

SECONDARY COUNTDOWN CRICKET

An intra-school competition format

We want all students to have the chance to play cricket with and against their peers, intra-school sport creates a platform for this to happen. It brings the whole class into the game, creates a bridge from PE lessons to competition against other schools, and supports mass participation within schools.

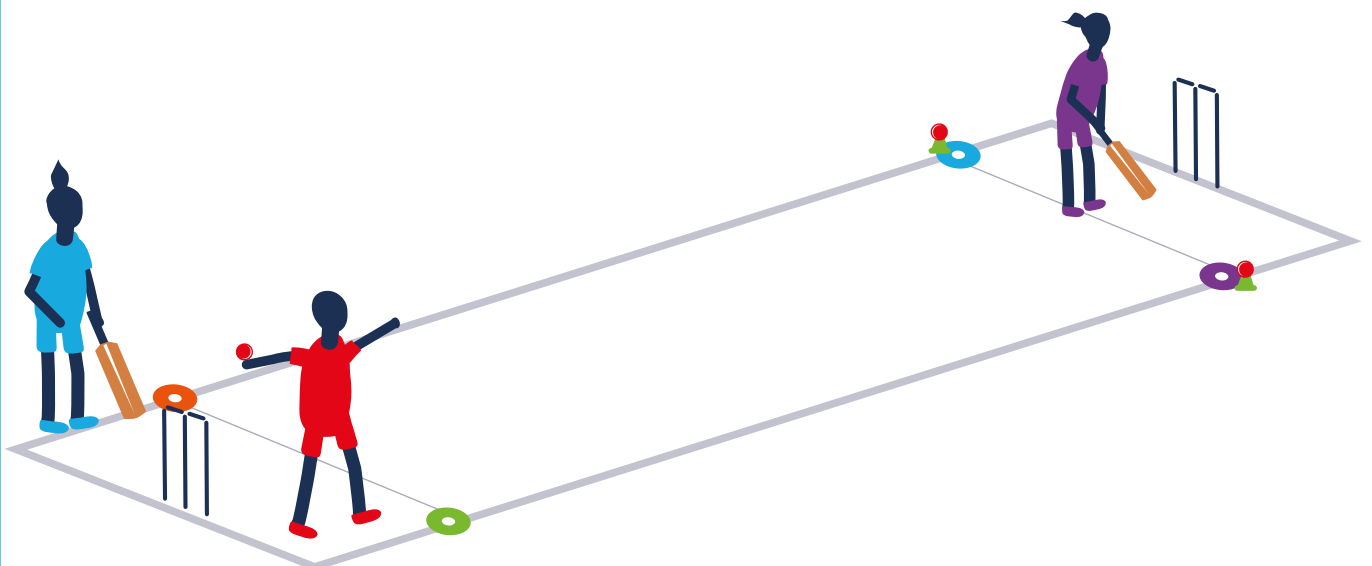


About the format

Secondary Countdown Cricket provides students with the opportunity to be involved and participate in all aspects of the game.

The core format of the game builds on the Dynamos Schools Cricket that students will have likely enjoyed at primary school, while increasing the challenge for secondary students.

The core format provides a clear starting point, which can then be adapted for students with different levels of cricket experience and confidence.



A flexible format

This resource provides guidance around:

- How to set up and play the core Format: organisation, scoring, equipment and the three skills – batting, bowling and fielding
- How to use STEP to adapt the game for the environment, lesson focus and student needs and preferences.



Teachers, young leaders and students can and should work together and use STEP to create the best game, playing and development experience for all students. This includes applying adaptations and modifying rules based on the needs of the group and/or individual participants, and incorporating student voice and choice in how the game is played.

Additional Options

Secondary Countdown Cricket sits within a wider school cricket offer:

- **Cricket for Teachers games can support students** to develop batting, bowling and fielding skills in PE lessons.
- **Students ready to try a more competitive offer** can access a range of competitive formats enabling inter-competition against other schools, such as [Chance to Compete](#) or the [Knight-Stokes Cup](#), supported by their local [Recreational Cricket Board](#).

School Cricket Offer

Cricket for Teachers Games

Build confidence in batting, bowling and fielding.

Secondary Countdown Cricket

STEP for access and challenge, ensuring all players can meaningfully participate.

