

EASY POOL TUTOR

Online Resource for free pool and billiard lessons

Pool Lessons

STEPBYSIEP

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EASY POOL TUTOR

Pool Lessons – Step by Step

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INTRODUCTION

Your Free Resource for Pool, Billiards & Snooker Instruction



Welcome to *www.easypooltutor.com* - the only website that freely offers comprehensive information about learning and playing pocket billiards. Whether you are a beginner or an advanced pool player, you can find plenty of good instructional articles here. Lessons are broken down into different topics from basic lessons ([Aiming](#), [Basic Shot Making](#), [Advanced Shot Making](#), [Basic Fundamentals](#)) to more advanced topics ([The Break](#), [Playing Advanced Position](#), [Playing Safety](#), [English or Side Spin](#), [Banks](#), [Kicks & Diamond Systems](#)) plus [Practice Drills](#) and determining your [Skill Rating](#). There's also a topic about the [Mental Game](#), [Game Rules](#) plus articles dealing with [Choosing the right equipment](#) and [Maintaining your equipment](#) as well as [Miscellaneous](#) articles related to playing the game of pool.

This PDF document is a compilation of all the lessons at www.easypooltutor.com thru July 28, 2004.

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I - FUNDAMENTALS OF POOL

The lessons provided in this section deals with the basic building blocks that are necessary to move on to more advanced topics about learning to play the game of pool.

- » [Stance](#)
- » [How to setup a Snooker stance](#)
- » [The Grip](#)
- » [The Grip - Another perspective](#)
- » [Getting a grip \(right\) is vital](#)
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- » [How to Stroke](#)
- » [How to learn to stroke straight](#)

Stance

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 00:34:30 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

Different types of players will have different stance. Your stance may not exactly be the same as mine but there are a few guidelines to keep in mind.

Balance is important simply because a good stroke requires minimal body movement except for your arm to swing the cue stick. You need to find the proper balance so that every other part of your body is kept still. Spread your feet apart to distribute your weight evenly on both feet. Move your left foot forward if you are right handed or your right foot if you are left handed.

Your arm should be perpendicular to the table, i.e. 90 degree angle (see illustration below). It should remain at 90 degrees as you swing your cue stick. There should be no sideways movement of your arm. This ensures a straight stroke.



Next, make room for your arm to swing freely. In order to do this you must angle your body at least 30 degrees from your cue stick. Make sure that your arm doesn't hit your hip when you swing back. Let yourself be comfortable with the position.

And last, you must set your cue stick as level as possible by lowering your upper body to a point where your cue stick becomes as level as possible. Depending on how tall you are, you may have to lower your body even more to accomplish this.

Head Alignment

As a general rule of thumb, your head must be aligned with the aim line. Your cue must be aligned with the center of your head or right below your dominant eye. You will have to find out which works for you. The important thing is to keep your head perfectly perpendicular to the floor and not tilted left or right. One way to check this is to video tape yourself as you are setting up your stance and alignment. Refer to the illustration below for an example of the correct head alignment.



How to setup a Snooker stance

By Plumb

Date: Wed, Sep 15 @ 00:34:30 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

The first thing to realize about a snooker stance is that the body goes down quite square on towards the shot with an even distribution of weight between legs and feet. It is quite unlike the American stance where the body is presented more side on to the shot- the right foot is turned presenting the inner side of the foot to the shot and the left foot is placed further forward (switch legs if left handed).

The following is a step-by-step sequence for setting up a snooker stance:

Step 1) Having observed the [Line of Shot] use the [Stomach, Chest, and Head,] to stand the [[Shoulders, Left Arm, Bridge, Cue, Right Hand Grip, Forearm, and Right Upper Arm] with the [Pelvis, Legs, and Feet]] on the [Line]

Stand the right foot a little outside the line of shot and slightly turned out to the right. Stand the left foot a little forward from the right pointing straight ahead and parallel with the line of shot. Let your weight be mostly resting on the left foot ready to transfer down onto the right foot. The width between both feet will vary depending on your height and weight, but as a rule of thumb, shoulder width is about right, hip width is too narrow. Where your feet are at this point shouldn't change until after the shot has been played.

Going down square on behind the shot means the stomach has to bend the chest and head over the pelvis quite square on behind the shot as well- use the balance point found in the stomach to bend the stomach, chest, and head, into the shot, as a single unit. Getting the stomach well positioned and comfortable is very important since this is where the body should be centered and breathing.

The cue should be pointing in the general direction of the shot- the left arm and bridging hand should be gently extended towards the shot away from the body not drooped against the torso. This helps fit the cue into place as you go down and also helps with your sense of distance from the shot.

Whatever your shape, size, and flexibility, the head, bridge, cue, right hand grip, and right upper arm all need to be lined up together to deliver a smooth, relaxed stroke. The right upper arm is critical, if it is not aligned the forearm and grip underneath cannot swing straight through the shot, the head will want to move, and the stability of feet and bridge is compromised. The pendulum effect relies exclusively on a correctly aligned upper arm. If it is out of line gravity becomes your enemy rather than your friend and the muscles of the forearm tense to hold the cue in place as you stroke. I recommend a firm full fingered grip on the cue with the right hand to help align the right forearm and upper arm comfortably together with the head when you go down. If you get your right upper arm correctly in position you should be able to squeeze the cue firmly and still stroke straight down the line.

Step 2) Bend Down Forward through the Line onto the Bridge.

As you go down forward, head and cue should line up together behind the shot. Pull back gently with the right hand grip and upper arm while extending forward gently with your left arm and bridge. This helps line things up with the head and brings the cue in against the body. As you bend from the stomach try to move the chest and head together over the pelvis. Gently lock the right knee as you come down- the left knee needs to bend to equalise the weight distribution. I strongly recommend keeping the right knee locked as it helps stabilise the pelvis and engages the hamstring of the left leg. In my experience the left foot should be in front of the right by a minimum half of your foot length to ease pressure on the right knee and thigh muscle.

I personally recommend having the head and chin all the way down gently touching the cue for most shots. This reduces the 3rd-dimensional visual image your eyes record to a more 2-dimensional image making long distance aiming easier. This isn't at all necessary, and indeed at times having a more 3-dimensional view of the shot helps to see the line as you stroke it.

The last and final step is of course to shoot the shot and I include how I structure this step for your interest. Everybody has their own way of doing this.

Step 3) Sight and Stroke-> Pause-> Shoot

It isn't enough to just stroke the bridge and cue, you have to aim that stroke as well. The entire body should be absolutely still as you stroke, as a single unit, only the right hand grip and forearm and cue should move. Eyes can move up and down the line between object ball, cue ball, and cue, but at the moment of contact it is essential to be looking at the line passing through the object ball.

Pausing the stroke has many merits. Firstly, if your stance is well set up, comfortable, and stable, you should be able to pause the motion of forearm and grip without strain. If you find it difficult chances are you're not really that stable in your stance. Secondly, pausing, whether at the front of the stroke next to the cue ball, or at its apex at the back, gives your eyes the chance to check the line of the cue in relation to the line of the shot. No matter how good you are at setting up it's still easy to miss. The subtlest of body movements can throw your aim off. This is why I recommend a pause at the back swing of your last stroke- it gives you one last moment to check the line and the alignment of your body and cue in relation to that line before you shoot.

I hope you have enjoyed this brief lesson, if you wish to write to me with comments and/or suggestions please email me at wesma740@student.otago.ac.nz

The Grip

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 00:45:03 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

A good grip is an important aspect in the game of pocket billiards. A proper grip allows you to make accurate shots. On the other hand, a bad grip will limit your potential for improvement.



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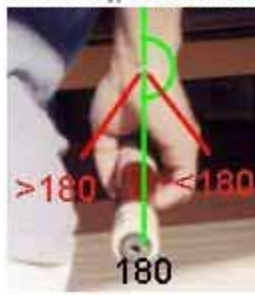


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Take a look at the illustrations above. As you can see your grip must be loose and relaxed. Never tighten your grip, keep it relaxed all the way through your stroke. Try to use two to three fingers to hold your cue stick while using the thumb as support to keep your cue stick from falling off.

The next image below shows you that your wrist and your lower arm must be in a straight line or 180 degrees. Your wrist must point downward and NOT inward (greater than 180 degrees) or outward (less than 180 degrees). The reason for this is that if your wrist is pointing inward or outward, it will most likely move sideways as you do your final stroke.

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The next thing to learn is which part of the cue stick you will need to put your gripping hand. Should you put it on the very end of the butt of the cue stick or should you put it closer to your body? It is different for everybody but one guideline for figuring this out is to locate the *balance point*.

Refer to illustration below. To do this, use your index finger to balance the cue stick on its own. Once it is balanced, remember the point on the cue stick where it balanced and use this as your reference point. Depending on how tall you are you

will need to place your gripping hand at least 6 inches from the balance point towards the end of the cue stick. Shorter players will put their gripping hand closer to the reference point while taller players will put their gripping hand farther away from the reference point.



There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article3-pg-1.html> to view the video.

The Grip - Another perspective

By ckimboy

Date: Sun, Jan 11 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

"Gripping" your cue can be a very misleading term, because it implies a strong force and hold on your cue. However, clenching the cue like a baseball bat will tense up your forearm. Try comparing how steady you are able to keep your forearm when it is relaxed and when it is tensed up and how smoothly you can move your forearm. See the difference when you're tense? This will prevent you from having a smooth, true stroke. Nor should you hold the cue in your fingertips so lightly that you are unable to steadily guide the tip of your cue to the desired contact point on the ball. Rather, you should have a light but firmly supportive hold on your cue. Some players have only the thumb and forefinger grasping the cue. Only these two fingers are in contact with the cue at the end of the backswing, and all the fingers come to hold the cue at the end of the follow-through. Do not put your thumb on top of the cue, because this will lock up your wrist, and it's very important for your wrist to stay relaxed. One way to practice a looser hold if you have made the habit of clenching your cue is to hold a few pieces of chalk in your hand along with the cue and play a few racks like this, all the time having an easy, lightly firm hold with your thumb and forefinger...just enough to stay in control, trying to avoid pressing the chalk into the cue. You'll definitely notice the difference when the chalk is gone.

At all times, your cue should feel well balanced in your hand. For normal shots, your hand should be in the center of the wrap (assuming your cue length is appropriate for your arm span). For shots that require more "touch" and accuracy, try moving your hand forward on the wrap, shortening the length between your bridge hand and the ferrule. For shots that require more power, try moving your hand back on the wrap, lengthening the distance between your bridge hand and the ferrule. Always remember to stay down and follow through on your shots.

Getting a grip (right) is vital

By Tim Miller

Date: Sun, Jan 25 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

Getting a grip (the right one) is vital to a good game of pool. Within the grip is an eye that sees the shots. An eye that looks out of the grip hand and down the shaft towards the target.

This eye must be able to visualize the shot. If there is something wrong, the eye cannot see and, therefore, you will not be able to deliver a smooth pure stroke. There will be interference within your efforts. You will be tentative as you start guessing at shots.

Get a grip. It should be comfortable, relaxed, and remain fairly consistent throughout the range of the stroke. A relaxed grip is usually best since too tight of a grip can tense up muscles in the arm that can cause your stroke to perform erratically. Likewise, too loose and you could lose control.

Start by balancing the cue in your hand. Hold it so the cue lays balanced and does not tip or drop on either end. This is the balance point. Now, move your grip hand back about four inches. Mark this spot with a small piece of red tape.

This is the proper place for getting a grip on your cue on most shots. There are times when the shot itself calls for you to slip your grip hand forward or backwards a few inches. For the most part however, your grip hand should be about four inches behind the balance point on the cue. You are training your eye to work with your hand. Repetition is the best trainer in the world. Analipotese once said, "The organism repeats that which is pleasurable."

