

Effective Practice

Effective practice is purposeful, measured and repeated with intent. It helps players improve the right things, build confidence, and transfer skills into competition.



Why It Matters

Time on the green does not automatically lead to improvement. Purposeful practice turns time into progress by focusing on the right actions and measuring change.

It builds better bowls, improves decision-making, and strengthens team performance under pressure. Small, consistent gains create big results over time.

The effective practice cycle



Key Ideas

Great practice is focused, measured and adaptable.

Practice focus	Example measure	What good progress looks like
Line and length	% bowls finishing within a target area	Consistent accuracy to intended target
Shot selection	Decision quality (self-rating)	Better choices under different score contexts
Communication	Useful calls per end (team count)	Clear, relevant calls that help the next player
Strength and consistency	Consecutive quality bowls	Less variability, more reliable delivery
Mental skills	Refocus time after mistake	Quicker reset, better next bowl

Purposeful practice session layout (example)

	Warm-up & set-up • Prepare body and mind • Clarify today's goal	10 mins
	Focused practice block • Practise the main focus • Measure and collect data	30–40 mins
	Review & reflect • What worked, what did not • Adjust and plan next block	10 mins

Quality over quantity. Intention over repetition.

Practical Example

Goal: Improve draw length to a target area.



- Plan:** Draw to finish in the 2m zone.
 - Deliver:** Bowl 10 draws.
 - Observe:** 7 out of 10 in zone (70%).
 - Adjust:** Shorten delivery length.
 - Repeat:** Bowl another 10. Aim for 80%+.
- Small adjustments + measurement = improvement.

Common Mistakes / Things to Watch

- No clear goal:** Practising without a target wastes time.
- Chasing perfection:** Small, useful gains beat unrealistic standards.
- Not measuring:** If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it.
- Only comfortable practice:** Growth happens outside your comfort zone.
- Ignoring feedback:** Dismissing results or input slows improvement.
- No transfer:** Practise skills you will use in competition.
- Fatigue without focus:** Long sessions with poor intent reduce learning.



Try This

- At your next session, pick one focus and one measure.
- Use the PLAN → DELIVER → OBSERVE → ADJUST → REPEAT cycle.
- Keep notes. Review your progress weekly.
- Apply it in games. Reflect on what transfers.
- Aim for steady improvement, not perfection.



Summary / Key Takeaway

Effective practice is planned, measured, reviewed and repeated.

It turns time on the green into real improvement.

Plan smart. Practise with intent.

Measure progress. Keep improving.



Related Public Resource

Explore more in this series:

- How to Read a Head
- Player Roles in Team Bowls
- Choosing the Right Shot
- Weight and Line
- Building Heads
- Game Sense and Strategy

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