



QUEENSLAND
CRICKET

Winter Laws of Cricket Course

Umpire Education

Week 1 | Queensland Umpires | June 2026

Queensland Cricket Umpires

Winter Laws Course

Laws Covered Today

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. Law 1 - The players | 5. Law 8 - The wickets |
| 2. Law 2 - The umpires | 6. Law 9 - Preparation and maintenance |
| 3. Law 4 - The ball | 7. Law 10 - Covering the pitch |
| 4. Law 5 - The bat | 8. Law 12 - Start of play; cessation of play |

**Today's focus is not combing through every sentence in lecture-style.
It is about improving working knowledge,
checking what needs to be checked,
and communicating decisions clearly on match day.**

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Why This Session Matters

These Laws frame what happens before play begins and how umpires control the match.

Sets up:

everything that happens before or around the start of play:
who is involved,
what equipment is legal,
whether the ground is fit,
how the pitch is prepared, and
what umpires need to check before play begins.

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Pre-Quiz

INTERACTIVE PRE-QUIZ



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Law 1: The Players

Key focus: nominations, replacements, captain/deputy responsibilities and Spirit of Cricket.

- Who can take the field?
- Who may act for the captain?
- What must be told to umpires and scorers?
- What responsibilities sit with captains?



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Law 1: The Players: Clause Summary

Summary of the key clauses.

- 1.1** A side normally has 11 players; no more than 11 may field.
- 1.2** Captains nominate players before the toss; replacement needs consent.
- 1.3** A deputy can act if captain unavailable; after nomination, deputy must be a nominated player.
- 1.4** Captains are responsible for the Spirit of Cricket and the Laws.

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Law 1: The Players: 2026 Changes

More detail for umpires: what changes and how to manage it.

Current position

- Replacement after nomination needs the opposing captain's consent.
- Replacement is treated as the same player under the Laws.
- Penalty time, warnings and suspensions carry across.

2026 wording / emphasis

- Captain must inform both umpires and scorers when consent is granted.
- This formalises best practice rather than creating a new umpiring task.
- Umpires should record the replacement and confirm with scorers.

Umpire takeaway: do not rely on a quiet sideline conversation - confirm, record and communicate.

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Law 1: The Players: Umpire Impact

- Before toss: receive written nominations.
- If replacement requested: confirm opposing captain's consent.
- Tell scorers: replacement inherits prior status and restrictions.
- If captain unavailable: identify a valid deputy for the duty required.
- Support captains in maintaining the Spirit of Cricket.

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Law 1: The Players: Scenario

Scenario

After the toss, a captain says a nominated player has been injured in warm-up and asks to replace them. The other captain agrees. The scorers have not been told.

Discuss

- What must the umpire do now?
- What should be checked with the scorer?



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Law 1: The Players: Scenario Answer

Decision Allow replacement only because opposing captain has consented.

Law ref Law 1.2.2 and Law 1.2.3.

Action Captain informs umpires and scorers; umpires confirm scorer record.

Risk Replacement inherits the original player's Law status and restrictions.

Avoid Do not let the change happen without scorer awareness.

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Law 1: The Players: Key Takeaways

1. Nominations happen before the toss and matter for the whole match.
2. Replacement after nomination needs opposing captain consent and scorer notification.
3. Captains carry responsibility for the Laws and the Spirit of Cricket.

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Law 2: The Umpires

Key focus: appointment, pre-match checks, fitness for play, decisions and signals.

- Control the match impartially.
- Agree key conditions before the toss.
- Judge fair/unfair play and fitness for play.
- Communicate clearly to players and scorers.



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Law 2: The Umpires: Clause Summary

- 2.1** Two umpires appointed; present at least 45 minutes before play.
- 2.2** Umpire change only in exceptional circumstances, injury or illness.
- 2.3** Meet captains: ball, hours, clock, boundary, covers, conditions.
- 2.4** Check creases, wickets and boundary before toss and during match.
- 2.5** Check conduct, implements and permitted equipment.

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Law 2: The Umpires: Clause Summary — Continued

The remaining clauses that affect match control.

- 2.6** Umpires are sole judges of fair and unfair play.
- 2.7** Together decide if ground, weather, light or circumstances are fit.
- 2.8** Suspend or prevent play if conditions are dangerous or unreasonable.
- 2.9** Stand where best placed to see decisions without interference.
- 2.10** Change ends after each side has completed one innings.
- 2.11** If disagreement or dispute arises, umpires together decide.
- 2.12** Decision may be altered promptly; otherwise final.

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Law 2: The Umpires: 2026 Changes

Wording and process changes that affect pre-match checks and match control.

