



HELPFUL HINTS - COME & TRY DAY

Which is the best day to hold an Open Day?

If during the week is your club's preferred time, the best timing is usually after work hours to cater for workers and their families.

If your club has a bistro or restaurant, you could schedule the Come & Try session when food is available to bring in extra revenue.

Saturday is a popular choice for a Come & Try session but because so many people play sport on Saturdays, a late afternoon or early evening time can be the best choice. Sunday is generally the most successful day to schedule a Come & Try session.

Best recommendations:

- Tuesday – Thursday, after 4pm
- Saturday, after 2pm
- Sundays, anytime

How to publicise your Come & Try Day?

Social Media – Facebook

Use posts, shares and you can even use paid boosts for your club page advertising the upcoming event.

Local Radio

Is there a sports programme you can line up someone from your club to be interviewed - about the sport and the Come & Try Day?

Local Newspaper

Let your local paper know the day is on.

Club Website

Put the details on your club website.

Local Council

Ask your local Council to put your day on their website and drop some flyers at the Council office for visitors to pick up. You could invite a local Councillor for a roll up and ask the local paper to come and take a photo for extra publicity.

Local Businesses

Will local businesses put up a poster in their window? Invite them along too.

Letter Box Drop

You can pay someone to do this or volunteer members may take an area.

Personal Invitation

This is the most important! Never underestimate the power of a personal invitation from your club members to their family and friends. Many will be curious to find out why you're so passionate about bowls.

Your Club

Put up posters, leave flyers on tables and bar to let your members and any social visitors know.

What to do on the day?

Step 1: When participants arrive on the day, welcome them and direct them to a Registration Desk. Have a sign in sheet which requires name, email, phone number. This will help your club connect with these players for future events. Give them a quick verbal orientation of the club pointing out the facilities and rinks. Allocate your participant a rink for the activities. Volunteers needed: 1 or 2

Step 2: The participant goes to the nominated rink and is greeted by a volunteer. Pick your volunteers carefully. You want the session to be fun for the participants not overwhelming with lots of rules and tips. Volunteers needed: 1 or 2 per rink, depending on numbers.

Step 3: Have bowls set up on the rinks you'll be using. Have a range of sizes to suit women and children. If your rink volunteers have coloured bowls, they may allow visitors to have a try with these, to add more appeal than the traditional black bowls.

Step 4: Running a BBQ on the day is usually a good idea, to attract people to the club and encourage them to stay a bit longer. How you charge for this is at the discretion of the club. Some do a free sausage sizzle, others might ask for a gold coin donation to a charity. Volunteers needed: 2-3

Step 5: Once the participants have finished bowling, it's important to give them something to take away. Perhaps a flyer about your club with the following details:

- What are the options at the club for barefoot, social and competitive bowls?
- Organise a follow-on event to attract them back like Jackattack, corporate bowls, Business house type of activity over a number of weeks.
- How much does the sport cost?
- Free coaching?
- What time of year is Pennant/Championships?
- Restaurant opening hours?
- Club trading hours?
- What nights are raffles/badge draws on?
- Who to contact at the club for more information?
- Club's email details and phone number.
- Membership options.

Equipment needed for a Come & Try Day

- Coloured bowls if possible, otherwise traditional black bowls
- Mats and jacks
- Drinking water, shade, sunscreen, bins.

If possible:

- Rookie Rollers kit to keep the children busy while their parents try bowls.
- Bowling Arms – If the club has an Arm at their disposal, it is useful for participants who would like to have a try but find it a challenge to bend.
- Your club might like to apply for grant funding for a few sets of colourful club bowls for Come & Try Days?

Important Points to Remember

- Keep it short. It will be easier to get volunteers if they don't have to give up their whole day. A 2-3 hour window is sufficient. EG Weekday 4pm – 7pm. Sunday 11am – 2pm.
- All participants should sign in. This enables the club to follow up and ask for feedback. Did the participant enjoy the day? How could the club do it better?
- Some members might be prepared to bring along their own coloured bowls for participants to try. The array of colours looks appealing.
- Send visitors home with a flyer about your club. You could add a cut off section offering a discount voucher for their next meal, drink or a free barefoot bowls session.

Games or activities to make it more fun

- Corner to corner challenge (bowling to a jack in a diagonal corner).
- Spiders (bowling towards a centre jack).
- Next toucher wins a drink.

Extra activities to attract families:

- Face painting.
- Jumping castle.
- Music played out over the green.

What else?

It could be a good thing to have a Basic Rules Guide on display at your club for Barefoot Bowls sessions which could also apply to a Come & Try Day:

- No drinks on the green.
- Respect the greens.
- No driving.
- Don't stand in the ditches or on the edge.
- Don't drop bowls on the green.
- No offensive language.
- Broken glass? Please advise staff ASAP.