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# 8-Ball Official Rules of Play

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## A. BALLS AND RACKING

1. The game is played with one cue ball and 15 numbered object balls. 2. The balls are racked in a triangle at the foot of the table with the 8-ball in the center of the triangle, the first ball of the rack on the foot spot, a STRIPE in one corner of the rack and a SOLID in the other corner, as the above illustrations shows.

3. The object of the game is to make one group of numbered object balls, either stripes or solids and the LEGALLY POCKET THE 8-BALL which then wins the games.

**B. BREAK SHOT** 1. Start of play – the home team breaks first and writes their line-up down first. The break will alternate thereafter. During International competition, the teams will flip a coin to determine home team.

2. If the breaker hits the racked balls with the cue ball driving four or more numbered balls and/or cue ball to a cushion OR pocketing one or more object balls, the game is considered started. If the player fails to make a legal break, it is not a foul; however, the original breaker must re-rack and rebreak until the break is completed successfully.

**3. Stopping or deflecting the cue ball prior to hitting the racked balls are considered fouls and loss of turn. The opponent will receive cue ball in hand behind the head string (kitchen).**

**4. When positioning the cue ball for the break shot, the base of the ball must be behind the head string (kitchen).**

**5. If a player scratches on a legal break shot: (1) all balls pocketed remain pocketed {exception, the 8-ball-which is an automatic loss}, (2) it is a foul, (3) the table is still open.**

**6. The opposing player must inform the breaking player of improper positioning of the cue ball before the shot is made. If the opposing player does not so inform the breaking player before the shot is made, the break is considered legal. If the shooting player is informed of improper positioning, he/she must reposition the cue ball.**

**7. Making the 8-ball on the break: An automatic win for the player breaking, however, if the cue ball is scratched when making the 8-ball on the break, the opponent wins the game.**

**8. If the player legally breaks the racked balls and does not make any balls, his opponent then shoots having an open table.**

**9. If a player jumps an object ball off the table on the break shot, it is a foul and the incoming player has the option of: (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or**

**PLEASE NOTE: Incoming player has cue ball in hand behind the head string and may not shoot an object ball whose base is not outside of the head string unless he/she first shoots the cue ball past the head string and causes the cue ball to come back behind the head string and hit the object ball. If a player positions the cue ball completely and obviously outside of the kitchen and shoots the cue ball, it is a foul, IF called by the opponent.**

**(2) taking cue ball in hand behind the head string and shooting. Any jumped balls are spotted in numerical order.**

### **C. OPEN TABLE**

**The table is "open" when the choice of groups (stripes or solids) has not yet been determined. When the table is open, it is legal to hit a solid first to make a stripe or vice versa. When the table is open, it is legal to hit any solid or stripe or the 8-ball first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid. On an open table, all pocketed balls remain pocketed. The choice of stripes or solids is not determined on the break even if balls are made from only one or both groups. THE TABLE IS ALWAYS OPEN IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE BREAK SHOT. The choice of group is determined only when a player legally pockets a called object ball after the break shot.**

#### **D. GAME**

In Call Pocket, obvious balls and pockets do not have to be indicated. It is the opponent's right to ask which ball and pocket if he is unsure of the shot. Banks and combinations are not considered obvious and both the object ball and the pocket must be called or it is a loss of turn. When calling the shot, it is NEVER necessary to indicate details such as the number of cushions, banks, kisses, caroms, etc. Any balls pocketed on a foul remain pocketed, regardless of whether they belong to the shooter or the opponent.

The opening break is not a "called pocket". Any player performing a break shot in 8-ball may continue to shoot his next shot as long as he has legally pocketed any object ball on the break. He may choose to shoot either solids or stripes regardless of any ball sunk on the break, it is still considered an open table at this point.

**NOTE:** All infractions above must be called before the next shot is taken.

#### **E. TIME OUTS**

The Player or any Team Member can call a time out. The Team Member must be on the night's team roster to assist in a time out.

The captain or person that is asked to assist can deny the need for a time out if they feel that this would be a wasted time out, at which point the player will need to continue their shot the best they can.

