

Universal Playing Rules

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Chapter 1 - Universal Playing Rules

1.1 Game definitions

1.1.1 A game of tenpins 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 spare is scored. Every frame must be completed by each player bowling in regular order.

1.1.2 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.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
X	X	X	7 2	(8) /	F 9	X	7 /	9 -	X X 8
30	57	76	85	95	104	124	143	152	180

1.1.3 A strike is made when a full setup of 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 it was made. The count for one strike is 10 plus the number of pins knocked down on the player's next two deliveries.

1.1.4 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.

1.1.5 Three successive strikes is a triple. The count for the first strike is 30. To bowl the maximum score of 300, the player must bowl 12 strikes in succession.

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

1.1.7 When a player fails to bowl down all ten pins after two deliveries in a frame, unless the pins left standing after the first delivery constitute a split, it is called an open frame.

1.1.8 A split (normally marked with an O around the number of pins) is a setup of pins left, standing after the first delivery, provided the head pin is down and:

- At least one pin is down between two or more standing pins; i.e. 7-9 or 3-10
- At least one pin is down immediately ahead of two or more standing pins; 5-6

1.2 Style of play

1.2.1 Dual lane style

a. A game shall be played on two lanes (a pair) immediately adjoining each other.

b. Members of competing teams, trios, doubles and individual entrants shall successively and in regular order bowl one frame on one lane, and for the next frame alternate and use the other lane until five frames are bowled on each lane of the pair

1.2.2 Single lane style

a. A game shall be played on one lane.

b. Members of competing teams; trios, doubles and individual entrants shall successively and in regular order bowl one frame on one lane until 10 frames are bowled on the lane.

The rules for each specific tournament shall specify which style of play that applies.

1.2.3 Match play style

a. In the match play style each athlete bowls two frames at a time.
b. However, the athlete starting on the left (odd numbered) lane bowls one frame only.
c. Thereafter both athletes bowl first on the right lane, then immediately bowl another frame on the left lane.
d. The athlete who bowled first will finish his game by bowling the tenth frame on the right lane.
e. When match play consists of more than one game, in succeeding games athletes alternate in starting on the left lane.

1.2.4 Baker format

a. In the Baker format, members of competing teams, trios and doubles successively and in regular order bowl complete and consecutive frames within the same game.
b. They shall alternate lanes within the pair after each game.

1.2.5 Round Robin format

a. In the round robin the qualifying format of the event determines the number of athletes who will advance to round robin competition
b. Each athlete bowls one match against every other athlete
c. Matches may consist of one or more games
d. A final position round match may be added. In a position round pairings are determined by the position in which an athlete finished the initial matches
e. In case of a tie before the position round between places 2-3, 4-5, 6-7 and so on, the athlete with the higher position is the one who in the round robin has
   - The higher total scratch pin fall
   - Won their match
   - Won more matches
   - The least difference between the highest and the lowest game
   - The higher game

1.2.6 Order of bowling

a. One or more athletes may be scheduled on a pair of lanes
b. After a block of games has started, no changes shall be made in the line-up in that block except that substitutions may be made in accordance with the rules for each specific championship

1.3 Legal pin fall

1.3.1 A legal delivery is made when the ball leaves the player's possession and crosses the foul line into playing territory.
1.3.2 Every delivery counts unless a dead ball is declared
1.3.3 A delivery must be made entirely by manual means.
1.3.4 No device may be incorporated in or affixed to the ball that detaches on delivery or is a moving part during delivery.
1.3.5 A player may use special equipment to aid in grasping and delivering the ball if it is in place of a hand or major portion thereof lost by amputation or otherwise.
1.3.6 Pins following a legal delivery - to be credited to a player, to be termed dead wood and to be removed before the next delivery - shall include :

- Pins knocked down or off the pin deck by the ball or another pin
- Pins knocked down or off the pin deck by a pin rebounding from a side partition or rear cushion
- Pins knocked down or off the pin deck by a pin rebounding from the sweep bar when it is at rest on the pin deck before sweeping dead wood from the pin deck
- Pins that lean and touch the kickback or side partition
- For string pinsetters, pins knocked over by the string from another pin.

