

BOWLING

GENERAL RULES

The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics bowling competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon the United States Bowling Congress (USBC) and the World Tenpin Bowling Association (WTBA) rules for bowling competition. USBC rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall apply.

OFFICIAL EVENTS OFFERED

1. Individual Ramp (singles assisted and unassisted)
2. Individual (singles)
3. Mixed Unified Team – Any combination of males and females (2 Special Olympics Athletes and 2 Unified Partners)
4. Traditional Team – Teams consist of 4 Special Olympics Athletes

SECTION A – GENERAL RULES

1. Competition will follow United States Bowling Congress (USBC) and Women’s International Bowling Congress (WIBC) rules.
2. Athletes will bowl three games. Warm-up / practice balls may be granted at the discretion of the venue director depending on schedule, time constraints, etc. An athlete(s) may be moved to a different set of lanes due to mechanical malfunction or other issues; such as, slow play at the discretion of the venue director.
3. A scratch score based on a 15 game average shall be used for determining handicaps.
4. Athletes will alternate lanes after each frame (singles and team only).
5. From the approach, athletes have 45 seconds to deliver the ball. If the athlete fails to release the ball after 45 seconds, a zero is recorded for that ball.
6. Ramp bowlers may be allowed to bowl three consecutive frames (at discretion of venue director) and will not alternate lanes.
7. Athletes in a wheelchair are able to compete on a bowling team only if they are able to bowl retrieve the ball, transport the ball, and release the ball, independently.
8. All athletes bowling on a team must be able to bowl independently.

9. In tournament play, 100% of the difference of the bowler's average from 200 will be used to determine the athlete's or team's final score. (The handicap will be added to the three-game scratch total to provide the final score).
 10. Legal line up for team competition:
 - a. A team must register four players to be eligible. However, if a team is short-handed, the legal line-up shall consist of three players with the fourth position counted as a "blind" bowler.
 - b. Unified Teams will consist of two registered Special Olympics Athletes and two registered Unified Partners. Note: The "blind" bowler on a short-handed team can only be a Unified Partner. This rule is consistent with Special Olympics Unified Sports Rules. The number of athletes must be equal to Unified Partners on a playing field or more than Unified Partners on an unequal playing field.
 11. Any player or team arriving late may start anytime before the fourth frame; otherwise, they will be scratched. The bowler or team may not make up frames that have been missed and will receive zero points on the missed frames.
 12. If a lane must be moved due to equipment malfunction (at the discretion of the venue director), athletes will start in the frame they left off on.
 13. Any protests or rules infractions must be brought to the attention of the sports rules committee.
 14. Coaches, chaperones, parents, etc., are not allowed on the lanes during competition. Once competition begins, coaches and spectators are not allowed to coach.
- NOTE:** "Special Needs Athlete" – If Special Needs is noted, this athlete's coach will be allowed on the lanes for consultation with the volunteer during a special time period set up just prior to the beginning of competition. A "special needs athlete" is one who has a communication limitation, hearing impairment, visual impairment, special equipment adaptation or behavioral need.
15. Athletes and volunteers are not allowed to smoke, eat food or drink during competition. Water will be provided for hydration. (The only other exception is for athletes with a medical condition requiring a regular intake of food or beverage. This must be communicated to the venue director prior to the competition.)
 16. Athletes, coaches, volunteers or any other Special Olympics supporters are not allowed to drink alcoholic beverages or smoke at the competition site.
 17. Uniform / clothing – Athletes must be neat in their dress and wear proper bowling clothing. No cut off shorts or shirts with advertising are allowed. Team bowlers must wear like shirts. No jeans or camouflage (pants, capris, or shorts) shall be worn for competition. It is suggested that bowlers wear khaki or colored shorts, slacks, or sweat pants and a collared shirt or nice tee.

SECTION B – RAMP BOWLING

1. Ramp bowlers include those athletes in wheelchairs, the visually impaired, and only those ambulatory athletes with conditions too severe to allow for sufficient balance.
2. Ramp bowlers will compete only against other ramp bowlers and divisioned by assisted or unassisted.
 - a. Assisted – Athlete needs assistance with retrieving ball, positioning the ramp, etc.
 - b. Unassisted – Athlete is able to retrieve the ball and position the ramp.
3. Athletes must initiate the forward motion of the ball with his / her hand touching the ball.
4. The coach may interact with the volunteers on the lane to aid in proper procedures for interacting with their athletes. (Refer to Section A, 14.)

SECTION C – FOULS

1. A foul occurs when a part of the player encroaches on or goes beyond the foul line and touches any part of the lane, equipment of building during or after the delivery. 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.
2. Foul lights shall be used for all bowlers (singles, team, and ramp).
3. When a foul occurs on the first ball of a frame, an “F” should be placed in the box (pins down will not count) and the pins will be re-racked. The number of pins knocked down on the second ball will be scored.
4. When a foul occurs on the second ball of a frame, an “F” should be placed in the box and the pins knocked down will not be scored for that ball.
5. If all pins are knocked down on the second ball, after a foul with the first, it is scored as a spare.