Only one player can assist in a time out. The player shooting may choose who they wish to ask for assistance if that person is on the night's team roster. The person assisting the player may confer with the other team members BEFORE approaching the table; once he/she has approached the table they CANNOT turn away from the table then return, once they turn away the time out is over.

Each player is allowed only one (1) time out each game and the time out is limited to 1 minute.

#### **F. SCHEDULING**

All games are to be played where scheduled.

#### **G. LEGAL SHOTS**

On all shots (exception 11C and on the break), the shooter must hit one of his group of balls first and: (1) pocket any group ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any other group ball to contact a rail. \*(There are two groups of balls: stripes and solids).

**PLEASE NOTE:** It is permissible for the shooter to bank the cue ball off a rail before contacting his object ball. However, after contact with his object ball, any group ball must be pocketed or the cue ball OR any other ball must contact a rail. If not, this results in a "ball in hand".

**SAFETY SHOT:** For tactical reasons a player may choose to pocket an obvious object ball and also discontinue his turn at the table by declaring “safety” in advance. A safety shot is defined as a legal shot. If the shooting player intends to play safe by pocketing an obvious ball, then prior to the shot, he must declare “safety” to his opponent. If this is NOT done and one of the shooter’s object balls is pocketed the shooter will be required to shoot again. Any ball pocketed on a safety shot remains pocketed.

## **H. FOULING**

**All fouls must be called and acknowledged before next shot is taken by the opponent that is currently playing. (exception: scratching)**

**The following results in fouls:**

**1. Failure to make a legal shot as noted above.**

**2. Shooting the cue ball into a pocket or off table.**

**3. It is a foul when a player scratches on the break or deflects the cue ball prior to hitting the racked balls. The incoming player receives (Cue ball in hand behind the head string).**

**4. When placing the cue ball in position, any forward stroke motion contacting the cue ball will be a foul, if not a legal shot.**

**5. Shooting without at least one foot touching the floor.**

**6. Coaching is a foul. Any member of a team called for coaching will result in a foul on the team member shooting. This includes calling “Ball In Hand” unless you are one of the shooters in the current game.**

**7. Object Ball Frozen to Cushion or Cue Ball.**

**This applies to any shot where the cue ball’s first contact with a ball is with one that is frozen to a cushion or to the cue ball itself. After the cue ball makes contact with the frozen ball, the shot must result in either:**

**a) A ball being pocketed, or;**

**b) The cue ball contacting a cushion, or;**

**c) The frozen ball being caused to contact a cushion attached to a separate rail, or;**

**d) Another object ball being caused to contact a cushion with which it was not already in contact.**

**Failure to satisfy one of those four requirements is a foul.**

**A ball which is touching a cushion at the start of a shot and then is forced into a cushion attached to the same rail is not considered to have been driven to that cushion unless it leaves the cushion, contacts another ball, and then contacts the cushion again. An object ball is not considered frozen to a cushion unless it is examined and announced as such by either the referee or one of the players prior to that object ball being involved in a shot.**

8. ACCIDENTALLY moving or touching any ball is not a foul unless: 1) the moved ball is the cue ball or 2) a moved ball makes contact with the cue ball or 3) a moved ball that is jumped off the table or pocketed or causes any ball to be jumped off the table or pocketed. (exception to #3: If the 8-ball is jumped off the table or pocketed it is loss of game if called by the opponent before the next shot is taken). Only opponent may replace the ball moved as closely as possible or leave it where it rests. If the shooter replaces the moved ball, it will be considered a foul.

9. Picking up or shooting the cue ball while any balls are still in motion is a foul.

10. Push shots and or double hits will be considered fouls.

11. With cue ball in hand, touching any object ball with the cue ball is a foul or touching any object ball with your hand while touching the cue ball is a foul.

12. When the slow play rule is enforced taking longer than ONE MINUTE between shots is a foul.

13. Jumping object balls off the table is a foul.

14. After a scratch on a legal break, if a player positions the cue ball completely and obviously outside the kitchen and shoots it is a foul.