The eye and the hand go together. They must be coordinated. The eye moves the hand. The hand responds to what the eye sees. Have you ever driven in a white out? The snow is so thick you see only white. There is no perspective. No way to measure distance. We encounter these in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan during the winter. The eye cannot see, therefore, the hands do not know how to guide the car. You panic and catastrophe follows.

We need to become one with our grip hand. This is vital to a winning performance. First, we need to be in line with the shot and have the confidence to allow the eye to move the hand. Let go of resistance. Let go of your preoccupation with making and missing the shot. Deliver the smooth winning stroke. Let it happen. Read my book, *Point The Way*. The chapter on "The Shot Shoots Itself" will give you some valuable insights on this fine art. Be one with your grip. Let the eyes and the grip become one unit. Transfer your eye to your grip hand. See the shot. Shoot the shot. First, by getting a grip. professionally.

Develop an intimate sense of feel in your grip hand. Set up the four ball exercise. Practice this over and over with a keen sense of the feeling in your grip hand. Feel the shot as the cue tip goes through the cue ball. Become one with the sound associated with a successful shot. Get a grip, feel the grip, hear the sound, see the shot. It all goes together. This is how you win.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

The correct grip

By mark163

Date: Sun, May 9 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

The correct grip is very important at all billiard games and must be mastered if the player is to make progress. One way is to play with an all finger grip where all five fingers remain in constant contact with the butt all the way through the stroke and never alter except for perhaps a slight squeeze on contact with the cue ball. This method requires the cue arm to be perfectly vertical at address of the cue ball or the cue will lift on the backswing causing a scooping motion. Most pros use a different grip, only the thumb and first finger remain constant, the others flex open on the backstroke and close on the forward stroke. This has the effect of tracking the cue and keeping it on line, also greatly increasing cue ball control and cue power. On the final backswing the little finger practically comes off the cue altogether, this allows the cue to remain flat; on the follow through the fingers all close and return to the original position. Most top pros use this method to a greater or lesser extent of flexing the fingers. To get a good idea watch Ralph Souquet, Oliver Ortman, or snooker players Steven Hendry, Steve Davis or Ronnie O'sullivan. They all use the same principle. Makes for more accurate cueing.

The Bridge - Part I

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 05:47:29 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

There are many types of bridges each of which serves its own purpose. However, the main function of the bridge is to lock your cue stick into position to minimize unnecessary sideways movement.

The closed bridge (see below) is widely used by many players. Because of the way the cue stick is wrapped around by your fingers, this type of bridge has a few advantages over the open bridge. First, it prevents unnecessary sideways movement of your cue stick thus preventing miscues. It is also better for power shots where you draw your cue as far back as possible. Using a closed bridge allows more control over the movement of your cue stick.



The open bridge (see below) is widely used by newer players mostly because it is easier to set your hand for an open bridge than a closed bridge. This type of bridge is useful for soft shots and follow shots.



The Bridge - Part II (How to set up an open bridge)

By admin

Date: Wed, Apr 9 @ 03:03:37 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

This article will discuss how to set up an open bridge. Below are the instructions to set up an open bridge.

First, lay your hand flat on the table as shown.



Next, curl your hand upwards to form a peak.



Next, move your thumb to close the gap between your pointing finger creating the placeholder for your cue stick.



Last, spread the rest of your fingers (the middle, ring, and small fingers) to stabilize your bridge hand. Make sure that your hand is planted firm on the table.



That's it for the open bridge. Pretty easy, huh?

The Open Bridge

By sputnik

Date: Sun, Jun 29 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

To setup an open bridge, the thumb should be pressed against the index finger thus creating a canal where the cue rests. See figure 1 below.

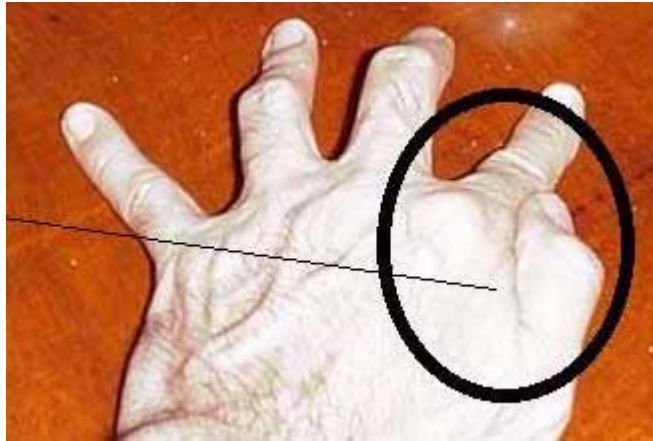


Figure 1

The proper setup of an open bridge is demonstrated by two of the finest Pinoy pool players below:



Lee Van Corteza



Snookie Villanueva

Credits: Martin Misa is the President of the Billiard Buddies Association of the Philippines (BBAP). Being exposed to the wizardry of Filipino pool masters, he has picked up concepts in the game that he is sharing with us. He can be reached thru e-mail at mbmisa@mydestiny.net

The Bridge - Part III (How to set up a closed bridge)

By admin

Date: Wed, Apr 9 @ 13:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

This article will discuss the steps on how to set up a closed bridge. Follow the following instructions to set up a closed bridge.

First, make a fist and lay it flat on the table.



Next, open up your pointing finger and your thumb.



Next, join the tip of your pointing finger and your thumb to create an enclosed area.



Next, open up the rest of your unused fingers and spread them to make your bridge hand stable. The same image is shown here at opposite views for better reference.



That's it for the closed bridge

Bridging the gap

By David Sapolis

Date: Wed, May 15 @ 13:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

So what's so important about the bridge?

For many experienced players the bridge is a pretty natural thing. We don't think about it, we just plop our hand down on the table and slip the shaft between our fingers and shoot away. What's the big deal? Many shots are missed due to basic flaws in the bridge. Listed below are some of them. There may be more, but these are the most common.

10 Common Bridge Flaws

1. Too Loose
2. Too tight
3. Too far away from the cue ball
4. Not level
5. Too high
6. Too low
7. Unbalanced
8. Supports the body, not the cue
9. Bunched up
10. Limited contact with the table.

Just to torture you, I will dissect every last one of those common flaws to strike home the importance of the bridge. To begin, I will bring to your attention that every stroke of the cue passes through your bridge.

If your bridge is weak, so is your stroke. If your bridge looks like crap, so will your stroke and anything you intend to do with it. The bridge is used to support and guide the shaft of the cue. You can have the best cue that money can buy, all of the knowledge in the world, and the stroke that nightmares are made of, but if it does not have the proper SUPPORT and GUIDANCE, it's useless!

This is what makes the bridge so important. The list of flaws is given as an example of what to stay away from. The bridge is made up of several different parts. It starts with the bridge shoulder, the bridge elbow, the bridge forearm, the wrist, the inner base, the outer base, the stabilizers (the pinky, ring and middle fingers) and the loop which is made when the tips of the thumb and forefinger are placed together. All 8 parts must work together for the bridge to properly perform its function.

The 8 Basic Parts of the Bridge

1. The shoulder
2. The elbow
3. The forearm
4. The wrist
5. The inner base
6. The outer base

7. The stabilizers
8. The loop BREAKING DOWN THE COMMON FLAWS Too Loose.

Too Loose

A loose bridge can cause two problems. a) The shaft can slip from side to side causing an inaccurate stroke on the cue ball. b) The shaft can slip up and down on the stroke and the follow through causing an inaccurate stroke on the cue ball. This is the primary reason that I stay away from the open hand bridge unless it is absolutely necessary. Even when it is necessary, I will try to find away around it. The bridge needs to hold the shaft firmly to ensure that the tip makes contact with the cue ball precisely where want it to. A loose, unsteady bridge places that in jeopardy.

Too Tight

Skipping through all of the BS, too tight means too tense, and we are not striving for tenseness. A tight bridge causes your shoulders (emphasis on the plurality) to tighten up as well. The bridge is supported by the non-shooting or bridge arm. This arm consists of all 8 parts. If the shoulder on the non-shooting side is tense, I can bet the other side is tense as well. When this happens, the shaft tends to be pushed downward into the felt. An excellent example of this is the break shot in 9 ball. Look at a table that has been played upon quite a bit. You will see a mark that leads from the break spot to the top of the rack. Down near the break spot you can see where the tip and the shaft of the cues have contacted the felt. This is caused by tenseness in the breaker's shoulders and bridge arm. When the breaker releases his break power, the weight is transferred downward, causing the shaft to contact the cloth. The effect is also aided by the fact that the bridge hand is squeezed so tightly that the shaft stops at a point PRIOR to the extent of the follow through, hence the shaft of the cue has nowhere else to go but downward into the cloth. (Mike Sigel's break is the perfect example of this).

This actually zaps the power FROM the break by effecting maximum follow through. Many players (when breaking) believe they are generating power into their break, when they are actually just generating tenseness into the mechanics of the task. Quite simply, a tight bridge eliminates and hinders maximum follow through, therefore it should be avoided at all costs.

A key to identifying this flaw is that generally there is no bend at the elbow. There should be a slight, relaxed bend at the elbow, and the wrist should also be relaxed. The loop should allow the shaft to guide freely. I've said this before, "NEVER SACRIFICE ACCURACY FOR POWER". There is a difference between being effective and being explosive. Only use enough power that you can control. So what is just right? For me and most players, I take the crease of the bend in my thumb and place the nail of the forefinger there. By doing so I will have a stable bridge in MOST situations. From this position, it is easier to elevate the cue and remain stable. This will vary from person to person, but for the norm, it allows the bridge to remain stable, and not too loose or too tight.

Too Far Away From The Cue Ball

This is extremely important to accurate shooting. I perform an experiment when my students are addressing the cue ball. I go to the butt of the cue and wiggle it from

side to side. I have yet to do this with a new student without having the tip of the cue move completely off the face of the cue ball. I then have the student move the bridge hand closer to the cue ball until the wiggling is minimal. This flaw is the primary cause of "mis-hitting the cue ball" as well as "coming up short" on position. Take 3 or 4 inches off of your follow through and I guarantee that you will soon be "punch stroking" the cue ball to overcompensate for the lack of cue ball action. This is a good example of how one bad habit can breed other bad habits. Your hand should be no more than 4-6 inches from the cue ball depending greatly on the situation.

When using the mechanical bridge, most players will unconsciously place it as close to the cue ball as possible. Yet, when bent down over a shot, the same player will resort back to 8 inches plus away from the ball. The closer the bridge hand is to the cue ball, the more accurate the stroke will be.

Not Level

Once I had the opportunity to teach this game to a man who would shoot with the knuckles of his bridge hand facing straight up in the air. It was one of the ugliest sights I had ever seen. I called this malady "The Chicken Claw". It was created and extremely tense open bridge that he decided to close one day. It was the end result of an extremely un-level bridge hand. For a level bridge, there are four (4) factors: 1) The STABILIZERS. The tips of your pinky, ring and middle fingers should have contact with the cloth. 2) The INNER BASE. The ball of your hand (beneath your thumb) should have contact with the cloth. 3) The OUTER BASE. The ball of your hand beneath your pinky should have contact with the cloth. 4) The LOOP BASE. The outside upper edge of your thumb should have contact with the cloth. This base also determines the height of your bridge. When the thumb is extended the bridge raises; when the thumb is bent the bridge lowers. All of these factors will vary from situation to situation. Remember, an un-level bridge destroys accuracy.

Too High

This is the result of the loop opening up, causing the loop to be loose and the base(s) to raise from the cloth. This causes the bridge to become unstable, effecting your stroke. Re-checking your stance (too close to the table, weight distribution etc;) should alleviate this problem. If your bridge elbow is locked, this is a sure sign of poor balance and weight distribution. The elbow should be RELAXED.

