

# How Long Is A Cricket Pitch

How Long is a Cricket Pitch? A Comprehensive Guide for Fans and Players Cricket, a sport deeply rooted in tradition and global appeal, boasts a captivating array of intricacies. One of the foundational elements of the game, often debated and misunderstood, is the precise length of a cricket pitch. This seemingly straightforward question unveils a fascinating tapestry of rules, variations, and historical context. This comprehensive guide delves into the world of cricket pitches, exploring its dimensions, significance, and the various factors influencing its length.

The Crucial Dimension of the Cricket Pitch A cricket pitch is more than just a strip of ground; it's the heart of the game, the stage where batsmen and bowlers engage in a timeless battle of skill and strategy. Its length is a crucial element dictating the pace and trajectory of the game, shaping the strategies employed by both batting and bowling sides. Understanding the precise dimensions provides a deeper appreciation for the tactical nuances of this captivating sport.

## Defining the Standard Cricket Pitch Length

The standard length of a cricket pitch, recognized by the International Cricket Council (ICC), is a crucial aspect of the game. While it might seem straightforward, variations exist depending on the specific format of the game (Test, ODI, T20).

# Test Match Pitches: The Traditional Dimension

Test matches, renowned for their marathon encounters, are played on pitches that adhere to stricter regulations. The length of the pitch in a Test match is consistently 20.12 meters (approximately 66 feet). This precise measurement ensures a level playing field across all Test matches globally.

## ODI and T20 Pitches: Adapting to the Pace of the Game

One-Day Internationals (ODIs) and Twenty20 (T20) matches, characterized by their quicker pace, often feature pitches slightly shorter than those used in Test matches. While there isn't a standardized length, pitches for ODIs and T20s are generally shorter, often around 18-20 meters, allowing for a faster pace of play.

## Variations and Factors Affecting Pitch Length

Pitch dimensions aren't static; they are influenced by several critical factors. Ground conditions, moisture levels, the nature of the soil, and even the time of year all play a crucial role in shaping the characteristics of the pitch. *Table 1: Summary of Cricket Pitch Lengths* | Format | Length (approx.) | ||| | Test Match | 20.12 meters (66 feet) | | ODI | 18-20 meters | | T20 | 18-20 meters |

# Beyond Length: Understanding Wicket Placement and Width

The length of a cricket pitch is only part of the picture. Equally critical are the exact locations of the wickets and the width of the pitch. The wickets are positioned precisely at the center of the pitch, and their placement is critical. The width of the pitch remains consistently 3 feet, 6 inches (1.07 meters), irrespective of the format.

## Importance of Wicket Positioning and Width

The positioning of the wickets, the width of the pitch, and the length of the pitch all contribute to the variations in the game's dynamics. • Wicket Positioning: The wickets serve as the target for bowlers and the base for batsmen. Their positioning is paramount for the game. • Width of the Pitch: The width is consistent across all formats, maintaining a fixed playing field for both bowlers and batsmen.

## The Significance of a Cricket Pitch in Strategy

The length of a cricket pitch directly impacts the game's strategy. Bowlers strategize to exploit different lengths and variations.

## Impact on Bowling Strategies

The length of the pitch affects the type of bowling employed. Longer pitches allow for more varied deliveries, whereas shorter pitches encourage quicker deliveries.

## **Influence on Batting Strategies**

The length of the pitch dictates where batsmen can place their shots. Batsmen need to adapt their game to the specific conditions of each pitch.

## **Historical Context and Evolution of the Cricket Pitch**

Cricket's history is replete with evolving rules and practices. The dimensions of a cricket pitch, while seemingly simple, have a rich history that reflects the sport's development.

## **Early Origins and Variations**

Early forms of cricket varied significantly in their dimensions and rules. The standardization of the pitch length represents a significant step towards a more organized and internationally recognized game.

## **The Role of ICC in Standardizing Rules**

The International Cricket Council (ICC) plays a crucial role in maintaining the consistency and standardization of the game's rules, including pitch dimensions.

## **Conclusion: A Deep Dive into the Cricket Pitch**

The seemingly simple question "How long is a cricket pitch?" unveils a multifaceted understanding of cricket's dynamics. From the standardized

length in Test matches to the slightly shorter pitches in ODIs and T20s, the dimensions are a critical component in the strategic gameplay.