1.4 Illegal pin fall

1.4.1 When any of the following occur the delivery counts but the resulting pin fall does not:

a. A ball leaves the lane before reaching the pins
b. A ball rebounds from the rear cushion
c. A pin rebounds after coming in contact with the body, arms or legs of a human pinsetter
d. A pin is touched by mechanical pin setting equipment
e. Any pin knocked down when dead wood is being removed
f. Any pin knocked down by a human pinsetter
g. The player commits a foul
h. 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.

1.4.2 If illegal pin fall occurs and the player is entitled to additional deliveries in the frame, the pin or pins illegally knocked down must be re-spotted where they originally stood.

1.5 Other pin actions

1.5.1 When bowling at a full setup or to make a spare, if it is discovered immediately after the delivery that one or more pins are set improperly, but not missing, the delivery and resulting pin fall counts. It is each player's responsibility to determine if a setup is correct. The player shall insist that any pin or pins incorrectly set be re-spotted before delivering the ball, otherwise the setup is deemed to be acceptable.

1.5.2 If any pins are moved or misplaced by a mechanical pinsetter following a delivery, they shall be manually adjusted back to their original positions before the next delivery, provided no additional pinfall has occurred. The correction must be made under the supervision of an official or designated personnel to ensure accuracy and fairness.

1.5.3 Pins that rebound and stand on the lane must be counted as standing pins.

1.5.4 No pins may be conceded and only those actually knocked down or moved entirely off the playing surface of the lane as a result of a legal delivery may be counted.

1.5.5 Should a pin be broken or otherwise badly damaged during the game, it shall be replaced at once by another as nearly uniform in weight and condition with the set in use. The tournament officials shall determine whether pins shall be replaced.

1.6 Dead ball

1.6.1 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 the setup.
- A human pinsetter interferes with any standing pin before the ball reaches the pins
- A human pinsetter removes or interferes with any downed pin before it stops rolling
- 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
- A player is physically interfered with by another player, spectator or moving object or by the pinsetter as the ball is being delivered and before delivery is completed. In such case, the player has the option to accept the resulting pin fall or have a dead ball declared
- 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.

1.6.2 When a dead ball is called, the delivery does not count. The pins standing when the dead ball occurred must be re-spotted and the player allowed re-bowling the delivery.

1.7 Bowling on wrong lane

1.7.1 A ball shall be declared dead and the player or players required re-bowling on the correct lane if no more than a total of 4 individual frames have been bowled on a pair of lanes by the players for Singles, Doubles, Trios and Team.

1.7.2 If more than four individual frames have been bowled on the wrong lane, that game will be completed without adjustment. Any succeeding game must be started on the correctly scheduled lane.

1.8 Slow bowling

1.8.1 Athlete's shall be ready to bowl when it is their turn and shall not delay the start of their approach or delivery when the pairs immediately adjacent to them on both the right and left are clear (one (1) pair lane courtesy. Competitors must observe one (1) pair lane courtesy at all times. Competitors on the same pair may not bowl consecutive deliveries without allowing one (1) competitor from the pair to the right and one (1) competitor from the pair to the left have made a delivery, unless those competitors are not ready to bowl or they give way.

1.8.2 The following time rules should apply and should be strictly enforced.

- First shot in a frame. When your opponent leaves the approach and you have a full set of pins, you have 30 (thirty) seconds to complete your shot. The shot is deemed complete in shot clock terms when the ball is fully released and has passed the foul line.
- Second shot in a frame. After your first ball has returned to the ball return, you have 30 (thirty) seconds to complete your shot. The shot is deemed complete in shot clock terms when the ball is fully released and has passed the foul line.
- First offence: A warning for slow bowling is given to the player/team.
- Second offence: A warning for slow bowling is given to the player/team.
- Third, and continued offence: The pin count of the whole frame where the offence occurred will be nulled.

