

## Billiards (8 Ball) Rules

For general rules that apply to all IMS Billiard competitions, please go to [http://www.bca-pool.com/play/tournaments/rules/rls\\_gen.shtml](http://www.bca-pool.com/play/tournaments/rules/rls_gen.shtml). The following rules apply to 8-Ball games only.

### I. Object of the Game

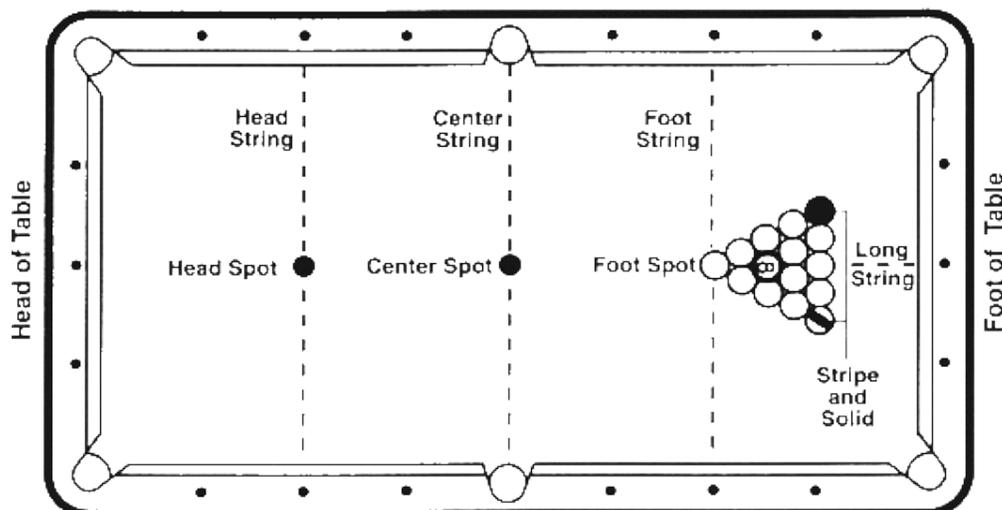
- Eight ball is a call shot game played with a cue ball and 15 object balls, numbered one (1) through fifteen (15).
- One player must pocket balls of the group numbered one (1) through seven (7) (solid colors), while the other player pockets nine (9) through fifteen (15) (stripes).
- The player pocketing either group first and then legally pocketing the 8-ball wins the game.

### II. Call Shot

- In Call Shot, obvious balls and pockets do not have to be indicated.
- It is the opponent's right to ask which ball and pocket if he/she is unsure of the shot.
- Bank shots and combination shots are not considered obvious, and care should be taken in calling both the object ball and the intended pocket.
- 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 shot".
- Any player performing a break shot in 8-Ball may continue to shoot so long as any object ball is legally pocketed on the break.

### III. Racking the Balls

- 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 ball in one corner of the rack and a solid ball in the other corner.



### IV. Order of Break

- Winner of the lag has the option to break

- The winner of each game breaks in the next.
- The following are common options that may be designated by the tournament officials in advance:
  - Players alternate break
  - Loser breaks
  - Player trailing in game count breaks the next game

#### **V. Legal Break Shot**

- Definition-To execute a legal break, the breaker (with the cue ball behind the head string) must either pocket a ball or drive at least four (4) numbered balls to the rail.
- When the breaker fails to make a legal break, it is a foul, and the incoming player has the option of accepting the table in position and shooting or having the balls re-racked and having the option of shooting the opening break or allowing the offending player to re-break.

#### **VI. Scratch on a Legal Break**

- If a player scratches on a legal break shot, all balls pocketed remain pocketed (exception, the 8-ball: see rule 8), it is a foul and the table is open.
- The incoming player has cue ball in hand behind the head string and may not shoot an object ball that is behind the head string, unless he first shoots the cue ball past the head string and causes the ball to come back behind the head string and hit the object ball.

#### **VII. Object Ball Jumped Off Table on the Break**

- 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 accepting the table position and shooting or taking cue ball in hand behind the head string and shooting.

