

The World Eightball Pool Federation

THE GOVERNING BODY FOR EIGHTBALL POOL

Established 1992

World Eightball Pool Playing Rules

Version 01/01/2015

Note: Additions from the previous version are in **BOLD** and deletions have been ~~STRUCKTHROUGH~~

A Spirit of the Game

The Game is known as Eight - Ball Pool. It is expected that players will always play the game in the true spirit and in a sporting manner. The Referee will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the spirit and rules of the game are observed.

B Equipment

The Game of Eight - Ball Pool is played with:-

- (1) A Cue Ball being a white ball.
- (2) Fifteen Object Balls consisting of:
 - (a) Colours - being a group of seven red balls (or balls numbered 1 to 7) and a group of seven yellow balls (or balls numbered 9 to 15)
 - (b) The Eight-Ball - being a black ball marked with a number Eight (8).
- (3) A six pocket rectangular Pool Table **with general characteristics as follows:**
 - (a) **The cloth will be marked with a "Spot" at the position where a straight line drawn diagonally from the centre of a side pocket to the centre of a corner pocket would intersect with a straight line drawn diagonally from the centre of the opposite side pocket to the centre of the other corner pocket.**
 - (b) **The cloth will be marked with a "Baulk Line", being 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 Spot.**

C Definitions

- (1) Shot: A shot begins when all balls stop moving from the previous shot.
A player plays a shot by striking the Cue ball with the tip of the cue.
A shot ends when all balls stop moving from the current shot.
- (2) Play: To Play an Object Ball is to play a shot that results in the Cue Ball's first contact with another ball to be with that Object Ball.
To Play the Cue ball is to strike it with the tip of the cue.
- (3) Ball On: At any time during a frame, a "Ball On" is any Object Ball that the player may play without incurring a penalty.
- (4) Pot: A ball is "Potted" when it leaves the bed of the table, enters a pocket and remains in that pocket.

- (5) Visit: A "Visit" comprises one shot or a series of shots. Each visit lasts until the player fails to pot a Ball "On", (or until a foul is committed or the frame ends).
- (6) Turn: A players "Turn" at the table comprises one visit or, after most fouls committed by the opponent, two visits.
- (7) Frame:
 - (a) A Frame is one game of Eight-Ball Pool between two players or two pairs of players.
A Frame is played from the opening break and usually through until the Eight-Ball is potted.
 - (b) A Player may concede a frame at any time.
(Note there are other ways that a frame may end - see Loss of Frame)
- (8) Match: A Match is a predetermined number of frames of Eight-Ball Pool between two players, two pairs of players or two teams of players.
- (9) Player in Control: A player (and the players partner in doubles) is deemed to be "in Control" of the frame from the time that the balls stop moving from the final shot of an opponent's turn until the balls stop moving from the final shot of the players turn. There can be no instance, once a frame has commenced, that someone is not in control.

D Object of the Game

- (1) The object of the game is to win by being the first player to Pot a group of Colours in any order and in any pockets, and then Pot the Eight-Ball in any pocket.
- (2) When "On" a group of Colours, potting more than one ball of that Colour in the same shot is allowed, but a separate shot must be played to pot the Eight-Ball and win the game.

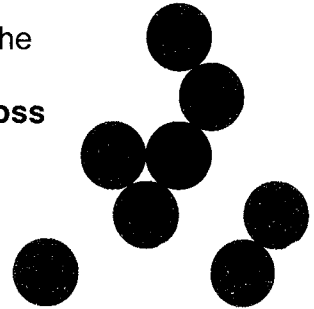
E Playing from Baulk

- (1) Baulk is the rectangular area of the table that is bordered by the Baulk Line and the three cushions at that end of the table.
- (2) When playing from Baulk:
 - (a) The centre point of the Cue Ball must be in Baulk when a shot is played. (If the centre point of the Cue Ball is directly on the Baulk Line it is not deemed to be in Baulk)
 - (b) The Cue Ball can be moved into position by hand or with the shaft of the cue, but when touched by the tip of the cue, a shot is deemed to have been played.
 - (c) The Cue Ball may be played in any direction.
 - (d) If a player wishes to play from Baulk after a "Foul Snooker", "Foul Jaw Snooker" or "Time Foul":
The player must verbally advise the referee of his choice and the referee will then recover the Cue Ball and hand it to the player or place it on top of, and in the centre of, the cushion at the Baulk end of the table for the player to retrieve by hand.
 - (e) After an "In Off", "Foul Snooker", "Foul Jaw Snooker" or "Time Foul" the player must endeavor to position the Cue Ball so as not to create a Foul Snooker. If the player claims a Foul Snooker from Baulk, the referee may choose to move the Cue Ball around to determine if there is any position in Baulk where the player would not be Foul

Snookered. Whether such a position is found or not, the referee will announce the result and hand the Cue Ball back to the player, or place it on top of and in the centre of the cushion at the Baulk end of the table, for the player to retrieve by hand.

