

# Ground Weather and Light (GW&L) - Umpires' Guide

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*This guide represents the key issues and actions umpires should consider in reviewing GW&L issues caused by weather conditions (other than lightning).*

In order for play to start, continue or resume, **both** umpires (subject to point 9 below) should **agree**, at all times, that conditions do not present an **actual and foreseeable risk of injury to any player or umpire**. To help to establish this, the following questions should be considered by both umpires. **The state of the game, or the views of either team, should have no bearing on the answers.**

1. Have you carried out an inspection of the whole playing area, at no faster than a reasonable walking pace, including the area immediately beyond the boundary over which fielders may need to pass as they endeavour to field or catch the ball?
2. Do the bowlers have reasonable footholds - i.e. are they able to bowl without slipping - this must include the whole of their delivery, from where they begin their run up, to the point they have regained control of their movement after delivery of the ball?
3. Do all of the fielders have the power of free movement around the ground - can they can move, turn and run at broadly full pace, without slipping?
4. Do the batsmen have the ability to play their shots and run freely between the wickets without slipping, both when they set off and in the action of turning?
5. Are you satisfied that there is no surface water and no standing water (water visible around the feet when pressed into the ground) in the playing area within 30 yards of the pitch, or on the square, or, if further away, that would be so slippery as to potentially constitute a danger?
6. In your opinion is there sufficiently good visibility to enable you to conclude that you, the batsmen, and fielders will be able to see the ball (taking into account its pace) clearly enough to be safe?
7. Are you satisfied that after pitching the ball does not bounce unpredictably or steeply or go through the surface of the pitch in a way that poses a danger to the striker or the wicket-keeper standing up?
8. Are you satisfied that none of the conditions pose an actual and foreseeable risk to the safety of any player or umpire?
9. Does the other umpire (if present) agree with your answers?  
If the other umpire is not a current full member of the ECB ACO then you should consult with him, but your answers to the above questions should determine the outcome.



Whenever your answers to one or more of the questions 1 to 9 above is a NO, play must be suspended until the umpires, working with those responsible for the ground, have implemented a solution that eliminates the danger.

Things to consider and actions needed before play can start, continue or resume:

**Consult** - Before play commences umpires should, if available, seek the view of people who know the ground and its facilities (covers etc) to agree with their colleague how GWL issues will be handled and ensure that both captains are informed.

**Observe** the movement and actions of the players prior to commencing and during play to help decide/affirm your answers.

**Record** at the time of all inspections, conversations, agreed actions, any delays/suspensions of play.

**Retain** these records and **Record** them on any official report on the match submit.

**Listen** to what others are saying, consider it and reach your own independent conclusions.

**Ensure** - play never starts or resumes without the umpires carrying out an inspection of the whole ground to confirm the answer to the above questions are all Yes.

**Delay** - do not wait until the end of the over - if an answer is NO suspend play immediately.

Other points to note

1. Once play has commenced it is not necessary for it to rain etc again - if any of the answers become a NO, then play should be suspended immediately.
2. If players wish to continue, in spite of the umpires concluding it is dangerous, umpires should tell them they will not umpire the match under the prevailing conditions.
3. If players refuse to play, point out the decision is yours, remind them of Law 21.3, give them a chance to change their mind and if not invoke Law 21.3.

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