

Match Rules

1. The Game

The game is known as Eight-Ball Pool. It is expected that all players and teams should play the game in a true spirit and sporting manner. The referee will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the rules of the game are observed at all times.

The referee is the sole judge of what is fair and unfair play.

2. Requirements

The game is played on a 6-pocket rectangular Pool Table, with a **'Cue Ball'**, and 15 **'Object Balls'**.

- **'Cue Ball'** – This is the white ball.
- **'Object Balls'** – These are split into two categories:
 - **'Coloured Object Balls'** - A group of seven red balls (or balls numbered 1-7), and a group of seven yellow balls (or balls numbered 9-15).
 - The **'8 Ball'** - This is a black ball marked with the number 8.

The table must have with the following markings:

- An **'8 Ball Spot'**, which is marked at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets at one end of the table.
- The **'Baulk Line'**. This is a straight line drawn from cushion to cushion, parallel to, and one fifth of the length of the table, from the face of the cushion that lies the greatest distance from the 8 Ball Spot.

The following aids are essential requirements:

- An "X" Rest.
- A Spider Rest.

3. Object of the Game

To win by being the player, or team, to pot a group of colours in any order and in any pocket, and then legally pot the 8 Ball (black ball) in any pocket.

4. Definitions

Terms (and their meanings) used through-out this documentation.

- A. **Break**
 - i. This is the opening shot of a frame.
- B. **Shot**
 - i. A player plays a shot by striking the cue ball with the tip of the cue. A shot ends when all balls on the table have stopped moving from the current shot.
- C. **Visit**
 - i. This comprises of one shot or a series of shots. Each visit lasts until the player fails to pot an object ball, or until a foul is committed. If a foul is committed the offending players visit(s) end immediately, and the relevant penalty is awarded against that player. (See section 7. Fouls)
- D. **Frame**
 - i. This is a single game of 8 Ball Pool between two players, or two teams.
- E. **Match**
 - i. This is a series of predetermined number of frames of 8 Ball Pool between two players, or two teams.
- F. **Free Table**
 - i. A player may play any **object ball** without nomination, and incur no penalty.
 - ii. A player may pot any **coloured object ball** (or combination of) in one shot.
 - iii. A player cannot pot the 8 Ball (black ball), unless that player is on the 8 Ball.

G. **Open Table**

- i. A player may play any **coloured object ball** without nomination, and incur no penalty.
- ii. If a player pots a single coloured object ball in one shot, that player is deemed to be on that coloured object ball group for the duration of the frame, and their opponent is deemed to be on the other coloured object ball group.
- iii. If a player pots one or more object balls of each coloured group in one shot, the player must then nominate the coloured group they wish to play. Once a player has nominated their coloured group, they are deemed to be on that coloured object ball group for the duration of the frame, and their opponent is deemed to be on the other coloured object ball group. (A player **does not** have to subsequently pot another object ball of their nominated group).

H. **Push Shot**

- i. This is when the tip of the cue remains in contact with the cue ball once it has commenced its forward motion.

I. **Ball in Hand**

- i. When a player is said to have the (cue) 'Ball in Hand', that player can 'Play from Baulk'.

J. **(Player) In Control of the Table**

- i. A player is said to be in control of the table from the time that their body, cue, or clothing comes into contact with the table prior to their visit(s), **or they ask for the white ball following a foul**. They remain in control of the table throughout their visit(s), and up until their opponent does likewise prior to their visit(s).
- ii. Any balls which fall into the pockets during this period are deemed to have been potted by the 'Player in Control'. That player is liable to any penalties or benefits that would normally be awarded for potting such balls.