F The Break

- (1) The Object Balls are racked (**as per diagram**) with the Eight-Ball on the Spot.
- (2) In the absence of any competition/tournament rules to the contrary, a coin will be tossed **or players will “lag”** to determine which player will break. **The winner of the toss or lag shall decide who will break first.** If a series of frames is to be played, (a match), the break of each subsequent frame will alternate.
- (3) The first shot of a frame is called the Break. To Break, the Cue Ball is played at the triangle of Object Balls from Baulk. The frame is deemed to have commenced the instant that the Cue Ball is played.
- (4)
 - (a) The Break will be deemed a Fair Break if:
 - (i) At least one colour is potted.
 - OR
 - (ii) Four object balls (at least) are driven to a cushion.
 - (b) If the Break is not a Fair Break it is a Non-Standard Foul and:
 - (i) The opponent is awarded two visits,
 - (ii) The balls are re-racked,
 - (iii) The opponent re-starts the game and is under the same obligation to achieve a Fair Break.
 - (c)
 - (i) If the Cue Ball is potted on a Fair Break it is a Non-Standard Foul that is penalized by the turn passing to the opponent.
 - (ii) If the Break is not a Fair Break and the Cue Ball is potted, the penalty for failure to perform a Fair break applies, (see (b) above)
- (5) If the Eight-Ball is potted on any Break, the balls are re-racked and the same player will break again. When the Eight-Ball is potted on the Break, all other aspects of the shot are ignored. (Except if a Serious Foul or breach of the Spirit of the Game occurs).
- (6) **Where the wrong player performs the break, if:-**
 - (i) **The break is fair, the opponent will continue with 2 visits and an open table.**
 - (ii) **The break is not a Fair Break, see 4(b) above.**



G Legal Shot

- (1) On all shots the player must:
 - (a) Cause the cue ball's initial contact with a ball to be with a Ball “On”, AND THEN,
 - (b) Pot a Ball “On” OR cause the Cue Ball or any Object Ball to contact a cushion.
- (2) Failure to play a Legal Shot is a Standard Foul
- (3) Exceptions:
 - (a) On the Break, the conditions of a Legal Shot do not apply (see (F) The Break)

- (b) When playing out of Total Snooker a player is only obliged to meet the conditions of (1)(a) above.
 - (i) Definition: A player is in a Total Snooker when it is impossible to play any part of any of the player's own colour by the way of a 'straight line shot'. Leaving an opponent in a Total Snooker is not a foul.
 - (ii) If a player believes that a Total Snooker exists, the player may ask the referee for a ruling.
 - (iii) If the referee rules that a Total Snooker exists, the player's obligations under the Legal Shot rule are relaxed as follows:- The player need only cause the Cue Ball initial contact to be with a Ball "On" . The requirement to pot a ball and / or cause a ball to strike a cushion is waived.
 - (iv) In a Total Snooker, the straight sections of the cushions DO come into consideration. If a player has to strike a cushion prior to impact with a Ball "On", then a Total Snooker does exist.
- (4) Interpretations:
 - (a) If the Cue Ball's initial contact is with an Object Ball that is touching a cushion, simply forcing that Object Ball into the same cushion does not constitute a Legal Shot.
 - (b) If the Cue Ball and an Object Ball are touching the same cushion simply forcing the Cue Ball and or the Object Ball into the same cushion does not constitute a Legal Shot.

H Deciding Colours

- (1) General:
 - (a) When Colours have not been decided the table is deemed to be Open. When the table is Open a player may play at either group of Colours.
 - (b) Colours can never be decided on a foul shot.
 - (c) Once Colours are decided, the player remains "On" that coloured group for the duration of the frame. The opponent remains "On" the opposite coloured group.
 - (d) Playing a shot after neglecting to nominate a choice of Colours is a Standard Foul. Any balls potted on such a shot are left in the pocket and ignored for the purpose of deciding colours
- (2) On the Break.
 - (a) If no colours are potted on the break the table is "Open".
 - (b) If one or more Colours are potted on the break the player then has a right and obligation to verbally advise the referee of a choice of colour before proceeding. Failure to do so is a Standard Foul. If a player is fouled under this rule the opponent faces an "Open" Table.
 - (c)
 - (i) If the player nominates a colour that was potted on the break, the player is on that colour no matter what happens next.
 - (ii) 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.
- (3) After the break.
 - (a) If a player pots one or more balls of the same colour, the player is then "On" that colour.
 - (b) If a player pots one or more balls of different colours, the player then has a right and obligation to verbally advise the Referee of a choice

