

# How to Change Your Ball Speed

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In this tip, I discuss how to easily alter your ball speed without impacting your timing feel. Use this method to increase ball speed while maintaining consistency!

If you want to become a great bowler, you need to be able to alter your ball speed. But, this takes practice. And, if you want to increase ball speed you must do this with a free swing. This means you shouldn't muscle the ball in your swing. Most professional bowlers on the PBA Tour throw the ball over 19 miles per hour or 30.4 kilometers per hour. In 2004, the average ball speed of a PBA professional was 19.5 miles per hour or 31.2 kilometers per hour. But, it will take years of bowling experience to throw this fast with a free swing. So, be patient. It is more important to be consistent with your ball speed than to throw it fast inconsistently. How Do I Measure My Ball Speed? Consistent bowlers are able to throw shots with similar ball speeds, shot after shot. This is known as repeatability, the ability to repeat the same shot over and over again. How consistent are you as a bowler? Well, let's find out. If you are interested in improving, collect data on your ball speed. To do this, use a stopwatch and measure the time it takes you to roll the ball down the lane. For example, have a friend start timing when the ball crosses the foul line and stop when it hits the pins. Use the following formula to measure the ball speed:  $40.91/t$  (MPH) or  $65.45/t$  (KPH) You can copy the following chart data for ten shots. Write down the time for each shot. Then, calculate the average time. Use the average time to calculate your average ball speed for ten shots. The goal is to be quite consistent for ten shots.

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Advanced bowlers can also change their ball speed in the starting position or the stance. Begin with the ball at chest high and throw ten shots. Now, bring it down to rib height and throw ten shots. Try beginning the ball at the belly button height as well as just below the waist. How does this change your speed? Below you will go through this process. How Does Ball Speed Impact Ball Reaction? When you decide to use more ball speed be aware that this will change your ball reaction. Specifically, as your ball speed increases, the ball will skid further down the lane. So, this will delay your backend reaction. Try the following experiment: Stand in the same place with the same target. Throw ten shots with the following starting position in the stance: chest, ribs, belly button and pocket high. For each height, note the ball reaction. How did it change? Important Considerations Be patient when trying this new ball change system. You should set-up the same way in the stance each time. Have the ball directly in front of your shoulder with the balance arm under the ball for support. Check that your elbow is on your side. You should push the ball away as you step with your ball-side foot. Try to get the elbow to be over your knee as your foot steps down. This will allow you to change the height of the ball in the stance while maintaining good timing.