

# Lesson 1 AN INTRODUCTION TO GOLF CROQUET

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## The History of the game and Canberra Croquet Club

The history of croquet throughout the world is documented at this link:

<http://milwaukeecroquet.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/History-of-croquet-4-14-16.pdf>

Another version of croquet, Golf Croquet, was introduced in Egypt in the 1920s through British colonialism.

Canberra Croquet club was established in 1928 as a Club for AC play and limited to women members only until 1964. The history of the club is documented on the website at this link:

<http://www.canberracroquet.org.au/history.html>

## The Court and equipment

A *standard court* is a rectangle 35 by 28 yards (32 by 25.6 metres). The borders must be marked clearly (painted line, string, tape, etc).

The four boundaries are known as the *south*, *west*, *north*, and *east* boundaries regardless of their real orientation. The corners are known as *corners 1, 2, 3* and *4*.

The *yard-line* is an imaginary rectangle (not marked) which is 1-yard inside the boundary. Its corners are the *corner spots* (not usually marked).

The game is played using a mallet per player, 6 hoops set out on the court, and 4 balls. It can be played as singles (2 players) doubles (4 players).

# Hitting a Ball

## The mallet

- croquet balls weigh 1lb, so mallets weigh around 3lb to get the weight ratio
- most mallets are made of wood, but many now metal and/or carbon fibre
- taller mallets will help your back, so go as tall as you can

## The grip (choices)

- Standard – good balance of power, direction and comfort – hands close, as close to top of mallet as comfortable
- Solomon – more control by using less wrist action & more leverage
- Irish – least favoured because less backswing so less accurate

Many players play with hands apart, but the bottom hand then does all the work

Grip with a firmness like holding a cup of coffee, rather than 'choking' it. If you grip too firmly, your body will tense up and interrupt the smooth back swing and follow through required for accuracy. You want a languid swing....

## Stance and Swing

The secret is to develop a consistent swing. Not too fast and not too slow, in a fluid motion. The body should be still with little movement in knees or hips. The grip needs to be consistent; not loose nor too tight. Ensure that the head remains down, with eyes on the striker's ball and that the follow through is straight.



A good exercise (off the lawn) is to swing at an imaginary ball before taking your shot (like golf players do).

## The feet

- Turn mallet head sideways in front of players 'feet. Player to point toes to each end of mallet head and keep feet parallel. This is the distance feet need to be apart, about shoulder width.
- Turn mallet head right way and place 1 inch in front of feet. This the hitting position.

## Stalking

- Key to accuracy!
- Allows you to square your shoulders, toes and hips to the line of swing
- Stalk every stroke
- Do not change grip or feet after stalking
- If not comfortable – re-stalk

## **ACTIVITY 1 Hitting a ball**

Points to stress:

- Stalk the ball
- Settle stance
- Keep head down and keep looking at ball as hit
- Swing through
- 3 points – the ball, your body and where want ball to go (to partner)

In pairs – distance from hoop 1 and 4 to centre peg line

Materials – 2 balls

## **ACTIVITY 2 Running a hoop**

Points to stress:

- Same principles as 'hitting a ball'
- Aim point centre of hoop - marker
- Remind re stalking

Pairs at hoops

Materials – 2 balls + marker in ground at hoop centre

## **ACTIVITY 3 Hitting ball a distance**

Points to stress:

- Hit through ball – don't just tap

Individuals lined 3 metres apart - hit ball to partner

After 2 successes move further metre apart

Repeat

Materials – 2 balls

## **ACTIVITY 4 Hitting to Hoop 1**

Line up markers in front of 4 hoops 1 yard either side of front of hoop

Run as competition in 4 groups of 4 with Captain keeping score as in Greg Bury exercise

Each person to have 2 turns. Balls falling within triangle receive a point. Regroup and share scores.

## **ACTIVITY 5 SIX HOOP GAME**

### **Ball sequence, hoop order and the court**

Use cork board and markers to demonstrate

### ***Some useful references***

*The following websites have downloadable information on golf croquet with practice drills and also published texts.*

[www.croquet-nsw.org](http://www.croquet-nsw.org)

[www.canberracroquet.org.au/](http://www.canberracroquet.org.au/)

<https://worldcroquet.org/index.php/croquet-information/golf-croquet>

<https://croquet-australia.com.au/disciplines-3/#golf>

#### Images for golf croquet

[www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s3962780.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s3962780.htm) an interesting story on children playing the game.

It's a game you might remember from Alice in Wonderland, a hobby of the crazy Queen of Hearts. Okay, so croquet isn't really about using flamingos as mallets and hedgehogs as balls. It's a real game that's lots of fun!

[www.woodmallets.com/howto/playcroquet.htm](http://www.woodmallets.com/howto/playcroquet.htm)

There are many Youtube sites. Have a look at this one and check others:

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2ZXOUTITXQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2ZXOUTITXQ)

#### ***Texts (both in CCC library & available for loan)***

- *Bury Greg, Through the Hoops Techniques for Golf Croquet 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*
- *Hague Michael, Golf Croquet Tactics 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Croquet Association, UK.*