



**LEARN THE  
SPORT**

# COACH'S GUIDE

Bowl better in 1, 2, 3, 4 weeks!





# COACH'S GUIDE

We are excited to bring you  
LEARN THE SPORT!



## Introduction

As a partnership between the Bowling Proprietors' Association of America (BPAA), United States Bowling Congress (USBC), International Bowling Campus Youth Development (IBC Youth), Strike Ten Entertainment and International Bowling Pro Shop and Instructions Association (IBPSIA), this new Youth learn-to-bowl program will help generate the next generation of new customers and future league bowlers for your center. The main objective of this program is to introduce new youth to the great sport of bowling and create a lifelong bowler.

Bowling truly is America's great pastime. According to Simmons Research, over 17 million youth ages 6 to 17 bowl each year, making bowling the largest YOUTH participatory sport in the United States. More youth bowl each year in the U.S. than play golf, baseball, basketball, soccer or any other sport. With this program and your help, we can give youth the skills they need to make bowling a lifelong sport.

Learn the Sport is structured to take place once a week for four weeks, with each weekly session taking one hour. The first 15 minutes of the session are designed to be in a classroom setting with a video lesson. The remaining 45 minutes is designed to take place on the lanes, allowing students to put into practice what they have learned.

## Getting Started

### FIVE KEY QUESTIONS TO ANSWER BEFORE YOU GET STARTED

1. Where will you hold the class?
2. Does the room have the ability to play the DVD?
3. What day and time is the class taking place?
4. How many lanes will be needed for the class?
5. Based on the number of students, will you be instructing alone or will you have help? (We recommend having one coach per four lanes).

### GETTING THE CLASS STARTED

One hour before the class starts:

- a. Set up the room.
- b. Have student handouts available.
- c. Make sure the audio/visual equipment works.

For the first class, take attendance based on sign-ups for the program. Be sure you call all no-shows to sign them up for the next program.



To get this program rolling, you need the ability to play a DVD in a classroom setting. Playing the DVD on your scoring system and showing the video down on the lanes is an option, but a dedicated, quiet location in which you can conduct the classroom portion of the sessions is recommended.



# COACH'S GUIDE



## POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

New bowlers need the right environment to learn and be successful. Coaches need to give positive verbal feedback and non-verbal actions of encouragement to build self-esteem, trusting relationships and teamwork. It is important to have an environment in which bowlers know they can fail without being overly criticized or ridiculed. Not all bowlers will learn as quickly, have the muscle development or the confidence to play equally. You have to be constantly focusing on small achievements to produce the overall goal.

## SELF-DIRECTION

In bowlers, self-direction can be strong and equates to wanting to work harder, practice more and learn more. The best athletes in all sports have strong self-direction and this can be taught. Coaches can help bowlers develop self-direction by focusing on:

- Motivation** – Get your bowlers excited about the sport.
- Initiative** – Get the most out of their talent.
- Focus** – Set goals for the bowlers.
- Discipline** – Help your bowlers follow through on their plans.
- Learning** – Challenge your bowlers to learn the sport.

## HAVING FUN

This is the key factor in the program. It's what brings it all together. Bowling is a great sport that allows anyone to compete. Above all else, make sure your students are having fun!

## WEEK 1

- Front Desk
- Concourse
- Settee
- Lanes
- Safety
- Shoes
- Bowling Balls
- Swing-Out, Down, Back, Through
- Ball Return
- Foul Line
- Approach
- Lane Markings
- Boards
- Dots
- Warm Ups
- Dynamic Stretches
- Lane Courtesy
- Starting Position
- Distance from Foul Line
- Hand in the Ball
- Step-Swing-Roll

## WEEK 2

- Four-Step Approach
- Alignment
- Footwork
- Align your Feet
- Posture
- Arm Swing
- Push Direction
- Finish Position
- Balance & Follow-Through

## WEEK 3

- Plastic Bowling Ball
- Resin Bowling Ball
- Pins
- Pin Number
- Pockets
- Spares
- Split
- Targeting
- Arrows
- Range Finders
- Key Pin
- 3-6-9 Spare System

## WEEK 4

- Visual Alignment
- Pins-Targets-Alignment on Approach
- Strikes
- Practice Drills
- Keeping Score



# COACH'S GUIDE

## 1 WEEK 1 - LESSON PLAN



Week 1 is for introducing students to the basics of bowling, discussing the rules of the game, proper bowling etiquette and safety. Before you play the DVD, welcome everyone and give them a quick overview of the four-week program.