Too Low

This is caused by crouching and standing too far away from the table. Hence the bridge tends to "flatten out". When this occurs, it is a sure sign that you have lost your "centering" (see previous post -Center of Mass). A sure sign that this is occurring is when your bridge elbow is dragging on the felt. This causes the bridge shoulder to droop and the forearm will actually rest on the cloth. The shoulders will be un-level, as will your balance, and your stroke.

Unbalanced

This occurs when the bridge seems to "roll" from side to side. This is also caused by the shoulders being uneven. It is caused by your weight being shifted to one side, causing an imbalance in the closing of the hand. The shooting side of your body will feel as if it is higher than the non shooting side. Aligning the ears DIRECTLY above the shoulders should alleviate this problem. The ears should never be forward of the shoulders (sagging head) nor should the shoulders be forward of the ears. This is caused by the shooter leaning forward towards the table, or leaning back away from the table while in their stance. (See Factors of Stance Mechanics).

Support the body and not the cue

Have you ever left the pool hall with a soreness in your bridge shoulder? This is caused by having the bridge shoulder support your body instead of the cue. By now you have probably realized that many flaws in the bridge are brought about by flaws in your stance and balance. If you are properly centered, you will be properly balanced. When you are properly balanced there will be less tension and deficiencies like this will be less likely to appear.

Bunched Up

The bridge hand should be loose and relaxed. This is different from "too tight" as all of the fingers are "crumpled up" (making a semi-fist). The Stabilizers should be extended and the loop firm so that the shaft glides smoothly. Having the bridge hand bunched up is a sure sign of tension. The tension is passed down from the shoulder to the elbow, to the forearm and then eventually the wrist and the hand.

Limited Contact With the Table

The four factors of the level bridge are extremely important in this area. If the bridge hand is not completely supported by the four bases, it will not completely support and guide the shaft of the cue either. The four bases should have contact with the table unless the situation does not allow it. As I explained earlier, there will be times when you will have to raise a base from the surface of the table. In doing so, follow this rule: If I do not have at least three of the four bases contacting the cloth (or rail) I need to either reassess the positioning of my bridge hand or the positioning of my entire body. Examine your bridge carefully to see if one or more of these deficiencies exist. Mostly, these deficiencies creep into our games when we least expect it. Videotape yourself and see how your body language changes during different situations. Chances are you won't detect the deficiencies by yourself. Always take lessons from a pro whether or not you believe that you need it. Usually most of us wait until the problem is extremely out of hand before we seek help. Many of us never seek help and the problems multiply and grow. Look at our game as a garden. It looks better and grows better if we keep the weeds out!

Credits: Feel Free to visit my website for many more articles, diagrams, and book excerpts.

URL: <http://www.geocities.com/blkjackds12>

The Bridge - Part IV (Other Types of bridges)

By admin

Date: Thu, Apr 10 @ 03:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

Rail Bridge

Rail bridges are used whenever the cue ball is too close to the rail and doing any of the normal bridges (open or closed) would be impossible. For this type of bridge you simply lay your cue stick on the rail and use your fingers to stabilize it. There are different types of rail bridges that you will learn as you play the game. Below are some illustrations you can use as reference.



The Elevated Bridge

The elevated bridge is a variation of the open bridge. You normally use this type of bridge when there is another ball obstructing the cue ball (as shown below). When doing an elevated bridge it is important that you have a stable base for your cue stick. Make sure to balance your hand so that it will not move as you take the shot.



The Mechanical Bridge

And last but not least, there's the mechanical bridge. This is normally used as the last resort whenever it is virtually impossible to use the other types of bridges. A mechanical bridge is normally used for shots that are too far for you to reach. It serves as an extension of your arm.



There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article52-pg-1.html> to view the video.

Stroke

By admin

Date: Wed, Apr 2 @ 03:42:58 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

There is no question that the stroke is the one of the most important element in the game of pocket billiards, snooker or any cue sport. A smooth, straight stroke is key in pocketing your object balls accurately.

So what's a good stroke? A superior stroke will allow the cue ball to travel along an exact path to the object ball. In other words, if you aim at some point on the object ball then that should be the point where your cue ball makes contact with the object ball. One way to test your stroke is to practice a straight-in shot with the object ball about 1 foot away from the pocket and the cue ball about a foot away from the object ball. A good stroke should send your object ball straight towards the pocket, if not, then you have an imperfect stroke.

- Use warm-up strokes before your final stroke. This allows you to loosen your swinging arm to create a smooth follow through. Take your time and don't rush your shot.
- As you do your warm-up strokes, look at your cue ball and find the point where your cue tip should make contact. Once that is set, focus on the object ball for your final stroke.
- Your body must be kept still except for your swinging arm's elbow down to your hand. There should only be a back and forth motion of your arm and there should be no sideways movement of your arm. Obviously, if there is any sideways movement, then your stroke will not be straight and you won't hit the cue ball where you intended to, therefore, a missed shot occurs.
- Make sure that you cue stick remains relatively level as you do your strokes.
- Follow through your shot, that is, allow your cue stick to extend past the point of contact with the cue ball and let your cue stick come to a natural halt. The illustrations below display the progression of a full follow through.



There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article19.html> to view the video.

The pendulum

By Gary Addison

Date: Wed, Jul 9 @ 04:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

The "stroke" is often the most misunderstood and most difficult to define part of the game. While we may be unable to put it into words - we know it when we see it. The stroke is what separates the good from the great. The stroke must be smooth; it must be straight; it must be complete. We know it when we "feel" it: the grip (the position of the fingers on the butt), the alignment (head, shoulders, elbows, and wrist), the execution (the lock of the eyes on the object ball, the feel of the cue as it contacts the CB).

The stroke can be taught, but ultimately the player will become his own best teacher. It is his/her responsibility to listen to every ligament and cell and to constantly adjust. Adjust to the conditions (humidity, temperature), adjust to the table (speed, rails, and balls). The greatest players are great because they have the ability to "adjust". From the inside out they are constantly tuning their bodies, polishing the roughness, smoothing muscle movements. They have learned to "listen" to their bodies. They have worked out all obstacles to a flawless execution. They have the "stroke".

The First Step to a better Stroke

By Nam Hoang

Date: Sun, Dec 28 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

This is purely from my experience. When you first start shooting pool, you must understand your stroke is the key to controlling that rock (cue ball). It is also important in aiming, because if you have a bad or crooked stroke, you will not see consistent results. Now the first thing you should do to straighten that stroke out and to keep it consistent. Get a beer bottle cleaned out and empty. Find a table in your house, i.e. dining table. place it on the table in front of you and get into a stance (with your cue) as if you were going to shoot through the mouth of the beer bottle as you would stroke through the cue ball. Now keep in mind, you have to stroke through the mouth of the beer bottle without touching the rim. It has to be a nice glide in and out. You don't want to force it in. You want to swing the cue back in forth like a pendulum. there is no force on pendulum, just a nice swing. If you do this everyday for about two weeks I believe you will straighten out your stroke and also build up muscle memory which will help you be more consistent. Sorry I don't have diagram to show. I'll try to post one up later.

Stroke detection and correction

By badandy

Date: Thu, Apr 3 @ 13:00:00 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

A smooth stroke is a worthy goal; you will never be good without it. A little wiggle at the back end will translate into inconsistency and many missed shots for unknown reasons. You knew the aim was good and it looked good but missed by a mile.

One practice shot is to place the CB (cue ball) on a spot, hit it to the opposite cushion and see if it comes back and strikes your tip or goes off to the side. It is a good idea to place a piece of chalk at the opposite end with a corner facing you. This will give you an exact point to aim at. If the CB goes off to the side it means you did not hit the exact center of the CB and the resulting english pushed it off center when it hit the cushion. This is also good practice for your follow through, staying put after the stroke.

A second shot you can do is very easy and can be used to correct your stroke occasionally during play. Place or pretend place the cue ball on one spot then aiming directly at the other spot or center diamond and just stroke but not strike the ball. Once you feel your stroke is right and feels good, look down at the diamond below your stick as you stroke and watch your cue go back and forth over the diamond. Is the cue directly over the diamond or is it on a slight angle? It should be straight. Is the cue moving back and forth straight or is there a wiggle? I find this a good way to get your stroke back in shape at any time; it only takes a few seconds. You can get the smooth feel back without the wiggle.

A third practice shot is to place your CB about ½ inch away from a side cushion (right if you are right handed) about 1/3 to ½ way up the rail then do the practice stroke. You can observe your cue movement along side the cushion. It should remain ½ inch away from cushion as you slide back and forth. If you see your cue moving all around concentrate on making it go straight and do it for a little while to get the feel of it and to train the muscles to do this.

Also, follow through on your shots, stay down after you stroke. It assists in a smooth stroke and is often one of the most neglected aspects in shooting. If you watch the pros you will see they have follow through. Many so-called good players have not figured this out and they look like a jack-in-the-box. This is part of what makes a pro look smooth.

What it amounts to is practice, lots of practice. Mosconi did not become Mosconi by being a weekend warrior. The more practice the faster you will get the stroke in shape. The above practice tests will assist but it still takes game practice to get the feel. If you play long enough over time the cue will actually feel like part of your arm. Most pool players never get to this point.

Slip Stroke

By BadAndy

Date: Tue, Apr 1 @ 12:38:09 CST

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

There is not much info on slip stroke and apparently no clear definition. From what I have read I believe I do utilize the slip stroke when I get going, kind of in the zone. I have tried to force myself to use it, to push me in the zone and it seldom works. The slip does not push me in the zone, the zone itself creates the slip stroke in me. That is me, perhaps different to others who use it, I am new to it, but like it. I only use it on normal shots, not over the ball stuff etc.

This is how I characterize my slip stroke. When I am there, I am very loose, kind of fluid like, natural. I know it sound dorky, but it the best way I can think of to characterize it. During the first two strokes the butt slips around in my hand by about an inch or two searching for the proper balance point for that particular reach on that stroke. It settles down in about two strokes and feels good, straightens out etc. Then on the contact stroke the shaft will actually slide forward a bit (not always) about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch. The fact that the shaft is semi airborne there should be no side movement and follow through is perfect. Its just a nice feeling.

If anyone is a target bow shooter, its similar to not gripping your bow. You have a strap on the bow that your hand fits into so when the arrow is release the bow falls forward on it own allowing for a smooth departure of the arrow, no side twisting.

How to Stroke

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Jun 20 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

If you listen to most people achieving a stroke in pool requires a lot of hard work and time put in on practice. If you don't understand how a stroke works it can take you years to become accomplished at it. If on the other hand you do understand the principle behind a good stroke it is easy to learn and can be accomplished in a fairly short time. If you watch players that haven't developed a stroke yet you will find that most of them seem to stroke well until the final forward movement of the cue. They take 3 or more warm up strokes that look like perfection then on the final stroke manage to destroy the entire illusion.

The most important thing to perfecting a good stroke it to first decide what stroke power level is required for what you are trying to accomplish with the shot. You should divide your stroke into at least 10 levels of speed with the majority of you shots falling between a 1 to 3 1/2 speed range. There is no shot that I can think of that would require a speed level greater than 5 except for the break. Once you have decided on the speed level for the shot stroke it at that speed. Here is the important part. **On the last stroke make sure that you don't increase the speed of your stroke.** If you change the speed of your stroke you are no longer shooting the same shot that you were practicing with the warm up strokes. The result will probably cause you to miss the shot if it has any degree of difficulty. As the tip contacts the cue ball the cue stick begins to transfer power to the cue ball and the stick begins to slow down. At this exact point you must increase (ever so slightly) the power of your stroke to maintain the original speed of your warm up strokes until the cue ball begins to pull away from the tip of your cue. Let your arm come to a stop naturally and don't force an extended follow through. If you practice this technique you find that in a short time you will have a phenomenal stroke with highly increased accuracy.

