

Choosing the Right Shot



Choosing the right shot is at the heart of successful bowls.
Good choices create pressure on the opponent, protect your team, and put you in control of the end.

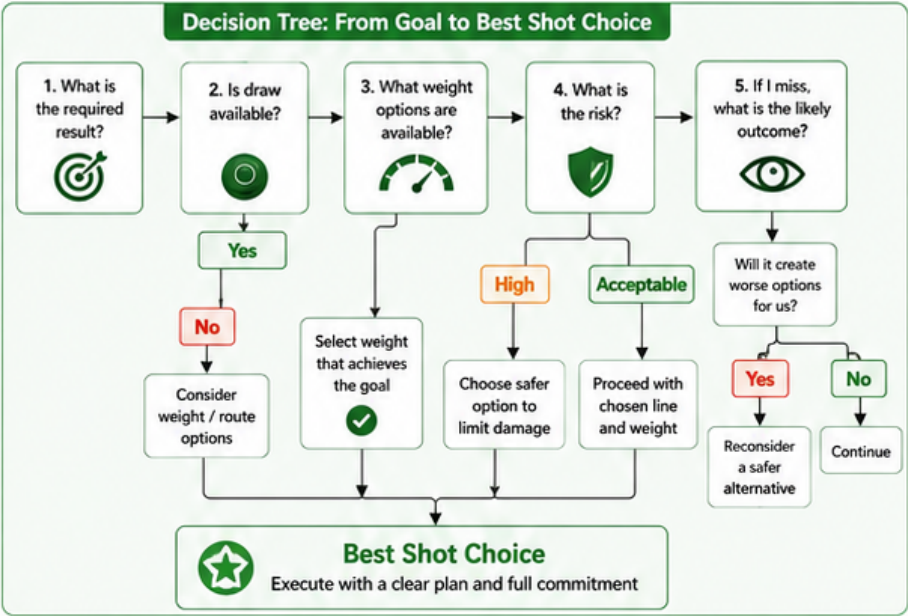


Why It Matters

Two identical shots can lead to very different results depending on context.

Choosing well means you play the conditions, the score, and the opponent — not just the shot you prefer.

Great players ask the right questions, see more options, and commit with confidence.



Key Ideas

Use this shot-selection guide to match the situation, manage risk, and shape the end in your team's favour.

Shot	Best Use	Main Risk	Likely Miss Effect	Key Consideration
Draw	Score, hold shot, or remove a threat at close range	Short of target, blocked, or caught on slope	Leaves shot up or an easier draw on	Read the green and weight precisely
Yard-on	Improve count without too much risk	Too full and it runs past the target	May not improve count	Match length to green speed and distance
Running Shot	Remove a bowl or open the head	Overhits leave a bowl out wide	Leaves a spare or creates a new problem	Check space for a safe miss
Rest	Hold position or block a line	Can be moved by opponent	Leaves shot up behind	Place on line, close to target
Trail	Protect a shot or control the head	Easier to remove than a rest	Opponent plays through or around	Use when defence is the priority

Practical Example

Score: 6–5 down, end 10. You have shot.

Goal	Score 2 or more and hold a shot.
Check	Draw available? Yes. What weight? Medium draw into head.
Risk	Opponent has bowls near the jack. Overdraw leaves them in control.
Likely Miss	If short, their bowls remain shot. If long, may remove their front bowl.
Choice	Select medium draw to take out front bowl and try to hold shot. Commit and execute.

Common Mistakes / Things to Watch

- ⚠ Defaulting to your favourite shot without checking the situation.
- ⚠ Ignoring the score or bowls remaining in the end.
- ⚠ Not considering the likely miss effect.
- ⚠ Being too aggressive when a safer option is better.
- ⚠ Playing to remove bowls but leaving the jack vulnerable.
- ⚠ Changing your mind mid-delivery — commit to the choice.



Try This

- Before each bowl, pause for three breaths and run through the decision tree.
- Ask: What is the goal of this bowl?
- Name your shot choice and the reason out loud.
- After your bowl, review the result and the decision.
- Aim for clear decisions, not perfect shots.



Summary / Key Takeaway

The best shot is not always the most aggressive. It is the one that:

- Achieves the required result
- Manages risk
- Creates the best next options

Decide well, commit fully, and back your choice.



Related Public Resource

Explore more in this series:

- How to Read a Head
- Effective Practice
- Weight and Line
- Game Sense and Strategy
- Building Heads

Visit your club or association website to access these free resources.