Inter-school Competitions

STEP can still be used for access and challenge to support participation, as in SEND and ALN Softball.

Lower
confidence



Higher
confidence

ONE GAME PLAYED DIFFERENT WAYS

SECONDARY COUNTDOWN CRICKET CORE FORMAT

Building directly from Dynamos, pairs-based cricket format played with a soft ball and plastic or carbon fibre bats.



STEP for ACCESS

Adapt Secondary Countdown Cricket to ensure all players are able to meaningfully participate.

SUPPORT for LEARNING

Use Cricket for Teachers games to build confidence in batting, bowling and fielding.

STEP for CHALLENGE

Add challenge and tactical choice as students progress towards inter-school competition.

**FORMAT USED IN PE,
INTRA-SCHOOL AND
INTER-SCHOOL CONTEXTS**

CORE FORMAT



In Secondary Countdown Cricket each team bats and fields.

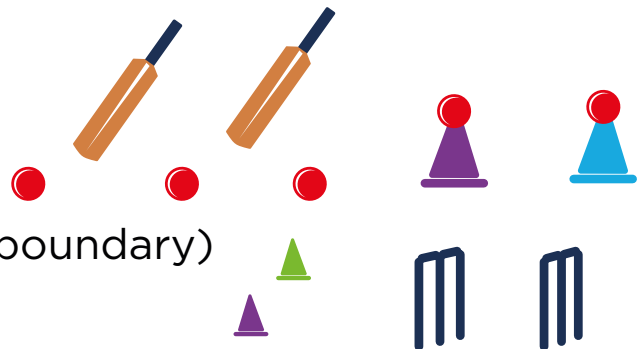
After both teams have batted, the team with the highest total score wins.

Aims of the game

- Encourage batters to score as many runs as possible.
- Encourage bowlers to take as many wickets as possible.
- Encourage fielders to be wicket takers.

Equipment

- 3 Soft Balls
- 2 Bats
- 2 Batting tees
- 2 Cones (more for the boundary)
- 2 Stumps



Scoring

Download the [Countdown Cricket](#) app to manage and score games – scoring can be done by a student, young leader or staff member