Understanding the pitch is integral to comprehending the intricacies of this global sport. **Meaningful Reflections** • The consistent standards for pitch dimensions ensure fairness and consistency in the game. • Adapting strategies to the specific conditions of the pitch is critical for success. • Understanding the history of the cricket pitch reveals the evolution of the game.

## FAQs: Addressing Common Queries

1. **What happens if a pitch is not the correct length?** Matches are typically forfeited if significant discrepancies exist. 2. **How do different playing surfaces affect the game?** Different terrains, whether hard or soft, affect the bounce and trajectory of the ball, significantly influencing the game. 3. *Why do different formats have different pitch lengths?* The shorter formats aim for a faster and more captivating pace of play, thus prompting different pitch lengths. 4. What is the role of the ground staff in maintaining the pitch? They play a vital role, preparing and maintaining the pitch's condition to match the specific requirements of each format. 5. **Can the length of the pitch affect the outcome of a match?** Indirectly, yes. The pitch length is one of several factors impacting the strategies employed by teams, contributing, in turn, to the outcome. This comprehensive guide has provided a detailed overview of the cricket pitch, addressing its length, strategic implications, historical context, and the importance of maintaining standard dimensions. This deep dive allows for a more nuanced understanding of the sport and its evolving dynamics.

# How Long is a Cricket Pitch? The Definitive Guide to the Heart of the Game

The gentle thud of leather on willow, the roar of the crowd, the strategic battles between bat and ball – cricket is a sport steeped in tradition and subtle nuances. And at the very heart of this captivating game lies the cricket pitch. It's where the drama unfolds, where fortunes are won and lost, and where the skills of bowlers and batsmen are truly put to the test. But have you ever stopped to wonder, just how long is a cricket pitch?

For the uninitiated, it might seem like a simple question, but the answer is foundational to understanding the game. It's not just about a number; it's about the dimensions that dictate the pace, the bounce, the spin, and ultimately, the very flow of a cricket match. So, let's dive deep into the world of cricket dimensions and discover the precise length of this iconic playing strip.

## The Official Length of a Cricket Pitch

Let's cut straight to the chase. According to the Laws of Cricket, the playing area between the two wickets is precisely **22 yards** in length. This is the universally accepted and enforced standard across all forms of professional and amateur cricket, from the hallowed grounds of Lord's to your local park.

To put that into perspective, 22 yards translates to:

1. **66 feet**
2. Approximately **20.12 meters**

This measurement is crucial. It's the distance a bowler has to cover to deliver the ball, and it's the distance a batsman must cover to score runs by completing a single, or even more if they're feeling adventurous and the field is spread. The concept of a "yard of 22 yards" is so ingrained in cricket vernacular that it's almost a unit of measurement in itself!

## **Why 22 Yards? A Glimpse into Cricket's History**

The enduring length of 22 yards isn't an arbitrary number. Its origins trace back to the early days of cricket, with the most widely accepted theory being that it was determined by the length of a furrow in a ploughed field. Back in the 18th century, cricket was often played on village greens, and fields were ploughed in furrows. It's believed that 22 yards represented a practical and easily measurable distance for such agricultural land.

Another interesting historical tidbit suggests that the length was influenced by the length of an average horse's stride, or perhaps even the amount of rope used to measure out boundaries in earlier versions of the game. Regardless of the exact historical reason, the 22-yard pitch has become a fundamental and unchangeable aspect of cricket, a testament to its rich heritage.

## **Beyond the Length: Understanding the Full Pitch Dimensions**

While the length of the pitch is the most commonly cited dimension, it's important to understand the broader context. The cricket pitch, also known as the "strip" or "wicket," is a rectangular area within the larger cricket ground. It's meticulously prepared and maintained to ensure fair

play and consistent conditions.

## The Width of the Pitch

While length is paramount, the width of the pitch also plays a significant role. The official width of the cricket pitch is **10 feet**, or approximately 3.05 meters. This width is measured between the outside edges of the two batsmen's creases.

This width provides ample room for the bowler to operate and for the batsman to play their shots, but it also means that edges of the pitch can still be a target for bowlers looking to exploit subtle movement or create awkward angles for the batsman. The 10-foot width is consistent and unchanging across all formats of the game.

