

ABOUT THE LEAGUE

GBL was founded in 1990 and is currently the largest LGBTQIA+ bowling league in New England. We welcome bowlers of every skill level and regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, with community at the center of the league.

GBL is sanctioned by USBC and IGBO. GBL pays the USBC and IGBO membership fees for all Regular Bowlers; Pacers are not required to hold either membership.

What is USBC (United States Bowling Congress)?

USBC is the governing body of bowling in the US and sets the rules and standards used in sanctioned bowling. Talk to our Director of Captains to learn more about USBC.

What is IGBO (International Gay Bowling Organization)?

IGBO connects 9,000+ members to LGBT+ leagues and tournaments. Talk to our IGBO Representative to learn more.

PRE-BOWLING

If you plan to pre-bowl, let your Captain know and:

- **Call EPL first** to confirm availability. Pre-bowling is generally unavailable after 5 PM on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.
- **Do not pay EPL.** Pay your weekly league fee the following week.
- **Take a photo of your completed scores and email it to the Secretary** using **GBL Week XX Pre-Bowl Scores** as the subject. Include your full name and team name.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Captains: Your Captain is your team's main point of contact for communication, etiquette, attendance questions, and weekly payments.

League Standings: Posted weekly on LeagueSecretary.com and at the lanes. The final week is playoffs.

Dues: \$23 per week or \$345 per season, due in full by Week 13. Dues include shoes and are still owed for missed weeks. Pay your captain/the Treasurer by cash or check payable to "GALA Bowling League, Inc."

Questions? Contact GBL Leadership or info.galabowling@gmail.com

Visit our website at www.galabowling.org or follow us on social media!



@galabowling



GALA Bowling League (GBL)



@gala_bowling



NEW MEMBER GUIDE

FALL 2026 – WINTER 2027

Welcome to the GALA Bowling League (GBL)!

This guide will go over everything you need to know to get started bowling, plus a high-level view of bowling and GBL. GBL offers additional instruction and on-lane practice throughout the season. Check out the events calendar for more details!

LEADERSHIP

GBL Leadership is made up of volunteers who help keep the league organized and welcoming. Reach out anytime with questions or for help.

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Vice President

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TERMS

Frame: A basic turn in bowling. Players get 2 attempts (balls) to try to knock down as many pins as they can.

Game: Ten frames strung together.

Series: Each week we bowl three games. This equals a Series.

Spare: When you knock down all the pins using both balls.

Strike: When you knock down all the pins on your first ball. You do not get a second ball in a frame where you get a strike.

Split: After your first ball, you leave pins that are not next to each other. On the scoreboard, a split will be circled.

Average: The mathematical average of your score for every game you've played this season.

Handicap: Extra pins that get added to your score to help even out teams that have different skill levels.

Approach: The part of the lane you walk on when bowling.

Foul Line: The line at the start of the lane that bowlers must not cross when delivering the ball.

BOWLING BASICS

GBL bowls every **Sunday**, except certain holidays (e.g., Easter). **Bowling may be rescheduled due to weather or other emergency situations, so be sure to check league emails.** Bowlers should arrive and be ready to start practice at 5:50 PM; **the first game will start at 6 PM.** Please arrive early to get shoes, your ball, and get settled before we start.

Absent bowlers incur a 10-pin penalty per game. Bowlers not present by the time the opposing team finishes their 3rd frame will be marked absent for the first game. If you know you'll miss a week, let your captain know as early as possible. See the Pre-Bowling section for instructions.

Your team will be assigned to a lane. The team assigned to the lane next to you will be your opponent for the night. Your team and your opposing team will alternate bowling on the two lanes you're assigned.

For example, if you are assigned to lane 43, you will bowl against the team on lane 44. You'll bowl the first frame on lane 43, the second frame on lane 44, and the third frame on lane 43, etc.

When it's your turn, you will step up to the approach and throw your first ball, trying to knock down as many pins as possible. Don't step onto the **approach** if a bowler next to you is actively bowling. If you don't knock down all the pins, you'll get a second ball to try to knock down the rest of the pins.

SCORING

On a basic level, you score the number of pins you knock down. However, if you get a **Spare** or a **Strike**, the ball(s) in your next **frame** will give you extra points.

Exception: The 10th Frame – If you get a spare or strike in your 10th frame, you'll throw 3 balls instead of two. This is because you don't have a "next frame" to get the extra points.

We bowl a **Series** (three **Games**) each week (Sunday night). Your score for a game is your total number of pins plus your **Handicap**. Your team's score will be the sum of each bowler's score.

For standings, you can earn 4 points per night: 1 for each of the three **games**, and a 4th point for having the most pins for the **series** as a whole. We post our weekly standings on LeagueSecretary.com and will have a printout at each lane on Sunday.

BOWLING ETIQUETTE & SAFETY

In order to ensure a fun and safe environment for everyone, please adhere to the following rules while bowling:

- Be on time and ready to go
- Always be respectful of other bowlers
- Make sure you're ready to bowl when it's your turn
- Do not throw a ball while the lane is resetting. This will break things
- Don't interfere with other bowlers or walk in another bowler's lane
- Don't actively throw a ball at the same time a bowler next to you is also throwing their ball
- No food or drink onto the lane. It's OK to have it at your table
- Clean up any spills immediately and don't get your shoes wet
- Don't step over the foul line—the lane is oily and you will slip!

YOUR FIRST NIGHT

- **If you're new to GBL, arrive by 5:30 PM in Week 1** for orientation.
- **On regular weeks, arrive early** to get your shoes, find a house ball, and get settled
- **Find your team and lane** and introduce yourself to your Captain and teammates
- **Be ready for practice at 5:50 PM.** Games begin at 6 PM
- **Watch the overhead screen** so you know when it's your turn
- **Ask questions.** Your Captain and league leadership are there to help
- Most importantly, **have fun!** Bowlers of every skill level belong here