of Colour before proceeding. Once a Colour is nominated in these circumstances, the player is on that colour no matter what happens next. Failure to nominate is a Standard Foul. If a player is fouled under this rule the opponent faces an "Open" table.

I Time Allowed

- (1) A player has a maximum of sixty seconds to play each shot.
- (2) The referee will start timing when all balls have come to rest from the previous shot.
- (3) If the first 30 seconds elapses before a shot is played, the referee will call "Thirty Seconds" as a warning to the player. This call must be made the instant the thirty seconds has expired. A Referee should not postpone the call because it appears that the player is about to play a shot.
- (4) If a shot is not played within sixty seconds it is a Non-Standard Foul. The incoming player is awarded two visits from:
 - (a) Where the Cue ball lies, or if the player wishes
 - (b) From baulk.
- (5) The referee may decide to grant "Time Out", being a period when timing ceases:
 - (a) At the request of the player, (For example something is obstructing the player or the player needs to leave the playing area). and/or
 - (b) Because the referee deems that it is warranted, (For example the referee may call time out when making a close Foul Snooker decision or when searching for a piece of equipment requested by the player).
- (6) When the referee has racked the balls, the referee will call 'Time Running'. The oncoming player must then play the break shot within 60 seconds.

J Fouls

There are **three** types of foul. Standard Fouls, Non-Standard Fouls, ~~Serious Fouls~~ and Loss of Frame Fouls. A player can only be penalised for one foul at a time. If two or more fouls are committed during a shot, the foul that carries the most severe penalty will apply.

~~Exceptions:~~

- ~~1. In the case of a Serious Foul and a Time Foul, where the incoming player has the right to 'Ball in Hand'. The penalty for Time foul still applies, even though a Serious Fouls has been called and applied.~~
- ~~2. In the case of a Serious Foul and a Foul Break, the incoming player has the right to 'Ball in hand'. The penalty for a Foul Break still applies, even though a Serious Foul has been called and applied.~~

K Standard Fouls

Standard Fouls are to be called by the referee as soon as they occur and the fouled player is in control, until all balls from that shot come to rest. The referee then awards two visits to the opponent.

- (1) Potting the Cue Ball - In Off (except on a Fair Break - see (F) The Break (4)(c)(1)).
The incoming player plays from Baulk (see (E) Playing from Baulk).
- (2) Playing from outside Baulk when obliged to play from Baulk. (See (E) Playing from Baulk).

- (4) **Deliberately striking a ball other than the Cue Ball with the tip of the cue.**
- ~~(5) Committing a Serious Foul that disrupts the table to such an extent that the Referee deems it impossible to return the balls as close as possible to their original positions.~~
- (5) **Deliberately causing any ball or balls to be moved in a manner other than that which may result from playing a normal shot.**
- ~~(6) Any deliberate attempt to prevent the opponent from potting the Eight Ball, when the opponent is on the Eight Ball, by way of a Serious Foul or other unsporting maneuvers.~~
- (6) **Deliberately striking the Cue Ball with other than the tip of the cue.**
- (7) **Deliberately interfering, by word or action, so as to disrupt an opponent's play.**
- (8) If a player breaches the 'Spirit of the Game' to such an extent that the frame (or match) should be awarded to the opponent.

N Push Shots and Double Hits

- (1) Definitions:- Most shots commonly known as Push Shots in the game of Snooker are allowed in the game of Eight-Ball. Generally, any shot played with speed will not be deemed to be a Push Shot, regardless of the fact that the cue tip may have come into contact with the cue ball more than once.
- (2) Exceptions that are Standard Fouls are:
 - (a) When, during the playing of a shot, the tip of the cue strikes the Cue Ball twice and the Referee is able to actually see each contact.
 - (b) When, during the playing of a shot, a player plays the cue so slowly through the Cue Ball that the cue tip remains in contact with the Cue Ball so as to be visibly pushing it along.
 - (c) When the Cue Ball is played into a touching Object Ball (see (R) Touching Balls).

