

Tenpin Bowling Rules

Valid through 2025

Special Olympics
New Hampshire



Special Olympics New Hampshire has created this set of rules based on Federation Internationale des Quilleurs (FIQ) Rules, World Tenpin Bowling Association (WTBA) Rules, and Special Olympics International Rules.

These rules shall be used to govern all Special Olympics New Hampshire Tenpin Bowling competition through the end of 2025 when we next review these rules.

Events Offered

- Singles
- Bumper Singles
- Singles with Support
- Bumper Singles with Support

Registering in Agon

- Each athlete may register for one event.
- Whether or not an athlete will use a ramp must be noted in the level field.
- A qualifying score must be submitted for each athlete. The qualifying score must be the sum of two (bumper events) or three (all other events) consecutive games.

Divisioning

- The qualifying scores (the sum of two games with bumpers or three games with no bumpers) submitted during registration will be used to place athletes in divisions based on ability (age and gender will not be used to create divisions).

Equipment

- Bowling shoes must be worn with socks. Bowling shoes are made with special soles so the bowler can slide right before the release of the ball. The bottom of the bowling shoes needs to stay clean and dry so the bowler does not stick on the approach.
- Athletes using their own bowling ball, must use an approved ball from the United States Bowling Congress <http://www.bowl.com/approvedballlist/>
- Competitors should wear appropriate bowling attire like khakis and a polo shirt. Jeans are not recommended.
- Ramps are used when an athlete does not have the physical ability to roll a ball with their hand or hands. Ramps are a two-piece unit consisting of a stand and a sloped piece. The stand is a minimum height of 24 inches and maximum height of 30 inches.

Competition

GENERAL RULES

- With support: An athlete needs the assistance of another individual and/or uses a ball ramp.
 - Assistance may be used to place the ball onto the ramp.
 - Athletes must push the ball down the ramp toward the target without assistance.
 - The assistance from another individual cannot provide forward momentum but assistance may be used to place the ball onto the ramp.
- A game of tenpin consists of ten frames. A player delivers two balls in each of the first nine frames unless a strike is scored. In the tenth frame, a player delivers three balls if a strike or a spare is scored.
- Three games will be played in competition in all events with one exception. When bumpers are used, then two games will be played.
- Final score for competition, without bumpers, is determined by the sum of three games.
- Final score for competition, with bumpers, is determined by the sum of two games.
- One frame is a single turn for a tenpin bowler, constituting one or two rolls, depending on pin fall.
- Players will remain on the same lane throughout the competition.
- No handicapping system will be used.
- If a bowler bowls in the wrong lane or out of turn, he/she shall complete the frame, and the pins knocked down will be credited to his/her score. Then he/she shall be moved to the correct lane or position.

SCORING PROCEDURES

- All games bowled in a tournament shall be recorded, either manually or by means of an approved automatic scoring device. The score sheets shall indicate the pin fall on each ball so that if necessary a frame-by- frame audit can be made.
- Except when a strike is scored, the number of pins knocked down by the player's first delivery is to be marked in the small square in the upper left-hand corner of that frame, and the number of pins knocked down by the player's second delivery is to be marked in the upper right-hand corner. If none of the standing pins are knocked down by the second delivery in the frame, the score sheet shall be marked with a (-). The count for the two deliveries in the frame shall be recorded immediately.
- A strike is made when a full rack of ten pins is knocked down with the first delivery in a frame. It is marked by an (X) in the small square in the upper left-hand corner of the frame where the strike was made. The count for one strike is ten plus the number of pins knocked down on the player's next two deliveries.
- Two consecutive strikes is a double. The count for the first strike is 20 plus the number of pins knocked down with the first delivery following the second strike.
- Three successive strikes is a triple/turkey. The count for the first strike is 30.
- To bowl the maximum score of 300, the player must bowl 12 strikes in succession.
- A spare is scored when pins left standing after the first delivery are knocked down with the second delivery in that frame. It is marked by a (/) in the small square in the upper right- hand

corner of that frame. The count for a spare is 10 plus the number of pins knocked down by the player's next delivery.

- An open frame is when a player fails to bowl down all 10 pins after two deliveries in a frame unless the pins left standing after the first delivery constitute a split.
- A split is normally marked with a circle around the number of pins initially knocked down with the first delivery of the ball. The head pin must be down and two or more non-adjacent groups of one or more pins remain.
- Errors in Scoring
 - Scoring or calculation errors must be corrected by a responsible tournament official immediately upon discovery of such error.
 - Questionable errors shall be decided upon by the designated official.

DEAD BALL

- A ball shall be declared dead if any of the following occur:
 - After a delivery (and before the next delivery on the same lane), attention is immediately called to the fact that one or more pins were missing from setup of the pins.
 - A player bowls on the wrong lane or out of turn. Or one player from each team on the pair of lanes bowls on the wrong lane.
 - Any pin is moved or knocked down as a player delivers the ball but before the ball reaches the pins.
 - A delivered ball comes in contact with a foreign obstacle.

ILLEGAL PINFALL

- When any of the following occurs the delivery counts but the resulting pin fall does not:
 - A ball leaves the lane before reaching the pins.
 - A ball rebounds from the rear cushion.
 - A pin is touched by mechanical pin setting equipment.
 - Any pin knocked down when dead wood is being removed.
 - The player commits a foul.
 - A delivery is made with dead wood on the lane or in the gutter and the ball contacts such dead wood before leaving the lane surface.

FOUL RULES

- A foul occurs when a part of the player's person encroaches on or goes beyond the foul line and touches any part of the lane, equipment or building during or after a delivery.
- When a player deliberately fouls to benefit by the calling of a foul, the player shall be credited with zero pin fall for that delivery and not allowed further deliveries in that frame.
- When a foul is recorded the delivery counts but the player is not credited with any pins knocked down by that delivery. Pins knocked down by the ball when the foul occurred must be re-spotted if the player who fouled is entitled to additional deliveries in the frame.

- A foul shall be declared and recorded if the automatic foul detecting device fails to call a foul that is apparent to:
 - One or more of the opposing players
 - The lane's score keepers
 - A tournament official