

RULES OF THE GAME

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 shall take whatever action is necessary to see that these rules are observed. The Referee's decision is final.

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; coloured (varying coloured balls must be used) or numbered, plus the 8 ball which is black. Balls in the two groups are known as object balls.

3. Object of the Game

The player or team pocketing their coloured or numerical group first in any order, then legally pocketing the 8 ball black ball, wins the game.

4. Commencement of the Game (Or Restart)

a) The balls are racked with the 8 ball (black) on the 8 ball (black) spot, placed at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets.
b) The Balls will be set up as in the diagram above. If a player breaks whilst they are not set up properly then the balls will be re-racked and they will break again. If a shot is played after the break then the frame will continue with no re-rack.
c) 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.
d) The opening player plays at the triangle of object balls by striking the cue ball from any position behind the baulk line. He must pocket the 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 and the opposing player restarts the game with two visits.
e) The table is open after the break and remains open until a player pots a ball or balls from only one group in a normal legal shot. The ball potted decides the group of that player. However, groups are not assigned if balls from both groups are potted on a shot or on a free shot following a foul.
f) Following a foul break or a foul on an open table, the visiting player has a free ball on his first shot, but on the second shot the player's choice of group is decided by the next ball they pot..
g) If no ball is pocketed from a legal break, then the players continue alternatively until such time a ball or balls are potted.
h) If a foul is committed (other than that of rule 4h) on the first occasion, one or more object balls are potted, then those balls are ignored in determining the groups to be played, and the oncoming player plays at any ball on the table.
i) If the player pockets the 8 ball (black) from the break, the game shall be restarted by the same player. No penalty will be incurred. The balls to be re-racked. This applies even if other balls including the cue ball are pocketed.
j) If a ball or balls are legally potted, this entitles the player to one additional shot and this continues until either:
fails to pocket one of his set of allocated balls, or commits a foul at any time.

5. Fouls

a) In off (cue ball pocketed).
b) Hitting an opponent's ball before his own ball or balls, except when rule 6b applies.
c) Failing to hit any ball with the cue ball.
d) Jump-shot, defined as when the cue ball jumps over any part of any ball before making contact with the object ball.
e) If the player hits the 8 ball (black) with the first impact before all of his own balls have been potted, except when rule 6b applies.
f) Potting any opponents ball, except when rule 6b applies.
g) Ball off the table:
Any object ball or the 8 ball (black) shall be returned to the 8 ball spot, or as near to that spot without touching any other ball, in a direct line between that spot and the centre of the baulk line. If the cue ball, the ball to be played from any position behind the baulk line.
h) A ball is deemed off the table if it comes to rest anywhere, other than on the bed of the table.
i) If a player's clothing or body should touch any ball.
j) Player not having at least one foot on the floor.
k) Playing or touching with the cue, any ball other than the cue ball.
l) Playing out of turn.
m) Playing before the balls have come to rest.
n) Striking the cue ball with any other part of the cue other than the tip.
o) Striking the cue ball with the cue more than once.
p) Foul break (see rule 4c).

q) Playing before the ball or balls have been re-spotted.
r) In Scotch Doubles matches only, there will be One Minute allowed to talk on the First Visit before a shot is played and then No More than Thirty Seconds allowed to talk between shots until the visit is over. If players are deemed to be taking too long then the Referee can prompt the players to end chat and play a shot.

6. Following a Foul

a) Following a 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 his first shot only of his first visit, the oncoming player may, without nomination, play the cue ball onto any ball without penalty (including his opponents object ball and the 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 the black. When he fails to pot a ball on the first visit he will then start his second visit.
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 behind the baulk line, and proceed as rule 6 a and b. Moving the cue ball in this manner does not count as a shot or visit.
d) A full ball 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 of his balls in his own group, (except as allowed under rule 4h), 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 opponents group are on the table, when he may legally pot the black as well as balls of his opponents group in any order.
d) A player who clearly, and in the eyes of the referee purposely, 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 NOT allowed. A player MUST play away from a touching ball of his own group.
b) Cue Ball in Hand – When a player has the cue ball in hand he plays from any position behind the Baulk Line in any direction.
c) Player in Control – A player is said to be in control of the table from the time the balls come to rest and the referee announces the next visit, through his visit, and up to when his opponent does likewise prior to his next visit. Any ball that falls into any pockets during this time, including the 8 ball (black), he is said to have potted, and is liable to any penalties or benefits normally awarded to him for potting that ball or balls, as are accorded to him in the rules of the game. Refer to rule 5c and new rule 4r.
d) The game is completed when the 8 ball (black) is potted in any pocket and all the remaining balls, including the cue ball, have come to rest on the table.

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 the situation has arisen by accident or design. If, in the opinion of the referee, neither player is allowing the game to progress or a stalemate has arisen, then a final 3-shot rule shall be introduced. If at the end of each player's final 3 shots the game has not progressed then the game is to be restarted 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, consisting of one shot, or series of shots.
c) The term 'BREAK' refers to the first shot of the game, or the first shot of a game being restarted.
d) Coaching is deemed unsportsmanlike behaviour and can lead to a foul or even loss of game. Refer to 'The Game'.
e) A referee may, if requested, advise on the rules of the game.
f) Right to appeal – Any player has the right to appeal against any match venue decision at the time of the match. If that person is still dissatisfied then he or she has the further right to submit a written appeal, accompanied by a payment of £10, to the legal secretary within 7 days of the said match. He will then be asked to attend an appeals meeting with the executive committee, the two or four players involved along with the captains and referee of the game. If the appeal is upheld, the persons will be refunded the payment. If the appeal is turned down the payment will go to the League fund.
g) Any person refereeing a game must be fully aware and competent with the rules of the game.

All official rules have been devised and agreed by the WBPPL Executive Committee – June 2024