#### **VIII. 8-Ball Pocketed on the Break**

- If the 8-ball is pocketed on the break, breaker may ask for a re-rack or have the 8-ball spotted and continue shooting.
- If the breaker scratches while pocketing the 8-ball on the break, the incoming player has the option of a re-rack or having the 8-ball spotted and begins shooting with ball in hand behind the head string.

#### **IX. Open Table**

- Defined-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.
- The table is always open immediately after the break shot.
- When the table is open, it is legal to hit any solid or stripe first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid.
- When the table is open and the 8-ball is the first to be contacted, it is a foul and no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter. The shooter loses his turn and the incoming player is awarded cue ball in hand. Any balls pocketed remain pocketed and the incoming player addresses the balls with the table still open.
- On an open table, all illegally pocketed balls remain pocketed.

## **X. Choice of Group**

- The choice of stripes or solids is not determined on the break even if balls are made from only one or both groups because 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.
- If the groups have been determined and the player mistakenly shoots at and pockets a ball of the group, the opponent must call a foul on him before he takes his next shot. If he fails to do so, the player automatically takes over the group of balls (solids or stripes) at which he/she has been shooting during this inning.

## **XI. Legal Shot**

- Defined-On all shots (except on the break and when the table is open), the shooter must hit one of his group of balls first, and pocket a number ball or cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a rail.
- It is permissible for the shooter to bank the cue ball off a rail before contacting the object ball; however, after contact with the object ball, an object ball must be pocketed or the cue ball or any numbered ball must contact a rail. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.

## **XII. "Safety" Shot**

- For tactical reasons, a player may choose to pocket an obvious object ball and discontinue a 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, the shooter must declare a "safety" to the opponent.
- It is the shooter's responsibility to make the opponent aware of the intended safety shot. 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.

## **XIII. Scoring**

- A player is entitled to continue shooting until he/she fails to pocket (legally) a ball of his/her group.
- After a player has legally pocketed his entire group of balls, he shoots to pocket the 8-ball.

## **XIV. Foul Penalty**

- Opposing player gets cue ball in hand.
- Player can place the cue ball anywhere on the table (does not have to be behind the head string except on opening break). This prevents a player from making intentional fouls that could put an opponent at a disadvantage.
- With "cue ball in hand", the player may use a hand or any part of the cue (including the tip) to position the cue ball.
- When placing the cue ball in position, any forward stroke motion contacting the cue ball will be a foul, if not a legal shot.

#### **XV. Combination Shots**

- Combination shots are allowed, however, the 8-ball cannot be used as a first ball in the combination unless it is the shooter's only remaining legal object on the table. It is considered a foul should such contact occur on the 8-ball.

#### **XVI. Illegally Pocketed Balls**

- An object ball is considered to be illegally pocketed when that object ball is pocketed on the same shot a foul is committed, the called ball did not go in the designated pocket, or a safety is called prior to the shot.
- Balls that are illegally pocketed will remain pocketed and then scored in favor of the shooter who controls that specific group of balls, solids or stripes.

#### **XVII. Object Balls Jumped off the Table**

- If any object ball is jumped off the table, it is a foul and loss of turn, unless it is the 8-ball, which is a loss of game.
- Any jumped object balls are not re-spotted.

#### **XVIII. Jump and Masse Shot Foul**

- A player should be aware that it would be considered a cue ball foul if the impending ball moves during an attempt to jump, curve, or masse the cue ball over or around an impending numbered ball, which is not a legal object ball.
- It does not matter if the ball was moved by hand, cue stick follow-through, or bridge.

#### **XIX. Playing the 8-Ball**

- When the 8-ball is the legal object ball, a scratch or foul is not a loss of game when the 8-ball is not pocketed or jumped from the table.
- Incoming player will have cue ball in hand.
- A combination shot can never be used to pocket (legally) the 8-ball, except when the 8-ball is the first ball contacted in the shot sequence.

#### **XX. Loss of Game**

- A player loses the game by committing any of the following infractions:
  - Fouls when pocketing the 8-ball (Exception: see 8-ball Pocketed on the Break)
  - Jumps the 8-ball off the table at any time
  - Pockets the 8-ball in a pocket other than the one designated
  - Pockets the 8-ball when it is not the legal object ball
- All infractions must be called before another shot is taken or else it will be deemed that no infraction occurred.