



Stumped by Irish cricket?

A handy guide
for those who want
to write, talk and
cover the game



**CRICKET
IRELAND**

Welcome!

If you have an interest in writing, talking or reporting on the sport of cricket, we're here to help you.

Cricket Ireland has designed this booklet to support both journalists and those who edit their work. A lot of this might seem obvious, but we prefer to be as inclusive as possible to help those who may have gaps in their knowledge and understanding.

And remember, we are always available to clear up any queries you might have on the sport and how it is played in Ireland.

A bit about cricket

Cricket has an estimated fanbase of 2.5 billion. It is the favourite sport of around 20% of the world's population.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is the governing body for the sport.

While 106 nations officially play international cricket, only 12 nations are Full Members of the ICC and have the right to play Test cricket (the remaining 94 nations are known as Associate Members). Ireland is one of the 12 – so, essentially Ireland sits at the top table of the world's second most popular sport!

Cricket and Ireland

Cricket has a long history in Ireland. It was the most popular team sport across the island until the advent of the GAA.

A short history of Irish cricket...

- 1730s** First recorded evidence of cricket, in the Phoenix Park in Dublin
- 1792** First record of a match – also in the Phoenix Park (it featured the young Duke of Wellington!)
- 1855** First game played by Ireland (again, in the Phoenix Park)
- 1884** First recorded game played by women, near Strabane in Co Tyrone
- 1923** Irish Cricket Union formed (became Cricket Ireland in 2008)
- 1982** Irish Women's Cricket Union formed, playing internationals from 1983
- 1987** Ireland Women play in World Cup for the first time
- 2000** Ireland Women host Pakistan in their first Test match at College Park
- 2001** Irish Cricket Union and Irish Women's Cricket Union amalgamate
- 2001** Ireland Women beat England to become European Champions
- 2007** Ireland Men play in World Cup for the first time, beating Pakistan and Bangladesh
- 2011** Ireland Men play in World Cup for the second time, beating England thanks to a century by Kevin O'Brien in just 50 balls – the fastest ever made at a World Cup
- 2017** Cricket Ireland promoted to Full Membership of ICC
- 2018** Ireland Men host Pakistan in their first Test match at Malahide
- 2021** Ireland Women's Amy Hunter becomes world's youngest-ever centurion in international cricket on 16th birthday

Laura Delany, Ireland Women's
longest-serving captain



Formats explained

There are three main formats of the sport in international cricket, each of which tests different parts of a player's skill set.

The three formats Ireland play are: Test Matches, One-Day Internationals and Twenty20 (or T20) Internationals.

Newer formats are emerging (The Hundred, T10) but are yet to be played internationally.

TEST MATCHES

Vibe: seen as the pinnacle or highest standard of cricket

Typical premise: four innings are normally played in a Test match, where each team usually bats and bowls twice

How to win: the basic aim is to outscore the opponent across the four innings. However:

- the game is called a **draw** if neither side wins the game within the time limit
- in rare instances, if a side is bowled out in its second innings with scores level, it is called a **tie** (rare, you say? It has only happened twice in the 2,428 men's Test matches played since 1877)

Duration: typically played over four or five days

Clothing: players wear white clothing

Colour of the ball: red

Bowling limitations: there are no limits on the number of overs a batting team can face or an individual player can bowl

What you should know:

- while 106 nations officially play international cricket, only 12 nations (ICC Full Members) play men's Tests. Ten nations have played women's Tests but only three have played any in the last seven years.
- the first Test match was played in 1877.

ONE-DAY INTERNATIONALS

Vibe: a faster, shorter tempo game than Test matches

Typical premise: each side gets to bat 50 overs and the highest score wins. There are no draws in ODI cricket, and a recent innovation means tied scores can now be decided by a Super Over (cricket's equivalent of football's penalty shoot-out)

Duration: played over one day (usually around seven hours)

Clothing: players wear coloured clothing

Colour of the ball: white

Bowling limitations: individual bowlers can bowl a maximum of 10 overs

What you should know:

- only 20 nations (based on performance rankings) can play men's ODIs, and the 12 Full Members play women's ODIs. The remaining cricket nations can play 50-over cricket, but these are called 'one-day matches' (as opposed to 'internationals')

TWENTY20 (T20) INTERNATIONALS

Vibe: frenetic, high-scoring, action-packed game

Typical premise: each side gets to bat 20 overs and the highest score wins. There are no draws in T20I cricket, and matches that end in a tie can be decided by a Super Over

Duration: played over one day (usually around three hours)