I think one reason players tend to increase speed on the contact stroke is because they are trying to hit the cue ball with the tip of the stick. Forget about hitting the cue ball other than to make sure the tip goes through the spot on the cue ball that you intended. Focus your concentration mainly on maintaining the speed of the stroke throughout the shot as you send the cue ball to its intended target.

Any comments or questions can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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How to learn to stroke straight

By James Bradley

Date: Tue, Jun 28, 2005 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Fundamentals of Pool

We are all still working on executing the perfect stroke. I am improving mine lately, thanks to the help of recent instruction. I'll try to relate the high points of what I was told.

My stance apparently was OK- he said many different stances are used by players and they are all fine as long as the person is in a balanced solid position-i.e. you can't push them over with a light push on the shoulder. Kind of a tripod idea- legs in comfortable position with some weight on the bridge hand to provide the third leg.

My grip was trouble- even though I thought I did use a light grip (I've read this a hundred times in many books), I was actually starting out loose but would tighten my hand as the stroke progressed. This causes the cue to go sideways!

My stroke itself was not timed well and was using way too many muscles. (upper arm and shoulder) He rested his cue on top of my elbow as I hit balls and forced me to use only the forearm. This uses only two muscles (triceps and biceps)- allowing for simpler consistency. Also-very important- always finish the stroke with your grip hand at you chest/armpit. Lean over without your cue and swing your forearm only all the way forward until it stops at your body. Do this on every shot- a consistent finishing spot for the back of the cue brings it through straight every time. It also, if done correctly will bring the cuetip through the cueball and towards the cloth in a downward motion on the finish. You will notice the cuestick pointing STRAIGHT ahead on the table. He also said that my backstroke was way too fast. He said pause at the cueball on the last stroke and pull the cue back slowly before hitting the shot. This has been hard to re-learn but is very effective.

So to put this all together I simply (it wasn't simple at at first!)practiced shooting the cueball only, up and down the center of the table, softly ay first- trying to get the cueball to return straight back. (this actually pretty easy to do-even with a bad stroke) Try to do the four things described above on every stroke:

VERY light grip on cue-don't tense up on stroke

smooth pendulum swing with forearm only

Slow backstroke before the hit (think of a bow and arrow-how a bowstring is pulled back slowly before release)

finish the stroke with grip hand at chest and cuetip on or near the cloth

You'll see that when all four are combined- you have a smooth stroke and straight followthrough. (it took me about 4-6 hours of working on this to remember/relearn to do all 4 every time. I've been doing it wrong for almost 30 years!) When you can combine the four elements every time- try shooting hard enough to go up and back twice- this simulates a break-speed shot. This is a the real test of a straight stroke

and whether or not you hit the exact center of the cueball. (I mean 1/2 to 1 tip above the center of the cueball but directly in the middle of right and left.) If you miss the center by an 1/8 inch- it will go way sideways on a hard shot.

*If your cuetip ends with a sideways motion- your grip tightened up on the way thru.

If the cuetip comes up after contact, instead of down towards the cloth- you dropped your elbow and /or shoulder -use forearm only! That means you did not finish the stroke with your grip hand at your chest also.

*The slow backstroke focuses your aim on the object ball before you hit the cueball.

I have practiced these new ideas for the last 3 weeks and although it is temporarily causing my game to be off a bit- I'm really happy that when I aim at a shot- I have confidence that the cueball will go where I aim. Doesn't mean that I make them all now- because I still aim like crap sometimes!

Credits: Taught to me by Scott Lee (<http://www.poolknowledge.com/i>)

II - HOW TO AIM: TECHNIQUES & EXECUTION

This section explains how to correctly aim and pocket object balls and covers some of the most common aiming systems used by majority of the pool players.

- » [How to Aim - Part I](#)
- » [How to Aim - Part II](#)
- » [Aim alignment](#)
- » [Pinpoint Accuracy in Aiming](#)
- » [Aiming points and compensating for English induced throw](#)
- » [The Clicks Aiming System](#)
- » [2-2-2](#)
- » [New Aiming Technique](#)
- » [Simple Aiming Technique](#)
- » [How to aim successfully](#)
- » [Ghost Ball Theory, the Holy Light System, dominant eye and stroke explained](#)
- » [Rifle-like cue aiming in pool](#)

How to Aim - Part I

By admin

Date: Wed, Apr 2 @ 03:29:52 CST

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

In the another article about [Stroke](#) I discussed the ground rules for a solid and reliable stroke. All the good players have a combination of a solid stroke and an exceptional sense of aim. Having learned the fundamentals of a superior stroke, you are now ready to learn the proper technique for aiming and you'll be on your way to becoming a good pool player.

Point of Contact

The biggest question that a new player always asks is *"Where do I hit the object ball to make it go into the pocket?"*. The answer is simple... you need to find the "point of contact" on the object ball. In other words, figure out the area on the object ball that needs to be hit by the cue ball. In Figure 1 below, the "point of contact" is indicated by the arrow.

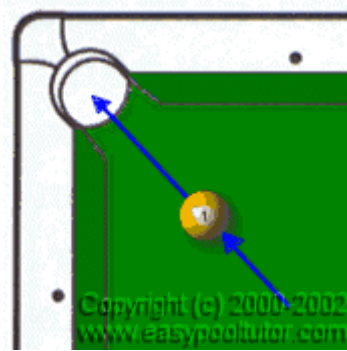
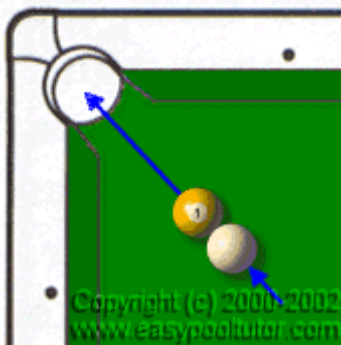


Figure 1

Cue Ball Contact

Figure 2 below displays where the cue ball should be when it makes contact with the object ball. Notice how the cue ball makes contact with the object ball... this is the "point of contact" that I am talking about. Let's say for example that you have a straight in shot at the one-ball, the "point of contact" will then be at the center of the "one" ball. For a straight in shot, you simply aim straight towards the center of the object ball to make the shot.



Aiming Technique #1

Aiming for a straight-in shot is fairly simple because the contact point would be the center of the object ball. However, aiming for cut shots or angle shots are a little more difficult. Look at the illustrations below... as you'll notice the "point of contact" is no longer at the center of the object ball, instead it is located a little bit on the left of center. One of the most common mistakes that a newer player makes on cut shots is aiming at the "point of contact" on the object ball instead of aiming at the "aim point" as shown in Figure 2.

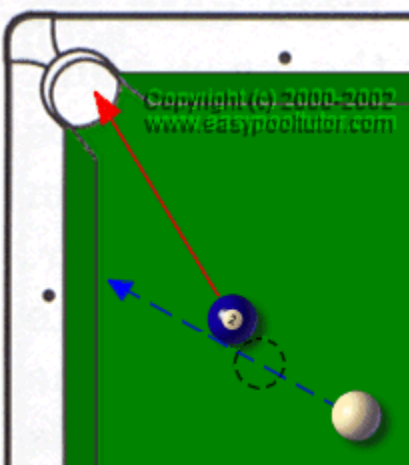


Figure 1

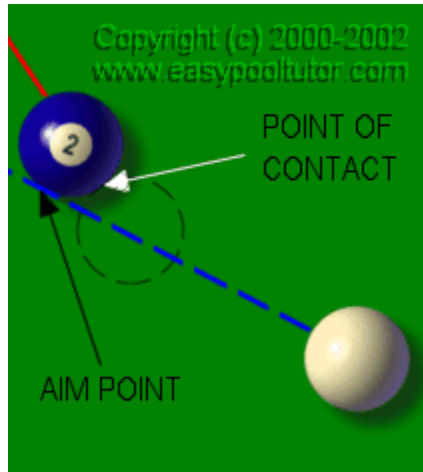


Figure 2

One technique for aiming is using an imaginary ball besides the object ball that lines up directly towards the pocket. Refer to Figure 1 above. The imaginary ball is represented by a dotted circle. Now all you have to do is aim at the center of the imaginary ball as if you are doing a straight-in shot with the imaginary ball (see Figure 2).

It takes a while before you can feel comfortable with your sense of aim but if you spend enough time practicing it you will slowly learn to aim even without using an imaginary ball.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article18-pg-1.html> to view the video.

How to Aim - Part II

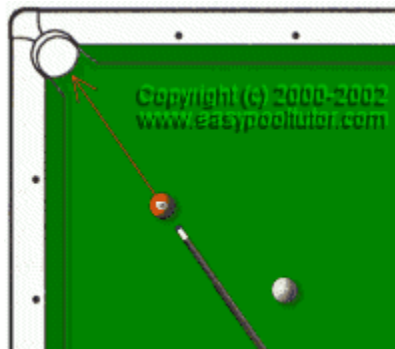
By admin

Date: Fri, Apr 4 @ 00:00:00 CST

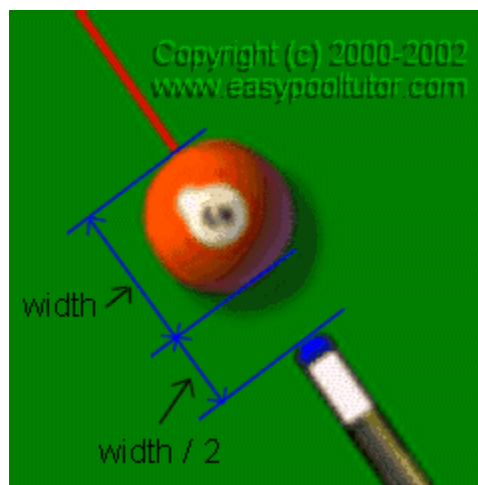
Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

Aiming Technique #2

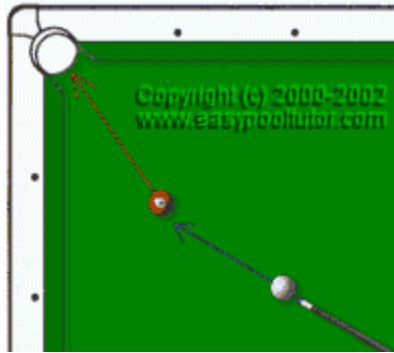
Another technique for aiming is by the use of your cue stick. Refer to the illustrations below. First, you need to determine the line of path of your object ball to the pocket (illustrated by the red arrow line in the illustration below) and point your cue stick in that direction.



- Measure the width of the object ball.
- Place the tip of your cue stick at 1/2 width from the object ball. This is your aim point.



The last thing you need to do is simply point your cue stick aim at the "aim" point and stroke. See illustration below.



Margin for Error

Depending on the size of the pocket opening (which varies between different types of tables), you normally have an allowed margin for error. Just remember that the closer the object ball is to the pocket, the larger is your margin for error and the farther away the object ball is from the pocket, the smaller your margin for error will be. However, it is always a good idea to strive for a perfect shot right in the middle of the pocket so you won't have to worry about your margin for error regardless of the size of the pocket opening.

Aim alignment

By Badandy

Date: Thu, Apr 3 @ 01:45:03 CST

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

A good book dedicated to aiming is [Answers to a Pool Player's Prayers](#). It is short and only covers the aspect of aiming, no stroke, no follow through, just aiming. It covers true eye, dominant eye and center eye and what happens to each depending on your facial alignment to the cue stick. Everything makes sense but most people do not think about it. I was just starting down that road when I got the book so it really accelerated my aiming progress. He explains (and makes sense) why left or right dominant eye can cause inconsistencies.

To make sure you have your head aligned vertically and not crooked you can use a mirror that is at least the size of a sheet of paper. Tape a string vertical, going up and down using a T-square or some other device to make sure the string will be perpendicular to the table, not slanting toward one side or the other.

