

# Bowling 8 Week Training Plan

## Week 1:

### 1. Scoring:

- A game of tenpin bowling is divided into ten turns, called frames. Each frame consists of two attempts by the athlete to knock down all the pins. If all the pins are knocked down in one shot, it is called a strike, and is marked on the score sheet with an “X”. If all ten pins are knocked down on two shots, it is called a spare, and is marked on the score sheet with a “/”.
- Scoring in bowling is based upon the number of pins actually knocked down, plus a bonus that is earned if the athlete gets a strike or a spare.
- A spare is scored by taking the ten points scored, plus a bonus. The bonus is adding the number of pins knocked down on the next shot.
- A strike also includes a bonus added to the ten points scored. The bonus consists of the pins from the next two next shots.
- Scores are cumulated throughout the game. If a spare or strike is thrown, in the last (10<sup>th</sup>) frame, the athlete cannot conclude the scoring until he/she throws the bonus shots, if any. Note that the bowler only get a bonus shot or shots once in the tenth frame; i.e., the athlete cannot just keep throwing strike after strike in a never ending procession; the most shots can be thrown in the tenth frame is 3 ( a strike on your first ball, plus the two bonus shots).
- A perfect game in tenpins is “300”; all 12 strikes (one per frame, plus the two bonuses in the tenth frame).

### 2. Getting Started, proper “Fit and Feel”:

- Bowling, like so many things in life, is enhanced when there can be consistency. Proper fitting equipment is one variable that one can be controlled regardless of the bowling style, and players seeking to improve should strive to eliminate any negatives that can arise from ill fitting balls and shoes.
- **Ball Fit:**
  - A pro shop can help decide the best grip, including spans and pitch, for the hand, strength and style.
  - A simple at home check for a grip tune-up is: In the setup routine hold the ball low in front of the body and insert the fingers into the holes until the pads of the fingers are in contact with the hole.
  - Do not insert the thumb into the thumbhole. Simply roll the ball onto the thumb instead, while maintaining the feel on the fingers.
  - This action will accomplish two things: 1) sets the ball correctly on the hand so that ball will simply roll back off the thumb at the time of release, and 2) allows one to identify possible span or pitch problems immediately if the ball does not roll onto the thumb in the setup routine.
  - The ball has to roll onto the thumb easily to expect it to come off the thumb in a consistent manner at release.
- **Ball Weight:**
  - If the ball is too heavy or too light it will not have a consistent roll.
  - The coach must find the weight that works for the athlete, remember heavier is not always better.

## Week 2

1. Establish a Balanced Starting Point – It is important for a bowler to have the same starting position each and every time. Listed below is a mental checklist for the athlete:

- Are the feet properly placed – front to back, as well as side to side?
- Are the feet about 1” apart with the toe and the ball even with the instep of my sliding foot?
- Are the knees relaxed and bent slightly?
- Is the upper body relaxed; is the ball side shoulder slightly behind the sliding side shoulder?
- Is the ball in the proper position height wise?
- Are the ball side shoulder, elbow, wrist and index finger all in line?
- Is the thumb at 10-11 o’clock?
- Are the shoulders parallel to target line, not necessarily the foul line?

The goal as bowlers is to have a consistency to the approach and delivery to maximize the potential to make shot after shot the same; the consistency begins on the approach before the first step. It is very difficult to have a consistent finish without a consistent beginning.

2. Alignment using the athlete’s personal number:

- The athlete’s personal number is based on his (normal walk pattern) (how far you release the ball from your slide foot).
- First, stand on board 20 ( all alignments are made using the inside of the left foot); walk in a normal delivery, feet parallel to the boards, and make a straight “ up the boards ” delivery; stop, look at where your left foot is after the slide; do this five times.

3. Computing your athlete’s personal number:

- If the athlete drifts right, add the number of boards of drift to the number of boards the athlete releases the ball from the left foot. Example, if there is a 2 board drift right the personal number is 9.
- If drift left, subtract the boards of drift from the number of boards the ball is released from your left foot. Example, if there is a 2 board drift left the personal number is now 5.

## Week 3

1. Establish a target spot.

- Warm up until the athlete is comfortable with speed and balance.
- Play any line that feels close for the normal lane condition.
  - If one hits the target light, move 2 boards right with feet.
  - If one hits flush nose, move 2 boards left with feet.
  - If there is a heavy crossover, move 4 boards left with feet.
  - If there is a far crossover, move 6 boards left with feet.

## Week 4

1. Balanced Finishing Position and Spare Practice

- Slightly bend legs at the knees.
- Body bent at the waist, not leaning forward.
- Trail foot toe on the ground.
- Free swinging pendulum follow through along the target line; extend, hold the arm swing at the target. One must have a free swinging pendulum that can reach, extend, return, reach, extend, return.

## 2. Spare Practice

- The fastest way to improve one's average is to pick up spares. One extra spare in a three game series would increase the athlete's average by 3.3 pins, without any more strikes. Consistency of release, accuracy, pocket shooting will increase the athlete's average. A game that can be played to increase the spare pick ups is called SEVEN FRAMES.
  - Frame 1: 10 pin, shoot it until it is made twice; count how many shots it took to make it twice; that is the score for the frame
  - Frame 2: 6 pin, shoot it until its made twice; count how many shots it took to make it twice; that is the score for the frame
  - Frame 3: 3 pin, shoot it until its made twice; count how many shots it took to make it twice; that is the score for the frame
  - Frame 4: the pocket; Three practice shots are allowed to find the pocket; when it starts again, the target is the pocket (a strike is not necessary, just hit the pocket); shoot it until it is hit twice; count how many shots it took to hit it twice; that is the score for the frame
  - Frame 5: 2 pin; shoot it until it is made twice; count how many shots it took to make it twice; that is the score for the frame
  - Frame 6: 4 pin; shoot it until it is made twice; count how many shots it took to make it twice; that is the score for the frame
  - Frame 7: 7 pin: shoot it until it is made twice; count how many shots it took to make it twice; that is the score for the frame
- Now total your score. A perfect score is 14. Keep a record of the score and make it a goal to get an average of 14.5-15; (b) Review the score in each frame; determine which basic type spare gives the athletes the most trouble and have them practice it.
- The athlete can also use the 3-6-9 system for spare shooting, the system refers to the number of boards that the athlete moves from the normal strike line to convert a spare. This system assumes the ideal strike line that is working for the athlete.
- LEFT SIDE SPARES: Move the feet to the right, keeping the target at the arrows the same.
  - 2 pin: move three boards
  - 4 pin: move six boards
  - 7 pin: move 9 boards
- RIGHT SIDE SPARES: First establish the preferred shot at the ten pin. Remind the athletes that no system is perfect. Try this and then adjust the boards accordingly
  - 6 pin: move three boards right and throw the normal pin shot
  - 3 pin: move six boards right and throw the normal ten pin shot

## Week 5

Same as week two and Individual work.

## **Week 6**

Same as week three and individual work.

## **Week 7**

Same as week four and individual work.

## **Week 8**

1. Put all skills together and have practice games without keeping score, just work on spares, target and angle adjustments, the athletes get better with practice and focus.
2. Points to Ponder:
  - “You can never learn to bowl; you can only learn as you bowl. Never limit yourself to what you know.”
  - “With the right attitude, learning is continuous.”