

**Seaforth Master Blasters**  
**(in)Frequently Asked Questions**  
**Season 2024/25**

**Q: We're about to play our first game of Master Blasters! What should we know?**

You and your team are going to have a blast!

The basics of Master Blasters is as follows:

- Each team bats for 12 overs.
- Batters bat in pairs for a set number of overs. If you have 6 batters (3 pairs) then each pair faces 4 overs; 8 batters (4 pairs) means each pair faces 3 overs.
- Each batter in a pair should face a roughly equal number of balls.
- When a wicket falls, the batters continue to bat on in their pair. Master Blasters is not "out, you're out" cricket.
- There are no LBWs.
- There are 6 balls in an over, and wides (or no balls) are not re-bowled.
- When there is a wide or no-ball, the batting team gets a 'free hit' from the batting tees.
- Free hits must be hit forward of the wicket. i.e. they cannot be hit behind the batting crease.
- The fielding team 'rotates' its positions after every over. This gives everyone a chance to bowl and to field at mid-on, mid-off, and behind the stumps.
- If teams are scoring, and one team 'overtakes' the other teams score, the game continues until the 12 overs have been bowled.

The exhaustive list of rules can be found on Page 1 of the Master Blasters Format & Rules.

[https://seaforthcricket.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/master-blaster-format\\_rules.pdf](https://seaforthcricket.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/master-blaster-format_rules.pdf)

**Q: Who setups the field? Our team? Their team? The Club?**

Either team can setup the field - whichever team arrives at the ground first, or they can choose to set it up together.

Each team has enough kit to setup the field without needing to use anything from the other team's kitbag. It's often good form for one team to provide the cones and stumps, while the other team provides the balls and batting tees.

**Q: How do we setup for a game?**

One of the best things about Master Blasters at Seaforth Oval is that there are 9 games in progress at one time, and the dimensions and shape of each field is guaranteed to be unique.

The pitch length for Master Blasters is 14m (or about 17 big strides!), with the boundaries 20m either side of the wicket. Teams who are new to Master Blasters might shorten the pitch length by a metre or so - or adjust the popping crease position during the game - to allow for younger bowling arms and to give the batsman more chance to hit a moving ball.

The batting tees - used for 'free hits' - should be placed either side of the batting crease and act as the wide markers. If you're playing on an artificial pitch, then the edge of the pitch is the best option. If you're playing on a grass/natural pitch, then allow a metre and a bit either side.

The distance to the boundaries is at the discretion of the coaches/managers. Teams in their first season generally prefer shorter boundaries - no kid in the history of cricket has not loved hitting boundaries!

Some teams - particularly those in their second season - like the boundaries to be longer so that their fielders have to throw the ball further/harder (good preparation for the next stage of cricket).

The final part of setting up for a game is the most important and one of cricket's greatest traditions; the toss of the bat to determine which team bats or bowls first. Bring the two 'captains' together, get them to say hello, and then one tosses the bat while the other calls 'Hills' or 'Flats'.

You can find a diagram of the field setup on Page 2 of the Master Blaster Format Rules.

[https://seaforthcricket.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/master-blaster-format\\_rules.pdf](https://seaforthcricket.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/master-blaster-format_rules.pdf)

### **Q: Is Master Blasters competitive?**

The primary purpose of Master Blasters is to allow our young players to participate in an environment which encourages development of both their skills and their love of cricket.

As far as we know, no one has ever topped the ICC World Rankings based upon their Master Blasters performance!

The best outcome for a single delivery is when the bowler puts the ball on the stumps, the batter hits (stylishly or otherwise!) it into the field, the fielders chase the ball down, another fielder gets ready to 'back up' the keeper, there's some frantic running between the wickets - yes! no! yes! - as the throw comes in, and the kids, umpires and parents are all cheering, calling out "great cricket!" and talking about the moment long after the next ball has been bowled.

The best outcome for a game is that every player goes home happily talking about a shot they played or a wicket they took or a run out they were part of.

The best outcome for the season is that our Master Blasters want to return for the next season, or progress to the next stage of cricket.

### **Q: I'm coaching! What can I do to create the best experience?**

Master Blasters is all about learning the foundational skills of cricket and getting to experience a 'game day' format rather than just doing drills or moving between skill stations.

As a coach, you'll quickly realise that there are 1000 things that every young cricket and their team needs to learn. The first time your team hits the ball, you'll realise that you need to teach them how to run between wickets, then how to call (yes, no, wait!), then how to slide their bat, then how to back up at the non-striker end, then when (and when not!) to run, and so on!

The best thing you can do is to be patient - both with the players and with yourself! The beauty of cricket is there is always 'one more thing' to learn - for both players and coaches.

If you're coaching a team in their first season of Master Blasters, then some things to focus on developing are:

- How to stand (take guard) when facing a bowler - and to hit the ball into space when taking a 'free hit'.
- Running between the wickets - shouting and responding to a 'yes', 'no', or 'wait' call.
- Teaching your bowlers when to release the ball, and to use their eyes to aim where they want the ball to go.
- Learning to field as a team and not compete over the same ball.
- Supporting each other – we all bowl some good balls and some not-so-good balls!