Clothing: players wear colour clothing

Colour of the ball: white

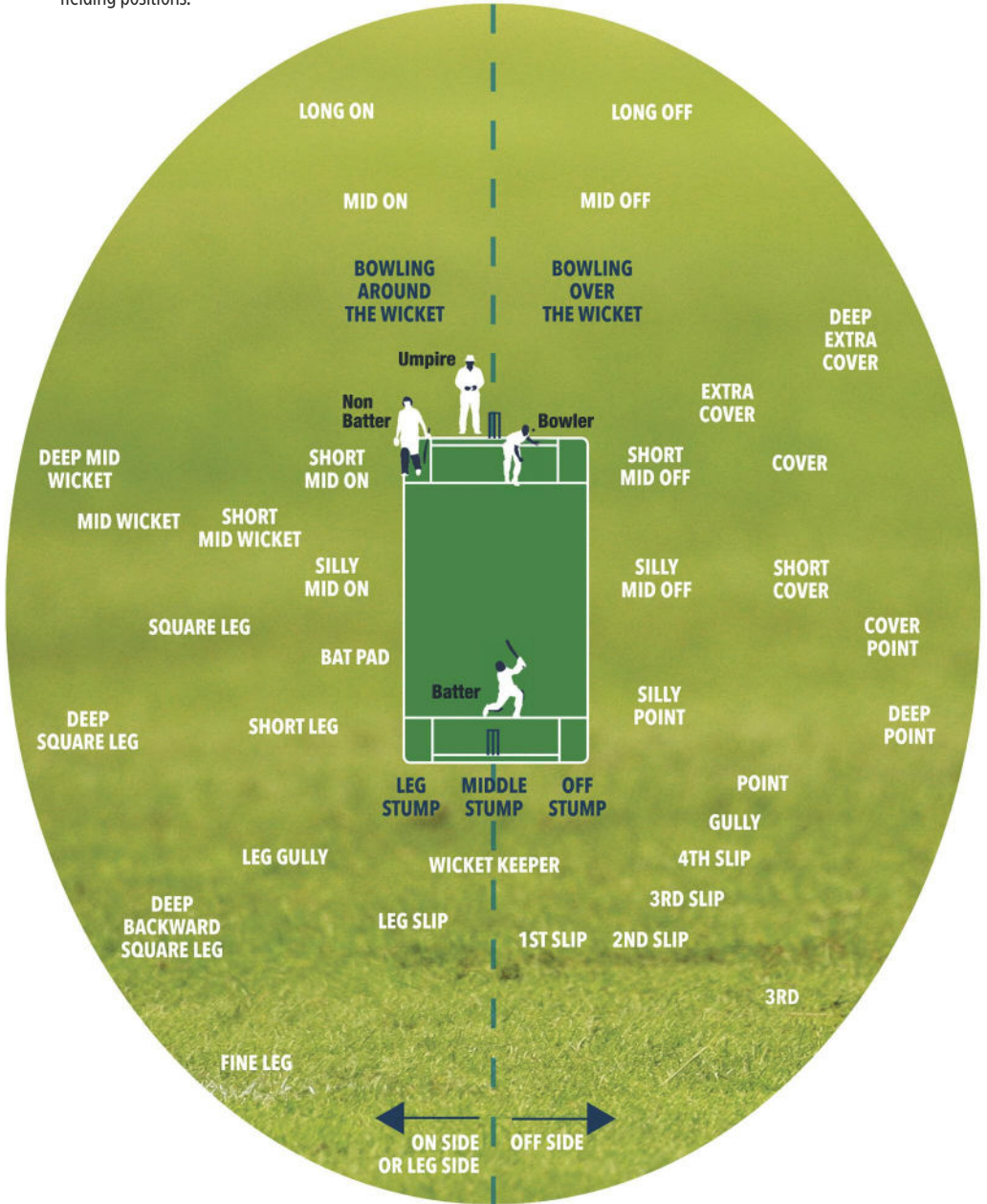
Bowling limitations: individual bowlers can bowl a maximum of four overs

What you should know:

- Any ICC member (Full Members or Associate Members) can play men's or women's T20Is

Know the field

The following diagram provides names of common fielding positions.



Getting to know the game

What to look for

The toss: a coin toss decides which team will bat or bowl first – it's considered the fairest way.

The teams: the two teams appear as follows:

- the bowling team has 11 players on the field – one bowler, one wicketkeeper and nine fielders; and
- the batting team has two players (batters) on the field standing on the pitch (one at each end)

Scoring runs: the most common ways to score runs are:

- the batter on strike hits the ball and runs to the crease at the other end of the pitch – that is one run (batters can keep running back-and-forth and score more runs up until there is a risk the fielding side can break the stumps with the ball);
- if the batter hits the ball over the boundary on the full they automatically get **six** runs; or
- if the batter hits the ball to the boundary where it bounces or rolls on the way they automatically get **four** runs.

