

HOW TO GET STARTED

A match results in a **forfeit if a player/team is not at the table and ready to begin within 15 minutes of the appointed time**. A forfeited individual player match is worth 7 points.

Players lag, with the winner of the lag having choice of game (8-Ball or 9-Ball) or the break. Once the game has been chosen, the entire set of that game must be completed before moving to the next format: or 7 games have been won.

8-BALL GAME RULES

1. GENERAL DESCRIPTION - 8-Ball is played with a cue ball and a normal rack of fifteen (15) object balls. Balls are racked with the front ball on the foot spot and the 8-ball in the center of the triangle. The primary purpose of this game is for one player to pocket the solid colored group of balls numbered from 1 to 7 or the striped balls numbered from 9 to 15. Choice of balls to be pocketed is made by the player legally pocketing the first ball of the game.

2. RACKING - All balls should be frozen (touching) as tightly as possible with the 8-ball in the center. The breaking player may request and receive a rerack.

3. BREAKING - Players must break from behind the head string. *Breaking safe* or *soft* is not allowed. At least four balls from the rack must be driven to the rails or a ball must be pocketed. Otherwise, the balls are reracked and rebroken by the same player. A game not legally broken (four balls do not go to a rail), but resulting in a scratch or foul, will be reracked and broken by the opposite player. The rack must be struck before a foul can occur. The head ball or the second ball must be struck on the break and the cue ball may not be shot into a rail before the rack. An attempt to break does not count unless the rack is broken as above. Breaking just hard enough to comply with this rule is not a guarantee against penalties. Break as hard as you can with control.

4. AFTER THE BREAK - Various circumstances can occur upon completion of the break. They are:

a. A foul on the break will result in *ball-in-hand* behind the head string and the incoming player has an open table. The incoming player may then shoot at any ball that is outside the head string. Outside the head string is determined by aligning the middle or base of the ball with the imaginary line (head string) between the centers of the two appropriate diamonds.

If an object ball is dead center or *out*, then it is playable. If it is *in*, the ball is not playable. If the two players cannot agree on an object ball being *in* or *out*, then an official is consulted for an opinion. The cue ball must be *in* as described above before play can begin. It is up to the opponent to check to be sure the cue ball is *in* before it is shot. No penalty may be assessed. The shooter must move the cue ball into a position acceptable to the opponent.

b. No balls are pocketed and it is the other player's turn.

c. The 8-ball is pocketed. This is a win unless the player scratches, in which case he loses.

d. One ball is pocketed (example: the 3-ball); now it is still the breaker's turn and he is shooting low balls or the *solids*.

e. One of each category ball is pocketed (example: the 6-ball and the 12-ball). Now the breaker has a choice. He may shoot at either category of balls. He may shoot any ball, except the 8-ball, and anything that goes in counts. If he were to make one of each on his second shot, he would still have an open table and a choice as after the break. If he were to miss on his second shot, his opponent would have an *open table*. *Open table* means a player can shoot a combination involving a stripe and a solid and whichever he makes, without committing a foul, would be his category.

f. If two balls of one category and one ball of the other category are pocketed (example: 3, 6, and 10-balls) it is the shooter's choice just as in "4e" above.

g. Occasionally it occurs that a player mistakenly starts shooting the wrong category of balls. Although it is sportsmanlike for the sitting player to remind the shooting player that he is about to foul by shooting the wrong category of balls, it is not a requirement for him to do so. Once the shooter has hit the wrong category of balls, the foul has occurred whether the ball is pocketed or not. If the ball is pocketed, it is permissible, though not recommended, that the sitting player allow the shooting player to continue shooting his balls in until he feels inclined to call the foul. The shooting player can escape penalty by quietly realizing his error and returning to shoot the correct category of balls and legally contacting one of them before his opponent calls foul, or by finishing off the wrong category of balls and legally contacting the 8-ball prior to his opponent calling a foul. In other words, the sitting player must call the foul before the shooter returns to the correct category and legally contacts one or before the shooter pockets the remaining balls of the wrong category and legally contacts the 8-ball. Before any foul has occurred, the shooter also may avoid penalty by asking the sitting player which category of balls he has. The sitting player must tell him the truth.