Conditions and set-up

- Wickets are “positioned” rather than “pitched”.
- Wet/slippery conditions can be dangerous when a bowler loses reasonable foothold.
- Fielders must be able to move freely; batters must be able to play strokes and run.
- Wet grass or a wet ball alone is not enough to stop play.

Signals and sanctions

- Wait until each signal to scorers is separately acknowledged.
- If several signals are needed, give them in event order.
- If both sides offend, apply each sanction independently unless they contradict.
- If sanctions conflict, apply the sanction for the first contravention.

Umpire takeaway: sequence matters - observe first, signal clearly and confirm acknowledgement.

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Law 2: The Umpires: Umpire Impact

Move from Law wording to match-day application.

- Assess ground, weather, light and exceptional circumstances.
- Decide together whether conditions are dangerous or unreasonable.
- Suspend or do not start/recommence if either umpire considers conditions unsafe or unreasonable.
- Inspect as often as appropriate, without players or officials.
- Resume when both umpires agree conditions are no longer dangerous or unreasonable.

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Law 2: The Umpires: Scenario

Scenario

Rain has stopped. The ball is wet and the outfield is damp. The bowling run-up is slippery, and the bowler cannot get a reasonable foothold.

Discuss

- Is “not ideal” enough to stop play?
- What makes it dangerous or unreasonable?
- Who inspects and decides?



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Law 2: The Umpires: Scenario Answer

Decision	Do not start or recommence until conditions improve.
Law ref	Law 2.7.1-2.7.4 and Law 2.8.2-2.8.3.
Reason	Wet ball alone is not enough, but loss of reasonable foothold is dangerous and unreasonable.
Action	Umpires inspect together, unaccompanied, as often as appropriate.
Resume	Call players back only when both umpires agree conditions are fit.

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Law 2: The Umpires: Key Takeaways

1. Use Law 2 to control pre-match checks and match conditions.
2. Fitness decisions belong to the umpires, not captains or ground staff.
3. Communicate decisions clearly to captains, colleague umpire and scorers.



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Law 4: The Ball

Key focus: ball size, approval, control, new balls and replacement balls.

- Which ball is approved for this match?
- Who controls the balls before and during play?
- When can a new ball be demanded?
- What happens if the ball is lost or unfit?



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Law 4: The Ball: Clause Summary

Summary of the key clauses.

- 4.1** Size 1, Size 2 and Size 3 ball specifications are now set out together.
- 4.2** Umpires hold all balls before the toss and keep control throughout.
- 4.3** Either captain may demand a new ball at the start of an innings unless agreed otherwise.
- 4.4** In a scheduled multi-day match, the fielding captain may demand a new ball after 80 overs.
- 4.5** Lost or unfit ball is replaced with one of comparable wear.
- 4.6** Governing Body determines ball size; if not, umpires determine it before the toss.

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Law 4: The Ball: 2026 Changes

The ball changes are mostly about size names, specifications and umpire control.

What changed

- Balls are now named Size 1, Size 2 and Size 3.
- All three specifications sit in Law 4.1.
- Margins for Size 2 and Size 3 have been tightened.
- Size 2 and Size 3 are no longer separated into Law 4.6.

Match-day meaning

- Check the competition or Governing Body requirement first.
- If none exists, umpires determine the ball size under Law 2.3.1.1.
- The 80-over new-ball right still applies in a scheduled multi-day match even if shortened.
- When a new ball is taken, inform the other umpire, batters and scorers.

**Umpire takeaway: confirm the ball before the toss;
record new ball and replacement ball decisions clearly.**

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Law 4: The Ball: Umpire Impact

- Take possession of match balls before the toss.
- Confirm which size ball applies to the match.
- At wickets, intervals and interruptions, take possession of the ball in use.
- When replacing a ball, choose comparable wear and inform batters and fielding captain.
- When a new ball is taken, ensure scorer awareness.



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Law 4: The Ball: Scenario

Scenario

Before the toss, the captains disagree about which size ball should be used.

The competition playing conditions do not state a ball size.

Discuss

- Who determines the ball size?
- When should that be settled?
- Who should be informed?

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Law 4: The Ball: Scenario Answer

Decision The umpires determine the ball size before the toss.

Law ref Law 4.6 and Law 2.3.1.1.

Action Confirm the ball to be used with captains and scorers as part of the pre-match consultation.

Risk Do not start with an unresolved equipment issue.

Avoid Do not let captains settle it informally after nomination or toss.

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Law 4: The Ball: Key Takeaways

1. Ball size is a pre-toss matter.
2. Umpires control the balls throughout the match.
3. Replacement balls must have comparable wear.

