

Week 5 Coaching Plan – Focus: Weight/Length Control

Length/Weight – introducing how stance height and swing length control the distance a bowl travels.

1. Introduction & Recap

- Recap Weeks 1–4: line, stance, grip, swing, balance, release.
- Introduce today's focus: *weight control is about sending the bowl the correct distance to reach the jack.*
- Acknowledge: *It's one of the hardest skills in bowls – but practice develops "muscle memory."*

2. Coach Demonstration

- **Height of stance:** lower stance = less weight, higher stance = more weight.
- **Swing length:** small swing = short bowl, longer swing = longer bowl.
- **Pendulum principle:** equal back and forward swing, let the weight of the bowl guide the arm.
- **Forward step link:** shorter step = less power, longer step = more.
- Demonstrate delivering to short, medium, and long jacks with smooth control.

3. Player Activity 1 – 3 Inline Jacks Drill

- Place 3 jacks on the centre line, at least 4m apart (short, medium, long).
- Pupils must **declare** which jack they are aiming for before delivering.
- Deliver 2 consecutive bowls (forehand/backhand).
- Coach observes stance height, swing length, and bowl result.

4. Player Activity 2 – Progressive Adjustment

- Gradually reduce the separation between jacks to make the weight judgment more challenging.
- Move the mat forward/backwards occasionally to reinforce adjustment.
- Encourage self-assessment: pupils call out "on target, short, or long" before the bowl reaches halfway.

5. Player Activity 3 – Weight Challenge (Engagement Optional)

- Game format: 3 points for correct weight (within 2m of declared jack), 1 point if the line is correct but the weight is off.
- Reinforces consistency and awareness of weight.

6. Wrap-Up & Reflection

- Ask pupils: "What did you notice about your swing length when the jack was further away?"
- Reinforce:



Berkshire Bowls Coaching Scheme



- Height of stance, swing length, and step length all affect weight.
- Easier to add weight than to take it off.
- Muscle memory improves with practice and feedback.
- Preview Week 6: *"Next time we'll build further on length/weight with more complex adjustments."*

Outcomes (refined)

By the end of the session, the pupil should:

- Deliver bowls consistently within ~2m of a declared jack.
- Understand how **stance height and swing length control weight**.
- Recognise outcomes (on target/short/long) before bowls finish.
- Begin developing muscle memory for weight control.

Coach's Observation Checklist

Week 5 – Length/Weight

- Adjusts height of stance appropriately for weight control.
- Uses pendulum arm swing (smooth, not forced).
- Matches the length of the forward swing with the back swing (balanced arc).
- Controls weight primarily with stance height and swing length (not forced arm speed).
- Identifies bowl weight outcome early (on target, short, or long).
- Consistently delivers within ~2m of the intended jack.

Homework

Set homework for pupils: Practice developing a back swing. Some pupils don't know they have not got a back swing. To help back swing development, either wrap a towel over a chair or stand by the net curtains about one normal step in front, facing away and then practice your delivery with or without a tennis ball. If you cannot feel the towel or net curtains, then you do not have a back swing.

