

3. BOWLING — BOYS AND GIRLS

A. GENERAL REGULATIONS

1) Interscholastic Participation

- 1.1) All high school bowling matches shall be played utilizing USBC playing rules which may be modified in accordance with OHSAA Bylaws and Sports Regulations.
- 1.2) A minimum of two (2) regular games of tenpin regulation scoring followed by a minimum of two (2) Baker games will constitute an official, regular season match. Total combined pins for all games bowled win the match. Regular season matches (excluding tournaments) that bowl more than the minimum number of games as described above require the permission of the participating schools.
 - 1.21) In addition to regular season matches, teams may participate in tournaments that utilize an all-Baker format, provided that a minimum of four (4) teams participate in each respective level/division and no fewer than six (6) Baker games are bowled by each participating team. Boys teams and girls teams may not participate against each other in regular season matches/tournaments without prior permission of the OHSAA Executive Director's Office. All matches count in the 24 match season limitation.
 - 1.22) Match limitations for each team and individual are 24 matches, plus the OHSAA postseason tournament.
 - a. A match is defined as head-to-head competition or a regular season tournament.
 - b. Regular season tournaments with multiple teams count as one match in field of play competition. For tournaments that only feature head-to-head competition shall count each head-to-head competition as one match.
 - c. If a tournament runs multiple and/or consecutive days, each day shall count as one match.
 - d. Teams and bowlers may not participate in more than one match, or in one game, simultaneously.
 - 1.23) A team/individual that exceeds the regular season participation limitation (maximum number of matches permitted) or participates in a regular season match(es) prior to the designated start date for matches shall be removed from the OHSAA tournament.
 - a. Participation Limits – Players may be moved between varsity and non-varsity teams at the discretion of the coach. The maximum number of matches in which a bowler may participate during the regular season is 24. Bowling a frame or any part of a frame in any game shall constitute a match. No player may compete on a school varsity and school non-varsity team simultaneously that day during a match. The match in which the student first competes (non-varsity or varsity) must have concluded prior to the student bowling in the next match (non-varsity or varsity).
 - 1.24) Competition is permitted between boys bowling teams and girls bowling teams on a case-by-case basis. This competition is permitted only when the Executive Director's Office issues a waiver prior to the competition occurring. Such matches shall count toward the 24-match season limitation.

Note: Bowling Regulation 3 prohibits students from bowling as a member of a boys team and a girls team during a season.
 - 1.25) Any scheduled regular season match which does not start shall be deemed a no-contest and shall not count in the won-loss record or season limitation. Any match that does start and is interrupted for any reason beyond the control of the responsible parties, if resumed, shall be resumed from the point of interruption. If the match is interrupted and not resumed, and a winner cannot be determined, the match shall not count in the season limitation.
 - 1.26) Tiebreakers
 - a. Team - Ties for team match total pins and the advancement of teams in tournaments and/or the placement of teams on brackets will be broken by a 9th and 10th frame roll-off between one player from each team selected by each respective head coach. This roll-off will be repeated until the tie is broken. For the initial tiebreaker, the winner of a coin toss will select their starting lane and determine who bowls the 9th frame first. Bowlers will rotate lanes for the 10th (and any additional) frame.
 - b. Individual - Ties for advancement/awards in matches that provide for individual advancement/awards will be broken based on the highest single game bowled in the series being used to determine advancement/awards. Should this also result in a tie, there will be a 9th and 10th frame roll-off until the tie is broken. For the initial tiebreaker, the winner of a coin toss will select their starting lane. Bowlers will rotate lanes for the 10th (and any additional) frame.
 - c. Baker Game - no individual Baker Game shall end in a tie in head-to-head Baker game competition that advances teams on brackets or tournaments. In such situations, the tie will be broken by a 9th and 10th frame roll-off between one player from each team selected by each respective head coach. This roll-off, utilizing the same two players will be repeated until the tie is broken. Each team member will bowl a 9th and 10th frame roll-off on the same lane in which the Baker game was bowled. The team member shall continue to bowl on the same lane until the tie is broken. The winner of a coin toss shall determine who bowls first.

1.3) A team will field five (5) players at a time in matches. A minimum of three (3) players must be present to constitute a legal lineup. Absent and/or tardy bowlers will receive a score of zero (0) for any missed frames. Missed frames cannot be made up. Any school that fails to field a legal lineup at the time the match commences shall not be permitted to participate in the match.

1.4) School teams are not permitted to practice against each other. School teams may practice in the same facility at the same time, but member schools may not “combine” teams to practice simultaneously on the same lanes. Such practice would be considered a scrimmage and scrimmages are not permitted in the sport of bowling.

Exception: The day prior to a school’s participation in the OHSA state tournament series it is permissible for individuals/teams to practice on the same lane at the tournament facility.