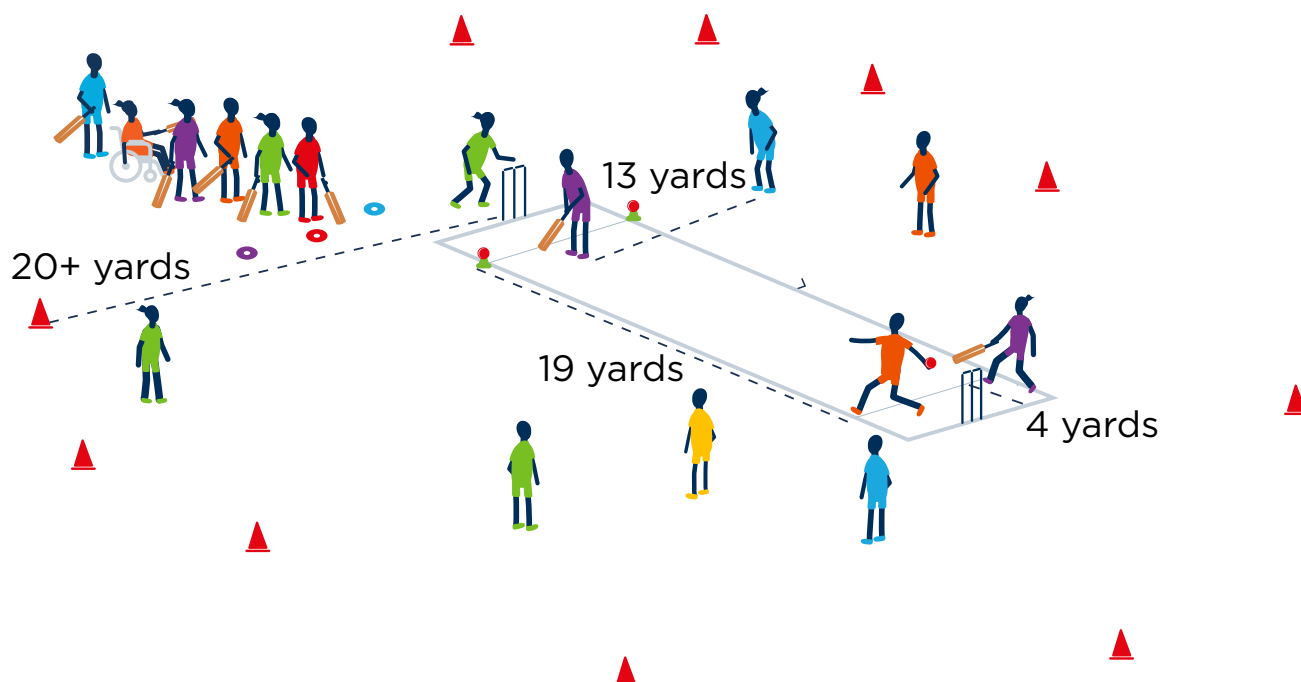


The game can also be [scored by hand](#).

Set up

On a field:

- Set up a 19-yard pitch in the middle of an approximately oval playing area.
- Include a marked boundary and safe zones for waiting batters.
- Mark the creases with cones and, at the batters end, tees with balls placed on them.
- For larger groups, set up multiple pitches.



In a hall or MUGA/Astro:

- Set up a 19-yard pitch in the middle of the playing space, with the wall or fence behind the bowler acting as the boundary.
- Identify a safe zone for the waiting batters.
- Mark the creases with cones and, at the batters end, tees with balls placed on them.

In a large hall or MUGA/Astro, two games can run next to each other with a shorter pitch length and bowlers bowling from standing or with a short run-up; make sure that the pitches are set up so that powerful horizontal shots are not crossing from one game to the other.

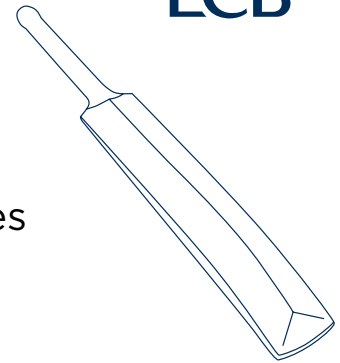
Use your space creatively, think about how different walls, fences or areas can be used as boundaries or scoring zones.

Organisation

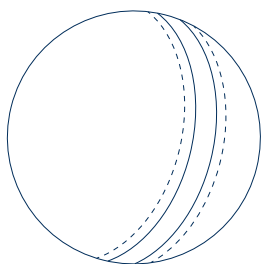


- Split the class/group into equal teams, usually 8 students, but a minimum of 4 and maximum of 10.
 - Where space and numbers allow, split into 4 teams with 2 playing areas.
 - With limited space, split into 3 teams with 1 team batting, 1 bowling/fielding and 1 involved in skill-based game. Rotate so that each team fully participates.
- Agree the number of balls for every batting pair before the game, usually 10 or 20 balls depending on team size and time available.
 - Each 5-ball set should take approximately 3 minutes.
- For example:
 - In an eight-a-side game with four pairs, 20 balls per pair creates an 80-ball innings. With each team batting once, the game should last approximately 100 minutes, including 5 minutes to switch teams.
 - In a six-a-side game with three pairs, 10 balls per pair creates a 30-ball innings. With each team batting once, the game should last approximately 25 minutes, including 5 minutes to switch teams.
- Put each team into pairs for their batting rotations, or ask teams to decide on their batting pairs.
- Decide which team will bat first, while the other team bowls and fields.
- After all batting pairs have batted the teams exchange.
- Once both teams have batted, the team with the most total runs wins.

BATTING



- Batters score one run each time both change ends safely.
- A boundary scores four if the ball bounces first, or six if it crosses without bouncing.
- Batters may be out:
 - **Bowled** – the ball delivered by the bowler hits their stumps.
 - **Caught** – a fielder catches a hit ball before it bounces.
 - **Run out/stumped** – the fielders return the ball to the stumps, while the batter is not safely in their crease.
 - **Hit wicket** – the batter hits their stumps in their attempt to play a shot.
- LBW (leg before wicket) does not apply.
- After a wicket, the pair swaps ends so the not-out batter faces the next ball and the pair continues; the fielding team earns 5 bonus runs.
- Pairs receive their full allocation of balls, as agreed at the start of the game, even after a wicket.
- Waiting pairs can score or officiate, or complete a batting practice if space allows.