### SAMPLE SCRIPT:

**Welcome everyone! The USA Bowling - Learn the Sport is going to help you understand bowling so you can enjoy your time on the lanes. It runs one day each week for four weeks and each lesson lasts approximately one hour. We will spend the first 15 to 20 minutes each week, in the classroom and the rest of our time on the lanes. We also have a take-home reference guide each week for you.**

- Start the DVD. The coach(es) should stay in the room during the video lesson.
- Once the lesson has been completed, review, discuss, and demonstrate what was in the video and hand out the reference guide.
- Take the students to the lanes and let them practice.
- Provide one-on-one coaching and feedback – remember to celebrate accomplishments and encourage as needed.
- Do not keep score at this time.

### FRONT DESK

The front desk is the control center for everything. This is where you get a lane, shoes, and any assistance while visiting the bowling center.

### CONCOURSE

The large open space for bowlers to prepare or gather during bowling. Typically located between the settee and entrance or walkway.

### SETTEE

The seating area next to the lanes for players to prepare before bowling.

### LANES

The playing field for bowling consisting of an approach, pins, and targets.

### SAFETY

The most important item to consider when bowling. Safety includes proper use of bowling balls, shoes, and lanes. Any questions about safety should be taken to the front desk.

### SHOES

You'll need a specific pair of bowling shoes to play the game. These are designed with custom leather or synthetic soles for sliding on the approach.

### BOWLING BALLS

Used for knocking down the pins. They weigh up to 16 pounds and come in many varieties. House balls are provided for bowlers who do not have their own and buying a personal ball and having it custom fit can improve your game quickly.

### SWING - OUT, DOWN, BACK, THROUGH

Cadence of the bowlers swing and definition of the directions the ball travels throughout the path of a delivery.

### BALL RETURN

Device for returning the ball to the bowlers.

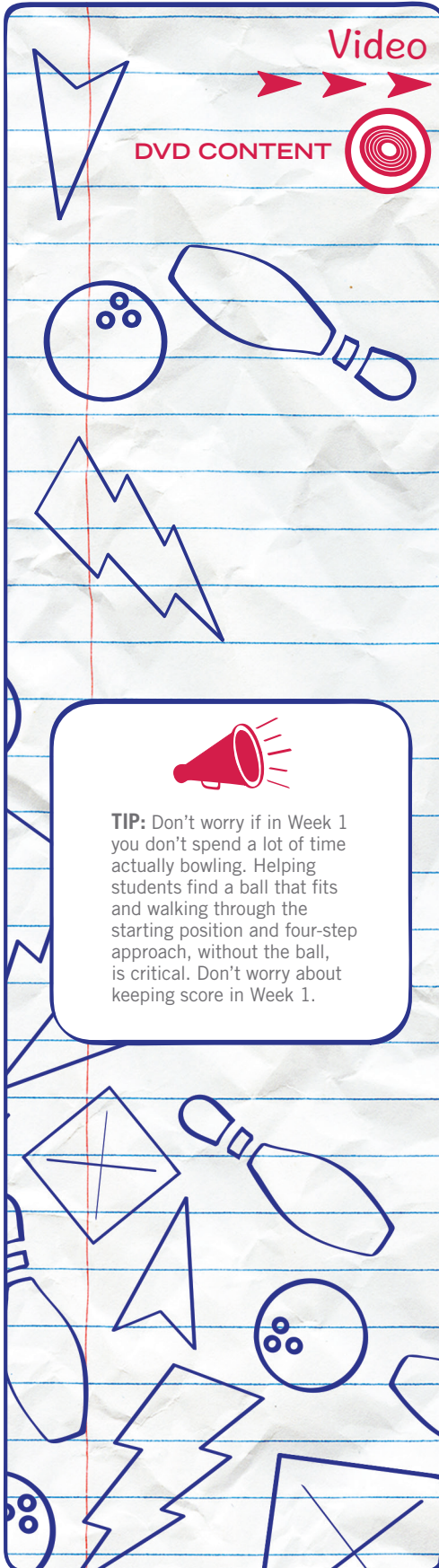
### FOUL LINE

Thick black line located at the end of the approach and the beginning of the lane. Bowlers should never cross the foul line onto the lane.



# COACH'S GUIDE

## 1 WEEK 1 - LESSON PLAN



### APPROACH

The area immediately in front of the lane before the foul line measuring at least 15 feet in length.