## The Creases: Defining the Boundaries of Play

Crucial to understanding the pitch are the various creases marked on its surface. These lines are not merely decorative; they are vital for umpiring decisions and the overall conduct of the game.

### The Popping Crease (or Batting Crease)

This is the most important crease for the batsman. It runs parallel to the wicket, a distance of **4 feet (1.22 meters)** in front of the stumps. A batsman is deemed "in" if any part of their bat or body is grounded behind the popping crease when the wicket is put down. This is the lifeline for a batsman, their personal zone of safety.

### The Bowling Crease

This crease is directly in front of the wicket, connecting the two popping creases. It's the line the umpire stands behind to signal a "no-ball" if the



bowler oversteps.

## **The Return Crease**

These are two lines, perpendicular to the popping crease, extending forwards and backwards from the stumps. They define the lateral limits of the bowler's run-up and delivery. If a bowler lands with any part of their front foot outside the return crease during their delivery stride, it's deemed a "no-ball."

These creases, along with the stumps themselves (which stand 22 inches (56.4 cm) high and have three bails on top), form the intricate geometry of the cricket pitch. The 22-yard length is the fundamental distance, but these other markings ensure that the game is played within defined parameters.

# **The Role of Pitch Dimensions in the Game**

The 22-yard length is far more than just a number; it significantly impacts the dynamics of a cricket match. Let's explore how:

## **Bowler's Perspective**

The 22 yards provides a challenging distance for bowlers. It requires significant effort and skill to generate pace and bounce over that length. For fast bowlers, it's about building momentum and releasing the ball with maximum force. For spin bowlers, it's about hitting the right length and generating turn or dip. A shorter pitch might favour batsmen, allowing them to hit through the line with less effort, while a longer pitch might make stroke-making more challenging.

## **Batsman's Perspective**

For batsmen, the 22-yard pitch presents a constant strategic challenge. They need to judge the length of the delivery accurately to decide whether to play defensively or attack. The 22 yards allows for a good balance – enough time to react to a delivery, but not so much that it becomes easy. Batsmen often talk about "playing it under their eyes," and the pitch length is crucial to this. The ability to play shots effectively on the full or short, or to use the crease to cut down the running between wickets, all hinges on this 22-yard expanse.

## **Pace and Bounce**

The nature of the pitch surface itself also interacts with its length. On a lively, bouncy pitch, the ball might kick up after pitching, making the 22 yards feel even longer and more challenging for the batsman. On a flatter, slower pitch, the ball might stay low, and the 22 yards could feel more forgiving.

## **Running Between Wickets**

The 22-yard distance directly influences how many runs can be scored on a single hit. A well-timed shot can potentially yield two or three runs, but it requires good running from the batsmen to cover that ground safely. This is where the concept of "quick singles" and aggressive running comes into play, adding another layer of excitement to the game.

## **Variations and Misconceptions**

While the 22-yard rule is universal in professional cricket, there can be slight variations in the overall ground size. However, the central strip, the

playing area between the wickets, will always be 22 yards. In informal games, people might occasionally use different lengths, but these are not considered official cricket pitches.

It's also important to distinguish the "cricket pitch" from the "cricket ground." The cricket ground is the entire playing area, including the outfield. The pitch is the specially prepared rectangular strip in the middle. Therefore, while a cricket ground can vary significantly in size, the cricket pitch remains a constant 22 yards in length.

## Conclusion: The Enduring Significance of 22 Yards

So, the answer to "how long is a cricket pitch?" is a definitive and unchanging **22 yards**. This seemingly simple measurement is the bedrock upon which the complexities and excitements of cricket are built. It's a distance that has tested the mettle of countless cricketers and will continue to do so for generations to come.

The next time you watch a cricket match, take a moment to appreciate this crucial dimension. It's the stage for incredible feats of athleticism, strategic brilliance, and dramatic turnarounds. The 22 yards of the cricket pitch: a small space that holds immense sporting significance.

The cricket pitch is a foundational element in the game, serving as the central stage where competition unfolds. Understanding its dimensions and significance offers valuable insight into the sport's structure and strategy.