15. If your opponent commits a foul and you do not receive his/her acknowledgement of such foul prior to touching the cue ball you have committed a foul. (Exception: scratching)

16. Illegal jumping of ball.

I. PENALTY FOR FOULING 1. Only the players involved may call a foul. In the event of a foul call, the opposing player receives cue ball in hand anywhere on the table. This means that the player can place the cue ball anywhere on the table (the cue ball does not have to be behind the head string except on opening break or immediately after a foul on the break).

2. A player must stop shooting when a foul is called. If a player refuses to yield to a foul call, the opposing captain may protest.

#### J. ADDENDUMS & VOTED RULE CHANGES

1. August 21, 2013 – Rule Changes: 1. Handicaps will be figured at 125% (1.25) beginning first week of 8/28/13. Total all handicaps for each team then subtract difference then multiply by 125% (1.25) round number off to nearest half or whole number, this will be the spot.

2. Handicaps for each player will be rounded to ½ point instead of whole. 7.4 used to be a 7 and

7. 5 used to be an 8. By rounding to ½ point, a 7.4 will now be a 7.5 and a 7.8 will be an 8.

3. If a team is short 1 player the other team will choose a player to play twice. The player who plays twice will use their current handicap in both places where their name is on the play sheet. The player will only get his/her personal credit for 1<sup>st</sup> position they play. No personal credit or handicap will be earned for the second position.

**4. Maximum times a team may have a player play twice is 3 times during the season.**

**2. September 2, 2015 – Rule Changes: 1. Any team in “A” Division that wins 2 seasons in a row must spot all other teams an additional 25%.**

**2. Handicap Minimum:**

**3. If a player is on a team that wins “B” Division, that player must play at least one season in “A” Division before playing again.**

**4. “B” Team moving up to “A” Division will start season with the same handicap that they finished “B” Division with. This team will get an additional 25% spot for half of the season.**

**A = 5**

**B = 4**

**C = 4**

**3. February 10, 2016 – Rule Changes: 1. If all players are present then they must shoot and not let someone play twice.**

**2. Makeup games must be played within 4 weeks or team that asked for makeup will lost 5-0.**

**4. June 1, 2016 – New Rule:**

**Home Team is responsible for turning in results of match and fees. These must be turned in at Knock Knock, emailed to hancockamusement.com by Friday or there will be a \$5.00 charge to home team. This is progressive; next offense is \$10.00, next \$15.00, etc.**

**5. November 11, 2016-Rule Change:**

**Team moving to “A” Division from “B” Division – Their first week of play in “A”, their starting average is what they had in “B” Division or 7.5, whichever is lower.**

**6. March 3, 2019 - New Rule:**

**“A” Division voted to approve one time-out per game, limited to one minute each and only one player (of the shooter’s choice) may give advice during the time out.**

**7. September 9, 2020 – Rule Changes: 1. Maximum spot is 9. 2. Last week of play is a position round in all divisions.**

**8. January 26, 2022 – Rule Changes/Addendum: 1. Eliminated the following options to the Break Rule: that when the player makes a break and does not make at least four balls (which may include the cue ball) hit the rail or pocketed a numbered ball the opponent has the options of: (1) accepting the table in position and shooting OR (2) have the balls re-racked and shooting the break himself.**

Changed Rule to: The original breaker must re-rack & rebreak until the break is legal.

## **2. Time Out Rule Change & Addendum:**

**Changed from: Only player can call a Time Out**

**Changed to: The Player or any Team Member can call a time out. However, the Team Member must be on the night's team roster to assist in a time out.**

**Addendum: The person assisting the player may confer with the other active team members BEFORE approaching the table; once he/she has approached the table they CANNOT turn away from the table then return, once they turn away the time out is over.**

### **New rules as of 3-22-23**

- **Any A team That wins 3 seasons in a row will have to spot an additional 50% if same team wins a fourth time in a row the spot will increase to an additional 75%**
  - **A division min. Handicap is now a 6.0**
- **Any division with a bye when its time for a position round the last place team will get its average wins and not have to pay for that week**
  - **Home team now has the option to choose to break 1st or 2nd round**
    - **To qualify for awards must play 65%**

### **New Rules as of 9-20-23**

- **After figuring 125% spot round up or down no more .5 points**  
  
(players handicap stay the same only ball spot is rounded)
  - **Final Position Round is played after makeup week**