### BOARDS

Individual lines on the lane that extend from the pins back through the approach. There are 39 boards on the lane surface.

### DOTS

Circular targets located on the lane and the approach used for alignment.

### WARM UP

Exercises used to prepare the body for the physical activity of bowling.

### DYNAMIC STRETCHES

Exercises used to warm the body's core before physical activity. Examples include, leg swings, torso twists, arm circles, and running in place.

### LANE COURTESY

When two bowlers step on the approach at the same time, players should allow the bowler on the right to bowl first. Purposely being watchful of the lanes around you and allowing others to bowl at the proper time ensures a safe environment for everyone playing.

### STARTING POSITION

The bowler's beginning stance with their ball on the approach.

### DISTANCE FROM THE FOUL LINE

The length of space between the bowler's starting position and the foul line.

### HAND IN THE BALL

How bowlers grip the ball. Typically inserting the two middle fingers and the thumb into the holes.

### STEP-SWING-ROLL

Key words to describe the bowler's motions for going from start-to-finish on the approach. Bowlers begin with a step, then swing the ball while they walk, then roll it onto the lane.



**TIP:** Don't worry if in Week 1 you don't spend a lot of time actually bowling. Helping students find a ball that fits and walking through the starting position and four-step approach, without the ball, is critical. Don't worry about keeping score in Week 1.



# COACH'S GUIDE

## 1 2 WEEK 2 - LESSON PLAN

**Consistency**

COACHING SUPPLEMENT

**Video**

DVD CONTENT

**TIP:** Do not keep score in Week 2. Students will be learning the four-step approach and should focus on the physical game not score.

The first activity each week should be a short review of what was learned the previous week. Begin by going over topics that were covered and ask the group various questions about what they learned.

*Know your audience to keep them engaged. Offer a piece of candy, free game pass, or arcade token for students who answer any recap questions correctly. This will ensure they are studying those student handouts each week when they go home.*

### FOUR-STEP APPROACH

The four-step approach involves the synchronization of the bowling ball and footwork of a bowler's approach. This is the most common approach used to consistently deliver the ball. The ball is pushed "out - down - back - through" starting with the bowler's first step of the approach.

### FOOTWORK

The tempo and direction the feet move during a bowler's delivery.

### ALIGNMENT

Positioning the footwork so the body and arm swing are in a line with the intended target(s).

### ALIGN YOUR FEET

Pointing your footwork in the direction of a target path for alignment and consistency.

### POSTURE

The position of the upper body throughout the bowler's approach and delivery.

### ARM SWING

The path a bowling ball travels during a bowler's approach and the direction a ball moves while being controlled by the arm.

### PUSH DIRECTION

The initial direction of the bowling ball into the bowler's swing.

### BALANCE AND FOLLOW-THROUGH

A bowler's balance after the ball is released is easiest to repeat when the upper body is centered over the hips and knees. The follow-through can be easily repeatable and consistent when the elbow of the bowling arm extends over the bowling shoulder.

### FINISH POSITION

The bowler's overall stance once the ball is delivered. The best finish position includes balance and leverage to deliver the ball onto the lanes.



# COACH'S GUIDE

## 1 2 3 WEEK 3 - LESSON PLAN

**Equipment and Targeting**

**COACHING SUPPLEMENT**

**Video**

**DVD CONTENT**

**TIP:** Begin keeping score so each bowler has a target score to improve during Week 4

Before you play the DVD, welcome everyone back. Ask if there are any questions and review what was taught in Week 2.

*Know your audience to keep them engaged. Offer a piece of candy, free game pass, or arcade token for students who answer any recap questions correctly. This will ensure they are studying those student handouts each week when they go home.*

### PLASTIC BOWLING BALL

A plastic bowling ball is what beginners typically start with and it has a very hard outer surface. This makes it go straight which is best for picking up spares.

### RESIN BOWLING BALL

A resin bowling ball is designed to hook and create more angle into the pins for more hitting power. They're used by high level players to skid in oil and create the highest amount of friction on the dry part of the lane.

### PINS

The objects at the end of a lane that bowlers are trying to knock over. They range in weight from 3 pounds 6 ounces to 3 pounds 10 ounces and are 15 inches tall.

### PIN NUMBERS

Pins are numbered front-to-back and left-to-right from 1 through 10.

### POCKETS

The two pins at the front of a set of pins that bowlers are aiming for so they have the best possibility to strike. Final two sentences: For a right-handed player, the strike pocket is between the 1 and 3 pins. For a left-handed player, the strike pocket is between the 1 and 2 pins.