Set the mirror up on the table. Place the CB a few inches away from it and inline with the string so the string is in the center of the CB. Pretend to shoot the CB into the image on the mirror. After you are lined up and ready to shoot look at your face and cue in the mirror. Is the cue in a straight line with the string? Where does the string intersect you face? Is it straight down the middle? If so you are in a centered aim position, which has a lot of advantages. Is it directly through the middle of the left eye? If so you have true left eye alignment which also has advantages. Is it halfway between the left eye and center of the face? Then you have dominant left eye aiming. None of these aim alignments are wrong but they have their advantages depending on what focus you use along with the aim technique. Also, is your head aligned vertically with the string or is it on a slant. If on a slant it makes aiming more difficult because each eye is seeing a different view and your brain has to make sense out of it. The dominant eye also has disadvantages because one time you may shoot at 80% - 20% then the next time you may be 70% - 30%. The change makes for a different view with respect to parallax and it may look good but is off. It is hard to be consistent with dominant eye. To see what I mean, just aim a shot as normal then without moving shut one eye and look at you aim. It looks different, like it is going to miss. Then shut the other eye and it will look different in the other direction. Your brain figures all this out but if you keep changing alignment its like shooting a gun with the site being changed before you aim.



Pinpoint Accuracy in Aiming

By Badandy (Ron Kurtz)

Date: Tue, Jul 1 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

In order to shoot center pocket, pinpoint aiming is required. It feels nice to have an accurate shot rather than to make a sloppy pocket and on long shots an accurate aim becomes more of a necessity. Pinpoint accuracy requires a pinpoint aim, that is, when determining your object ball contact point (OBCP) do not have a general area. Make your OBCP be like a pinpoint, not like the size of a dime. If your OBCP is sloppy so will your end result. It also takes total concentration on that pinpoint spot to not lose it, in other words, keep your eye on the OBCP and not jump back and forth between the Cue Ball (CB) and Object Ball (OB).

Sample aiming scenario:

Address the shot by aligning yourself looking at the angle of the CB, OB and pocket while you are standing up. Get yourself in alignment as if you were the cue. This is the time to determine how you want to shoot, what type of power and CB control you want. Look at the OBCP and see the pinpoint, concentrate on it as you bend down to shoot, do not take your eyes off of the point. Take a couple of warm up strokes while still concentrating on the OBCP. Now you are aligned and stroking and if you do not move you should be able to make the shot with your eyes shut. This is the time to look down at your CB for the first time to ensure you cue is where you want it, center hit, English, draw, etc. This is just a short glance because you do not want to lose the OBCP. Look back up, re-orient yourself on the OBCP and concentrate on it while taking another couple of strokes then make your shot. While you are stroking you can see the end of the cue in your peripheral vision. You can see if it is wiggling or going dead straight. It does not require a look down at the cue and watch it go back and forth. The important part is to see the pinpoint OBCP, not a general area and to keep your concentration on that point. The more you look elsewhere, the CB, the cue, what may be standing around the table, the more you will miss your shot.

As you get used to aiming, the process will not be mechanical, your movement will flow naturally. No ghost balls, no clicks, you just see the spot and shoot. When you find yourself missing for unknown reasons, go back to the above basics and it is a good chance you will get out of the slump. What you will probably find is that your pinpoint has gotten sloppy or just lazy, it has become a general area not a pinpoint. Also you will probably find you started paying too much attention to the CB and lost concentration on your OBCP.

Aiming points and compensating for English induced throw

By Mick Turner

Date: Sat, Apr 19 @ 03:18:08 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

How do you need to aim to compensate for "throw" when you use english?

I will explain several methods of this technique, starting with a simple positioning and aim point determination for a shot.

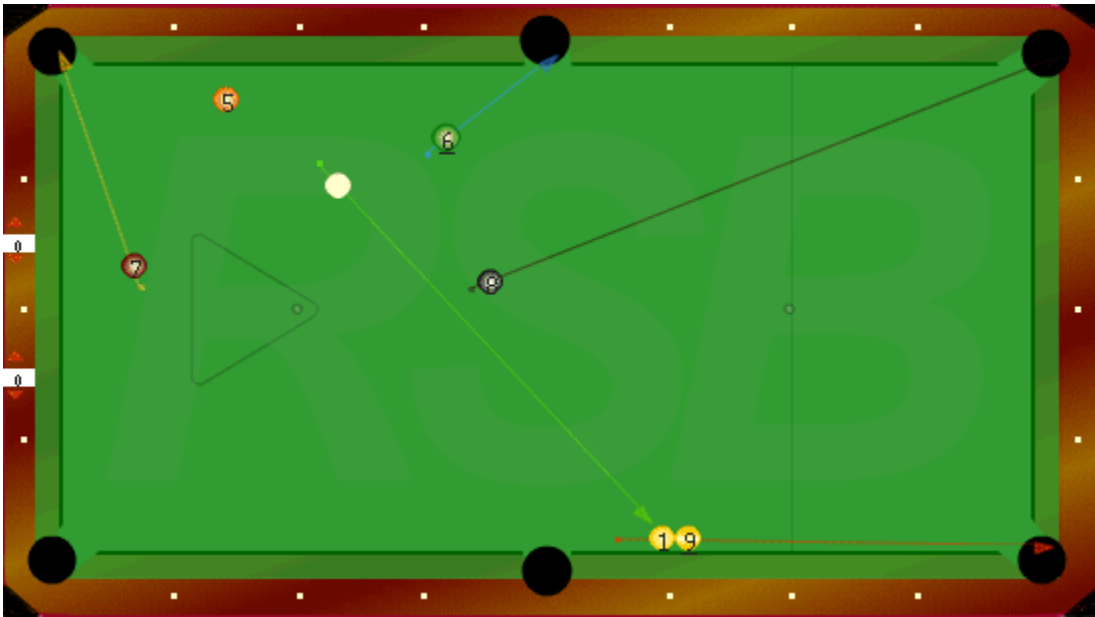
I took *wild1*'s diagram and modified it slightly to show the aim point.

This is where being able to imagine a "ghost ball" (in this case the 1 ball behind the 9) is helpful.

If you place the "ghost ball" directly behind the object ball (OB) on the same line that the object ball needs to follow to go into the pocket, then all you have to do is aim for the center of the "ghost ball", the 1.

What happens is that the CB, if aimed this way, hits the 9 exactly in the right place to cause the 9 to go into the corner. This same method works for all balls on the "wild1" diagram.

Basically the aim point is the center of the ghost ball.



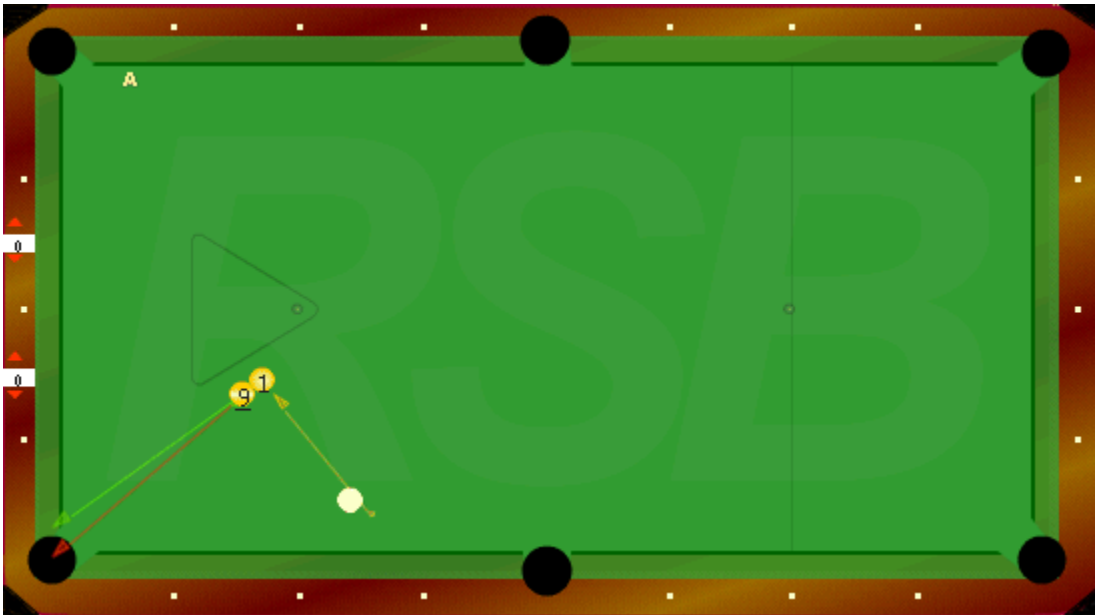
The exception to this is when you use English on the CB, which will "throw" the OB (cause the OB to track opposite the applied English). How much it tracks off, depends on the amount of English and how hard you hit the CB. Throw is the process of "imparting spin" or "gear action" between balls when one (the CB) is spinning and the other (the OB) is hit. This also works between 2,3 or 4 balls in succession, in reverse direction for each new ball hit. Of course the effect diminishes as more balls are hit in sequence, but the effect is there.

If you have an angle that is greater than 90 degrees on the shot, or you need to hit the OB off angle (to get around another ball) you can use "Throw" to put the OB back on track toward the pocket. This, of course, is a more advanced playing technique you will need to practice before becoming proficient. See the next diagram for this example.

In this example the 1 is the ghost ball, the 9 the OB. This shot has the CB at 90 degrees or slightly greater to the 9. Your "aim point" is the center of the 1 or slightly (a hair) left of center).

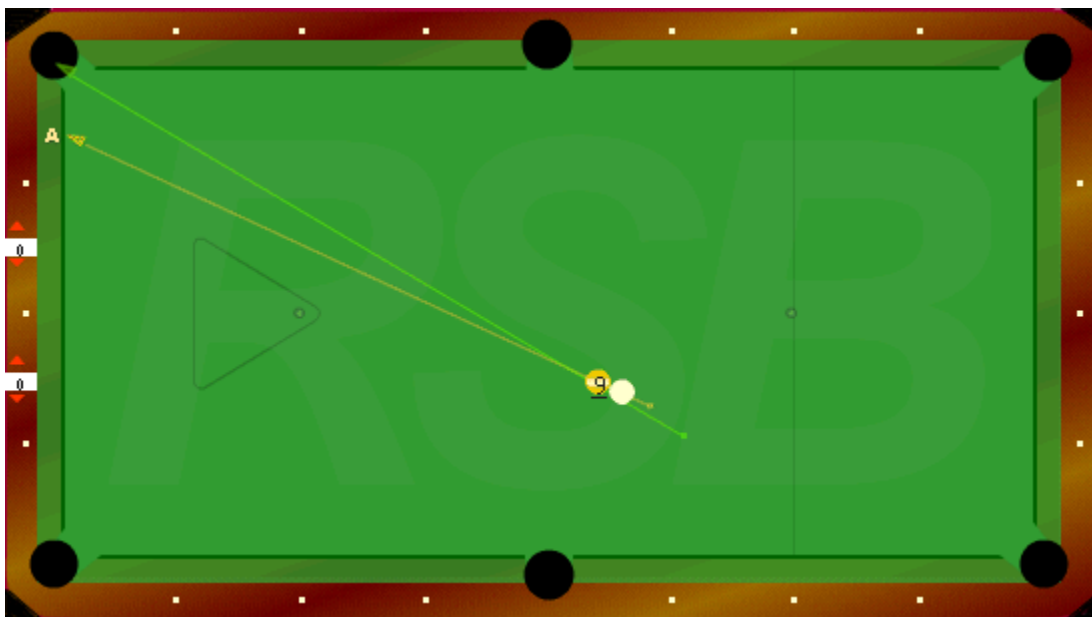
If you hit the CB with no english the probable result will be the 9 tracking on the green line, missing slightly. If you put outside (right) english on the CB, it will impart or throw the 9 back to the left along the orange line.

Without English, you will probably scratch, with English you will end up hitting the cushion at "A"...Of course, as I mentioned this is not an easy shot.....I make it about 50%...