# Understanding the Dimensions of a Cricket Pitch

At the heart of every cricket match lies the pitch—a rectangular strip of grass measuring exactly 22 yards, or 66 feet, from one end to the other. This standardized length has remained unchanged for over a century, established by the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the governing body responsible for defining cricket's laws. The pitch's width is consistently 10 feet, measured from one side edge to the other, creating a uniform playing surface across all major formats—Test, One Day Internationals (ODIs), and Twenty20 (T20) matches. This precise measurement ensures consistency in gameplay, allowing players, umpires, and coaches to rely on a predictable field layout regardless of location or competition.

A cricket pitch is not merely a marker of boundaries but a critical component shaping the game's dynamics. Its length determines the span of play between the wickets, influencing batting strategies, bowling tactics, and field placements. For batsmen, a longer pitch increases the distance they must cover, testing endurance and precision, while shorter pitches in T20 cricket encourage aggressive shot selection and quick scoring. Bowlers, in turn, adapt their line and length based on these fixed dimensions, adjusting to exploit or neutralize space. The pitch's stable size ensures fairness and balance, making it a cornerstone of cricket's enduring appeal.

## Applications and Strategic Implications Across Formats

The standard length of 22 yards is carefully calibrated to suit the diverse

formats of cricket. In Test matches, the extended pitch allows for prolonged periods of strategic play, where patience and technical skill are rewarded over five days. The full length demands stamina and adaptability, with players facing variable weather, changing conditions, and the psychological pressure of long innings. In contrast, ODIs and T20s use the same pitch but compress play into limited overs, turning each over into a high-stakes contest. Here, the fixed dimensions amplify tension—every ball becomes crucial, and space becomes a weapon. Fielding roles are optimized for this scale, with wicketkeepers positioned closer and boundary walls closer to the batsmen, intensifying the challenge.

Beyond gameplay, the pitch's standardization supports global consistency. Players training in different countries encounter identical dimensions, ensuring a seamless transition between domestic leagues, international tours, and major tournaments. This uniformity fosters fairness and professionalism, allowing talent to be evaluated on merit rather than surface variation. Coaches design drills around this fixed layout, emphasizing footwork, shot selection, and spatial awareness—skills honed by the pitch's unchanging scale. The pitch thus becomes more than a surface; it is a teacher, a test, and a canvas for athletic excellence.

## **Benefits of Standardization and Future Outlook**

The 22-yard pitch length is a masterstroke of design, balancing tradition with practicality. Its consistency enables reliable game scheduling, accurate umpiring decisions, and reliable performance analysis. Equipment, from bats to balls, is engineered to perform optimally on this

standard field, reducing variables and enhancing the purity of competition. For fans, familiarity with the pitch's dimensions deepens engagement—viewers understand what constitutes a legitimate boundary, a successful run-out, or a run-out, enriching their appreciation of the game's nuances. Looking ahead, while the pitch's length remains unchanged, innovation may influence how it is used and experienced. Advances in pitch preparation technology could refine grass quality and drainage, maintaining the 66-foot standard under diverse climates. Digital tools like ball-tracking and real-time analytics build on this foundation, but the pitch's core size remains unshaken. As cricket evolves with faster formats and global expansion, the pitch's steadfast dimensions preserve the game's identity, ensuring that every match—whether a grueling Test or a thunderous T20—unfolds on a field steeped in tradition, precision, and enduring challenge.

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## Questions & Answers About how long is a cricket pitch

| No | Question                                           | Answer                                                                                          |
|----|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | So, how long is a standard cricket pitch, exactly? | A standard cricket pitch is 22 yards (or 20.12 meters) long between the stumps at each end.     |
| 2  | Is the length of a cricket pitch always the same?  | Yes, for professional and most standard cricket matches, the pitch length is fixed at 22 yards. |

