

OFFICIAL 8 BALL POOL RULES

Obviously, some of these rules won't apply in the computer version of the game (eg. Rules 5(h) and (i)) but otherwise, the computer adheres to (most) of them, and so should you!

1. THE GAME

The game shall be known as 8 Ball Pool and referred to in these rules as "the game". It is intended that players and teams should play 8 Ball Pool in the true spirit of the game and in a sportsmanlike manner. It should be clearly understood that the referee is the sole judge of what is fair and unfair play. The referee will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that these rules are observed.

2. REQUIREMENTS OF THE GAME

The game is played on a rectangular 6-pocket table with 15 balls, plus a cue ball. Balls comprise of two groups, 1-7 which are plain coloured balls, 9-15 which are striped coloured balls, plus the 8 ball which is black. Alternatively, the numerical groups 1-7 and 9-15 may be represented by two different colours. Balls in the two groups are known as "object balls".

3. OBJECT OF THE GAME

The player or team pocketing their group of object balls first in any order then legally pocketing the 8 ball (black), wins the game.

4. COMMENCEMENT OF THE GAME (OR RE-START)

- The balls are racked as illustrated with the 8 ball (black) on the 8 ball spot which is at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets.
- Order of play is determined by the flip of a coin. The winner of the flip has the option of breaking or requesting his opponent to do so.
- The opening player plays at the triangle of object balls by striking the cue ball from any position on or within the 'D'. He must pocket a ball or cause at least two object balls to hit a cushion. Failure to do so is a foul break and will result in the balls being re-racked. The opposing player restarts the game with two visits.
- On the first occasion a player legally pockets an object ball, including following a foul, then that ball denotes his group, unless he pockets a plain and a striped ball, when he must nominate his choice before play continues.

- If no ball is pocketed from a legal break, then the players continue alternatively until such time a ball or balls are pocketed.
- If a foul is committed (other than as rule 4(g)) on the first occasion, one or more balls are pocketed, then those balls are ignored in determining the groups to be played and the oncoming player plays at any ball on the table.
- If the player pockets the 8 ball (black) from the break, the game shall be re-started by the same player. No penalty will be incurred. The balls to be re-racked. This applies even if others balls, including the cue ball, are pocketed as well.
- If a ball or balls are legally pocketed, this entitles the player to one additional shot and this continues until the player either:
 - Fails to pocket one of his set of allocated balls.
 - Commits a foul, at any time.
- Combination shots are allowed provided that the player hits one of his own group of balls first (unless rule 6(b) applies).

5. FOULS

- In off (cue ball pocketed).
- Hitting opponent's balls before his own ball or balls, except when rule 6(b) applies.
- Failing to hit any ball with the cue ball.
- Jump shot – defined as when the cue ball jumps over any part of any ball before making contact with any object ball.
- If a player hits the 8 ball (black) with the cue ball on the first impact before all his own balls have been potted, except when rule 6(b) applies.
- Potting any opponent's ball, except when rule 6(b) applies.
- Ball off the table:
 - Any object ball or the 8 ball (black), that has left the table shall be returned to the 8 ball spot (see 4(a)) or as near as possible to that spot without touching any other ball, in a direct line between that spot and the centre of the 'D'.
 - If the cue ball has left the table then the ball to be played from any position on or within the 'D'. A ball shall be deemed 'off the table' if it comes to rest other than on the bed of the table.
- If a player's clothing or body should touch any ball.

- (i) Player not having at least one foot on the floor.
- (j) Playing or touching with the cue any ball other than the cue ball.
- (k) Playing out of turn.
- (l) Playing before balls have come to rest.
- (m) Playing before the ball or balls have been re-spotted.
- (n) Striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip.
- (o) Striking the cue ball with the cue more than once.
- (p) Failing to nominate when rule 4(d) applies.
- (q) Foul break (see 4(c)).

6. PENALTY FOLLOWING ANY FOUL

- (a) Following any foul the offending player loses his next visit to the table, and his opponent is entitled to two consecutive visits to the table.
- (b) On the first shot only, of his first visit, the oncoming player may, without nomination, play the cue ball onto any ball without penalty (including his opponent's object balls and the 8 ball (black)). If he pots any ball or balls directly or by combination he is deemed to have potted a legal ball (or balls) and continues his first visit. However, he may not pot the 8 ball (black), which would mean loss of game, unless he is on 8 ball (black). When he fails to pot a ball on the first or subsequent shot of his first visit, he will then start his second visit (see rule 4(d)).
- (c) If a player is snookered (unable to play a legal full ball shot at any one of his own group of object balls) after a foul stroke, then the cue ball may be played from the 'D' and proceed as rule 6(a) and 6(b). Moving the cue ball in this manner does not count as a shot or visit.
- (d) A 'full ball shot' is defined as being able to strike the centre of the object ball directly with the centre of the cue ball.

7. LOSS OF GAME

- (a) If a player pockets the 8 ball (black) before he pockets all the balls in his own group, except as allowed under rule 4(g), he loses the game.
- (b) A player going in off the 8 ball (black) when the 8 ball (black) is potted, loses the game.
- (c) A player potting the 8 ball (black) and any other ball on the same shot will lose the game, except following a foul when only the 8 ball (black) and ball or balls of the opponent's group are on the table, when he may legally pot the 8 ball (black) as well as balls of his opponent's group in any order.

- (d) A player who clearly fails to make any attempt to play a ball of his own group will lose the game.

8. GENERAL

- (a) Push stroke.
A push stroke is allowed but a player may play from a touching ball of his own group and be deemed to have played that ball. Should the cue ball be touching an opponent's ball or 8 ball (black), a player shall play away without penalty providing that the cue ball strikes one of his own group. When 6(b) applies, a player may play away from any touching ball and be deemed to have played that ball.
- (b) Cue ball in hand.
When a player has the cue ball in hand he plays from any position on or within the 'D' and in any direction.
- (c) Player in control.
A player is said to be in control of the table from the time that his body, cue or clothing touches the table prior to his shot, through his visit and up until his opponent does likewise prior to his visit. Any balls which fall into the pockets during this period (including 8 ball (black)), he is said to have potted and he liable to any penalties or benefits normally awarded to him in the rules of the game (rule 5(c) applies).
- (d) The game is completed when the 8 ball (black) is potted in any pocket and all the balls including the cue ball have come to rest, except where rule 4(g) applies.

9. STALEMATE

Should any situation arise whereby a legal shot cannot be played, then the game shall be re-started by the same player whether this situation is arrived at by accident or design. If in the opinion of the referee neither player is allowing the game to progress or a stalemate situation has arisen, then the game shall be re-started by the same player.

GUIDANCE

- (a) The term 'shot' means striking the cue ball once.
- (b) The term 'visit' refers to one turn at the table comprising of one or a series of shots.
- (c) The term 'break' refers to the first shot of the game or the first shot of a game being re-started.
- (d) Coaching is deemed to be unsportsmanlike behaviour (see rule 1).
- (e) A referee may, if requested, advise on the rules of the game.