You can also use "Throw" to change the inevitable path of a ball frozen to the CB, in the same way...Left English will "throw" the OB Right and visa-versa...how much depends on how much English, the friction between the balls (dirty balls tend to throw more) and the table cloth's friction.

In this example, the 9 is frozen to the CB. The line of alignment is the yellow line. If you hit the CB with no English, that is where the 9 will go, to point "A". If you put 11 o'clock English on the CB, and align your cue to the pointing at the pocket, the 9 will travel the green line. I can tell you this works, but how much "offset" travel the English will cause depends on the factors I mentioned above (how much depends on how much English, the friction between the balls (dirty balls tend to throw more) and the table cloth's friction).



Whenever you use English, it causes some "throw". How much depends on how much English, as I mentioned earlier...The main thing to remember:

IF you use English on a shot to position your CB for the next shot, don't forget the throw effect on the current shot. If you are using, for example, Right English, it will throw the OB Left so to compensate you will need to aim at the OB, slightly Left to get the OB to go back to the Right, thus offsetting the throw. (depending on English and distance OB has to travel to pocket).

Remember, to compensate for throw, aim opposite English side (Right English, aim more left on OB, and visa-versa). In reality, on a short (1ft) shot, this throw/aim compensation technique may not even need to be used...but on a longer shot it must be considered or you will invariably miss the shot and not know why.

This might sound complicated but it is not that hard to remember if you go through it and understand and remember "what you need to do" on a shot to improve your odds for success!

There are many examples one could use to show variations in this technique but they all basically have the same characteristics. What is important is that you learn these techniques and make them an integral part of your game.

So as you can see, Aiming and aim points is a bit more complex than it appears to be.....ever wonder why that shot you thought you had dead stroke on missed? Maybe you used English and caused "throw" you didn't intend or maybe didn't know "throw" would cause.....certainly something to think about, and better yet practice so you get to know the various effects.

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The Clicks Aiming System

By The Monk

Date: Wed, Apr 16 @ 09:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

This is an important break through when it comes to aiming. I have been perfecting it for over a year. It's called The Monk Clicks. You will be better at pocketing balls with this system. It will improve your game.

A WORD OF WARNING HERE!!!! it is very difficult to change the way you have been playing. That is another workshop in itself. Any time you change you cause stress. When I began this system, I did not do well. Still, I knew I was on to something and was determined to see it through to the end. You must be committed to this system and give it a good try. Once you leave your own method of sighting, and take up The Monk Clicks, you will win more game and pocket more balls.

Let us begin with the knowledge that there are four points on an object ball to aim at. We call each of these a "Click".

Set up a medium cut shot into the corner pocket. Now, sight directly, in a straight in line from the cue ball to the object ball. This is your starting point. If the shot calls for you to cut the object ball to your right, you will move one click from straight in to the left and determine if this will be the spot to pocket the ball. If not, move one more click. This will be half the distance from straight in to the edge of the object ball. Will this enable you to pocket the object ball? If so, then move two clicks to the left of the cue ball and connect these two points. You have now locked and loaded. If this shot is two clicks to the right, move two clicks to the right on the cue ball and place your back foot in line with these two points. You are awesome. Now all you have to do is deliver the pure stroke you are so capable of delivering and watch the object ball disappear. Once you lock and load, the computer in your brain will tell you if you are lined up. If you get a positive then shoot the shot.

Each click is a zone. From straight in to the edge there are four clicks. One of those clicks will line up with the pocket.

If you want to use a punch stroke with one cue tip inside english you understand that you will have deflection. Line up the shot. If it is a two click shot, you will only sight one click, thus allowing for the one click deflection you will experience with the one cue tip inside english you want to use on the shot. If you are using outside english, you will add one click on the object ball.

It will take some time to perfect this. I am still only using it eighty percent of the time. It will take some time. The Monk Clicks aiming system will help you pay attention to just where you want to shoot the shot. It helps you focus better. May All The Rolls Go Your Way.

Credits: [*The Monk Billiard Academy*](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

2-2-2

By Tim Carter

Date: Wed, Apr 9 @ 00:55:33 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

In this article I will describe a no nonsense approach on how to break down a shot from start to finish. The 2-2-2 stands for 2 aim spots 2 aim spots 2 aim spots. This is a breakdown of three strokes. I feel this system surpasses any and all methods to pocket a ball. I have given each stroke a purpose and devised a system that is rather simple, but requires detailed and undivided attention.

I usually only teach this to my students due to the concentration level this teaches. It will also change your style of play, I know a lot of EPT members don't like that idea and that's one reason I haven't mentioned this before. In my system you use only 3 strokes. I have found that most players' concentration level (or the time they are able to concentrate) allows three strokes of total concentration.

I developed this around that idea so that any player could apply the level of concentration to their game that is usually only reserved for pro players. Before I continue I would suggest using my system do require or I recommend using my practice methods to develop this system to its fullest potential. It will take at least 8 hours at the table to start to be aware and start to be comfortable with my system. It takes hard work but the end result is well worth it. I'm going to break down a shot and I will go over the eye movements to use with this system.

The first thing I do concerning the shot is, I find a spot in the pocket that I want to target, I connect that with a spot on the object ball, I connect the object ball to the cue ball, I connect the cue ball to the butt of my cue, I know this seems elementary but this is the first step, this helps me place my right foot on line (right handed). You should be down on the ball now but your still at the first step so all you should be doing is connecting the butt of the cue to the cue ball line this up as best you can before you do anything else, once you have done this you can look up at the object ball, stroke this, this is your first stroke, on the second stroke you are connecting the cue ball to the object ball, stroke this, that's your second stroke, on the last stroke you are connecting the spot on the object ball to the spot in the pocket, on delivery of your tip to the spot on the object ball it is very important to be aware of the spot in the pocket, on some shots you may be able to see both, use your peripheral vision on these shots, so you can see in a sense that I break down the shot from the pocket to the butt of my cue.

I don't feel I can describe my system in the way that it works for me, or my students, it is better to see it in action to fully understand what I think is a total execution of any shot...with this system I am actually teaching a player to be in dead stroke from the moment you pick up your cue, until your ready to call it an evening, to be able to play through any situation without any distractions. My system does work, but it takes hard work and sweat to get the potential from it. It's not magic, it is a means to attain a skill above what people expect from us, a means to make champions. As simple or as complicated as we make it, it works for me and it will work for you. All you have to do is make up your mind to be all that you can be and go for it!

New Aiming Technique

By cubanbear

Date: Thu, Aug 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

This is a technique that I discovered on my own through years of playing. I don't know if this has ever been documented before, but I would like to share it with you.

1. Setup a medium cut shot into a corner pocket
2. Spot the contact point on the object ball in order to pocket it
3. Line up the cue ball for a straight on shot on the object ball
4. Locate the outside edge of the object ball and the inside edge of the cue ball
5. Locate the exact center between the two edges
6. Adjust your aim so that the exact center between the two edges is directly over the contact point of the object ball
7. Take your shot

This is about the best that I can describe it without visual aid.

Simple Aiming Technique

By Jay

Date: Sun, Dec 14 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

Here's a technique for aiming that I've come up with. It's pretty simple. Consider the fact that a common billiard ball is 2 1/4 inches in diameter. That means that when the cue ball contacts the object ball, there is 2 1/4 inches from the center of one ball to the center of the other (that is, provided the cue ball is not larger than the other balls, as is sometimes the case on many bar tables, but I'm approximating here). Once you have determined the line of aim, simply shoot for a point along the line of aim that is about 1 inch behind the object ball.

There is no substitute for practice of course. That is the best way to develop a good eye for shooting. But if you are having trouble with your aim, it's a good method of double checking. And it can be very useful on snooker tables, where aim can be made even more difficult by the larger size of the table and the smaller size of the balls. Let me know what you think. I would like to hear any feedback people might have.

Credits: I'm just a recreational player who has a lot of random ideas about the physics and geometry of the game.

How to aim successfully

By umaier

Date: Sun, Feb 22 @ 01:53:06 CST

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

Before I start talking about how to aim lets first talk why we have a difficulty time aiming and miss shots.

We have two eyes and actually see three pictures:

1. The picture recorded by our left eye.
2. The picture recorded by our right eye.
3. The composite picture computed by our brain which is the one we consider the true picture but which is entirely different than the left or right eye recording.
4. Another complication is the fact that we have a dominant eye that is used by the brain as the master reference.
5. Also the brain weighs lights and shadows which for example makes striped balls appear different depending how the stripes are oriented.

In my opinion most shots are missed because the shooter gets confused about where he is aiming and not because of bad cueing. This is easy to see because one has three pictures to choose from and explains poor performance under pressure when we talk ourselves into using the wrong picture. Under stress the brain tries to gain more information about the object in view(potential aggressor) in this case OB by alternating/evaluating left, right and composite view . This survival behavior is good in the real world when we try to judge if an aggressor is getting ready to make a move at us but makes aiming difficult or impossible(total confusion). I call this effect of confusion "NG" for No Good.

I have been looking for a way to get rid of "NG" and found this method:

1. I start by aligning any cut shot like it was a straight in shot.
2. Now I become aware where my cue is pointing at the rail(thus becoming aware what is a straight in shot) and look at that rail point past the OB.
3. Now I change my cue aiming point right/left until I think I have the proper cut angle.
4. Again I become aware where my cue is aiming at the rail and look at that rail point past the OB. I see the branch (straight line cue – CB – contact point – rail point, and the branch of this line which is OB to pocket). This makes it much easier because you judge the angle of the branch. By becoming aware(looking at) of the cue aiming point on the rail you double check your alignment automatically and get rid of "NG".

This has greatly helped my aiming and gives me confidence that I have the proper alignment when setting up for the shot. Aiming using the contact point only is impossible for me since the ball is round and it is impossible to focus and remember one specific point on it especially since we alternate what we are looking at during the aiming process.

Projecting the CB to the rail creates a much bigger context and gets rid of "NG" because the OB is not the main focus point but is only viewed with the peripheral vision.

Just to emphasize the main points.

1. ALWAYS PROJECT THE CB TO THE RAIL AND LOOK AT THAT POINT.
2. Project the CB past the OB ball to the rail even if the OB is touching the rail.
3. The angle you judge is cue to rail point – with branch OB to pocket.

Give it a try.

Ulrich

Ghost Ball Theory, the Holy Light System, dominant eye and stroke explained

By Steve Sharber

Date: Sun, Mar 21 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques & Execution

The Ghost Ball Theory is most commonly used when explaining how to aim properly. The player has to imagine the cue ball frozen on the object ball at the point of contact. "Point of contact " is where the cue ball has to hit the object ball in order to pocket the ball.

The Holy Light System is using every light in the whole room reflecting off an object ball to determine the strike area. It's never wrong, there has to be a light reflection on the point of contact. There might be 3-5 reflections, but one of them will tell you the point of contact, that's a "Go". All you have to do is look for it. Aim your cue stick on the object ball as though you are going to shoot it into the desired pocket and there you will find the holy light that says "GO," then just aim for that spot. English, deflection, and the speed of the stroke has to be calculated like any other shot.

Another thing to consider is which eye do you aim with? It may be your left, right, or, maybe both. This is critical to aiming. You need to know your dominant eye.

Are you left or right handed compared to your dominant eye? For example, if your right eye is dominant and you are right handed, then that's the most proper and pure way to aim, with the dominant eye over the cue. If you don't believe this, try playing with your opposite hand for 2-3 hours and then switch to your dominant hand and you will most likely find yourself missing a lot of shots, at least until your mind switches back, along with your dominant eye.

The stroke, building your muscle memory on mastering tip position is equal to how good you aim, if your stroke or tip position isn't there, how can you aim properly to even pocket a ball? You can't.