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Law 5: The Bat

Key focus: legal construction, size limits, permitted protection and bat categories.

- What makes a bat legal?
- What can be added for protection or repair?
- What size limits matter?
- Which bat categories are permitted at this level?

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Law 5: The Bat: Clause Summary

Summary of the key clauses.

- 5.1-5.3** The bat has a handle and wooden blade; commercial identifications must comply.
- 5.4** Protection and repair are permitted only within the stated limits.
- 5.5** No material may cause unacceptable damage to the ball.
- 5.6** Ball contact includes the bat, the hand/glove holding it and permitted materials.
- 5.7** Bat size limits apply: length, width, depth, edges and bat gauge.
- 5.8** Bats fall into Types A, B, C and D, with use depending on level.

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Law 5: The Bat: 2026 Changes

The main 2026 change is around Type D bats and clearer category wording.

What changed

- Type D bats may be laminated and/or coloured.
- They are no longer limited only to junior cricket.
- They may be used at lower levels determined by the national Governing Body.
- The categories have been rationalised for clearer reading.

Match-day meaning

- Type A may be used at any level.
- Types B, C and D depend on the level set by the Governing Body.
- Bats outside Types A-D are not recognised in the Laws.
- Umpires check externally visible requirements, not hidden internal construction.

**Umpire takeaway: use the Law plus the competition level
- a coloured or laminated bat is not automatically legal.**

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Law 5: The Bat: Umpire Impact

- Check obvious bat compliance when raised before or during play.
- Use Law 2.5.2.2 for externally visible bat requirements.
- Know what your competition allows for Type B, C and D bats.
- If there is doubt, manage it calmly before the player uses the bat.
- Do not ignore material that could damage the ball.

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Law 5: The Bat: Scenario

Scenario

A batter arrives with a coloured laminated Type D bat in an open-age match.
The opposing captain objects before the batter faces a ball.

Discuss

- Is the bat automatically illegal?
- What should the umpire check?
- What if the Governing Body has not permitted Type D bats at this level?

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Law 5: The Bat: Scenario Answer

Decision Check whether Type D bats are permitted at that level by the Governing Body.

Law ref Law 5.8 and Law 2.5.2.2.

Action If permitted and otherwise compliant, the bat may be used; if not, it should not be used.

Risk Do not decide only by colour or appearance.

Avoid Do not allow a bat outside recognised categories or level permissions.

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Law 5: The Bat: Key Takeaways

1. Bat legality is about construction, size, materials and permitted category.
2. Type D use now depends on the level set by the Governing Body.
3. Umpires should manage bat concerns before play if possible.

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Law 8: The Wickets

Key focus: correct positioning, dimensions, bails and when bails may be dispensed with.

- Are the wickets positioned correctly?
- Are stumps and bails the right dimensions?
- When can safety devices be used?
- When may umpires dispense with bails?



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Law 8: The Wickets: Clause Summary

- 8.1** Two sets of wickets positioned opposite and parallel in the centres of the bowling creases.
- 8.2** Stumps are 28 in / 71.12 cm above the surface and dome-shaped.
- 8.3** Bails must fit correctly; approved safety devices may limit how far bails travel.
- 8.4** Junior dimensions are determined by the relevant Governing Body.
- 8.5** Umpires may agree to dispense with bails if necessary, and resume their use when possible.

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Law 8: The Wickets: 2026 Changes

The 2026 wording change aligns Law 8 with Law 2 and avoids confusion with “the pitch”.

What changed

- Law 8.1 now refers to wickets being “positioned”.
- Older wording used “pitched”.
- Related wording in Law 2.4 was aligned.
- This is a language clarity change, not a new equipment test.

Match-day meaning

- Umpires still check wickets before the toss and during the match.
- Check both ends: width, vertical positioning and relationship to creases.
- If bails are unsafe or impractical, umpires may dispense with them at both ends.
- Resume bails as soon as conditions permit.

Umpire takeaway: the wording changed, but the umpire routine stays the same
- check, agree and communicate.

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Law 8: The Wickets: Umpire Impact

- Include wickets in the pre-toss ground check.
- Do not assume junior dimensions match senior requirements.
- If bails are dispensed with, make it clear to both captains and scorers.
- Use no bails at either end while the decision applies.
- Review conditions and return to bails when possible.



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Law 8: The Wickets: Scenario

Scenario

A strong wind repeatedly blows the bails off both wickets before deliveries. Replacing them is delaying play and creating confusion.

Discuss

- Can play continue without bails?
- Who decides?
- Do you use bails at one end only?



