

# Road to Reading Lanes

## Advanced adjustments for house shots and strong blends

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After we figure out how to line up and then make moves based on our ball reaction to keep playing the lane the same as the night progresses, we really need to think about what the next move should be if the adjustments to play the lane the same aren't working.

Every time you bowl, even if the lanes are oiled the same each week, the topography of the pair of lanes you're on as well and the bowlers you're bowling with will impact the adjustments you'll need to make. Also very rarely will both lanes play exactly the same.

As the oil gets depleted in the heads and mid-lane, your initial adjustment is to move inside a little at a time, where you find more oil. Sometimes, that may cause your carry to go away or your ball to over or under-react, so you'll need to have other adjustments in mind.

(An over/under reaction means if you miss your target to the outside, the ball hooks too much and/or too early, losing energy. If you miss your target to the inside, the ball slides too much and finishes light or half pocket. Very common on house conditions, where your misses end up the opposite of the miss you made.)

The next option to consider is an angle change. You now have a drier area to roll the ball to. You open up your angles by initially moving your feet more than your target, which changes the direction the ball travels down the lane.

To change your angle you need to understand how much you are adjusting. Let's say your initial angle had your ball crossing the foul line at the 10 board and crossing the arrows (15 feet out on the lane) at the 8 board. If that ball continued on a straight path down the lane without hooking at 30 feet it would be on the 6 board. At 45 feet it would be at the 4 board and at 60 feet the 2 board. However, that would not happen because we are rolling the ball into friction, which stops its trajectory to the right and forces the ball to change direction.

If you change that angle with a two-and-one move (feet and target) left (for a right-hander), the results would mean the ball crosses the foul line at the 12 board and the arrows at the 9 board. At 30 feet, the ball would be at the 6 board, at 45 feet it would cross 3 and at 60 feet, it would be at zero (the gutter), if it didn't hook. A two-and-one move results in a two-board difference at 60 feet, which is the distance to the head pin.

We need to understand how much we are adjusting, so our lineups don't get away from us. The more you understand how much you are adjusting, the easier it is to make better and more refined adjustments. This will take some of the randomness away from adjusting, but adjustments always are educated guesses. The more educated you are, the better those guesses become.

The basic math is if you move one board with your feet and zero with your target at the arrows it becomes three boards at 60 feet. Two boards with your feet is 6 boards at 60 feet, three is nine, and so forth. But a two-and-one move results in two boards at 60 feet because you have moved feet and target in the same direction.

The next issue that occurs with adjustments in team play not only is dictated by you but by the other players on your pair. If they are playing inside the line you are playing, the adjustment rules change. If you make parallel moves in, you eventually will get to the track the players have created inside of your play area. Once you get on top of their track, it can make the ball hook too early and too much. Also, because they started farther inside than you, they were hooking the ball more than you and the angle they created in the oil is more inside out. Now, you not only have to move in, but you also have to change your angle. You have to go more inside out, too, and more than likely, make a bigger move to play inside of where they are.

To do this, you have more than one option. Once you start changing your angles, in this case, opening them up, you may need to do one of the following, or a combination of them, which now becomes advanced adjustments. Whether you are proficient at them or not, you need to experiment with them to expand your range of play.

The first adjustment would be to change your axis rotation, basically getting your fingers around the ball more, so it can slide longer and hook more down the lane. The second option is to change balls to one that will hook harder when it changes direction. The third option, because you are opening up your angles, is to slow the ball down, so it has more time to react.

Adjusting is the essence of lane play. You have to be open-minded and move. Some nights, you have to just survive, other nights, you will light them up. This game is played in spurts and is played on an unstable playing field. Be prepared to move and don't be surprised that you have to move.