Taking wickets: while the batting side is seeking to score as many runs as it can, the bowling side is looking to take 10 wickets. There are several ways a batter can be out:

- if the bowler hits the stumps behind the batter with the ball (bowled);
- if the batter hits the ball directly to a fielder without it bouncing (caught);
- if the batter, including their bat, is outside the crease (line) when the stumps are broken by the wicketkeeper (stumped);
- if the fielding side breaks the stumps when the batters attempt a run and fail to get their bat or body behind their crease (run out); and

- if the ball strikes the batter on the legs or body and the umpire decides it prevented the ball from hitting the stumps (leg before wicket).

There are a few other obscure ways of being out but these rarely happen.

Umpire signals: the two umpires on the field regularly signal to the scorers what has happened – some of the most common are:

- **Hand raised over head with finger pointing up** means the batter is OUT
- **Waves arm from side to side at waist level** means it's a FOUR
- **Holds two arms vertically over head** means it's a SIX
- **Both arms outstretched** means the bowler has bowled the ball too WIDE – penalty run
- **One arm outstretched** means the bowler's foot has gone over the crease, so it's a NO BALL – penalty run
- **Uses index fingers to draw a big rectangle in the air** means the umpire is referring a decision to the TV umpire to decide on a potential wicket



Paul Stirling is Ireland's highest run-scorer across all formats

Getting to know the game

What terms mean

Cricket can seem full of jargon – one of the dictionaries of the game's terminology covers 270 pages (!).

The comedian Stephen Fry once came up with a list of over 100 different words to describe a cricket shot with the bat!

Cricket has given the English language several commonly-used terms such as: 'stumped', 'on the back foot' and 'hit for six'. The term 'it's not cricket' is widely used to signify cheating, or something underhand.

Here are some of the commonly-used terms you might hear:

Stumps: the three vertical wooden poles at each end of the pitch – the batter seeks to protect them, while the bowler seeks to hit them

Bails: two pieces of wood which sit on top of the three stumps. The bails must be dislodged for a run-out, bowled, or stumping.

Bouncer: a short-pitched ball which bounces high at or over the batter's head

Duck: when a batter is dismissed without scoring a run

Duckworth-Lewis Stern (DLS): a method of calculation used when a limited-overs match is interrupted or stopped by rain or bad light – the DLS algorithm works out which team is 'ahead' at the stage the game is stopped and sets a revised target if play can resume

Off and leg side: the off side is the area to the right of a right-handed batter as they hit the ball, the leg side is the area to the left of a right-handed batter. And vice versa for a left-hander!

Maiden: if no runs are scored off an over, it is called a 'maiden'

Over: a set of six balls bowled by a bowler. After an over is completed from one end of the pitch, the next over is bowled by a different bowler from the other end.

Spin bowler: a slow bowler who can use their fingers or wrist in the delivery to impart spin on the ball, where the ball changes direction after hitting the pitch

Seam or Pace bowler: a bowler who can generate pace with the ball, or can make the ball swing in the air, or can make the ball move left or right off the pitch at pace

Some cricket facts and stats

Cricket has been played internationally since 1844, when Canada played the USA at New York in what is accepted as the first international sports fixture.

England and Australia began playing Test matches in 1877 and since then they have been joined by South Africa, West Indies, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Ireland and Afghanistan. Only full members of ICC can play Tests.

The Imperial Cricket Conference was founded in 1909 and renamed as the International Cricket Conference in 1965. It became the International Cricket Council in 1980, and is based in Dubai.

World Cups:

- The ICC Men's Cricket World Cup (a 50-over competition) is held every four years. Ten teams compete in the tournament after a lengthy qualification process (expanding to 14 teams from 2027). Ireland qualified to play in 2007, 2011 and 2015.
- The ICC Men's T20 Cricket World Cup (a 20-over competition) is held every two years. Sixteen teams compete in the tournament – the top 10 in the current rankings and six who emerge after a series of qualifiers. Ireland qualified to play in 2009, 2010, 2016, 2021 and 2022.
- The ICC Women's Cricket World Cup (a 50-over competition) is held every four years. Eight teams compete in the tournament (with 10 teams to play in the 2027 event). Ireland qualified to play in 1988, 1993, 1997, 2000 and 2005.
- The ICC Women's T20 Cricket World Cup (a 20-over competition) is held every two years. Ten teams compete in the tournament (the hosts, seven of the

top eight in the current rankings and two who emerge after a series of qualifiers). Ireland qualified to play in 2014, 2016, 2018 and 2023 (expansion planned in the next cycle).

ICC also produces the world rankings in each format, for teams and players. The latest team and player rankings can be found at:

- Men:
www.icc-cricket.com/rankings/mens/overview
- Women:
www.icc-cricket.com/rankings/womens/overview

Josh Little is one of Ireland's most sought-after T20 franchise cricketers



Irish cricket overview

Cricket Ireland is the national governing body for cricket across the island of Ireland. It administers all national representative teams (men and women) from under-age to senior sides, and has over 35 players (men and women) on retainer and non-retainer contracts.

