pitch is acceptable, but not usually done when playing in Recessed pits because of loss of height and visibility into the opposing pit. Standing in the clay with your toe against the back of the hob is more common when playing with Flush or Raised pits.

3.2 The pitcher lines up anywhere behind the foul line when it is their turn to throw. The player must stay behind the foul line through the duration of the pitch. Stepping into the throw is allowed, as long as the forward stepping foot remains behind the foul line. This requires the pitcher to start his stance a yard or two behind the line to make room for their step.

4. Scoring

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4.1 After all four quoits are thrown, only one team will score points, if any are to be had.

4.2 The closest quoit to the hob, within a horizontal quoit's diameter, determines which team will receive any points for that throw. The points for the closest quoit are

awarded to that corresponding team, and if their second quoit is also closer to the hob than either of their opponent's quoits, they receive the points for their second quoit also. If any opposing quoit is closer to the hob than their second quoit, no points are scored for the second quoit.

4.2.a NO POINTS are awarded to any quoits that are more than a horizontal quoit's diameter from the hob. These are out of Scoring Range. If all four quoits are out of scoring range, it is called an Open Pit or Dead Bed, and no points are awarded to either team for that throw. In this case, the same pitching order is observed for the next throwing sequence.

4.3 A Woody is any quoit that touches, leans against, or bounces off the wooden box of the pit. The quoit is considered Out of Play and is removed immediately from the pit.

4.4 A Grounder is a quoit that lands on or bounces off the ground outside the pit area. If the quoit bounces or rolls into the pit, it is also Out of Play and is removed immediately from the pit.

4.5 A She-Quoit is basically an inverted quoit, and includes:

4.5.a Any quoit that lands upside down in the pit or on the hob (see photo at right);

4.5.b Any quoit leaning against the hob with the top surface of the quoit;

4.5.c Any Quoit sticking upright in the clay which is BEYOND 90 degrees vertical.

4.5.d A She-Quoit cannot score any points. BUT, it is still in play and is NOT removed from the pit. It is possible to flip it back over into an upright position by striking it with another quoit, thereby putting it back into scoring play.

The upside down quoit in this photo is a She-quoit and does not score any points.

4.6 There are three possible positions in which a quoit can score points:

4.6.a A Point is any quoit that is less than a horizontal quoit's diameter away from the hob and closer than either of the opponent's two quoits. A Toucher or Hobber is a Point that lands tight against the hob. A Toucher beats a Point. Two opposing Touchers cancel each other.

Here the quoit leaning against the hob is a Toucher and is worth 1 point.

This quoit is NOT scored as a Leaner because it is not resting on the top of the hob.

4.6.b A Leaner is a quoit that has an edge resting in the clay and is leaning against the TOP EDGE of the hob. If it is leaning against the side of the hob rather than the top edge, it is considered only a "Point", as in the previous photo. A Leaner scores 2 points unless an opposing team's Ringer is underneath it; in this case the Ringer still counts. Two opposing Leaners on the same hob shall cancel each other. A Leaner always beats a Toucher.

This quoit is scored as a leaner because it rests on the top of the hob. It is worth 2 points.

The second quoit is a Toucher, and also scores 1 point if it is from the same team.

4.6.c A Ringer is a quoit that lands over the hob so it completely encircles the hob. A ringer scores 3 points, unless an opponent's quoit is rung on top of it. This is called Topping a ringer, and the team with the top ringer shall be rewarded 3 points each for ALL the Ringers on the hob. This results in 3 points for each of their own ringers and 3 points for each of their opponents' ringers underneath. Two Ringers on top of an opponent's Ringer shall therefore score 9 points, with a maximum possible score of 12 points for 4 Ringers on the hob. A Ringer always beats a Leaner.

Two ringers on the same team's throw, as seen here, scores 3 points each, for a total of 6 points.

4.7 If two opposing quoits appear to be equidistant from the hob when measuring with available methods, and both are within scoring range, they shall cancel each other. Also, if the position of two opposing quoits in the clay does not allow a fair measurement to be made using available methods, The quoits shall also cancel each other. For the most accurate measuring, a set of dividers can be used to make exact measurements. If the cancelled quoits result in no points being scored for either team, that throwing sequence is called a Draw or a Push. The same pitching order is then observed for the next throwing sequence.

4.7.a The "Second Quoit Rule" does not apply in regulation quoits. If the two quoits in question are the closest quoits to the hob, but not ringing the hob, the second quoits for each team are NOT scored and the entire bed is declared dead. The same pitching order is then observed for the next throwing sequence.

4.7.b The "Seven Point Rule" also does not apply in regulation quoits. If a player rings his quoit on top of an opponent's ringer, and his second quoit is closer than the opponent's second quoit, the first player does NOT score 7 points, but only 6.

4.8 For the most accurate measuring, a set of Dividers or Calipers can be used to make exact measurements against two opposing quoits and are standard equipment for serious game play. Combinations of finger widths or a non-scoring quoit are two other methods that can be used to visually compare opposing quoit distances when dividers are not available.

Randy Flick uses a non-scoring quoit to measure the distances between two opposing quoits and the hob. This is the easiest method for determining which quoit is closer and scores the point, when they are too evenly spaced to call it by sight. By looking at how far the measuring quoit's outer edge overlaps either the edge or the hole of each of the two quoits in question, or by how much the holes themselves overlap, measuring this way usually can determine the results.

5. Winning the Game

5.1 Play continues until one team reaches a score of 21 or greater while having at least a two point lead over the opposing team. This is the "Win by Two" rule. If the

current score is 21-20, play must continue beyond 21 until one team achieves at least a 2 point advantage over the opposing team after completing a round.

5.2 There will be no shutouts during regular pool play or for playoffs.

Recreational Rule Modifications (Not for Tournament Play)

These are modified rules that can be used during "Recreational Play" for fun or convenience. It can be desirable to modify the Official Rules somewhat to suit visitors and to make the play a little more lively and interesting. You can choose to adopt any of these rules for play on your home pits, or make up other "House" rules as you see fit. Just remember that these House rules are NOT valid in Tournament Play, so don't get TOO used to using them! Enjoy!

"3-man Pitch": It is possible to pitch with 3 players, in a Two-on-One format, when you do not have a fourth player to complete two teams. A single player pitches both sides of the pits against the remaining two-player team, who pitch from opposite sides of the pits as normal. This sometimes may be preferable than having the third person sit out a game waiting to play the winner of the competing pair.

"Everything Counts": She-Quoits, Woodies, and Grounders are all in play and count for points if in Scoring Range. The idea here is to increase scoring opportunities during Recreational Play without needing to disrupt the game to remove out-of-play quoits from the pits. It is especially inconvenient to remove quoits when only two players are competing. If there are no spotters or teammates present to remove out-of-play quoits from the opposite pit, playing by Official Rules only promotes excessive walking between pits. This added exercise is unnecessary and tends to lessen somewhat the effect of drinking all that beer during the game!!

"Leaners Beat Ringers": Similar to Topping a Ringer, a Leaner thrown onto a hob containing any opponent's Ringers shall award to the throwing team the total points of all Leaners and Ringers on the hob. That is, 2 points are awarded for the Leaner PLUS 3 points for each of the opponent's Ringers. A leaner over 1 Ringer scores 5 points, and a Leaner over 2 Ringers score 8 points. Again, this is an attempt to increase defensive scoring opportunities during Recreational Play.

"Play to 15": To shorten the length of games when you have a lot of players and not a lot of pits to play on, games can be played to 15 points instead of the usual 21. The "win by two points" rule can also be waived if desired, awarding the win to the first team scoring 15 points.