

What the Stamp on Bowls Means – Player's Guide

Think of the stamp on a lawn bowl like an MOT test certificate for your car. It shows that the bowl has been checked, meets World Bowls standards, and is valid for competition. Here's a simple breakdown of what the stamp means and why it matters.

What the Stamp Shows

Stamp Element	What It Means	Why It Matters
Expiry year	Last two digits of the year (e.g., '21' = valid until 2021)	Needed for higher-level competitions
Trademark 'R'	Registered trademark	Always present, no effect on play
'WB'	World Bowls standard	Assures bowl meets global rules
Manufacturer/Test code	Unique tester ID	Links bowl to licensed company

Licensed Testers and Codes

Every official tester or manufacturer has a unique letter code. Here are some of the most common:

Code	Company
A	Thomas Taylor (Bowls) Ltd
N	Henselite (Australia) Pty Ltd
X	Drakes Pride
Z	Aero Bowls Pty Ltd
C	George Mackay
D	The Bowls Doctor
P	Pershore Bowls Centre UK
Q	Sydney Bowls Centre
S	The Bowling Arm & Bowls Test Centre Bendigou
U	Bayeumas Bowls Test Centre
V	NSW Bowls Testing

Do You Need Re-Stamping?

- Casual club play → usually not checked.
- Local leagues → rarely enforced.

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- National or International competitions → MUST be within expiry date.

Cost of Re-Stamping

It costs between £35–£50 to re-stamp a set of bowls. Once re-stamped, they are valid for another 10 years.

Key Takeaways

- The stamp proves a bowl has been tested to World Bowls standards.
- Expiry year shows when it must be re-tested for competition use.
- Only national and international competitions enforce expiry strictly.
- Re-stamping is affordable and extends your bowl's competitive life.

