

# STRICT CURL RULES

## 1. Weight Classes

**Women:** under 60 kg, under 70 kg, and over 70 kg

**Men:** under 80 kg, under 90 kg, under 100 kg, under 110 kg, and over 110 kg  
Weigh-in is held at least two hours before the competition at a pre-determined time.

## 2. Age Categories, Women and Men

**Juniors:** 16 and 19 years. A competitor may compete in the junior category until the end of the year in which they turn 16 or 19.

**Masters:** A competitor may compete in the Masters category in the year they turn 40.

## 3. The Lift

**3.1** The lifter must face forward. The bar is held horizontally across the thighs with palms facing outward. The feet must be flat on the floor, knees locked, and arms fully extended. The lifter's head, shoulders, and buttocks must remain in contact with the wall during the lift.

**3.2** After taking the bar from the rack or floor, the lifter must move backward towards the wall. The lifter must wait for the head judge's signal. The signal is given once the lifter is motionless in the correct starting position: head upright, chin up, arms extended downward. The heels may be no more than 30 cm from the wall.

The head judge gives the signal by raising their hand and giving the command "**LIFT.**"

**3.3** Upon the lift command, the lifter must curl the bar fully upward, the bar passing close to the chin or throat with palms facing upward. The head, shoulders, and buttocks must remain in contact with the wall always. The legs and hips must not be used to generate momentum. Leaning backward to assist the lift is prohibited. No leg or hip drive is allowed.

**3.4** When the lifter has reached the final position, the head judge will lower their hand and give the command "**DOWN.**" The signal is not given until the bar is completely motionless.

**3.5** At the end of the lift, the head, shoulders, and buttocks must still be in contact with the wall. The lifter must wait for the judge's signal to rack or

release the bar. The judge lowers their hand and gives the command “**RACK.**” The bar must be returned to the rack under control.

**3.6** Failure to follow the commands of the head judge results in a no-lift.

**3.7** Any upward movement of the bar counts as an attempt.

**3.8** At the head judge’s discretion, the lifter may be granted an additional attempt with the same weight if the failure was caused by a loader’s error.

### **3.9 Order of Lifting, Attempt Declaration, and Flow of Competition**

The lifter must declare their opening attempt before the competition begins, either during weigh-in or no later than 30 minutes before the start. The opening attempt cannot be increased afterward.

**3.10** Lifting order is determined by competition numbers. The lowest number is assigned to the lightest athlete in the class, the highest to the heaviest. During the first two rounds, the order follows numerical order to ensure equal recovery time.

In the final round, order is determined by weight attempt: lightest to heaviest. If two or more competitors request the same weight, the heavier competitor lifts first.

**3.11** There are three rounds. If an attempt is missed, the competitor may retry the same weight or increase it for the next round. Weights cannot be lowered after the first attempt. The second and third attempts may use the same weight or a heavier weight.

## **4. Increase of Weights**

**4.1** The opening weight on the bar is 10 kg.

In the first two rounds, the minimum increment is 2.5 kg (e.g., 32.5 kg is allowed, 33.0 kg is not). Possible increments: 2.5 kg, 5 kg, 7.5 kg, 10 kg, etc. In the third round, the minimum increment is 500 grams, and weights may be increased in 500-gram steps.

Once declared, the weight cannot be reduced.

**4.2** The competitor must declare their second-round attempt immediately after finishing their first lift upon leaving the stage. The competitor may increase their second-round attempt once before the second round begins. There is a minimum five-minute technical break between rounds one and two.

**4.3** The third-round attempt is declared immediately after completing the second lift.

After round two ends, competitors may increase their third-round attempts during a five-minute technical break. No increases are accepted during round two or after the five-minute break. The secretary announces when the five-minute period begins and ends.

In the third round, order is determined by the declared weight: the lifter with the lowest declared weight lifts first. If the same weight is declared, the heavier lifter goes first.

### **5. Finnish Record Attempt**

The class winner may attempt an additional Finnish record attempt if desired. The attempt is made after the completion of the third round, and the minimum increase over the existing Finnish record is 500 grams.

### **6. Tie-Break**

If competitors finish with the same result, the lighter competitor (as verified at weigh-in) wins. If bodyweights are identical, the lifter with the higher successful second attempt wins.

If still tied, the result of the first attempt decides.

### **7. Equipment and Attire**

The lifting outfit must be tight and contrasting enough for judges to evaluate the lift.

Upper body clothing must be form-fitting: long-sleeve shirt, T-shirt with sleeves ending at the forearm, or a sports top/tank top. Lower body clothing must be athletic: leggings, shorts, or sweatpants. The outfit must not provide support to the lift. Wrist wraps or supports are allowed. Rubber-coated elbow warmers under 30 cm long and under 7 mm thick are permitted (non-adjustable). Sport shoes are required. A lifting belt up to 100 mm wide may be worn. Hats or headwear that obstruct judging of the head area are not allowed.

### **8. Causes for Disqualification**

1. Any downward movement of the bar before reaching the final position.
2. Leaning backward to assist the lift.
3. Loss of contact between head, shoulders, or buttocks and the wall.
4. Failure to keep head, shoulders, and buttocks against the wall after completing the lift.
5. Stepping back or any foot movement, including swinging the legs.
6. Lowering or shaking the bar before receiving the judge's signal.

7. Bouncing the bar off the thighs or hyperextending the back to assist the lift.
8. Failure to follow the head judge's commands.
9. Dropping the bar when taking it from or returning it to the rack.

## **9. Sport Participation Ban**

An athlete under an active sport participation ban may not compete or serve as an official in the strict curl competition.

A sport participation ban means a complete prohibition from organized sport activities. The ban applies to all organizations that have adopted the World Anti-Doping Code and is therefore global.

## **10. Judges**

**10.1** A judge must be a person familiar with strict curl rules and who has completed the official judge training. The training will be held on 24 April 2026 in Pyhtää as part of the Finland Grip Games.

**10.2** The organizer appoints suitable judges for the competition.

**10.3** There are three judges in the Finnish Nationals: one head judge and two side judges, who also function as loaders.

**10.4** The head judge verifies the bar weight before each competitor is called to the platform.

## **11. Qualification Criteria for the Finnish Championships**

Participants in the Finnish Championships in Strict Curl are selected based on the following criteria:

**11.1** All previous year's Finnish Champions may enter the Finnish Championships without qualification. The previous year's Finnish Champion may compete in the same, a higher, or a lower weight class than the one in which they won their title.

**11.2** The winner of each qualification category earns a place in the Finnish Championships. If the winner is unable to participate, the runner-up from that qualification event will receive the winner's spot. If the runner-up is also unable to participate, the third-place athlete will *not* receive a spot in the Finnish Championships.

**11.3** Among all four qualification events, the athlete with the best result who placed second in their category will also qualify for the Finnish Championships.

**11.4** A special invitation may also be granted to an athlete well-known in another sport or to a foreign competitor, who will participate in the Finnish Championships as a guest/exhibition competitor.

**11.5** The athlete must compete in the Finnish Championships in the same weight class from which they earned their qualification.