1.8.3 If an athlete does not observe the procedures outlined, it shall be construed as slow bowling. An athlete failing to observe these procedures shall be warned by an authorized tournament official as follows

a) A white card for the first offence (no penalty)

b) A yellow card for the second offence (no penalty)

c) A red card for the third and each succeeding offence in any block of games (six games for singles and doubles, three games for trios or five-person team and all games of match play in a day). the penalty shall be a zero pin fall for the frame

1.8.4 For interpretation of the enforcement of this rule, the Referees shall specifically monitor any athlete or team that gets more than four frames behind the leader in a singles, doubles or master event; or more than two frames behind in trios or team, not counting the end pairs of lanes. In Baker format competition the same rule applies as for the singles event.

1.9 Foul definitions

1.9.1 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.

1.9.2 A ball is in play after a delivery until the same or another player is on the approach in position to make a succeeding delivery.

1.9.3 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.

1.9.4 When a foul 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 respotted if the player who fouled is entitled to additional deliveries in the frame.

1.9.5 A foul shall be declared and recorded if the automatic foul detecting device or foul judge fails to call a foul that is apparent to:

- Both team captains or one or more of the opposing players
- The official score keepers
- A tournament official

1.9.6 No appeal shall be allowed when a foul is called unless

- It is proved that the automatic device is not operating properly
- There is preponderance of evidence the player did not foul

1.10 Provisional ball

1.10.1 A provisional ball or frame shall be bowled by a player when a protest involving a foul, legal pin fall or a dead ball is made and cannot be resolved by the tournament officials.

1.10.2 When a dispute occurs on a player's first delivery in any frame, or on the second delivery in the tenth frame after a strike on the first delivery

- If the dispute is over whether the player fouled, the player shall complete the frame and then bowl one provisional ball at a full setup of pins
- If the dispute involves alleged illegal pin fall, the player shall complete the frame and then bowl one provisional ball at the setup that would have remained standing had the disputed pin(s) not fallen
- If the dispute is over whether a dead ball should have been declared, the player shall complete the frame and then bowl a complete provisional frame.

1.10.3 When a dispute occurs on a spare attempt, or on the third delivery in the tenth frame, no provisional ball is necessary unless the dispute is over whether a dead ball should havebeen declared. In that case a provisional ball shall be bowled at the same setup, which was standing when the disputed ball was bowled.

1.11 Approaches must not be defaced

1.11.1 The application of any foreign substance on any part of the approach that detracts from the possibility of other players having normal conditions is prohibited.

1.11.2 This includes, but is not limited to, such substances as talcum powder, pumice and resin on shoes; also soft rubber soles or heels that rub off on the approach are prohibited.

1.12 Errors in scoring

1.12.1 Errors in scoring or errors in calculation must be corrected by a responsible tournament official immediately upon discovery of such error. Questionable errors shall be decided upon by the designated official.

1.12.2 The time limit for filing protests on scoring errors shall be one hour from the end of the event or block of games for each day of tournament, but must be before the prize presentation or the commencement of the next round (in an elimination event), whichever is the sooner.

1.12.3 Each protest under this rule must be specific in itself and this rule shall not be construed to cover a previous or similar violation.

1.13 Additional tournament information

1.13.1 A tournament may have a rule limiting the number of re-racks a player may have in a game and/or block or series.

1.13.2 A tournament may have a rule to cover tardy players.

1.13.3 A tournament may have a rule addressing unfair tactics by a player.

1.13.4 The tournament management should make provision for enforcement and penalty, if any, for violations.

1.14 Code of Conduct

1.14.1 All athletes, team officials, coaches, technical officials and other accredited persons participating in an IBF approved competition shall comply with the IBF Code of Conduct and any applicable competition-specific codes of conduct.

1.14.2 The Code of Conduct shall establish the standards of behaviour expected of all participants and shall address matters including respect, sportsmanship, integrity, fair play, discipline and appropriate behaviour towards other participants, officials, organisers and spectators.

1.14.3 Violations of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action or penalties in accordance with the applicable IBF rules and regulations.