|   |                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Does the pitch length change for different formats of cricket, like T20 or Tests?  | No, the official length of the pitch remains the same across all recognized formats of cricket, from Test matches to T20.                                                            |
| 4 | What's the significance of the 22-yard measurement in cricket?                     | The 22-yard length is a fundamental dimension of the game, dictating the timing for bowlers, batsmen, and fielders, and influencing the pace of the game.                            |
| 5 | Are there any variations to the cricket pitch length in junior or amateur leagues? | While 22 yards is the standard, some junior or recreational leagues might use slightly shorter pitches to suit younger players or smaller grounds, but this isn't the official rule. |
| 6 | How does the pitch length compare to other sports fields?                          | A cricket pitch is significantly shorter than a football (soccer) field but longer than a tennis court's playing area.                                                               |
| 7 | What are the 'stumps' that the 22 yards are measured between?                      | The stumps are the three wooden poles that form the wicket at each end of the pitch. The distance is measured from the base of the stumps.                                           |
| 8 | If I'm playing backyard cricket, do I have to stick to 22 yards?                   | For fun backyard cricket, you can adjust the pitch length to suit your space and players! The official 22 yards is for formal matches.                                               |

## How Long Is A Cricket

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## **How Long is a Cricket Pitch? The Definitive Guide to Cricket's Central Strip**

The iconic, rectangular strip of carefully manicured turf at the heart of a cricket ground is more than just a playing surface; it's the stage upon which the drama of cricket unfolds. While many casual observers might have a general idea, a precise understanding of **how long is a cricket pitch** is fundamental to appreciating the nuances of the game. This article delves into the official dimensions, the reasons behind them, and the practical implications for players and spectators alike.

In the world of cricket, consistency is key. The standardized dimensions of the pitch ensure a level playing field, regardless of the venue. This uniformity is crucial for the integrity of the sport and allows for the

development of sophisticated strategies and techniques that rely on predictable ball behavior. So, let's get straight to the point: the standard length of a cricket pitch is **22 yards or 66 feet**.

## **Understanding the Cricket Pitch Dimensions**

The cricket pitch, officially defined by the Laws of Cricket, is a rectangular area measuring 22 yards in length between the stumps at either end. But it's not just about the length; the width is also a critical factor. The pitch is 10 feet wide. This precise measurement is fundamental to the game, influencing everything from the speed of the ball to the positioning of fielders.

### **The Core Measurement: 22 Yards**

The 22-yard length is arguably the most well-known dimension of a cricket pitch. This distance is measured from the base of the stumps at one end to the base of the stumps at the other. This measurement has remained largely unchanged throughout the history of cricket, becoming an ingrained part of the game's identity. The significance of this specific length is deeply rooted in the game's evolution, offering a balance between the bowler's ability to deliver the ball and the batsman's opportunity to react and score runs. It's a length that has been tested and proven over centuries to produce exciting contests between bat and ball.

### **The Width Factor: 10 Feet**

While often overshadowed by the length, the 10-foot width of the pitch is equally important. This width allows for various bowling lines and

attacking strategies. A wider pitch might encourage more aggressive bowling, while a narrower one could favor batsmen looking to exploit gaps. The 10-foot width provides ample space for bowlers to aim for different areas of the pitch, thereby influencing the trajectory and bounce of the ball. It also dictates the boundaries of the batsman's crease and the scoring areas.

## **Defining the Creases: Pop Crease and Bowling Crease**

The cricket pitch is further defined by specific lines or creases. These markings are not merely cosmetic; they play a vital role in umpiring decisions and gameplay.

### **The Bowling Crease**

At each end of the pitch, the bowling crease is a rectangular line, 8 feet 8 inches long, centered on the middle stump. The lines marking the ends of the bowling crease extend 4 feet 4 inches on either side of the middle stump. This crease is the line the bowler must be behind when delivering the ball. If a bowler oversteps this line, it results in a no-ball, an illegal delivery that often leads to a free hit or extra runs for the batting team.

### **The Popping Crease (or Batting Crease)**

This is the rectangular crease, 6 feet long and 4 feet wide, located at the batsman's end. The front edge of the popping crease runs from side to side, directly in front of the stumps. The popping crease is crucial for determining whether a batsman is 'in' or 'out' when a stumping or run-out occurs. A batsman is considered safe if any part of their body or bat is grounded behind the popping crease when the wicket is broken.

## The Return Crease

Running perpendicular to the bowling and popping creases from the center of the popping crease towards the boundary, the return crease is not a specified length in the Laws but is typically marked to ensure the bowler delivers the ball from within the correct channel. It helps maintain the integrity of the bowling action and prevents bowlers from gaining an unfair advantage by bowling from too wide an angle.