Here's a drill that I find works for a lot of players. Set the cue ball on the foot spot and try to hit a simple center ball hit straight down to the middle diamond on the head rail/kitchen and back again to the same spot. If you executed this accordingly it should roll back to the spot and hit the tip of your cue. Try and perfect this shot 10 times in a row. If you think you are hitting the cue ball where you think you are this should be no problem for the average Joe. Any little bit of english applied to the cue ball will not work with this shot. The center ball hit is the hardest to hit. Master tip position and stroke, and your aim will be equally as deadly.

Also try shooting into a wine bottle laid on its side without hitting the rim of the bottle. Don't cheat yourself, stroke the cue stick at normal speed and making sure your tip comes all the way out of the bottle before stroking again. Lets face the music here. If your stroke is bad then your tip position is off, meaning you aren't hitting the cue ball or english that you want to for that shot. For example, you could hit straight right hand english, thinking that you hit center ball instead, and deflection from the english departs off your line of aim causing the cue ball to over or under cut the object ball which causes "throw" to the object ball as well. If that 's off,

then your line of aim will be off, causing failure to hit the contact point, thus pocketing the ball.

Abstract Aiming System

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Jul 28 @ 00:13:33 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques and Execution

How to aim the cue ball has always been a troublesome concept to learn because aiming a round ball to hit a precise spot on another round ball some distance away requires abstract visualization in the mind's eye to complete the process. You have to train your brain over time to develop a feel for the correct line of aim. Normally you do this by trial and error until the ball begins to go into the pocket on a regular basis for a particular angle or distance. The brain basically builds a memory for line of aim for each of these shots. As the angle changes and or the distance increases your brain has to once more go through the process of relearning the line of aim for the new shot. Unfortunately there are thousands of different angles and varying distances to the pocket which takes years to master them all. Add to that your varying state of mind from day to day and you are never quite sure If your abstract point of aim is going to produce the results that you desire.

Over the years I have developed (through lots of trial and error) an aiming system that works well for me. It still requires abstract visualization but is much easier to learn than thousands of shots. I know that you've heard this many times before but I will stress it again here because it is the single most important rule for aiming correctly. **You must always have the same head and cue alignment for each shot.** If normally your right eye is exactly over the pool cue and you have your nose tilted 10 degrees to the right of the cue you should use this alignment for all of your shots. Here is a simple test to show you how important head-cue alignment is. Aim down your arm like a rifle and point the tip of your finger to a specific spot at a distance of 3 to 9 feet. To dramatize the effect close the eye that is the farthest from your arm. Now while keeping the tip of your finger on the spot rotate your head either to the left or to the right. You will see that as you rotate your head the point of aim continually changes. That means that if you don't have your eye aligned with your cue exactly the same way each time your brain will not see the correct line of aim for the way it has learned the shot. There are 4 head alignments that you need to be aware of to develop consistency for head-cue alignment. The key word here is "parallel". Always strive to keep each of the alignments in parallel with the cue for the best results.

The most obvious alignment of course is how your head is centered over the cue. Many players align their dominant eye over the cue. I prefer to center my chin and nose over the cue. The 2nd alignment is the turn of the head to the left or right of the way the cue is pointing. As you saw in the test above turning your head changes your point of aim. As I center my nose over the cue I can easily tell if my head is pointing in the right direction by the way my nose is pointing. If my nose is aligned with the end of my cue then my eyes have to be aligned parallel to the cue. The 3rd alignment is head tilt. Is your head aligned vertical(90 degrees) to the floor or is it tilted to one side. As this axis alignment is a little difficult to detect by yourself you might ask a friend to verify if you head is vertical to the cue or not. I use my cheek bones as a reference. If one is not higher than the other then my vertical alignment is close and both eyes are parallel to the table. The last alignment is how far you hold your head from the cue. Most players I see don't have a problem with this except when they are shooting a shot with a difficult stance. When you are in an awkward stance try to be as consistent as possible.

The aiming method I use is a little different than most systems that I have seen. Most aiming methods have you aiming the cue ball at a contact point on the object ball. My aiming method requires that you aim a contact point on the cue ball at a contact point on the object ball. To find the contact point on the cue ball you have to do a little work. This can be done by using the well known ghost ball technique. In the diagram below the 10 ball is to be cut into the corner pocket. Using the 11 ball as a ghost ball your line of aim would be through the center of the cue ball and the center of the ghost ball which is show below with the black arrow. Pay attention to the exact spots on the cue ball and the ghost ball where black line exits the balls. Next look at the red line that goes through the ghost ball (11 ball) and the 10 ball. Visualize the curved distance between where the red line exits the 11 ball going into the 10 ball and where the black line exits the 11 ball and transfer it to the cue ball using the exit point of the black line on the cue ball as the starting point. I have setup the 15 ball in the diagram below to help you visualize the curved distance. The blue arrow is pointing to the curved distance between the 2 exit points made by the green and yellow arrows.

As you aim through the exact center of the cue ball visualize the contact point on the cue ball that you obtained through the above technique and try to make it hit the contact point on the object ball. After a little practice your accuracy should increase significantly on the more difficult shots you normally miss.

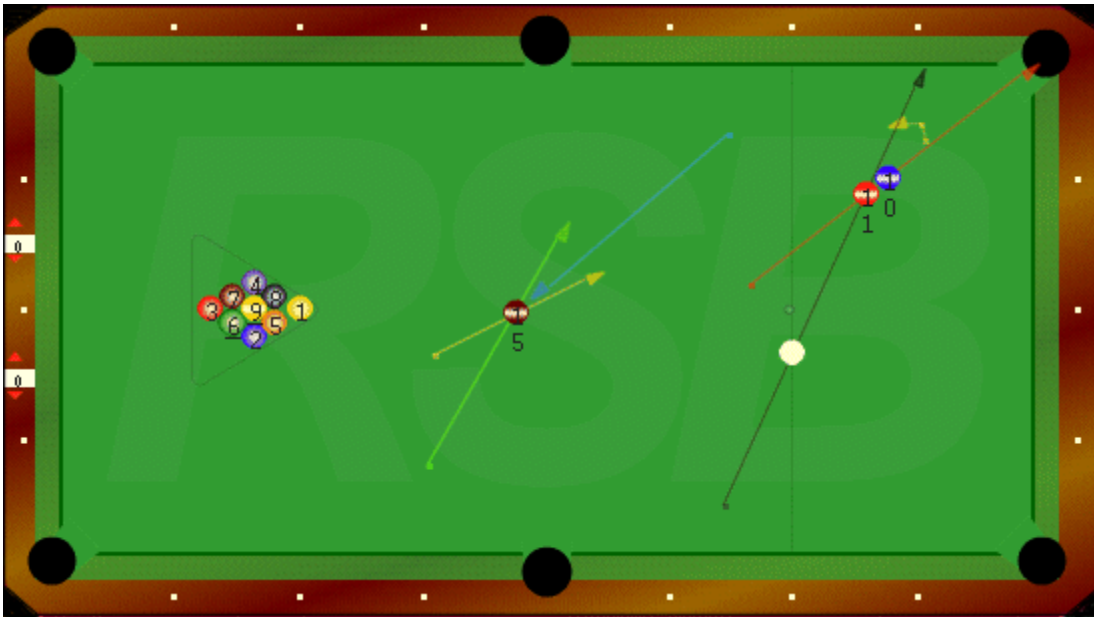


Diagram 1

Any questions or comments can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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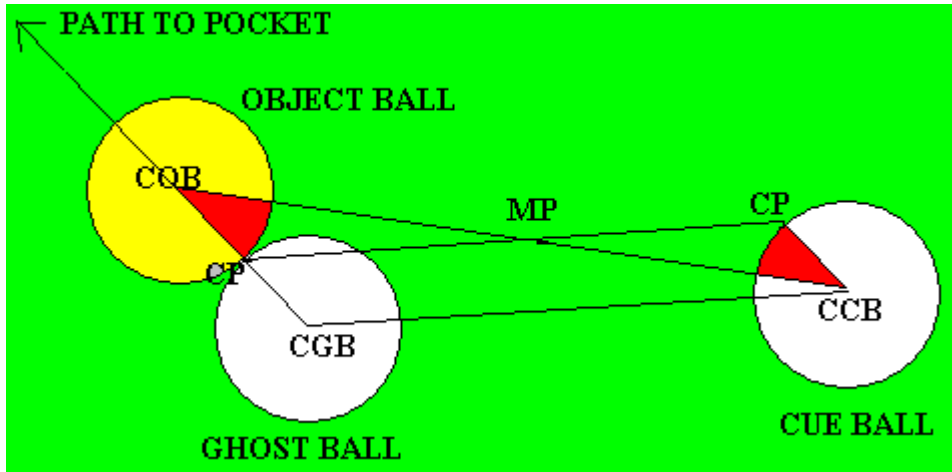
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Rifle-like Cue Aiming in Pool

By Walter Riley

Date: Sat, Jan 15, 2005 @ 00:13:33 CDT

Topic: How to Aim: Techniques and Execution



Pool beginners easily learn to see the object ball contact point (CP). The problem is that they often use a rifle-like sighting down the cue through the center of the cue ball at the object ball CP, which always undercuts the object ball.

The diagram above shows that the only way to use the cue with rifle-like sighting directed at the object ball CP is to line up along the line from the cue ball CP to the object ball CP. This is rarely done because it has a couple of problems in addition to squirt and throw. If the cut angle is large, a miscue is likely. Also the contact point on the cue ball is not visible when you are standing close to where you will take your stroke because it is on the opposite side of the cue ball. But as the diagram shows, the exact mid-point (MP) between the cue ball and the object ball is also on the cue ball CP – object ball CP - rifle-like sighting line and this midpoint can often be seen fairly easily. Once the beginner sees that MP – object ball CP is the only correct rifle-like sighting line to the object ball contact point, they will realize why rifle-like aiming through the center of the cue ball at the object ball CP fails. They then need to know that, neglecting the effects of squirt and throw, any stroke parallel to MP – object ball CP will also pocket the object ball. As the diagram shows, the CCB – CGB 'ghost ball' aiming line is one such line parallel to MP – object ball CP and is itself a popular aiming system.

Although I don't think the technique of locating the MP – object ball CP line and then thinking 'parallel to that line' will ever be a popular aiming system, the one thing I do hope you take away with you from this article is the understanding that there is only one correct rifle-like aiming line directed at the object ball contact point and that is along the MP – object ball CP line. Shots aimed through CCB directed at the object ball CP must undercut!

III - BASIC SHOTS & SHOTMAKING

This section covers some of the simple and basic shots in pool. These simple shots will pave the way for more advanced shots as you advance your pool skills.

- » [The Stop Shot](#)
- » [The Draw Shot](#)
- » [The Follow Shot](#)
- » [Cut Shots](#)
- » [Stop Shot, Revisited](#)
- » [Draw Shot, Revisited](#)
- » [The Follow Shot, Revisited](#)

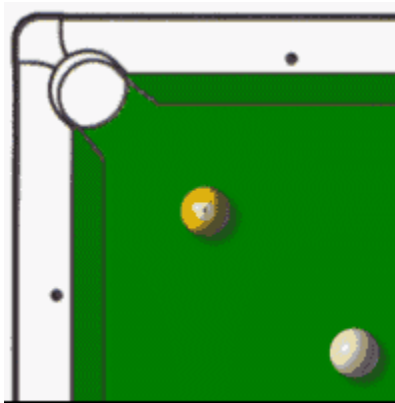
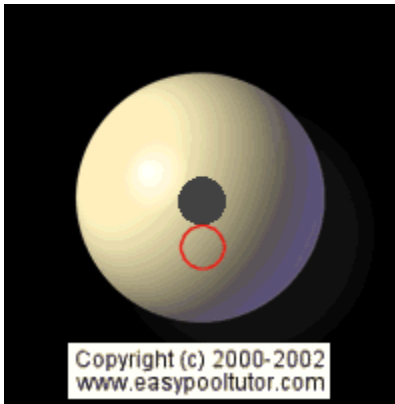
The Stop Shot

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 06:09:34 CST

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

A "Stop Shot" or "Stop Ball" as Filipinos normally call it, is when the cue ball stops dead in its tracks upon contact with the object ball. It is normally done by hitting the cue ball at the center (see illustrations below). If the object ball and the cue ball is only a short distance away, a centerball hit on the cue ball with medium stroke will generally stop the cue ball after making contact with the object ball. There are however, a few exceptions.