### SPARE

When a bowler knocks all of the pins off the deck in two deliveries.

### SPLITS

Any pin combination that doesn't include the head pin and has at least two or more non-adjacent groups of one or more pins. Examples include the 2-10, 4-6, 3-10, and 6-7-10.

### TARGETING

Aligning the footwork and arm swing with one or more targets to knock down specific pins.

### ARROWS

Triangular marks on the lane surface used for targeting. There are seven arrows located every five boards, and the board locations are 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 35.

### RANGE FINDERS

Specific dark markings on some lanes that are one board wide and several feet long. These are located close to the pins and are used to identify the location of a bowling ball while it's traveling down the lane.

### KEY PIN

When there's a cluster of pins standing, the pin closest to the bowler is the key pin. Hitting the key pin offers the best chance at knocking them all down.

### 3-6-9 SPARE SYSTEM


A spare system based off the strike target. The adjustments are in three-board increments (or 3-6-9) for pins residing in the zones on the bowler's non-ball side and three-board increments (or 3-6-9) for pins residing in the zones on the bowler's ball side.




# COACH'S GUIDE

## ① ② ③ ④ WEEK 4 - LESSON PLAN

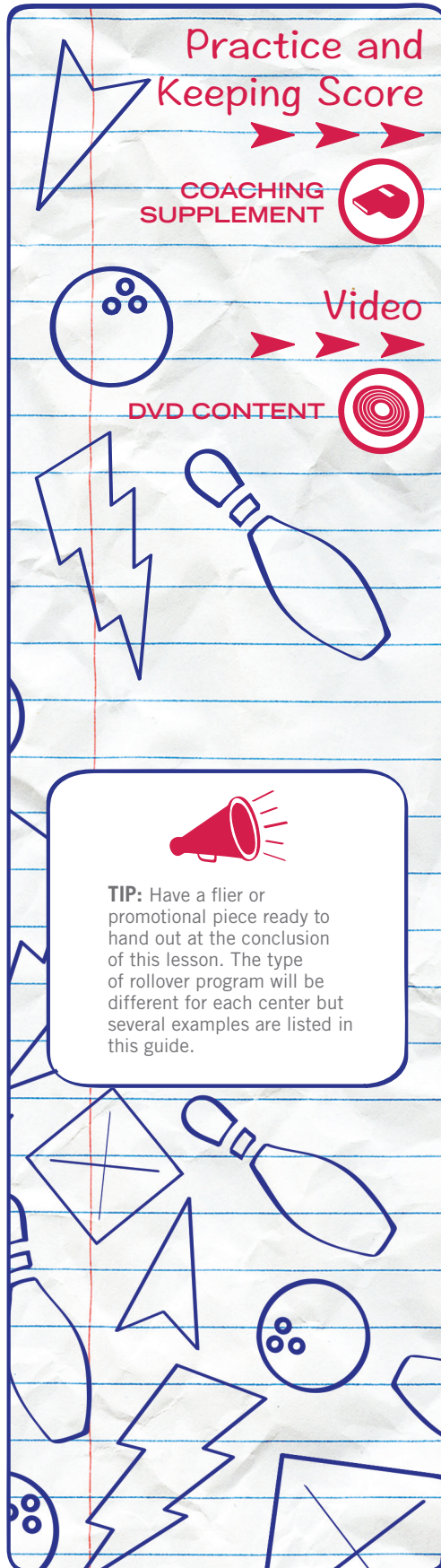
**Practice and Keeping Score**

COACHING SUPPLEMENT 

Video

DVD CONTENT 

**TIP:** Have a flier or promotional piece ready to hand out at the conclusion of this lesson. The type of rollover program will be different for each center but several examples are listed in this guide.



Before you play the DVD, welcome everyone back. Ask if there are any questions and review what was taught in Week 3.

*Know your audience to keep them engaged. Offer a piece of candy, free game pass, or arcade token for students who answer any recap questions correctly. This will ensure they are studying those student handouts each week when they go home.*

### VISUAL ALIGNMENT

Placing a target in line with the bowler's sight path to roll a ball over it.

### PINS – TARGETS – ALIGNMENT ON APPROACH

Using the pins as the initial starting point then mentally drawing an imaginary line back to a target (board, dot, or arrow) on the lane and adjusting the footwork to deliver the ball on the intended path.

### STRIKES

Knocking all 10 pins down on the first delivery.