O Snookers

- (1) Definition: - A player is snookered when it is impossible to play the finest cut possible on both sides of any of that players own Colour by way of a straight-line shot. Snookering an opponent is not a Foul.
- (2) A player cannot be Snookered by a ball of the players own Colour. That is, if one of the players own coloured group is an obstructing ball, it will be ignored for the purposes of determining a Snooker.
- (3) A player cannot be snookered on an Object Ball if the Cue Ball is touching that Object Ball.
- (4) A player cannot be snookered by the straight sections of the cushions. If a straight section of a 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.
- (5) If an Object Ball is partly obscured by a curved section of a cushion (the Jaw) this in itself does not constitute Snooker.

P Foul Snookers

- (1) Definition: - When an opponent plays a foul shot and this results in the incoming player being snookered, the incoming player is deemed to be Foul Snookered.

- (2) If a player believes that a Foul Snooker exists, the player may ask the Referee for a ruling.
- (3) If the Referee rules that a Foul Snooker exists, the player initially has the following options:
 - (a) Play the Cue Ball from where it lies (see (4)(a) below)
OR
 - (b) Ask the Referee to remove the Cue Ball so as to allow the player to play from Baulk (see (4)(b) below).
- (4)
 - (a)
 - (i) If the player chooses to play the Cue Ball from where it lies, the player may, if the player wishes, nominate the Eight Ball, (but see (5) below), or any one of the opponent's Colour. The player can nominate a particular ball by verbal description of it, or its position, or by pointing at it. The Referee may ask for further information if \par any doubt exists as to which ball has been nominated.
 - (ii) Once nominated, a ball is deemed to become one of the player's Colour for the first shot of the first visit. The player may then play any of the player's own Colour, or the nominated ball. If any of the player's Colour and/or the nominated ball are potted, the player continues with the first visit.
 - (b) If the player chooses to play the Cue Ball from Baulk, a Foul Snooker may no longer exist. In this case the procedure under the heading (E) Playing from Baulk (2)(d)(2) and (2)(e) should be followed. If the Referee decides that a Foul Snooker does still exist, the player may nominate a ball and follow the procedure in (4)(a) above.
- (5) If the Eight Ball is nominated it may be played, but potting it will mean loss of frame.
- (6) If a player is On the Eight Ball and is Foul Snookered, the Player may play a nominated ball or the Eight Ball and pot either, or both, of these balls, directly or indirectly, in any pocket or pockets.
Assuming the player does not commit a foul:-
 - (i) If neither the Eight Ball nor the nominated ball is potted, the player's first visit is complete.
 - (ii) If the nominated ball is potted and the Eight Ball is not, the player continues with the first visit.
 - (iii) If the nominated ball and the Eight Ball are potted, the player wins the frame.
 - (iv) If the Eight Ball is potted and the nominated ball is not, the player wins the frame.
- (7) If a Foul Snooker exists and the Cue Ball is touching an opponent's ball or balls, the player may, but is not obligated to, nominate one of those touching balls.

Q Foul Jaw Snooker

If an opponent fouls and the Cue Ball comes to rest on, or near, a Jaw, (the curved part of a cushion), and that jaw is preventing the player from playing the finest cut possible on both sides of any of that player's own Colour by way of a straight-line shot, the player is deemed to be Foul Jaw Snookered and all the rules pertaining to Foul Snookers will apply.

- (3) Should any ball fall into the pocket after a shot is played, but before balls come to rest, and the fallen ball would have been struck, then the Referee will replace the balls to their original positions.
- a) If no infringement of the rules were committed during the shot, or if the Cue Ball is potted as a result of a ball falling that the Cue Ball would otherwise hit, the player who played will replay the shot or may play a different shot.
 - b) If any foul was committed (other than as defined in a) above), then the next player will continue with the appropriate penalty.

U Interference

- (1). If any balls are moved during a frame:-
- (a) By a person other than the players taking part in the frame, or
 - (b) As a direct result on one of the players being bumped, or
 - (c) Due to any other event deemed outside the players control such as:-
 - (i) An Act of God, such as an earthquake etc., or
 - (ii) Tip falling off the cue, or end falling off a spider etc., the Referee will replace the balls as near as possible to the positions they were in before the incident occurred. No penalty shall be imposed on either of the players, and the frame shall continue.
- (2)
- (a) The Referee will prevent any unauthorised marking of the table. If a player causes a block of billiard chalk or other foreign matter to be on any part of the table it is not a foul. However the Referee will ensure that the item is removed.
 - (b) If a player repeatedly causes a block of billiard chalk, or other foreign matter to be on any part of the table the Referee may deem that the player has breached the Spirit of the Game and award the frame to the opponent.
 - (c) Exceptions to (a) above:- A cigarette or beverage container (see (K) Standard Fouls (9)).

