How to Play Cricket and the Basic Rules

KS2 PE KS3 PE Ages 10-14 ⏰ 4 min read

What Is Cricket?

Cricket is a team sport played between **two teams of 11 players**. It's popular in countries like **India**, **Australia**, **Pakistan**, and the **West Indies**. The game involves batting, bowling (throwing), and fielding, with matches lasting anywhere from a few hours to several days depending on the format.

The Basic Setup

Cricket is played on a large oval field with a flat rectangular strip in the middle called the **pitch**. At each end of the pitch stand **three wooden sticks called stumps**, with two smaller sticks balanced on top called **bails**. These form the **wicket**.

Think of it like baseball, but instead of a pitcher throwing at a batter, the **bowler** runs up and throws the ball at wooden sticks behind the batter. The batter, called the **batter** or **batsman**, tries to hit the ball and protect those sticks.

How the Game Works

One team **bats** while the other **bowls and fields**. The **bowler** (not a pitcher—they have a straight arm) throws the ball toward the **batter** who stands in front of the wicket. The batter tries to hit the ball and score **runs** by running between the two wickets. Each time they run from one end to the other and back, that's **one run**. If the ball reaches the edge of the field, that's **four runs**. If it goes over the boundary without bouncing, that's **six runs**.

Getting a Player Out

The batting team loses players when they get **out**. This happens in several ways: if the bowler hits the stumps with the ball (called **bowled**), if a fielder catches the ball before it bounces, or if the batter is in front of the stumps when hit by the ball (**leg before wicket** or **LBW**). When **ten players are out**, that team's turn is over and they switch roles.

Winning the Match

The team that scores the most **runs** wins. In shorter formats like **Twenty20** cricket, matches last about **3 hours**. In traditional **Test cricket**, matches can last up to **five days**!

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