K. **Touching Ball**

- i. The object ball that the cue ball is touching must be 'played away' from.
- ii. The object ball that the cue ball is touching must not move. (Should the object ball move after the cue ball has been played away due to an imperfection on the table, it is at the referees' sole discretion whether to enforce a foul, or to allow play to continue).
- iii. If the touching ball is one of the players own object group, then the player is deemed to have played that ball and does not have to make contact with any other object ball of that group.
- iv. If the touching ball is one of the opponents object group, then the player must play away **and** make contact with, at least, one of the players own object group.
- v. When a 'Free Table' applies, a player must play away from a touching object ball and is deemed to have played that object ball and does not have to make contact with any other object ball of any group.
- vi. **Should a situation arise, where the cue ball is touching more than one object ball, and the cue ball cannot be played away without moving one of the object balls (i.e. committing a foul), then that given frame must go to a re-rack.**

L. **Total Snooker**

- i. A total snooker is declared when a player cannot see an edge of any of his object.
- ii. If a player is in a **Total Snooker**, then the match referee **must** advise the player of this before he takes his shot. If the referee fails to do this, for whatever reason, then player must bring this to his attention and/or ask his opponent to confirm this. Failure to do so will result in 'Standard Foul' being called if the player fails to hit a cushion after contact.

M. **Frozen Ball**

- i. If the object ball you intend to play, is already on a cushion, this is classed as a 'frozen ball'. In this case, either, the 'frozen ball' must hit another cushion after first contact, or, the white, or other object ball must hit a cushion after first contact with the 'frozen ball'

N. **Head On**

- i. To play a ball 'head on', the centre of the cue ball must make contact with the centre of the object ball, without being deflected off any other ball or cushion (i.e. the first contact that the cue ball makes is with the object ball in question).

5. Playing from Baulk

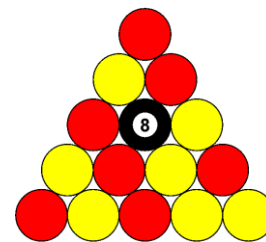
'Baulk' is the rectangular area of the table that is bordered by the Baulk Line and the three cushions at the end of the table. When playing from 'Baulk':

- A. The centre point of the Cue Ball must be on or behind the Baulk Line (so it lies in the baulk area).
- B. The Cue Ball can be moved into any position by hand or with the shaft of the cue. If the tip of the cue comes into contact with the Cue Ball, a shot is deemed to have been played.
- C. The Cue Ball may be played in any direction.
- D. A player can play from Baulk following any foul. The player must verbally inform the referee of this choice. The referee will then recover the Cue Ball and hand it to the player, or place it in the centre of the top cushion at the Baulk end of the table for the player to retrieve by hand. If the player recovers the Cue Ball, while it is still on the table, after a foul this will result in 'Loss of Frame'.

6. Playing the Game

6.1 The Break

- A. The balls are racked as shown, with the 8 Ball (black ball) on the 8 Ball Spot.
- B. Order of play for League and Cup matches are detailed in the League Constitution.
- C. The opening player plays at the triangle of object balls, by striking the cue ball from any position in the Baulk area. (See 5. Playing from Baulk)
 - i. A Legal Break is achieved if;
 - a. at least one coloured object ball is potted **and / or**
 - b. at least four object balls hit any cushion.
 - ii. A Foul Break is achieved in one of two ways:
 - a. If four object balls fail to hit a cushion, then the balls are re-racked, the opponent is awarded two visits, and the opponent re-starts the frame.
 - b. If the cue ball goes in-off, then the opposing player is awarded **one visit only**, and play resumes from where the object balls have come to rest. This will be deemed an "Open Table". The opposing player will play the colour of the first object ball they legally pot, unless they pot two balls of different colours – in which case they must then nominate the colour they wish to play before taking their next shot.
- D. If the 8 Ball is potted from the break, the balls are re-racked, no penalty is incurred, and the same player will re-start the frame. This applies even if other object balls, and/or the cue ball, have been potted as well.



6.2 General play

- A. The white ball, or any object ball, must hit a cushion after the white ball has first contacted an appropriate object ball.
 - i. A cushion does not have to be hit after first contact if;
 - a) you pot the object ball, **or**,
 - b) you are totally snookered (in that you cannot see an edge of any of your object balls - this is known as a total snooker).
 - ii. If you are in a **total snooker**, then the player must ask match referee (or his opponent in the case of a singles match where a referee may not be in attendance) to confirm this. Failure to do so will result in 'Standard Foul' being called if the player fails to hit a cushion after contact.
 - iii. If the object ball you intend to play, is already on a cushion, this is classed as a **frozen ball**. In this case, either the **frozen ball** must hit another cushion after first contact, or the white or other object ball must hit a cushion after first contact with the **frozen ball**.

