

Come-and-Try Days at the Canberra Croquet Club

The Canberra Croquet Club lawns are located at 1 Coronation Drive, Parkes, next to the Hyatt Hotel.

If you want to learn to play croquet the Come-and-Try days are the starting point. They are usually held on the **first Sunday** in the months **February-May** and **August-November** from **1-3 pm**, but may change occasionally if a conflict with a special event occurs. Actual dates are advertised in the Saturday Canberra Times but if in doubt you can phone the Croquet Club 02-62731030 (or call in and check the Notice Board).

Flat-soled shoes are required for walking on the croquet lawn and a hat is strongly recommended because you will be out in the open for the whole two hours of a Come-and-Try Day.

At a Come-and-Try day you will be shown first how to hold and swing a croquet mallet, which is the easy part. You will then be introduced to the harder aspects of croquet which involve hitting a ball through a narrow hoop and manoeuvring other balls to your advantage.

Croquet is not as easy as it looks and you will find it a challenging experience, but it can be played by anyone as the challenge is more of a mental nature rather than a physical one. So come and have a go.

Joining the Canberra Croquet Club

The first step to joining the Canberra Croquet Club (CCC) as a playing member is to attend a Come-and-Try day. Then, once your name is registered with the CCC you can apply to attend a Coaching Session which will cost \$50 for six lessons. When your Coach is satisfied that you have grasped the essentials of the game you will be invited to play a game or two with the Coach (or another Coach) at one of the regular CCC playing days. Once you and your Coach are happy for you to continue on your own, at that point you will be able to join the CCC and pay the appropriate membership fee (pro-rata for financial year).

The reason for this rather long gestation period before actually joining the CCC is that croquet is a somewhat demanding sport in the sense that every stroke must be preceded by considerable mental calculation and decision-making. Thus croquet is a mental challenge firstly and a physical challenge secondly and this combination does not suit every sportsperson. There is a car bumper sticker that reads 'Croquet = Chess + Snooker' which captures the essence of croquet. So, rather than asking you to pay a full membership fee up front only to find that you do not wish to proceed, the Club has arranged this 'step' procedure to make the whole initiation less stressful for everyone concerned.

In summary, the procedure is:

1. Attend a free Come-and-Try day.
2. Apply for Coaching and pay \$50.
3. Apply to join the CCC and pay \$240 annual fee (pro-rata for FY)