



MATCH RULES

(THURSDAY NIGHT DISTRICT LEAGUE)

Game

The game shall be known as 8 Ball Pool and referred to in these rules as 'The Game'. It is intended that players and teams should play 8 Ball Pool in the true spirit of the game and in a sportsmanlike manner. It should be clearly understood that the referee is the sole judge of what is fair and unfair play. The referee will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that these rules are observed.

Requirements of the Game

The game is played with two "groups" of 7 balls, one "8 ball" and one "cue ball". The cue ball must be white and may be plain or spotted.

The colour / style of the groups and the 8 ball does not matter so long as the two groups, the 8 and the cue ball are all clearly distinguishable from one another.

The league strongly encourages the use of coloured balls in line with the EPA standards - this is 7 reds, 7 yellows, a white / dotted cue ball and a solid black or striped black 8 ball.

Object of the Game

The player or team pocketing all their group of object balls in any order, and then legally pocketing the 8 ball, wins the game.

Commencement of the Game

A. The balls are racked in a triangle with the 8 ball (black) on the 8 ball spot, which is at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets.

B. Order of play is determined by the flip of a coin before frame 1. The winner of the flip has the option of breaking, or requesting their opponent to do so. Frames 2 to 10 (or 11) will then have an alternate break.

C. The opening player plays at the triangle of object balls by striking the cue ball from any position on, or behind, the baulk line. An object ball must be pocketed, or at least TWO object balls hit any cushion. Failure to do so is a foul break and will result in the balls being re-racked as per rule sheet. The opposing player then starts the game with two visits.

D. If the 8 ball (black) is pocketed from the break shot, the balls will be re-racked and the game will be restarted by the sample player. No penalty will be incurred. This applies even if other balls, including the cue ball, are pocketed or leave the playing surface ("off the table").

E. If a ball of one colour is potted on the break then the player may nominate to play the colour that was not potted on the break. If the player nominates a colour that was not potted on the break, to be on that colour, the player must pot a ball of that colour on the next shot. Failure to do so results in the oncoming player having an "Open" table. If the player pots the colour ball not potted on the break without nominating that colour then a foul is committed.

F. If a ball, or balls, are legally pocketed, this entitles the player to one additional shot and this continues until the player either:

1. Fails to pocket one of their own set of allocated balls, or;
2. Commits a foul at any time.

Snookers

A. Snookers are allowed but only if at least one ball (either the cue ball or any object ball) has touched a cushion during that shot. Failure to make a ball hit a cushion will be deemed a foul snooker and will result in the on-coming player having two shots and a free table. An accidental snooker is still a foul, and a player is deemed to be snookered in this instance if he cannot play an object ball 'full-ball' (i.e. centre to centre & both extreme edges of the ball). If a ball is touching a cushion before a shot, then it is termed a 'dead ball' and that ball or another ball must touch a cushion elsewhere during the shot, as the player is not deemed to have made it hit the cushion. It is up to the player to check with the referee before the shot to ensure the ball is not dead.

B. Definition: A player is snookered when it is impossible to play the finest cut possible on **both sides** of any of that player's own colour by way of a "straight-line" shot (excluding obstruction caused by a cushion or a player's own ball).

C. A player cannot be snookered by a ball of the player's own colour. That is if one of the player's own coloured group is an obstructing ball, it will be ignored for the purposes of determining a snooker.

D. A player cannot be snookered on an object ball if the cue ball is touching that object ball.

E. A player cannot be snookered by any sections of the cushions. If a section of cushion is preventing the finest possible cut on the side of an object ball, that section of cushion will be deemed not to exist for the purposes of determining a snooker on that object ball.

Foul Shots

A. In off (cue ball pocketed).

B. Hitting an opponent's ball(s) with the cue ball on first impact of the cue ball, except with the first shot following any foul.

C. Failing to hit any ball with the cue ball.

D. Jump shot – defined as when the cue ball jumps over any part of any ball before making contact with any ball.

E. Hitting the 8 ball (black) with the cue ball on first impact of the cue ball before all their own group are pocketed, except with the first shot following any foul.

F. Potting any opponent's ball, except with the first shot following any foul.

G. Ball leaving the table (coming to rest anywhere other than the bed of the table). Any object ball or the 8 ball (black), shall be returned to the 8 ball spot or as near as possible to that spot without touching any other ball, in direct line with the black spot. If the cue ball leaves the table, then it shall be played from in hand (see rule 8(B) general).

H. If a player's body or clothing should touch any ball, except the cue ball after the referee calls a "foul" when the player is entitled to the cue ball in hand.

I. Player not having at least part of one foot on the floor.

J. Playing or touching with the cue any ball other than the cue ball.

K. Striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip.

L. Playing out of turn.

M. Playing before all balls have come to rest.

N. Playing before any ball(s) requiring re-spotting have been placed.

O. Striking the cue ball with the cue more than once.

P. Push shot – defined as where the cue tip remains in contact with the cue ball for more than the momentary time commensurate with a normal stroked shot, or the cue tip remains in contact with the cue ball once it has commenced its forward motion.

Q. Failing to nominate when balls of both groups are pocketed with the first legal pot.

R. Foul break, failing to pot an object ball or drive at least two object balls to hit any cushions.

S. Snookering an opponent without hitting a cushion during the shot which lead to the snooker (see above definition of a snooker).