In addition, Cricket Ireland oversees a range of inter-provincial and club competitions:

Men's Inter-Provincial Championship – first-class tournament (three-day matches) played between Leinster Lightning, Northern Knights and North West Warriors on a home and away basis. Lightning have won six of the seven tournaments since it was first staged in 2013, and Warriors one.

Men's Inter-Provincial Cup – tournament (50-over format) played between Leinster Lightning, Northern Knights, North West Warriors and Munster Reds on a home and away basis. First staged in 2013, of the ten tournaments staged Lightning have won eight, Knights one and Munster one.

Men's Inter-Provincial Trophy – tournament (T20 format) played between Leinster Lightning, Northern Knights, North West Warriors and Munster Reds played in a series of three-day festivals. First staged in 2013, of the ten tournaments staged Lightning have won seven, the Warriors twice and the Knights once.

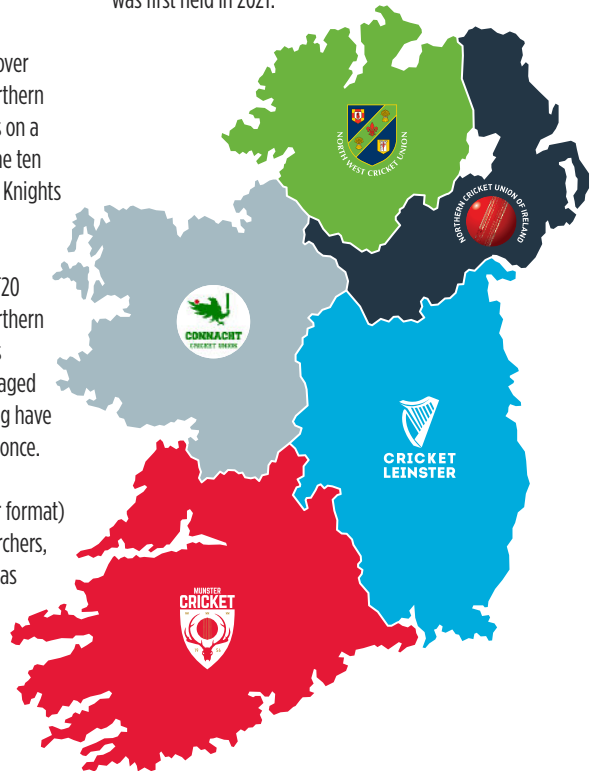
Women's Super 50 Cup – tournament (50-over format) played between three 'franchise' sides, the Scorchers, Typhoons and Dragons. First staged in 2015, it has List A status.

Women's Super 20 Trophy – tournament (T20 format) played between three 'franchise' sides, the Scorchers, Typhoons and Dragons. First staged in 2015, it has List A status.

Men's Irish Senior Cup – 50-over knockout club tournament played between premier division clubs, with 10 each from Leinster, North and North West, and two from Munster. First staged in 1983 it has been won most often by Waringstown (six times).

Men's National Cup – 40-over knockout club tournament played between the remaining senior clubs from Leinster, North, North West, Connacht and Munster. First staged in 2012 it has been won twice each by Rush and Malahide.

Men's and Women's All-Ireland T20 Cup – T20 tournament played between the T20 club champions of each of the Provincial Unions. The men's competition was first staged in 2017, while the women's competition was first held in 2021.



Connacht Cricket Union (currently an unaffiliated union with Cricket Ireland)

Who's Who in Irish Cricket

Cricket Ireland

- Chair: **Brian MacNeice**
- CEO: **Warren Deutrom** (since 2006)
- Men's Head Coach: **Heinrich Malan**
- Men's captain: **Andrew Balbirnie** (since 2019)
- Women's Head Coach: **Ed Joyce** (since 2019)
- Women's captain: **Laura Delany** (since 2016)
- High Performance Director: **Richard Holdsworth** (since 2011)
- Participation Director: **Elaine Nolan** (since 2017)
- Academy Manager: **Pete Johnston** (since 2017)

Provincial Unions

- Cricket Leinster general manager: **Philip Smith**
- Leinster Lightning head coach: **Nigel Jones**
- Northern Cricket Union general manager: **Paddy Grimes**
- Northern Knights head coach: **Simon Johnston**
- North West Cricket Union general manager: **Peter McCartney**
- North West Warriors head coach: **Boyd Rankin**
- Munster Cricket general manager: **Joe Moynihan**
- Munster Reds head coach: **Ted Williamson**

Cricket media contacts

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www.cricketireland.ie



YouTube



Arlene Kelly debuted for Ireland Women in 2022