

Chapter 7: Equipment Specifications and Certifications

NOTE: The following are Commonly Asked Questions explaining some of the specifications USBC has implemented. The *USBC Equipment Specifications Manual* containing all USBC equipment specifications, including detailed information on all revised measurement and material specifications is available on BOWL.com.

Where does someone find out what products are approved for use during competition?

Any bowling ball, accessory or cleaner used in certified USBC competition must be approved and located on the list on the Equipment Specifications page on BOWL.com. Additionally, for identification purposes, bowling balls must have the manufacturer's name, product name and the serial number.

Can I use a ball with a crack in it?

If a crack is located within your track area, it is not permitted for use during USBC competition. A crack is defined as a narrow opening or crack of considerable length and depth usually occurring from some breaking or parting.

I use rosin or powder in my gripping holes. Do I need to wipe my ball after every use?

Yes. Rosin and powder are considered foreign substances and must be wiped off completely before making a delivery. In addition, these substances may be only used as a gripping aid and may not be placed anywhere else on the ball surface.

Do I have to use all gripping holes during the delivery of the ball?

If a thumb hole is not being used during a delivery and a weight/balance hole is present, a bowler must demonstrate that all gripping holes can be used for gripping purposes simultaneously. The ball must be within specification as the ball rests in the bowler's hand but all holes do not need to be used for gripping purposes during a delivery.

Do lanes have to be dressed prior to every league?

No. Every bowling center is inspected annually for a compliant lane condition. USBC specifications dictate that when the lanes are dressed, a minimum of three units from edge board to edge board be used for the length of the pattern. As long as this is done when the lanes are initially dressed, they are compliant.

If my bowling ball's serial number has been removed or is no longer visible on the ball, is it still legal/acceptable to use in USBC competition?

If the serial number can no longer be identified, it must be replaced by engraving another serial number provided the ball's original product name and manufacturer's name are still visible. The manufacturer's name, product name and the serial number must be visible for the ball to be used in USBC competition. These items must be included to verify that it is an approved ball.



It is discovered that my bowling ball is out of specification while bowling league or just after. What happens?

If it is found that the bowler had prior knowledge, a protest can be filed within the time constraints of USBC Rule 119. All games would be subject to forfeiture within the previous 15 days. If the bowler had no prior knowledge the games would not be subject to forfeiture but the ball would not be able to be used until the issue was resolved.

Our lanes didn't appear to be dressed the same as normal. This time the center put down a (sport shot, or the machine malfunctioned) are our scores still valid or can they be null and voided?

The scores are valid and they may not be null and voided. As long as the minimum specifications are met, the condition is compliant and the scores stand as bowled.

On my first delivery, I don't use my thumb hole, I also have a balance hole. Is this acceptable?

Yes, a bowler must only be able to reasonably demonstrate that all gripping holes can be used for gripping purposes simultaneously. As long as the ball is in specification as the ball rests in the bowlers hand it is acceptable.