Penalty Following Any Foul

- A. Following any foul the offending player loses their next visit to the table, giving their opponent two consecutive visits to the table.
- B. If the cue ball has come to rest on the playing surface, then the player having two visits may proceed to play from where the cue ball lies, or the cue ball may be played from any position on or behind the baulk line. Moving the cue ball in this manner does not count as a shot or visit (players are advised to ask the referee to hand them the cue ball but this is not compulsory).
- C. On the first shot only of the first visit, the oncoming player may without nomination play the cue ball onto any ball without penalty, including any opponent's ball(s) or 8 ball (black). If any object ball(s) is pocketed directly or by combination, the player is deemed to have pocketed a legal ball(s), and continues with the first visit. However, the player must not prematurely pot the 8 ball (black) which would mean loss of game, (it is ok if the player is already on the 8 ball (black) then the game would be won). When the player fails to pot a ball on the first or subsequent shot of the first visit, play then continues with the second visit.

Loss of Game Fouls

- A. If a player pockets the 8 ball (black) before all the balls in their own group except on the break (which is a re-rack) the player loses the game.
- B. A player going in off the 8 ball (black) when the 8 ball (black) is pocketed, loses the game.
- C. A player pocketing the 8 ball (black) and any other ball on the same shot will lose the game, except following a foul when only the 8 ball (black) and ball(s) of the opponents group are on the table, then with the first shot of the first visit, the player may legally pocket the 8 ball (black) as well as ball(s) of the opponent's group by any combination and in any order.
- D. A player who **clearly** fails to make any attempt to play a ball of their own group will lose the game... i.e. a deliberate foul.

General

- A. Touching ball.
 1. A touching ball should always be **played away** from.
 - a. To play "into" the ball and make it move as a result will be deemed a foul.
 - b. Should the touching ball move **as a result of the white clearly being played away**, then there is no foul.
 2. Touching opponent's ball or 8 ball (black) - the player MUST play a ball of their own group, except on the first shot of the first visit following any foul – as this entitles the player to any ball.
 3. Touching any ball the player is legally entitled to play. The player is not obliged to hit any other object ball:
 - i. Must play away from the touching ball, and will be deemed to have played that ball. Should the cue ball fail to make contact with any ball, or strike the opponents ball or 8 ball (black), then the shot is fair, no foul.
- B. Cue ball in hand.
 1. When a player has the cue ball in hand, the ball is played from any position on, or behind the baulk line, and in any direction.
- C. Completion of game.
 1. The game is completed when the 8 ball (black) is pocketed legally in any pocket and all the remaining balls have come to a rest, except on the break (where a pocketed black results in a rerack).

Stalemate

Should any situation arise whereby a legal shot is IMPOSSIBLE to play, then the game shall be immediately replayed with the player who started that frame breaking again, whether this situation has been arrived at by accident or design. Note this means physically impossible, i.e. the cue ball cannot physically fit through a gap – the complexity of the shot is not relevant, only whether there is physical space for the cue ball to pass to reach a legal object ball.

If no ball is potted for over 5 minutes in a frame, it indicates that the frame is not progressing. The referee will start a 10 minute timer and inform both players this is in play. If no ball is potted in this time, the frame will be voided and immediately replayed with the same player breaking again. If a ball is potted after the timer has started, the timer will be reset and reran (for the remainder of the frame, resetting with every pot). Then if at any point a formally timed 10 minute period elapses without a single ball being potted, a re-rack will be called.

Doubles

During the doubles frames the 2 players may speak to one another, but only before the start of each visit. Once a player is in play he cannot talk to his partner until the visit is over. Failure to comply will be deemed as coaching (see below). Players may touch the table whilst conferring so long as only the oncoming player addresses the table once ready to take the shot. Note - the break off is deemed an exceptional shot and so conferring will be allowed following a break if ball(s) are potted, to determine which colour to go for.

Coaching

When player(s) are in play they should not discuss the shots with anybody not involved in the frame or this will be deemed as coaching. If a referee feels coaching is taking place in the first instance a warning will be issued. In the second instance 2 shots will be awarded to the other player. In the third instance the frame shall be conceded. Only the person in play should touch the table as this will be deemed as coaching if other players address the table in any way.

The Informal 60 Second Rule

The general expectation is that 60 seconds is the maximum shot time a player should ever need, although referees are not expected to time shots and should use discretion for extremely difficult shots etc. If in the opinion of the referee a player is taking too long, he should issue a "30 seconds remaining" warning and time the shot from here on. If no shot is then played within 30 seconds a foul shall be called. For the purpose of shot timing, the oncoming player is deemed as "in play" from the moment the balls come to rest.

Control of Table

- A. A player is deemed in control of the table from the moment they first touch it up until the point where the balls come to rest after their shot.
- B. **If at any point a ball drops into a pocket after the balls have "come to rest", the ball should be replaced by the referee as close as possible to the spot where it was. Common sense should be exercised here, nobody should gain or lose an advantage from a ball randomly dropping.**

Guidance

- A. The term "SHOT" means striking the cue ball once.
- B. The term "VISIT" refers to the one turn at the table comprising of one or a series of shots.
- C. The term "BREAK" refers to the first shot of a game, or the first shot of a game being restarted.
- D. A referee may if requested, advise on the rules of the game.
- E. The role of the referee is to oversee a smooth and fair frame and help players if they are not clear on any rules.
- F. Referees should avoid ambiguity and proactively make helpful calls such as "both colours potted from the break – please nominate", "reds in play" or "2 visits remaining".