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Law 8: The Wickets: Scenario Answer

Reveal after discussion.

Decision The umpires may agree to dispense with bails if necessary.

Law ref Law 8.5 and Law 29.5.

Action Use no bails at either end and inform captains/scorers clearly.

Review Resume the use of bails as soon as conditions permit.

Avoid Do not use bails at one end and not the other.



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Law 8: The Wickets: Key Takeaways

1. Wickets must be correctly positioned before play.
2. Bails are normal, but umpires can dispense with them if necessary.
3. Any change to bails must be consistent and communicated.



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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance

- Who controls pitch maintenance during the match?
- When may the pitch be rolled?
- How is debris cleared safely?
- What do umpires manage around footholes and creases?



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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance: Clause Summary

- 9.1** Rolling during the match is limited; batting captain may request up to 7 minutes when permitted.
- 9.2** Debris must be cleared before each day, between innings and at meal intervals.
- 9.3** Mowing before the match is Ground Authority; later mowing is under umpire supervision.
- 9.4-9.5** Pitch cannot be watered during the match; creases are re-marked when needed.
- 9.6-9.7** Umpires ensure footholes are cleaned/dried and may allow sawdust if no pitch damage.
- 9.8** Non-turf pitches use the same provisions where appropriate.

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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance: 2026 Changes

Law 9.2 now recognises modern curation practice.

What changed

- Debris clearance is no longer limited to sweeping.
- The Ground Authority may use any appropriate means.
- Mechanical blowers and other suitable equipment can be used.
- If the method may damage the surface, the area must be cleared by hand.

Match-day meaning

- Umpires do not choose the tool by default; they judge risk to the pitch surface.
- Debris clearing before play must sit inside the 30-10 minute window.
- Debris may be removed by hand before mowing and when either umpire considers it necessary.
- Protect the pitch first; speed is secondary.

Umpire takeaway: permit practical ground care, but stop any method that may damage the surface.

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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance: Umpire Impact

Match-day application

- Know the time windows for rolling, debris clearing and mowing.
- Supervise maintenance after the match has started.
- Refuse rolling after a delayed start if the delay has not significantly affected the pitch.
- Allow sawdust for footholds only if no pitch damage and Law 41 is not contravened.
- Use clear communication with ground staff and captains.



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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance: Scenario

Use this before showing the answer.

Scenario

Before play, ground staff want to use a leaf blower to clear leaves and grass clippings from the pitch before rolling.

One captain objects, saying only sweeping is allowed.

Discuss

- Is a blower automatically prohibited?
- What must the umpires consider?
- What if the blower may damage the pitch surface?



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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance: Scenario Answer

Decision A blower or other appropriate equipment may be used if it is not detrimental to the pitch.

Law ref Law 9.2.1-9.2.3.

Action If the method may damage the surface, require that area to be cleared by hand.

Timing Before play, debris clearance must occur after mowing and before rolling within the required window.

Avoid Do not let convenience override pitch protection.



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Law 9: Preparation and Maintenance: Key Takeaways

1. Law 9 gives umpires control of match-time pitch maintenance.
2. Debris may be cleared by appropriate means unless detrimental.
3. Rolling, mowing and foothole work all have limits and timing rules.

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Law 10: Covering the Pitch

Key focus: who controls covers, what must be covered and when covers come off.

- Who is responsible before the match?
- What is the default during the match?
- What must be covered?
- When must covers be removed?



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Law 10: Covering the Pitch: Clause Summary

- 10.1** Before the match, use of covers is the Ground Authority's responsibility.
- 10.1** Captains must be able to inspect the pitch before nomination; umpires must be able to discharge duties.
- 10.2** Unless determined otherwise before the toss, cover the whole pitch + 4ft/1.22m beyond each end.
- 10.2** Bowlers' run-ups should be covered where possible.
- 10.3** Covers are removed as soon as practicable or promptly when conditions allow.

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Law 10: Covering the Pitch: 2026 Changes

The 2026 Law 10 change is minor wording with no change in outcome.

What changed

- Law 10.2 has minor wording updates.
- The outcome is unchanged.
- The default coverage still applies unless otherwise determined before the toss.
- The focus remains practical protection of the pitch and run-ups.

Match-day meaning

- Record any agreement about covers before the toss.
- Cover the whole pitch plus 4 ft / 1.22 m at each end.
- Cover run-ups where possible.
- Remove covers promptly when conditions allow.

Umpire takeaway: the Law is simple, but the pre-toss agreement matters.