### PRACTICE DRILLS

Any technique used to train consistency and repeatability in a bowler's approach. Common practice drills include timing, arm swing, release, balance, and accuracy.

### KEEPING SCORE

A game of bowling consists of 10 frames. The first nine frames have one or two attempts to knock down all 10 pins. A strike (marked with an X) is when you knock down all 10 pins on the first delivery; a spare (marked with the first ball's pinfall and a /) is knocking down all 10 with two deliveries. A miss (marked with a -) is when you leave any pin standing after the second roll.

It's possible to throw three balls in the 10th frame because there is an extra ball if you throw a strike or a spare. A strike lets you throw two extra balls, a spare lets you throw one.

X = 10 pins + the next two balls

/ = 10 pins + the next ball

- = total number of pins knocked down for that frame

## ⑤ WEEK 5

This is the week you start your rollover program. The success of this effort will happen during Week 4 when you go lane-to-lane and give everyone a promotional piece about your new program. If your coach conducting the program is not strong in sales and marketing, then Week 4 is when you need someone to join the coach. Your representatives should go lane-to-lane to thank everyone for taking part in the program and have the new bowlers sign up for your rollover program.

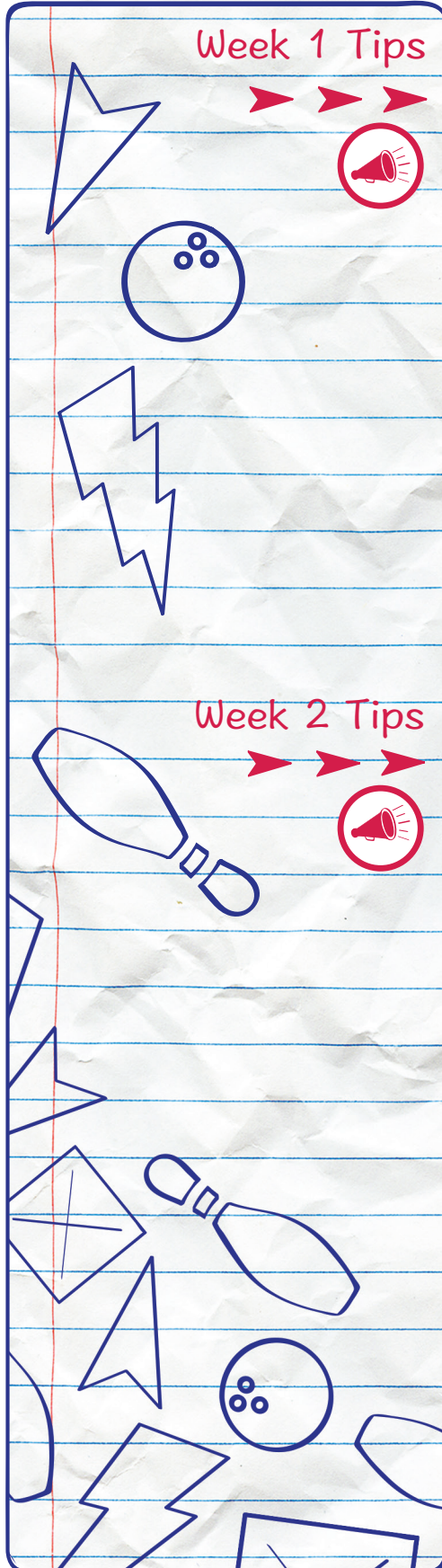
You decide the type of rollover program to offer the bowlers. However, it should have a fee attached to it and be short in duration. Now is when you can start to generate revenue from your four-week investment. There are many types of programs to offer, but the "8 for 8" program is gaining popularity and national recognition in today's marketplace. The program is eight weeks in length, costs \$8 per week and typically has a ball as a premium item given to the bowler at the conclusion of the eight weeks. It is a normal transition to the life cycle of a bowler in today's marketplace. These new youth bowlers are not yet ready to be mixed in with your traditional youth league bowlers.





# COACH'S GUIDE

## WEEKLY COACHING TIPS



### BOWLING SHOES

- The bottoms of shoes should be kept dry avoiding water or spills of any kind.

### BOWLING BALLS

- Start with a ball that is 10 percent of the bowler's body weight.
- The fingers will go into the ball first, followed by having the bowler roll the ball onto their thumb.

### BOWLING BALL GRIPS

- Conventional grip: Fingers are inserted to the second joint.
- Fingertip grip: Fingers are inserted to the first joint.