5. COMBINATION SHOTS - Combination shots are legal, but striking the correct ball first is required except in the *open table* situation. The 8-ball is not neutral. A player is credited with all balls he legally pockets. When a player does not pocket one of his balls, but pockets an opponent's ball, he loses his turn. The opponent does get credit for the pocketed ball. No pocketed ball is ever spotted.

6. BALLS ON THE FLOOR - If the 8-ball is knocked on the floor, it is loss of game. Other object balls that get knocked on the floor will be spotted. Knocking a ball other than the cue ball on the floor is not a foul. It might occur that a player pockets his ball while simultaneously knocking some other ball on the floor. In this situation, it is still his turn and the ball is not spotted until he misses. If the ball on the floor is one of the shooter's balls, then it is spotted when the shooter has pocketed all of his other balls or misses.

7. POCKETED BALLS - Balls must remain in a pocket to be legal. If a ball goes in a pocket, but bounces back onto the playing surface, it is not considered pocketed. If it is the 8-ball, it is not to be considered as either a win or a loss. If it is the cue ball, it is not to be considered a scratch.

Note 1: If a ball which has been hanging in a pocket for more than a few seconds suddenly falls in, it is to be placed back on the table where it was originally sitting.

Note 2: It occasionally happens on tables with small pockets that two balls become jammed in a pocket and are leaning over the edge of the slate to some degree. They are *off* the

playing surface and are pocketed. Drop them in and resume playing the game unless the pocketing ends the game (8-ball or cue scratch when shooting the 8-ball).

8. ONE FOOT ON THE FLOOR - At least one foot must be on the floor at all times while shooting if a bridge stick is present. There is no foul—simply stop the shooter and hand him the bridge.

9. THERE ARE VARIOUS WAYS TO LOSE:

a. The opposing player pockets his numerical group and legally pockets the 8-ball.

b. Player pockets the 8-ball out of turn or knocks it on the floor.

c. When playing the 8-ball, a player pockets the 8-ball in the wrong pocket or fails to properly mark the pocket where the 8-ball went in.

d. Player fouls the cue ball and then pockets the 8-ball.

e. When playing the 8-ball, a player scratches the cue ball. He loses whether or not he pockets the 8-ball.

Note 1: Player shooting at the 8-ball and missing it altogether has fouled and his opponent has *ball-in-hand*, but he doesn't lose because of this foul.

Note 2: A game is forfeited if the shooter alters the course of the 8-ball or the cue ball in a game losing situation.

Example: *The shooter is shooting the 4-ball, misses the pocket, and the 4-ball hits the 8-ball. The 8-ball is going towards the pocket and the shooter reaches out and stops it and tries to claim that it is only a ball-in-hand foul. Wrong, it is loss of game.*

Example: *The shooter is shooting at the 8-ball and misses the pocket and the 8-ball is heading towards the wrong pocket or the cue ball is heading towards a pocket. The shooter reaches out and stops them and claims that it is simply ball-in-hand. Wrong, it is loss of game.*

10. FOULS - If any of the following fouls are committed, the penalty is *ball-in-hand* for the incoming player. Make certain you have *ball-in-hand* before you touch the cue ball. Confirm it with your opponent before touching the cue ball. *Ball-in-hand* means you get to put the cue ball anywhere on the table (with the exception of fouls on the break which result in *ball-in-hand* behind the head string), and shoot any of your balls (or the 8-ball, if all your category of balls have been pocketed) regardless of where that ball is. A player exercising his rights under the *ball-in-hand* rule may place the cue ball on the table anywhere he desires. Even after having addressed the cue ball a player may, if not satisfied with the placement, make further adjustments with the hand, cue stick or any other reasonable piece of equipment. A foul may be called only if the player fouls the cue ball while actually stroking the cue ball, meaning a double hit of the cue ball (sometimes called double clutching). The *ball-in-hand* rule penalizes a player for an error. Without this rule, a person can actually benefit by accidentally or purposely scratching or otherwise fouling. In the unlikely event that a game should ever become stalemated, meaning that neither player wants or can make use of *ball-in-hand*, then the balls would be reracked and the same player breaks.