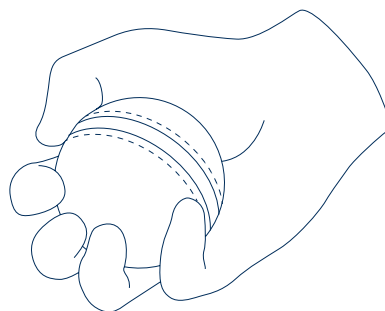


Bowling



- Bowling takes place from one end. Everyone bowls at least one set of 5 balls, and a new bowler takes over after each set.
- Overarm bowling is encouraged but underarm is allowed
- Wides and no-balls give the batter a free hit from a tee rather than extra runs.
- If the final scheduled delivery is a wide or no-ball, add one more ball so the innings does not finish on an unfair delivery.

Fielding



- Fielders should rotate around all fielding positions and roles.
- Fielders should never be closer than 13 yards from the batter at the point that the bowler bowls the ball.

Adaptations: STEP for access and development



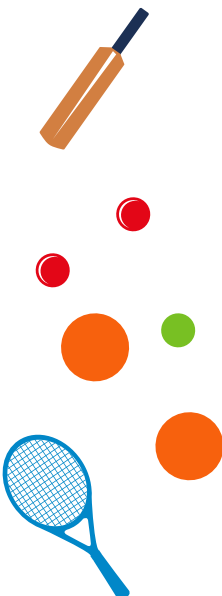
Teachers, young leaders and students should use STEP together to adapt the game to the needs of the group and individual students.

	Batting	Bowling	Fielding
Space	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shorten the distance needed to complete a run. Make scoring zones wider or closer. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Add bonus zones to encourage different shots. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow bowlers to deliver from a shorter distance. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend the pitch, up to 22 yards. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce the playing area while maintaining safe distances. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the playing area for longer return throws.
Task	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strike from a low or raised tee. Choose between a stationary ball, partner feed or bowled delivery. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give each pair a limited number of lives. Award a bonus run for communication between batters. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow an underarm or overarm throw instead bowling. Knock the ball into play from a raised tee. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use overarm only. Award a bonus wicket for hitting an agreed target. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow catches after one bounce. Batters stop running once a fielder collects or touches the ball. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Award a bonus wicket for a direct-hit run-out.

Adaptations: STEP for access and development



Teachers, young leaders and students should use STEP together to adapt the game to the needs of the group and individual students.

	Batting	Bowling	Fielding
Equipment 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer bats, rackets or striking implements of different sizes and weights. Use a larger, softer or high-visibility ball. Adjust the height of the batting tee. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a narrower cricket bat or stump for a bat. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a larger or softer ball. Bowl at two sets of stumps. Mark a target area to aim for. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bowl at a smaller target, such as a single stump. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a larger, softer or high-visibility ball. Mark starting positions for fielders. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return the ball to a smaller target, such as a single stump.
People 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow the pair to divide striking and running roles. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of fielders. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bowl in pairs, alternating deliveries. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teams strategise who will bowl additional sets. 	For access <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task fielders to work in pairs within a zone. For development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit the number of fielders who can begin in set areas.

USING BATTING 'LIVES'



For a game closer to conventional cricket, teachers, young leaders and students can agree a limited number of lives for each batting pair.

How batting 'lives' work

Use this adaptation when students are ready for wickets to affect the length of a pair's innings.

- Each pair starts with 2 lives.
- A bowled, caught, run out, stumped or hit-wicket dismissal costs the pair one life.
- When out, batters must swap ends and continue.
- Once all lives are used, the pair's remaining agreed balls are lost, and the next pair begins its allocation.

The allocation of batting lives is for the batting pair and not the individual batter.

Increase or reduce the allocation of 2 lives where it creates a more equitable contest. You can involve players in decision making related to the number of lives each pair receives. For example, in a 4-pair game, each pair could have 1, 2, 3 or 4 lives, with teams discussing and agreeing the number of lives each pair will have before they start their batting innings.

