

# 10 Things That Will Make You A Better Bowler

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Thursday, 19 October 2006  
Last Updated Thursday, 22 February 2007

In this Oct 6, 2006 Bowling Talk, I present a 10-point checklist that will help improve your scores by making you a more consistent bowler. Surprisingly, many bowlers ignore some of these fundamental steps. Commit to these 10 things and you will be a better performer on the lanes.

Bowling Talk - 10 Things That Will Make You A Better Bowler - Oct 6, 2006

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## (# 1) Pre-Shot Routine

Research has proven that athletes who use a pre-shot routine perform more consistently and at a higher level. Specifically, every bowler should have a series of actions that they do before each shot. And, these should be done in the same exact sequence. First, wipe the ball off, next, put your hand over the drier, etc. But, do these actions exactly the same way and in the same order.

## (#2) Watch Your Feet

When you step onto the lane be sure to check your feet. Be sure you are lined-up on the correct board. Equally important, be sure that the distance of the slide foot is exactly the same distance in front of the ball-side foot. And, verify that your feet are parallel to the target line. Simply imagine the line your ball will swing toward the target. Your feet should be parallel with this line.

## (#3) Check Your Body

After aligning your feet, a bowler should verify that their shoulders and hips are perpendicular to the target line. Now, place the ball in front of your shoulder and have your elbow at the middle of your side. Look down at your arm. Is it straight?

## (#4) Take a Deep Breath and Visualize

After setting-up the body, it is time to mentally prepare. Close your eyes for one second while taking a deep breath and exhale. This works by releasing alpha waves, a slower brain wave. It will prepare you to be more consistent. Imagine, in your mind, the successful shot you want to make. As Tiger Woods says about putting, putt to the picture. You will see a picture in your mind and bowl to the picture.

## (#5) Hold Your Finish Position

At the completion of your follow-through, hold your position at the foul line until the ball is down the lane at least 30 feet or half the distance of the lane. Be sure you are using the balance arm purposefully. It shouldn't be flapping around like a chicken. Many bowlers don't hold their position when they are throwing the ball. Consequently, this leads to inconsistencies and lower scores. Commit to the foul line and you will see higher scores. Literally, stay at the line in a nice finish position.

## (#6) Commit Equally to Every Shot

It is important to commit mentally and physically to every shot with the same level of focus. Go through the pre-shot routine with the same commitment. Keep your eye on your target and don't leave it. If you do this, you will see higher scores due to increased consistency. Most importantly, this will positively impact your spare shooting. I have witnessed so many bowlers who are not committing to the second shot and their scores suffer. As we say, strike for show, spare for dough (USA slang for money).

### (#7) Learn, Refocus, Move-On

As the ball is traveling down the lane, watch the ball reaction. How far does it travel? What is the shape? How strong is the backend reaction? Great bowlers watch their ball reaction to determine how the lanes are changing. But, once you have reviewed the shot, it is time to move on to the next one. Too many bowlers get upset over things they can't control. Take deep breaths and refocus yourself for your next shot.

### (#8) Practice, Practice, Practice

If you want to improve, you must practice. And, practice is practice. You should shoot 7-pins and 10-pins on your first shot. And, on your second shot, throw a strike shot. This ensures that you will take two shots in each frame and maximize your investment in lane fees. Be sure to practice throwing to the pocket from different angles.

### (#9) Check Your Thumb Hole

Since temperature and humidity can change the size of the thumb, great bowlers are constantly changing tape in their thumb hole. This provides a consistent feel and most importantly a proper release. Sometimes I change my tape every six frames. Visit your pro shop and purchase slick black and textured white tape. Most bowlers prefer to put white in the front and black in the back. If you are right-handed you would put the weight at the 1 o'clock position of your thumb hole and the black across in the 7 o'clock position.

### (#10) Have Fun