The following are the only fouls resulting in *ball-in-hand*:

a. Failure to hit a correct ball first. (A player who is shooting stripes must hit a striped ball first.) In general, the shooter has the advantage in such situations unless his opponent has asked an outside party to watch the hit. Protect yourself. If you think your opponent is getting ready to shoot a shot that could possibly be a bad hit, stop him from shooting and call an official to watch the shot. Potential *bad hit* situations are usually fairly

obvious and protests and disputes over these close situations can almost always be avoided if an official is asked to watch the shot.

b. Failure to hit a rail after contact. A rail must be hit by either the cue ball or any other ball after the cue ball makes contact with the object ball. A pocketed ball counts as a rail. A sentence that should answer many questions is: *ANY ball must go to a rail AFTER LEGAL contact.*

c. The object ball is *frozen* to a rail and the player is contemplating playing a *safety*. In order for the following *frozen ball* rule to be in effect, the opponent must declare that the ball is *frozen* and the player should verify. Once it is agreed that the ball is *frozen*, then the player must either drive the object ball to another rail (of course, it could hit another ball, which in turn hits a rail), or drive the cue ball to the rail after it touches the object ball. If the latter method of safety is chosen then the player should take care that he quite obviously strikes the object ball first. If the cue ball strikes the rail first or appears to hit both the rail and ball simultaneously, then it would be a foul unless either the cue ball or object ball went to some other rail.

d. It is illegal and, therefore, a foul to jump a cue ball over another ball by miscuing it up in the air on purpose. Accidental miscuing is not a foul unless other rules in this section are violated.

e. Anytime the cue ball goes on the floor or otherwise ends up off the playing surface.

f. Receiving illegal aid during a match. It is not considered illegal aid to remind a player to call the 8-ball, or to tell a player a foul has occurred. Anyone may do so.

g. Causing even the slightest movement of the cue ball, even accidentally, is a foul. It is not a foul, however, to accidentally move any other balls (including the 8-ball) unless, during the process of shooting, a player moves a ball and it in turn strikes the cue ball. Even dropping the chalk on the cue ball is a foul. Any balls moved accidentally during a shot will be replaced by the opponent after the shot is over and all balls have stopped rolling. If it occurs before the shot, it will be replaced before the shot is taken.

h. If, during the course of a shot, the cue ball does not touch anything.

i. Exercise caution when placing the cue ball on the table. The cue ball is always *alive* and if it touches another ball, it is a cue ball foul and your opponent has *ball-in-hand*. Be especially careful when you are placing the cue ball in a tight spot.

11. HOW TO WIN - A player has won the game when all the balls of his numerical group have been pocketed, and he has legally pocketed the 8-ball in a properly called pocket without scratching.

Note: You cannot play the 8-ball at the same time you play the last ball of your category. The 8-ball must be a separate shot.

9-BALL GAME RULES

Many of the rules concerning 9-Ball are similar to those used in 8-Ball. When this is the case, it will be so indicated. The rest of the details concerning 9-Ball follow.

1. **GENERAL DESCRIPTION** - 9-Ball is played with a cue ball and nine object balls numbered 1 through 9. 9-Ball is a rotation game, meaning the balls are shot in numerical order. The shooter must strike the lowest numbered ball on the table first. The game is over when the 9-ball is pocketed. A player retains his turn at the table as long as he strikes the lowest numbered ball first and pockets a ball. He need not pocket the lowest numbered ball to continue shooting. He may, for example, shoot the 1-ball into the 4-ball thus pocketing the 4. He will continue shooting but must, once again, strike the 1-ball first. If the shooter shoots the 1-ball into the 9-ball and the 9 is pocketed, the game is over.

2. **RACKING** - The same as 8-Ball but only nine balls are used and are racked in a diamond shape. The 1-ball is at the front of the rack and on the foot spot. The 9-ball is in the center and the rest of the object balls can be placed in any numerical order.

