

## **Go Practice!**

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There is an old saying that goes, "You don't win anything for practice, and you don't win anything if you don't." This is as true in bowling as any other sport, especially if you are a tournament bowler. It can be tedious, boring, and just generally anti-fun, but practice is the key to improving on your game and achieving success.

When you walk into a bowling center with the intention of practicing, it's important to have some kind of game plan before you start. Just throwing bowling balls down the lane one after another will be counterproductive in the long run. You might want to work on just one thing, like your follow through. Don't worry about where the ball is going, just make sure that your follow through is consistent and steady from shot to shot. You might want to work on keeping your head steady or having a good knee bend. Whatever you plan to work on, make sure you have a purpose to going out and practicing.

When Tiger Woods was learning his game, he would go out and practice with his father, and during the round his father would purposely do things right before he took his swing to try to distract him; this made Tiger mentally tough, and we all know where he is today. Now, I'm not suggesting you go get your dad and have him drop bowling balls on the lane before you throw the ball, but one thing I like to do from time to time, when it's possible, is to be put on the lane next to a bunch of kids or a kid's birthday party. This helps me to work on tuning out distractions while I'm on the lane. This is just something I do, you might find something else as equally distracting while you bowl, my advice would be to bowl with that distraction and work on tuning it out. If you can do that, your mental toughness in tournament play will kick in when the time comes to deal with a distraction.

Practice is essential, but it is important to have a purpose in practicing. Hopefully these suggestions will help you develop a game plan.