If you're coaching a team in their second season of Master Blasters, then you can start to build on their skills:

- Playing new shots which find open space - like leg glances behind square.
- Taking free hits quicker before the fielders get set.
- Calling their own running between the wickets (with coaches and umpires being silent).
- Backing up in the field at both the bowler and keeper ends.
- 'Walking in with the bowler' when in the field.
- Effecting run outs by throwing the ball at the stumps rather than simply running it in.
- Talking to each other in the field- clapping, cheering, encouraging - between deliveries.

### **Q: I'm umpiring! What can I do to create the best experience?**

The umpires play the key role in making the game as fun as possible for all participants by encouraging the players on both teams, congratulating them on any great play (or awareness), and actively coaching them to become better cricketers.

If you're the umpire standing at the bowling end, then do what you can to encourage an exciting game of cricket.

- If a batter gets a bad ball or hasn't hit a ball for a couple of deliveries, then give them a free hit. Free hits are cheap. If you give 6 in an over and a game of cricket breaks out, then that is awesome.
- If the bowler is struggling to make the distance, then let them bowl from a mark closer to the stumps.
- If the fielders are standing too close to the pitch (within 10 metres of the bat), then get them to move back before the game continues.

If you're the umpire standing at square leg, then help our younger batters 'take guard' or show them how to hold the bat. You should also encourage the fielders to 'move back' and give the batters more space.

### **Q: I'm a parent watching on the sidelines! What can I do to create the best experience?**

If your team is fielding, then encourage them with cheers and clapping as often as you can. If all the parents generally sit in one spot on the sideline, then often it helps to have a parent or two stand on the other side of the field, so that the kids on that side remain focused or involved and feel encouraged.

If your team is batting, then encourage the players who have batted (or who are waiting to bat) to keep watching the game and cheer on their teammates.

**Q: Are games scored? Is there a ladder for the competition?**

Master Blasters is not a competition - there is no league, no ladder, and no end of season finals.

There is no obligation to score. Some teams have a dedicated scorer and keep accurate records of each over and match, some teams only score their own batting, some teams don't score at all.

The only thing that needs to be tracked is the number of overs bowled. The umpires often do their best to remember this, but it helps if someone on the sideline is keeping count.

You can rest assured that kids will keep an internal count of how many runs or wickets they have scored! (although the accuracy of their count might be questionable)

**Q: When does the season run from / to?**

The 2024/25 season of Master Blasters is split into two halves, with rounds 1-9 taking place before Christmas, and rounds 10-17 taking place after the school holidays.

- Round 1 is October 19th.
- Round 9 is December 14th.
- Round 10 is February 1st.
- Round 17 is March 22nd.

**Q: What times are the games?**

All games start at 8:30am and go for anywhere between 60-90 minutes.

**Q: Where are games played?**

Games are played on one of 9 fields at Seaforth Oval. In the event of parts of the oval being unavailable - i.e. due to Council works - then some games will be played at Bantry Bay Oval.

**Q: Will we play on an artificial pitch or on the grass?**

For Master Blasters, Seaforth Oval has 3 fields which have artificial pitches: Field 1, Field 2, and Field 4. The Club also has a 2G roll-up mat which it often makes available as a pitch on Field 9. The other fields use the natural grass of Seaforth Oval.

Over the course of the season, all teams will play the same number of games on the artificial pitches. Some teams may play more games on a particular numbered field than another team does.

**Q: What happens in the event of wet weather? Will you call the games off?**

In the event of inclement weather, games continue as scheduled unless:

1. The council closes the grounds. This is less common for cricket than it is for other sports as cricket is considered 'low impact'; or
2. The coaches/managers of two competing teams decide not to play.

It is important that team managers do not silently call a game off. The WhatsApp group for managers should be used to communicate and to get confirmation from the other team.

The Club will only call off games in exceptional circumstances (this has not occurred in the past three seasons).

**Q: What should we do if our team only has 5 players?**

If your team has less than the normal number of players – i.e. you only have 5, not 6 – 8 - then you can borrow players from the other team. These players can field for you, bat for you, or do both! There's no restriction on player movements – the goal is to ensure that everyone gets to play and every game goes ahead.

**Q: What should we do if our team has too many players?**

If your team has more than 8 players, then the best option is to rotate the extra players on and off the field at the end of every over. For example, if you have 9 players, then one player sits out an over, then rotates on – replacing the person who just bowled is often the easiest and most memorable way.

If you have more than 8 players when batting, then simply work out pairs and allocate overs as evenly as possible – this might mean that one pair bats an over more (or less) than other pairs.

**Q: What should we do when batting if our team has an odd number of players?**

If you have 7 players, then a common option is to form up in 4 pairs, with one player 'doubling up' by batting in the last pair.