3. **BREAKING** - The same as 8-Ball except the head ball (1-ball) must be struck first.

4. **AFTER THE BREAK** - Various circumstances can occur upon completion of the break. They are:

a. A foul on the break will result in *ball-in-hand* anywhere on the table for the breaker's opponent. Pocketed balls, if any, stay down (are not spotted), except the 9-ball.

b. No balls are pocketed and it is the other player's turn.

c. The 9-ball is pocketed. This is a winner unless the player scratches, in which case the 9-ball is spotted and the turn passes to his opponent.

d. One ball or a number of balls are made. It is still the breaker's turn and he shoots at the lowest numbered ball on the table.

e. Occasionally it occurs that a player mistakenly shoots the wrong ball. Although it is sportsmanlike for the sitting player to remind the shooting player he is about to foul by shooting the wrong ball, he is not required to do so. Once the shooter has hit the wrong ball, the foul has occurred whether the ball is pocketed or not. If the ball is pocketed, it is permissible, though not recommended, that the sitting player allow the shooting player to continue shooting until he feels inclined to call the foul. The shooting player can escape penalty by quietly realizing his error and returning to shoot the correct ball and striking it first on a shot prior to his opponent calling the foul. In other words, the sitting player must call the foul before the shooter has shot the correct ball.

f. On the shot immediately following a legal break, the shooter may play a *push out*. On a push out, the cue ball is not required to contact any object ball or any rail. The player must announce his intention of playing a push out before the shot, or the shot is considered to be a normal shot. Any ball pocketed on a push out does not count and is spotted. Following a legal push out, the incoming player is permitted to shoot from that position or to pass the shot back to the player who pushed out. A push out is not considered to be a foul as long as no rule is violated. An illegal push out is penalized according to the type of foul committed.

5. **COMBINATION SHOTS** - Combination shots are legal and extremely common in 9-Ball. Just make sure to hit the lowest numbered ball on the table first.

6. **BALLS ON FLOOR** - Object balls that get knocked off the playing surface will be immediately spotted on the foot spot. **Knocking an object ball on the floor is not a foul.** It might occur that a player legally pockets a ball while simultaneously knocking some other ball(s) on the floor. In this situation, the ball(s) is spotted and the player continues shooting until he misses.

7. **POCKETED BALLS** - Balls must remain in a pocket to be legal. If a ball goes in a pocket but bounces back onto the playing surface, it is not considered pocketed.

8. **SPOTTING BALLS** - Other than the circumstances described in BALLS ON FLOOR and the push out rule, the only ball that will ever be spotted will be the 9-ball when the shooter has pocketed the 9-ball and scratched or otherwise fouled. If the shooter makes the 9-ball on the break and fouls or scratches, the 9-ball and only the 9-ball is spotted. If the shooter is shooting at the object ball and plays it into the 9-ball and pockets the 9-ball, but scratches or otherwise fouls in the process, the 9-ball is spotted. The incoming player has *ball-in-hand* and will be shooting at the lowest numbered ball on the table.

Note 1: If a ball which has been hanging in a pocket for more than a few seconds suddenly falls in, it is to be placed back on the table where it was originally sitting.

Note 2: It occasionally happens on tables with small pockets that two balls become jammed in a pocket and are leaning over the edge of the slate to some degree. They are off the playing surface and are pocketed. Drop them in and resume playing the game unless the pocketing ends the game.

9. **FOULS** - The same as 8-Ball except as follows:

a. The exception concerning fouling on the break does not apply to 9-Ball. Fouling on the break is *ball-in-hand* anywhere just as other fouls.

b. The foul concerning striking the correct ball first applies, but ignore the reference to stripes or solids.

c. The foul concerning illegal aid still applies, but ignore the reference to reminding a player to call the 8-ball. The 9-ball does not have to be called.

NOTE:

Coaching and timeouts are not permitted in this event.

The three consecutive foul rule will not be used in this tournament.

Jump cues will be allowed in this tournament. It is also permissible to break down a cue or switch cues to make a jump shot.



*Official
8-Ball & 9-Ball Rules*

of the

*Masters
Championship*

Conducted By:

