

Rules for Eight Ball while playing at the Schuckman Home

These rules are generally based on the rules set forth by World Pool-Billiards Association, Billiard Congress of America and American Poolplayers Association. Exceptions are noted with a ~~striketrough~~ and comments are in blue.

Eight ball is played with fifteen numbered object balls and the cue ball. The shooter's group of seven balls (one through seven or nine through fifteen) must all be off the table before he attempts to pocket the eight ball to win. ~~Shots are called.~~ Only the eight ball shot is called.

The fifteen object balls are racked as tightly as possible in a triangle, with the apex ball on the foot spot and the eight ball as the first ball that is directly below the apex ball. One from each group of seven will be on the two lower corners of the triangle. The other balls are placed in the triangle without purposeful or intentional pattern.

The breaker always has the option of racking the balls. Alternately, the breaker may ask their opponent to rack the balls.

Players will alternate breaking on each subsequent game.

Break Shot

The following rules apply to the break shot:

1. The cue ball begins in hand behind the head string.
2. No ball is called, and the cue ball is not required to hit any particular object ball first.
3. If the breaker pockets a ball and does not foul, he continues at the table, and the table remains open.
4. If no object ball is pocketed, at least four object balls must be driven to one or more rails, or the shot results in an illegal break, and the incoming player has the option of:
 - a. accepting the table in position, or
 - b. re-racking and breaking, or
 - c. re-racking and allowing the offending player to break again.
5. Pocketing the eight ball on a legal break shot is not a foul. If the eight ball is pocketed, the breaker has the option of:
 - a. re-spotting the eight ball and accepting the balls in position, or
 - b. re-breaking.

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6. If the breaker pockets the eight ball and scratches, the opponent has the option of:
 - a. re-spotting the eight ball and shooting with cue ball in hand behind the head string, or
 - b. re-breaking.
7. If any object ball is driven off the table on a break shot, it is a foul; such balls remain out of play (except the eight ball which is re-spotted); and the incoming player has the option of:
 - a. accepting the table in position, or
 - b. taking cue ball in hand behind the head string.
8. If the breaker fouls in any manner not listed above, the following player has the option of:
 - a. accepting the balls in position, or
 - b. taking cue ball in hand behind the head string.

Open Table / Choosing Groups

Before groups are determined, the table is said to be “open,” ~~and before each shot, the shooter must call his intended ball.~~ (It is not necessary to call the intended ball). If the shooter legally pockets ~~his called~~ a ball, the corresponding group becomes his, and his opponent is assigned the other group. If he fails to legally pocket ~~his called~~ a ball, the table remains open and play passes to the other player. When the table is “open”, any object ball may be struck first except the eight ball.

Continuing Play

The shooter remains at the table as long as he continues to legally pocket ~~called~~ balls, or he wins the rack by pocketing the eight ball.

Shots Required to Be Called

~~On each shot except the break, shots must be called.~~ The eight ball may be called only after the shot on which the shooter’s group has been cleared from the table. The shooter may call “safety” in which case play passes to the opponent at the end of the shot and any object ball pocketed on the safety remains pocketed.

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Spotting Balls

If the eight ball is pocketed or driven off the table on the break, it will be spotted or the balls will be re-racked. **No other object ball is ever spotted.**

Losing the Rack

The shooter loses if he

1. pockets the eight ball and fouls
2. pockets the eight ball before his group is cleared
3. pockets the eight ball in an uncalled pocket
4. drives the eight ball off the table

These do not apply to the break shot.

The rack is not lost if the shooter scratches on the eight ball shot but does not pocket the eight ball. In this case it is a foul, and the incoming player will have ball in hand anywhere on the table.

Standard Fouls

If the shooter commits a foul, play passes to his opponent. The cue ball is in hand, and the incoming player may place it anywhere on the playing surface. The following are standard fouls.

1. Cue Ball Scratch or off the Table
2. Wrong Ball First
3. No Rail after Contact
4. No Foot on Floor
5. Object Ball (numbered ball) Driven off the Table
6. ~~Touched Ball~~
7. Double Hit / Frozen Balls
8. Push Shot
9. Balls Still Moving
10. Bad Cue Ball Placement
11. Bad Play from Behind the Head String
12. Cue Stick on the Table
13. Playing out of Turn

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Cue Ball Scratch or off the Table

If the cue ball is pocketed or driven off the table, the shot is a foul.

Object Ball off the Table

If an object ball is driven off the table, the shot is a foul. The object ball driven off the table will be spotted.

Wrong Ball First

The first ball contacted by the cue ball on each shot must belong to the shooter's group, except when the table is open.

No Rail after Contact

If no ball is pocketed on a shot, the cue ball must contact an object ball, and after that contact, at least one ball (cue ball or any object ball) must be driven to a rail, or the shot is a foul.

No Foot on Floor

If the shooter does not have at least one foot touching the floor at the instant the tip contacts the cue ball, the shot is a foul.

~~Touched Ball~~

It is a foul to touch, move or change the path of any object ball except by the normal ball-to-ball contacts during shots. It is a foul to touch, move or change the path of the cue ball except when it is in hand or by the normal tip-to-ball forward stroke contact of a shot. The shooter is responsible for the equipment he controls at the table, such as chalk, bridges, clothing, his hair, parts of his body, and the cue ball when it is in hand, that may be involved in such fouls. If such a foul is accidental, it is a standard foul.

Double Hit / Frozen Balls

If the cue stick contacts the cue ball more than once on a shot, the shot is a foul. If the cue ball is close to but not touching an object ball and the cue tip is still on the cue ball when the cue ball contacts that object ball, the shot is a foul. If the cue ball is very close to an object ball, and the shooter barely grazes that object ball

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on the shot, the shot is assumed not to violate the first paragraph of this rule, even though the tip is arguably still on the cue ball when ball-ball contact is made.

However, if the cue ball is touching an object ball at the start of the shot, it is legal to shoot towards or partly into that ball (provided it is a legal target within the rules of the game) and if the object ball is moved by such a shot, it is considered to have been contacted by the cue ball. (Even though it may be legal to shoot towards such a touching or “frozen” ball, care must be taken not to violate the rules in the first paragraph if there are additional balls close by.)

The cue ball is assumed not to be touching any ball unless it is declared touching by the referee or opponent. It is the shooter’s responsibility to get the declaration before the shot. Playing away from a frozen ball does not constitute having hit that ball unless specified in the rules of the game.

Push Shot

It is a foul to prolong tip-to-cue-ball contact beyond that seen in normal shots.

Bad Cue Ball Placement

When the cue ball is in hand and restricted to the area behind the head string, it is a foul to play the cue ball from on or below the head string.

Bad Play from Behind the Head String

When the cue ball is in hand behind the head string, and the first ball the cue ball contacts is also behind the head string, the shot is a foul unless the cue ball crosses the head string before that contact. The cue ball must either cross the head string or contact a ball in front of or on the head string or the shot is a foul, and the cue ball is in hand.

Cue Stick on the Table

If the shooter uses his cue stick in order to align a shot by placing it on the table without having a hand on the stick, it is a foul.

Playing Out of Turn

It is a standard foul to unintentionally play out of turn.

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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 object ball, then prior to the shot, he must declare a "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.