1.5) Lineups – A coach may change his/her team lineup (order of bowling) prior to the start of any game. Eligible bowlers who arrive late may be added to the lineup.

1.6) Substitutions – A coach may substitute a player “at will” at any time before or during a game. However, once removed from the lineup, the removed player(s) may not re-enter play until the start of the next regular or Baker game. A player once removed is reclassified as a substitute bowler and may be used as a substitute bowler in any spot in the team lineup upon legal return to play (subsequent game). A coach substituting any player for any reason must notify the match scorekeeper and opposing coach at the time of the substitution. The partial game score produced by the removed player and substitute shall not be computed in the individual pin count of either player when determining advancement/awards in respect to matches/tournaments. Conferences may establish their own regulations to determine a student’s bowling average. Total pin count determines a team’s standing in regular season/tournament matches.

Penalty: An illegal substitute shall be assessed a score of zero (0) for all frames, or part of a frame, bowled. A substitution has to occur for the score to count or not count.

Note: Any frame, or part of a frame bowled, counts in the total number of matches bowled in the season limitation of 24 matches. See Bowling Regulation 1.22 a.

1.7) The home school coach or tournament manager shall serve as the official, enforcing all OHSA regulations and appropriate USBC rules.

1.8) School Representative – No team or individual entry will be permitted to compete in a match unless accompanied by a properly certified school coach or a person authorized by the Board of Education or similar governing body.

1.9) Uniforms

1.91) Uniform Tops:

- a. All participants must wear the same sleeved, bowling shirt which conforms to school/OHSA regulations.
- b. Uniform tops shall require the school name on the back of the uniform top. The name of the school must be at least 1 inch in height.
- c. Uniform tops do not require a number.

1.92) Uniform Bottoms:

- a. All participants must wear solid black pants/bottoms.
- b. If a participant is wearing a skirt or shorts, they must be black and be no shorter than the end of the bowler’s index finger when standing. Uniforms may be mixed (e.g., pants, skirts and/or shorts).
- c. Pants shall be worn at waist level and not sag or touch the floor.
- d. Cargo, yoga pants, jeggings, leggings, zebra/zubaz, and painter pants (i.e. pants with multiple side pockets down the leg) and warmups are not permitted.

1.93) Headbands, if worn, must be a solid color and bear no markings, other than the school name, or official nickname, or mascot logo. Headbands do not need to be the same color for each team member. It is not necessary for each team member to wear a headband. Hair ribbons are permitted. Hats are not permitted nor are bandanas of any type.

1.94) Bowling center logos are not permitted on any part of the uniform. Manufacturer’s logos (Nike, Adidas, etc.) are permitted on uniforms, not headbands. See General Sports Regulations 20 for additional information on uniforms.

1.95) Conferences and/or leagues may have their own requirements but may not conflict with OHSA uniform requirements.

1.10) Electronic Devices may be used for coaching and scoring purposes only during an OHSA match.

2) Non-Interscholastic Participation

A member of an interscholastic bowling squad (any student who has played in a regular season/tournament match) sponsored by the Board of Education or similar governing body shall not participate in a non-interscholastic match

or event during the school's bowling season (Sports Regulation 7).

Note: Examples of non-interscholastic bowling matches include, but are not limited to, club or intramural bowling, bowling facility championships, tournaments, leagues (adult and/or youth), charitable events and other events that are organized for the purpose of competition or fundraising.

Exception: A student, who has participated for the school team this season, may participate in two non-interscholastic matches/events as an individual participant provided the participation does not violate any coach's, school, or school district/system policy. Each match/event shall have a clearly defined start and end date, not to exceed one-week (7 days) for each respective match/event. In addition, for the match/event to be considered a permissible event, all participation must be scheduled on consecutive days. A waiver from the Executive Director's Office is required prior to a student's participation in a non-interscholastic match/event once a student has participated for the school team. NO waiver will be granted for participation that occurs on or after January 19, 2026. Any student who participates in a non-interscholastic match/event on or after the non-interscholastic date indicated below, without receiving an OHSAA approved waiver, shall not be eligible for the OHSAA postseason bowling tournament. In addition to this denial of participation, other penalties may be prescribed. This exception may not be used to grant school 'teams' additional matches, nor may it be used to participate in any league.

- 2.1) The maximum consequence for violation of Bowling Regulation 2, and/or Sports Regulation 7.2.2, participation on a non-interscholastic bowling squad, or in a non-interscholastic bowling event; or any OHSAA regulations for any member of the school squad is ineligibility for the remainder of the interscholastic bowling season or the ensuing season. For a senior, the maximum penalty shall be ineligibility for the remainder of the school year.

Note: For a senior, the maximum penalty shall be ineligibility for the remainder of the school year.