- B. If an object ball (or balls) is legally potted, this entitles the player to one additional shot. This continues until the player either:
- i. fails to pot one of their group object balls,
or
 - ii. commits a foul at any time.

6.3 Nominating Colours to play

- A. General
- i. If no coloured object balls have been potted from a legal break, the table is deemed to be 'Open'. When the table is open a player may play at either group of coloured object balls.
 - ii. Colours can never be nominated on a foul shot.
 - iii. Once a group of coloured object balls have been nominated (and at least one has been potted), the player remains on that group of balls for the duration of the frame. The opponent remains on the other group of balls.
- B. On the Break
- i. If one or more coloured object balls are potted from a Legal Break, the referee is **required** to tell the player to verbally nominate a colour to play before play continues (the player **must** do this if the referee fails to do so). In such an instance, if play continues when a player has failed to verbally nominate a colour, then a 'Standard Foul' is committed. If a player is penalised under this rule the opponent faces an 'Open Table' (so they will be on the first ball they pot).
 - ii. (Ref i. above) If a player nominates a coloured group where no balls have previously been potted, then they **must** pot at least one ball of the nominated colour to remain on that group (see **Examples:** below).

Examples:

If a player pots a red ball on the break, he may then nominate yellows. He must pot a yellow in order to remain on yellows because he has switched colours. If he fails to pot a yellow ball, then the opposition player is presented with an 'Open Table'.

If a player pots a red ball on the break, and then nominates reds, he **does not** have to pot a subsequent red because he has already potted a red from the break.

If a player pots one of each colour, he still has to nominate a colour to play, but does not have to pot, as he has already done so. In this instance, he remains on the colour he has nominated.

- C. In 'Open' play
- i. If a player pots one or more object balls of the same colour, the player is then on that colour.
 - ii. If a player pots one or more object balls of different colours, the player must then verbally nominate their desired group of coloured object balls before play continues. Failure to do so is a 'Standard Foul'. If a player is penalised under this rule the opponent faces an 'Open Table'.

6.4 Doubles play

In all Doubles League and Cup Matches:

- A. **On the break**, if a player pots a ball, they may confer with their partner **immediately** after the break.
- B. **General Play**, once the current player's visit(s) are over, the opposing players may confer with each other only.
- C. **Following a Foul**, a player is in control of the table only when they have either asked for the white ball or touched the table (see 4.J.i)

In all cases, the referee must ensure that excessive time is not taken to play a shot.

Once a player is deemed to be in control of the table (see 4.J.i) conversation between that player and their partner **must** cease (the exception being 'On the break' above). If they continue to confer, then a 'Standard Foul' must be called.

7. Fouls

7.1 General

There are the four categories of foul, the 'Break Foul', 'Standard Foul', 'Deliberate Foul' and the 'Loss of Frame Foul'.

7.2 Standard Foul

This will result in two visits being awarded to the opposing player. The opposing player has the choice to play the cue ball from where it comes to rest, or to 'Play from Baulk'. The first shot of the first visit only is regarded as a 'Free Table'.

The list of fouls below is in addition to the types of fouls mentioned in earlier sections.