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Law 10: Covering the Pitch: Umpire Impact

- Discuss covers with captains before the toss under Law 2.3.1.5.
- Understand what the Ground Authority controls before the match.
- Ensure captains and umpires can inspect the pitch before nominations.
- When play is suspended, monitor when covers should be applied or removed.
- Connect cover removal to fitness-for-play decisions.

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Law 10: Covering the Pitch: Scenario

Scenario

After rain, conditions improve enough for covers to come off.

The Ground Authority wants to leave the covers on longer “just in case”.

Discuss

- When should covers be removed?
- Who manages the decision to recommence play?
- What Law 2 issue follows next?



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Law 10: Covering the Pitch: Scenario Answer

Decision Covers should be removed promptly as soon as conditions allow.

Law ref Law 10.3.2, linked to Laws 2.7 and 2.8.

Action Umpires then assess whether ground, weather and light are fit for play.

Risk Leaving covers on unnecessarily can delay the match and affect fairness.

Avoid Do not confuse cover management with the separate fitness-for-play decision.



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Law 10: Covering the Pitch: Key Takeaways

1. Before the match, covers are a Ground Authority responsibility.
2. During the match, the default is whole pitch plus 4 ft at each end and run-ups where possible.
3. Remove covers promptly when conditions allow.



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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play

- When is Play called?
- When is Time called?
- When must an over be completed?
- How do the last hour and final over rules work?



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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: Clause Summary

- 12.1** Bowler's end umpire calls Play before the first ball and after intervals or interruptions.
- 12.2** Bowler's end umpire calls Time, when the ball is dead, at the start of any interval or interruption.
- 12.3** After Time, remove bails except at the start of a drinks interval.
- 12.4** Start another over if the umpire has reached position before the agreed time is reached.
- 12.5** Complete the over when interval time is reached, except where Law 12.5.2 applies.

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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: Clause Summary — Continued

- 12.6** Last hour begins when one hour of playing time remains; minimum 20 overs.
- 12.7** Last-hour interruptions reduce overs by one for each complete 3 minutes lost.
- 12.8** If a new innings starts in the last hour, apply the overs/time calculations.
- 12.9** Match concludes on result, minimum overs plus close time, final innings complete, or no further play possible.
- 12.10** Final-day over in progress is completed unless result reached or players leave the field.
- 12.11** If a bowler cannot complete an over in the last hour, Law 17.8 applies.



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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: 2026 Changes

Law 12 contains several practical 2026 changes.

Cessation of Play

- Law 12.2 clarifies that Time is called at the start of an interruption.
- This aligns wording with existing practice.
- Law 12.3 means bails are not removed at the start of a drinks interval.
- This aligns with common match practice.

End-of-day wicket

- Law 12.5.2 changes the final-over-of-day situation.
- If less than 3 minutes remains and a wicket falls, lunch/tea intervals are to be taken immediately.
- But at the end of a day's play, the over is completed.
- The incoming batter does not avoid the remaining balls simply because it is close of play.

Umpire takeaway: end-of-day wickets no longer automatically protect the incoming batter from the remaining balls of the over.

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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: Umpire Impact

- Use exact language: call Play and Time at the correct moments.
- Do not remove bails at the start of a drinks interval.
- Know when a new over must start based on the bowler's end umpire's position.
- For last hour, signal the start and keep scorers informed.
- At end of day, do not call Time immediately just because a wicket falls inside three minutes.

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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: Scenario

Scenario

There are less than 3 minutes until close of play on day one.

During the over, a batter is dismissed. Conditions remain fit for play.

Discuss

- Is close of play taken immediately?
- Must the incoming batter face the remaining balls?
- What should the umpire communicate?



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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: Scenario Answer

Decision At the end of a day's play, the over is completed.

Law ref Law 12.5.2.

Action The incoming batter commences their innings and complete the over if conditions remain fit.

Communication Explain that the exception for dismissal/retirement does not apply at end of day.

Avoid Do not incorrectly end the day and carry the remaining balls over.

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Law 12: Start of Play; Cessation of Play: Key Takeaways

1. Call Play and Time at the correct moments.
2. End-of-day wickets inside 3 minutes does not cease play.
3. Last-hour overs and interruptions must be tracked carefully with scorers.

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Key Takeaways: Week 1 Laws

What participants should leave being able to apply.

1. Confirm players, umpires, equipment, wickets and ground set-up before problems arise.
2. Use the 2026 changes to guide decisions on balls, bats, pitch care, covers and time.
3. Communicate clearly with captains, colleague umpire, scorers and ground staff.

Ready for post-quiz, match-day scenarios or the next weekly law block.

RECAP





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