- 2.2) An individual who has not participated as a representative of the school in a bowling match during the current season must cease non-interscholastic competition prior to the non-interscholastic date indicated below to be eligible for OHSAA tournament competition in bowling. Once a member of the school team (the student has participated in a school match), the student is subject to Bowling Regulation 2. In addition to this denial of participation, other penalties may be prescribed.

- 2.3) No non-interscholastic competition permitted on or after this date. The non-interscholastic date is:

Date: January 19, 2026

- 2.4) Interscholastic bowling coaches may coach athletes from the school where employed outside the interscholastic season of the sport. No coach may require participation until the official start of the interscholastic season.

3) Sponsorship

- 3.1) Per Bylaw 1-6-1, girls may participate on a boys team. Once a girl has joined the boys team, she is not permitted to join the girls team at any time during the remainder of that respective season and would need to finish the year on the boys team. Girls participating on the boys team must count toward that team's competitive balance roster.
- 3.2) A school that sponsors girls bowling, with five or more girls participating, shall have a separate girls team in order to enter the OHSAA-sponsored girls team tournament competition.
- 3.3) A school that does not sponsor girls bowling and has indicated it will not enter the girl's postseason tournament, but has one or more girls participating, may permit the girls to participate on the boys team. They shall enter the OHSAA-sponsored boys tournament competition.
- 3.4) A school that sponsors girls bowling and has less than five girls participating may permit the girls to participate as individuals with the boys team during the regular season. The girls are permitted to enter and compete as individuals in the OHSAA-sponsored girls tournament provided the school is registered for the girls tournament, or may enter the OHSAA-sponsored boys tournament.
- 3.5) No boy may bowl on a girls team. A boys team that has less than five (5) bowlers shall permit members of the boys team to participate in the OHSAA boys tournament as individuals.
- 3.6) No bowler may bowl on both a boys team and girls team during the same school season.
- 3.7) No bowler may bowl in both the boys and girls OHSAA tournament.
- 3.8) A school that sponsors boys and girls bowling and has separate teams shall schedule separate matches, but both may be held at the same time. A school representative must be present during all matches.

4) Penalties

Violation of any Bowling Regulations or General Sport Regulations are subject to penalties, as outlined in the Bowling Regulations and/or Bylaw 11.

5) Transfer Bylaw

While all questions regarding the transfer bylaw should be addressed to the appropriate school administrator, information regarding the transfer bylaw can be found on the OHSAA website at this link, <http://www.ohsaa.org/>

Eligibility/Transfer. Note that students who transfer and do not meet an exception to the transfer bylaw, and who participated in high school bowling within 12 months of the transfer date, are ineligible for all regular season matches, scrimmages, and the OHSAA postseason tournament beginning with varsity regular season match #13.

6) Other Bylaws and Regulations

For additional information regarding uniforms, use of foreign substances, altering the ball surface, out of state travel, spectators, and the OHSAA ejection policy, etc. please refer to the OHSAA Bowling Coaches Manual located on the Bowling Page on the OHSAA website.

In addition, information regarding the ejection policy for coaches and players can be found in Sections 13 and 14 of the OHSAA General Sports Regulations, which are in the OHSAA Handbook and posted at OHSAA.org.

B. SPECIFIC REGULATIONS — GRADES 9-12

- 1) Coaching, tryouts and instruction may begin — **October 31, 2025**
- 2) First match — **November 14, 2025**
- 3) Deadline date for OHSAA Tournament — **January 19, 2026**
- 4) Tournament draw/seeding meeting — **February 1, 2026, 2:00 p.m.**
- 5) Season ends — **March 7, 2026**
- 6) Scrimmages — **None permitted**
- 7) Regular season matches — **24 for team and individual and each interscholastic match counts**
- 8) Rules—**United States Bowling Congress (USBC) as modified by OHSAA**
- 9) Officials — **No requirements**

BOWLING CALENDAR

Bowling	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28
Coaching and Tryouts Begin	10/31	10/30	10/29
Season Begins	11/14	11/13	11/12
Non-Interscholastic Date	1/19	1/18	1/17
Sectional – Div II	2/8-2/15#	2/7-2/24#	2/6-2/13#
Sectional – Div I	2/15-2/22#	2/14-2/21#	2/13-2/20#
District – Div II	2/15-2/22	2/14-2/21	2/13-2/20
District – Div I	2/22-3/1	2/21-2/28	2/20-2/27
State – Div II	2/27-2/28	2/26-2/27	2/25-2/26
State – Div I	3/6-3/7	3/5-3/6	3/3-3/4
Season Ends	3/7	3/6	3/4

#Unless an earlier date is established by a District Athletic Board
(no earlier than two days prior to the established date)