

# Pool Billiards - The Rules of Play

(Effective 1/1/08)

## 5. Black Ball

Black ball is played with 15 colored object balls and the cue ball. The object balls are two groups of seven and the black ball. The player or team pocketing their group of object balls and legally pocketing the black ball wins the game. Shots are not called.

### 5.1 Definitions

In addition to definitions defined in 8. Definitions Used in the Rules, the following definitions apply to black ball:

#### Free shot

After a foul has been committed the incoming player is awarded a free shot. On a free shot Rule 6.2 Wrong Ball First is suspended and the player may take the cue ball in position or in hand in baulk.

#### Baulk

Baulk is the rectangular area of the table that is bordered by the baulk line and the three cushions at the head of the table. The baulk line is parallel to the head rail and one fifth of the length of the playing surface away from the head cushion. For the applicable general rules, “behind the head string” should be read as “in baulk.”

#### Snookered

A player is said to be snookered when the cue ball has no straight, direct path to hit at least part of a legal target ball. The snooker must be declared by the referee for it to be in effect.

#### Ball On

An object ball is said to be “on” when it is a legal target for the shooter.

### 5.2 Equipment

The fifteen object balls include two groups of seven balls distinguished by two solid colors or by the usual pattern of numbered solids and stripes. (One through seven and nine through fifteen are the two groups.) In addition, there is a black ball or a black eight ball.

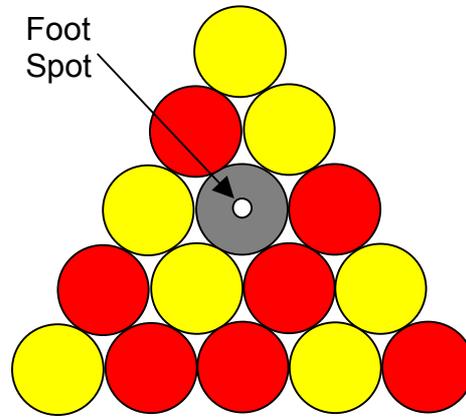
The foot spot and the baulk line should be marked.

### 5.3 Determining First Break

The player winning the lag has the option to determine who has to execute the first break shot. (See 1.2 Lagging to Determine Order of Play) The standard format is alternate break (See Regulations).

## 5.4 Black Ball Rack

The balls are racked as illustrated with the black ball on the foot spot.



Black Ball Rack

## 5.5 Break Shot

The following rules apply to the break shot.

- (a) The cue ball begins in hand in baulk.
- (b) At least one ball must be pocketed or at least two object balls must cross the center string or the break shot is a foul.
- (c) If the black ball is pocketed on the break, all the balls are re-racked and the same player breaks again. Any violation of 6.1 Cue Ball Scratch or off the Table or 6.5 Ball Driven off the Table is ignored on a break that pockets the black ball.

## 5.6 Open Table / Choosing Groups

The table is said to be “open” when the players’ groups have not been decided. The table is open after the break shot and remains open until the shooter pockets balls from only one group on a legal normal shot, which means not a break shot and not a free shot. The shooter is then assigned that group of balls to pocket and the opponent is assigned the other group.

## 5.7 Continuing Play

The shooter remains at the table as long as he continues to legally pocket balls or the rack ends. If he fails to legally pocket a ball but commits no foul, the opponent shoots from the position left.

## 5.8 Cue Ball in Hand in Baulk

When the player has the cue ball in hand, he may place it by hand anywhere in baulk. The player may continue to adjust the position of the cue ball by hand until he takes a shot. The cue ball is not required to leave baulk before striking an object ball.

## 5.9 Touching Balls

If the cue ball is touching an object ball, the shooter must not play the cue ball in the direction of that ball. He is considered to have hit the touching ball when he shoots away from it if the ball is on for the shot.

## 5.10 Playing from a Snooker

When the shooter is snookered, Rule 6.3 No Rail after Contact is suspended for the shot.

### **5.11 Spotting Balls**

Object balls driven off the table are spotted on the long string. If several balls are to be spotted, they are spotted in the following order: (1) the black ball, (2) balls from the group of the next shooter, or balls from the red, blue or solid group if the table is open, (3) other balls.

### **5.12 Stalemate**

In case of a stalemate due to lack of progress towards a conclusion, the breaker of the rack will break again. A stalemate also occurs if the position does not allow any legal shot.

### **5.13 Standard Fouls**

If the shooter commits a foul, play passes to his opponent. The incoming player has one free shot (see Free shot) as the first shot of his inning. The following are standard fouls at black ball:

- 6.1 Cue Ball Scratch or off the Table
- 6.2 Wrong Ball First (suspended for a free shot)
- 6.3 No Rail after Contact
- 6.4 No Foot on Floor
- 6.5 Ball Driven off the Table
- 6.6 Touched Ball
- 6.7 Double Hit / Frozen Balls
- 6.8 Push Shot
- 6.9 Balls Still Moving
- 6.10 Bad Cue Ball Placement (when playing from baulk)
- 6.12 Cue Stick on the Table
- 6.13 Playing out of Turn
- 6.15 Slow Play

The following additional situations are fouls at black ball.

5.13.1 – Pocketing Opponent’s Ball – It is a foul to pocket an opponent’s ball without also pocketing a ball from your own group.

5.13.2 – Table Incorrect – It is a foul to play before all balls that require spotting have been spotted.

5.13.3 – Jump Shot. – Causing the cue ball to jump over any ball is a foul. (If the cue ball leaves the bed of the table and misses an object ball that would have been struck had the cue ball not left the table on an otherwise identical shot, the cue ball is deemed to have jumped over that object ball.)

### **5.14 Loss of Rack Fouls**

The player loses the rack if he:

- (a) pockets the black ball on an illegal shot;
  - (b) pockets the black ball on a shot that leaves any of his group of balls on the table;
  - (c) intentionally violates 6.2 Wrong Ball First; or
  - (d) does not attempt to hit a ball on.
- 6.16 Unsportsmanlike Conduct will be penalized by loss of rack or other penalty depending on the nature of the conduct.