V Impossible Shot

A situation may arise during a frame where it is impossible for a player to play a shot without fouling. In such a situation the player has no other option but to commit a foul.

W Stalemate

The Referee shall declare a Stalemate if both the player and the opponent have three turns in succession where the Cue Ball fails to make contact with an Object Ball. In such a case the frame will be replayed with the same player breaking.

X Referees Guidelines and Duties

The Referee's Guidelines and Duties listed below supplement those directions contained in various other sections of these rules.

- (1) The Referee's decision is final except where players have been advised that it is possible to appeal to a Head Referee or other higher authority.
- (2) Information to be disclosed/not disclosed by a Referee:-
- (a) (i) A player is responsible for knowing the rules of the game. It is not the Referee's duty to explain the rules to a player.

- (ii) A Referee, if asked by a player, may divulge certain information pertaining to the frame in question under the guidelines of the Past, Present and Future rule. A Referee may divulge information relating to any past event, or Present situation in the frame, (e.g. "Who's Turn is it?" - Present, "Was that a Foul?" - Past, Which colour am I on? - Present) However, "If I play this shot will it be a Foul?" "Is a question regarding the Future and the Referee should advise the player that the Referee cannot answer this type of question.
- (3) The Referee shall either toss a coin, or the players shall lag, to determine the break. The winner of the toss or lag shall decide who will break first and the Referee shall announce the decision.
- (4) If an Object Ball (or balls) is potted on the break the Referee will advise both players of this fact by announcing the Ball, (or Balls) potted. When Colours are decided for the first time the Referee will announce Player 'A' on Red (or Yellow) Balls. When that player's turn is complete the Referee will advise the incoming player of the situation by announcing Player 'B' on Yellow (or Red) balls.
- (5) (a) The Referee will call fouls as soon as they occur and the fouled player immediately loses control of the table.
 - (i) The call for a Standard Foul is "Foul, Two Visits".
 - (ii) The call for a Non-Standard Foul is "Foul,(and announce the relevant penalty)."
 - ~~(iii) The call for a Serious Foul is Serious Foul, Two Visits.~~
 - (iii) The call for a Loss of Frame Foul is "Loss of Frame".
- (b) After a player has been awarded two visits the Referee will make no call until the player fails to pot a Ball On (except for 30 seconds time warnings and for any fouls that may occur). The referee will then call "Second Visit" to advise the player that the First Visit is complete and the Second Visit is about to begin.
- (6) The Referee will call any instance when the Cue Ball is touching a Ball "On".
- (7) In the absence of any competition/tournament rules to the contrary, two Referees will Referee each frame. One Referee will make the standard calls, such as Second Visit and Player A on Red (or Yellow) Balls, while the other Referee will keep the time. Both Referees will be involved in the refereeing of the frame and either can call fouls. If one Referee calls a foul, the other Referee cannot overrule the call. That is the two Referees have equal authority.

Y Lag for the Break *(added by the Australian Rules and Umpires Committee)*

- (1) **If competition or tournament rules require a lag for break then the following procedure should be used:**
- (2) **Each player should use balls of equal size and weight. With the balls in baulk, one player to the left and one to the right of the table, the balls are struck simultaneously to the rack cushion and back to the baulk end of the table. The player whose ball is the closest to the innermost edge of the baulk cushion wins the lag.**
- (3) **The lagged ball must contact the rack cushion at least once. Other cushion contacts are immaterial, except as prohibited below.**
- (4) **It is an automatic loss of the lag if:**
 - (1) **The ball crosses into the opponent's half of the table,**

- (2) The ball fails to contact the rack cushion,
 - (3) The ball drops into a pocket,
 - (4) The ball jumps the table,
 - (5) The ball touches the side cushion,
 - (6) The ball rests within the corner pocket and past the nose of the baulk cushion, or
 - (7) The ball contacts the rack cushion more than once.
- (5) If both players violate automatic-loss lag rules, or if the umpire is unable to determine which ball is closer, the lag is a tie and is replayed.
- (6) If one player strikes the ball, the other player has to strike his ball before the opponent's ball reaches the foot cushion in order to have a simultaneous lag. If this is not the case and the umpire feels that the player who played second wanted to get an advantage out of that, then the lag has to be replayed.

Z