- A. If a player goes 'In Off' (i.e. cue ball potted).
 - i. If a player goes in off when playing a coloured object ball.
 - ii. If a player goes in off when playing the 8 Ball, so long as the 8 Ball is **not** potted. Otherwise see **7.4.A**.
- B. If a player causes the cue ball to make contact with any other object ball(s) (Coloured or 8 Ball) before making contact with their own object ball(s) (Coloured or 8 Ball), except when a 'Free Table' applies.
- C. If a player pots an opponent's object ball(s), except when a 'Free Table' applies.
- D. If a player fails to hit any object ball with the cue ball, **except where rule 4.J.ii applies**.
- E. If a player's clothing or body should come into contact with any object ball or the cue ball.
- F. If a player fails to have at least part of one foot on the floor when playing any shot.
- G. If a player plays or touches, with the cue, any other object ball other than the cue ball.
- H. If a player plays a 'Jump Shot'.
 - This is when the cue ball jumps over any part of any object ball **before** making contact with an object ball.
- I. If a player forces any ball(s) off the table.
 - Any ball shall be deemed to be 'off the table' if it comes to rest other than on the bed of the table.
 - i. If the cue ball is forced 'off the table', the opposing player is given the cue ball in hand, and must play from Baulk.
 - ii. If any coloured object balls are forced 'off the table', the balls are placed in one of the pockets of the table, and the opposing player is awarded two visits.
 - iii. If the 8 ball is forced 'off the table', this would constitute a 'Loss of Frame' Foul (see **7.3.C**).
- J. If a player plays out of turn.
- K. If a player plays a shot before all the object balls and cue ball have come to rest.
- L. If a player strikes the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip.
- M. If a player strikes the cue ball with the cue more than once.
- N. If a player plays a 'Push Shot'.
- O. If a player moves an object ball (Coloured or Black) when playing away from a touching ball, **except where rules 4.K.ii applies**.
- P. If a player accidentally interferes with a moving ball.
- Q. Conferring in doubles matches (see **6.4 Doubles play**).
- R. Failing to hit a cushion with any ball after first contact (see **6.2 General play**).

7.3 Deliberate Foul

If a player commits a Deliberate Foul, then they would lose that frame of 8 Ball Pool.

When can a Deliberate Foul be called?

It is up to the referee whether a Deliberate Foul has been committed (Guidelines below).

- If a player plays an opponent's object ball directly (**i.e. head on - see 4.M**), this is deemed to be a '**Deliberate Foul**'. (This does not apply if both players are on the 8 Ball (black ball)).
- So long as a player plays his own object ball on first contact, or via a cushion, with the cue ball in a given shot, a '**Deliberate Foul**' **cannot be called**.
- If a player is snookered on all his object balls, so long as he does not play an opponent's object ball directly (**i.e. head on**), a '**Deliberate Foul**' **cannot be called**.

7.4 Loss of Frame Foul

As its name suggest, if a player incurs this type of foul, this will result in losing the current frame of 8 Ball Pool.

The list of fouls below is in addition to the types of fouls mentioned in earlier sections.

- A. If a player goes 'In Off' (i.e. cue ball potted) when playing the 8 Ball, **but only if** the 8 Ball is potted as well. Otherwise see **7.2.A.ii**.
- B. If a player pots the 8 Ball before they have potted all the coloured object balls in their own group.
- C. If a player forces the 8 Ball (black ball) 'off the table' (**see 7.2.I.iii**).
- D. If a player clearly fails to make any attempt to play an object ball of their own group.
- E. If a player deliberately touches a moving ball, retrieves a ball dropping into the pocket, or recovers the Cue Ball, while it is still on the table (see **5.D**).

8. Stalemate

Should a situation arise, whether by accident or by design, whereby;

- A. a legal shot cannot be played;
- B. in the opinion of the referee, neither player is allowing the game to progress;

then the game shall be restarted by the same player.

9. General

General Guidance

- A. Coaching is deemed to be unsportsmanlike behaviour (see Rule 1).
- B. If requested, a referee must advise on the rules of the game.
- C. The referee should ensure that excessive time is not taken to play a shot and should act in accordance with competition rules.
- D. Re-racks due to a stalemate (see Rule 8), may result in a reduced number of balls in accordance with competition rules.

Referee Guidance

Generally, the referee must advise on the rules at any time through a match.

Specifically, the referee **must** remind players to nominate if a ball is potted from the break and advise if there is a total snooker. They **cannot** advise on a frozen ball. The player playing the shot must ask the referee to confirm if the ball they are playing is frozen or not.

These Rules will apply to all competitions unless otherwise stated.

Notes