## Why 22 Yards? The Historical Context

The question of **how long is a cricket pitch** is often followed by 'why this specific length?' The 22-yard measurement is deeply embedded in cricket's history. While the exact origins are debated, it's generally believed to have evolved from earlier forms of bat-and-ball games. One theory suggests it relates to the length of a furrow in an agricultural field, a common backdrop for early sporting contests. Another popular, though less substantiated, theory links it to the length of two wickets placed end-to-end, with a distance allowing for a reasonable bowling and batting contest.

As cricket professionalized and moved to formal grounds, the 22-yard length became standardized. This length was found to be optimal for several reasons:

1. **Bowling Mechanics:** It provides enough distance for bowlers to generate pace and swing, but not so much that it becomes insurmountable for batsmen.
2. **Batting Response Time:** The 22 yards offer batsmen a challenging but manageable timeframe to perceive the ball's trajectory, bounce, and spin, and to react with their shot.
3. **Fielding Strategy:** This length allows for tactical deployment of

fielders to cover various scoring opportunities and to create pressure on the batsmen.

4. **Game Pace:** The 22-yard pitch contributes to the rhythmic ebb and flow of a cricket match, allowing for periods of intense action interspersed with strategic lulls.

The 22-yard length ensures that the contest between bowler and batsman remains central to the game. It's a distance that demands skill, strategy, and nerve from both parties, making cricket the captivating spectacle it is.

## Practical Implications of Pitch Length

The precise length of the cricket pitch has significant practical implications for all participants:

### For the Bowler:

A bowler must deliver the ball from behind the popping crease and within the confines of the return creases. The 22-yard run-up allows them to build momentum and generate the necessary speed. The length also dictates the amount of time the ball is in the air before reaching the batsman, influencing the effectiveness of various bowling types – fast, spin, and medium pace.

### For the Batsman:

The 22 yards provide the batsman with a crucial window of opportunity to assess the delivery. They need to decide whether to play forward, back, or leave the ball. The length also influences shot selection; a short ball might be pulled or cut, while a full ball could be driven. The distance from the stumps to the popping crease (defined by the 4-foot width of the

popping crease from the stumps) is also critical for judging when to leave the crease for a run or to play a shot effectively.

## **For the Umpire:**

Umpires rely on the defined creases and the pitch length to make crucial decisions. LBW (Leg Before Wicket) decisions, run-outs, stumpings, and boundary calls all hinge on precise measurements and an understanding of where the batsman and ball are in relation to the pitch and creases.

## **For the Fielder:**

Fielders position themselves based on the expected flight of the ball from the bowler to the batsman and the potential trajectories after the ball hits the pitch. The 22-yard length influences how quickly a ball can travel to the boundary and the angles at which fielders need to cover ground.

## **Variations and Misconceptions**

While the 22-yard length is standard for professional cricket played under the Laws of Cricket, it's worth noting that variations can exist in informal games or practice sessions. However, for any officially sanctioned match, including Test matches, One Day Internationals (ODIs), and T20 internationals, the 22-yard pitch is non-negotiable. Sometimes, people might confuse the length of the pitch with the boundaries of the ground, which vary significantly from one stadium to another.

The condition of the pitch itself – its hardness, dryness, and the presence of grass – can significantly affect how the ball behaves, even on a standard 22-yard strip. A "sticky wicket" or a pitch with significant turn will drastically alter the game's dynamics, making the same length play very



differently.

## Conclusion: The Enduring Significance of 22 Yards

So, to definitively answer the question: **how long is a cricket pitch? It is 22 yards (66 feet)**. This seemingly simple measurement is the foundation upon which the intricate and captivating game of cricket is built. It's a length that has stood the test of time, fostering a perfect balance between aggression and defense, skill and strategy, and ultimately, providing endless entertainment for fans worldwide.

The next time you watch a cricket match, take a moment to appreciate the significance of that central strip. It's more than just grass and white lines; it's a precisely engineered arena where heroes are made and legends are forged, all within the confines of those fundamental 22 yards.

*Keywords: cricket pitch length, how long is a cricket pitch, cricket pitch dimensions, 22 yards cricket, cricket ground size, cricket rules, cricket creases, bowling crease, popping crease, cricket field, cricket pitch width.*