

Guide to Weight Control – Player’s Workbook

Weight control is one of the most important skills in bowls. It’s what allows you to consistently reach the jack and adapt to different lengths. This guide blends key concepts, comparisons, checklists, and drills to make weight control easier to understand and practice.

What Is Weight Control?

Weight control = the ability to consistently deliver bowls within 1 mat in front to 2 mats behind the jack. It’s not about being perfect every time, but repeatable and predictable.

Theories of Weight Control

Method	How It Works	Strengths	Limitations
Pendulum Swing	Vary arm swing length (arc) only	Simple, consistent, easier for brain to calculate	Harder to reach heavy greens without extra power
Delivery Stance	Alter stance height, step, or backswing	Adaptable to conditions, adds power	Less repeatable, more athleticism needed

Building Consistency

- Keep arm straight – fewer moving parts = fewer errors.
- Maintain the same stance for every delivery.
- Finish with consistent follow-through height.
- Stand in the same position on the mat each time.
- Don’t change too many variables at once.
- Keep it simple – avoid overthinking.

Rule of Thumb

👉 Raise your hand by 1 inch = bowl travels about 1 yard further.

Adjusting Length

Jacks are not always rolled to the same spot. You need to adapt length mid-game. The pendulum swing approach generally makes adjusting easier, but whichever method you use,



practice the feel of 'yard on' and 'yard off' shots. Avoid overcompensating when trying to adjust.

🚫 What Stops Good Weight Control

- Inconsistent stance – taller or lower stance adds unintended power.
- Inconsistent line – wider lines need bowls to travel further, making length look wrong.
- Unstable arm swing – extra effort added through fingers or elbow causes errors.

🔧 Actionable Steps

- Ask a club coach to observe and give feedback.
- If no coach, ask a teammate to film you from the side and front.
- Experiment with both pendulum and stance methods to see which feels more repeatable for you.

🏏 Weight Control Drills

Drill 1: Rhythm Finder

- Goal: Discover your natural short, medium, and long lengths.
- Method: Use two mats and four bowls. Deliver at 'easy', 'short', and 'long' lengths while keeping rhythm steady.
- Measure: Check how close your groupings are for each length.

Drill 2: Land the Mat

- Goal: Land bowls in a 3-mat long, 2-mat wide target zone.
- Method: Use six mats (five target, one delivery). Deliver 4 bowls, forehand and backhand, repeat over different lengths.
- Measure: Count how many bowls finish in the zone. Track patterns over sessions.

🔑 Key Takeaways

- Weight control is worth 90% of a good shot – more important than line.
- Pendulum swing = simpler consistency, stance variation = adaptability.
- Repeatability is the secret to reliable length.
- Use drills to train feel and rhythm for consistent control.