### WARM UP

- Use warm-up exercises to avoid injury.

### COURTESY

- One bowler on the approach at a time.

### FOUR-STEP APPROACH

- Measure the bowler's appropriate starting distance from the foul line.
- The first step (ball-side foot) and ball move together in one smooth motion.

### ARM SWING

- The arm swing should begin with a smooth rounded motion and swing loose from the shoulder.

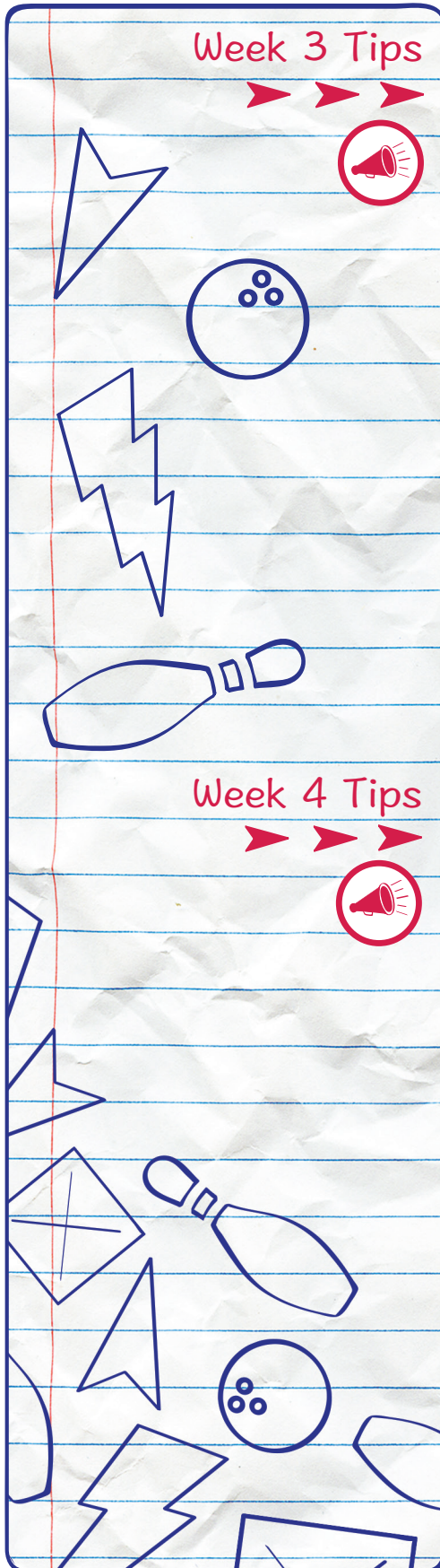
### BALANCE AND FOLLOW-THROUGH

- Balance should be stable and follow through with the elbow above the shoulder.



# COACH'S GUIDE

## WEEKLY COACHING TIPS



### TARGETING (USED FOR STRIKE AND SPARE SHOTS)

- There are different ways to target, and it is a personal preference; have the bowlers pick one that feels comfortable.
- The arrows are good targets to start with.
- Keep the head steady throughout the approach.
- Follow through until the elbow is over the shoulder.

### SPARE SHOOTING

- Locate the Key Pin (the pin closest to them). Count the appropriate amount of boards to line up with the intended spare. Use visual alignment by drawing a line straight back from the key pin to their ball-side shoulder; remind them to keep their eyes on the target.

### DRILLS

- Practice their bowling approach at home to create a feel for synchronization of the ball swing and footwork.
- Practice the first step of the ball-side foot and ball moving at the same time.
- Bowlers can practice the One-Step Drill, Arm Swing Drill, and Balance Drills to improve their approach.

### TERMINOLOGY

- Strike: Knocking down all the pins on the first roll.
- Spare: Knocking down the remaining pins, after the first roll.
- Open: When pins are left standing after the second roll.
- Double: Two strikes in a row.
- Triple: Three strikes in a row.
- Split: Pin combination that doesn't include the head pin and has a gap between two or more pins. Examples include the 2-10, 4-6, 3-10 and 6-7-10.

### QUICK ADJUSTMENTS

- Bowlers will move their feet on the approach the direction they miss the head pin, miss left = move left, miss right = move right.
- Keep their eyes on the same target.

### BALANCE ARM (the opposite arm or non-ball-side arm)

- As the ball is pushed into the swing during the first step, the hand comes off the ball with the arm continuing out to the side for balance.

### WRAP UP

- Since this is the final week, ask if they have questions about anything learned.