The farther away the object ball is from the cue ball, the lower you need to hit your cue ball. Keep in mind that if you hit the cue ball too low, you will end up with a "draw" shot or a miscue. The Draw shot will be discussed in another article. So simply lower the aim on the cue ball (as needed) no more than one cue tip below the center of the cue ball as indicated by the red circle in the first illustration above.

Note: Make sure that your cue stick remains relatively level... do not lower the tip of your cue stick by raising the butt end of your cue stick.

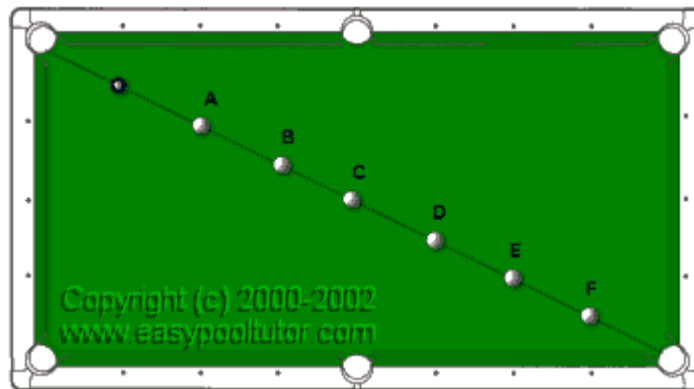
In order for the cue ball to stop at the point of contact with the object ball, the cue ball cannot have spin on it. This means that the cue ball has to slide smoothly on the table cloth without creating a back spin or a forward spin before it hits the object ball. Upon contact with the object ball, the cue ball would then stop immediately. If the cue ball has a slight forward spin when it hits the object ball then it will move

forward after hitting the object ball. If the cue ball has a back spin, then it will move back after hitting the object ball.

- At short distances, a stop shot is done with a centerball hit on the cue ball at medium stroke. The cue ball simply slides across the table without any spin on it and it stops dead in its tracks the moment it makes contact with the object ball.
- At longer distances, a below center hit is needed coupled with a slightly stronger stroke. Hitting the cue ball below center will create back spin on the cue ball which will gradually diminish (due to friction caused by the table cloth) as it comes closer to the object ball. By the time the cue ball comes into contact with the object ball, the cue ball will have lost all of its back spin and stop immediately.

Only with enough practice will you be able to learn at what distances to use centerball hit or a below center hit on the cue ball. All I have given you above is a guideline. Keep on practicing this shot and you should be able to instinctively learn when to hit center or below center.

Practicing the Stop Shot



Refer to the image above. Start by positioning your cue ball at position A using a center ball hit and medium stroke. After you have mastered the stop shot at this distance, proceed to place your cue ball at position B and so on. As you progress through the drill, take note of where you need to hit your cue ball (center hit or below center hit) and the speed of your stroke. Remember that the farther the distance between your cue ball and object ball, the more speed you need on your cue ball. Also take note of the maximum distance where a center ball hit is effective and where a below center hit starts. Generally, when the cue ball is between position A and B, a center ball is sufficient to create a stop ball and any farther than that would require a below center hit on the cue ball. However, it still depends on the type of the cloth on the billiard table you use. Some are smoother than others which means that the friction generated is dependent on whether the cloth is smooth or rough. You will have to adjust to the surface of the table.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article6-pg-1.html> to view the video.

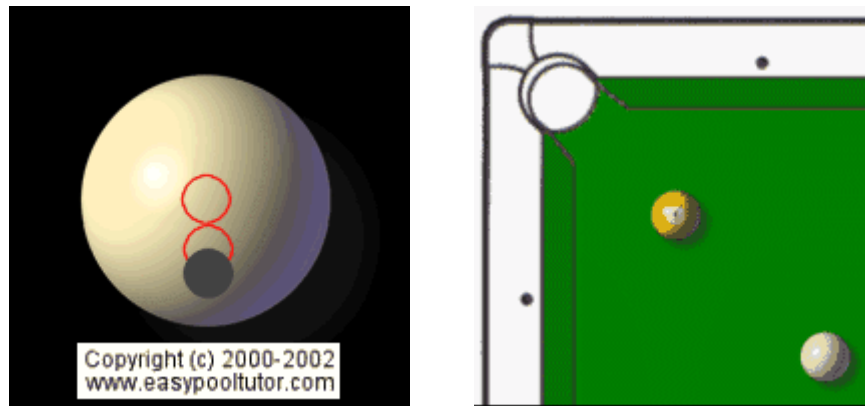
The Draw Shot

By admin

Date: Mon, Apr 7 @ 04:34:23 CDT

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

A *Draw Shot* is when the cue ball stops momentarily then draws away from the object ball towards you upon contact with the object ball. This is one of the more pleasing shots to see as the cue ball stops momentarily before it races back towards you. It is normally done by hitting the cue ball below center (see illustrations below). This is a difficult shot to master because hitting the cue ball below center normally creates a "miscue" specially for beginner players.



In order for the cue ball to return towards you, it needs to have back spin. The cue ball needs to be able to retain its back spin as it slides towards the object ball. This is done by hitting the cue ball below center and a slightly stronger stroke (compared to the stop shot). Remember that as the distance between the object ball and the cue ball increases, you will need to put more backspin on the cue ball because the friction caused by the table cloth will take away some of that back spin away. This is where the difficulty of the back spin comes into play. A lot of players find it very difficult to draw the cue ball at longer distances mostly because there is not enough back spin on the cue ball.

At shorter distances, hitting the cue ball one tip below center will draw the ball back. However, the speed of the stroke determines how far back your cue ball will go. The stronger you hit the cue ball below center, the more back spin it creates thus retaining most of its spin as it makes contact with the object ball. Upon contact, the cue ball should stop momentarily before racing back towards you.

You have learned from the previous article on Stop Shot that at longer distances, a below center hit on the cue ball will create a Stop Shot with the right amount of speed on the cue ball. Therefore, you will need a stronger stroke to create more speed and back spin on the cue ball to make it go back towards you. Also, the further away the object ball is from the cue ball, the lower you need to hit your cue ball in order to draw the cue ball back. You also need to keep your cue stick as level as possible when doing a draw shot. The maximum recommended range for hitting the cue ball is about one and a half cue tips below the center of the cue ball. Hitting lower than this usually causes your cue ball to jump or miscue.

Again, only with enough hours of practice will you be able to learn how low you need to hit the cue ball and how strong your stroke needs to be.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article44.html> to view the video.

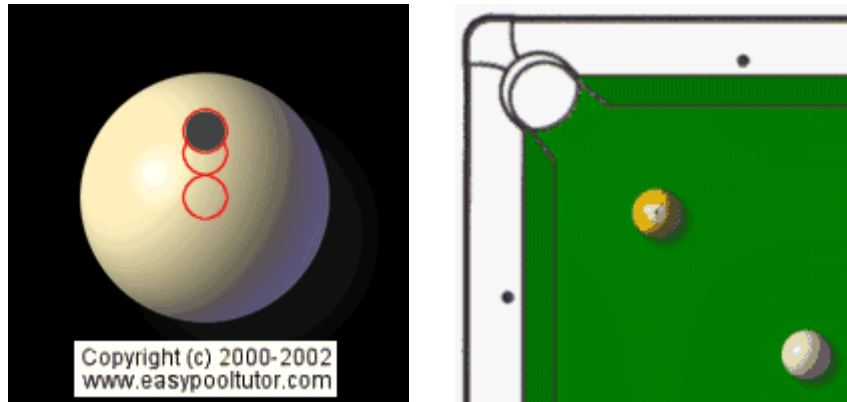
The Follow Shot

By admin

Date: Tue, Apr 8 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

A *Follow Shot* is when the cue ball stops momentarily then follows the object ball's direction upon contact with the object ball. It is normally done by hitting the cue ball above center (see illustrations below). This is a relatively easy shot as long as you don't hit the cue ball too high which can cause you to miscue.



In order for the cue ball to move forward after hitting the object ball, it needs to have top spin just as the draw shot needs back spin. Upon contact with the object ball, the remaining top or forward spin on the cue ball will cause it to still run forward thus following the object ball. As with the draw shot, the more speed you put on your stroke the more top spin it will create thus allowing the cue ball to move forward more.

The maximum recommended range for hitting the cue ball is about 1 and 1/2 cue tips above the center of the cue ball. Hitting higher than this usually causes your cue ball to miscue. See illustrations above.

Try experimenting with different speeds when executing a follow shot and see what happens. The follow shot is a relatively easy shot and it doesn't need as much practice like the draw or even the stop shot.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article45.html> to view the video.

Cut Shots

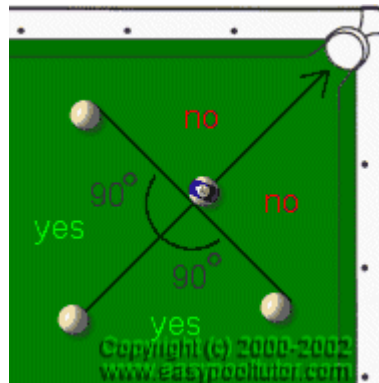
By admin

Date: Tue, Apr 8 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

Angle shots, also referred as cut shots or slice is generally make up the most of your shots in the game of pocket billiards. Therefore, it is important to master these type of shots. In this lesson, I will discuss key points that you should remember about angled shots.

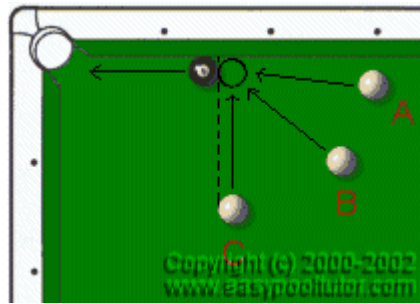
Refer to the illustration below. This illustration shows you the amount of the angle where a cut shot is possible and where it is not. A straight-in shot at 0 degree angle is pretty simple, however as the angle increases towards 90 degrees, the difficulty level increases as well. Keep in mind that at 90 degree angle, the shot is virtually impossible to make unless the object ball is very close to the pocket. I think it is pretty obvious to say that you should never attempt a cut shot at a 90 degree angle... instead consider the alternatives: (a) you can do a bank shot or (b) you can play safety.



- Angles between 0 to 45 degrees should be relatively easy using soft to medium stroke. Use the aiming technique that I have discussed in previous articles. However, some players actually have difficulty with very minimal cut angle at around 1 to 5 degrees which is highly attributed to an incorrect stroke. In this case, some players use english to throw the object ball into the pocket while others simply practice it until it is no longer a problem.
- Angles greater than 45 degrees are more difficult not only on your aim but also for cue ball positioning (positioning will also be discussed on later lessons). Since the angle is more, the less contact will be made between the cue ball and the object ball therefore a slightly stronger stroke will need to be used depending on the distance of the object ball to the pocket.
- Angles between 75 and 90 degrees are extremely difficult. I would suggest that you limit your cut shots to less than these angles. Again, the problems that you will have to deal with at these angles are aim and positioning and even speed control.
- It is important to note the amount of cut angle as well as the distance of the object ball to the pocket.

Frozen to the rail cut shot

Object balls that are frozen to the rail are actually easier to make than object ball that are not frozen to the rail. Refer to the illustration below.



One thing to remember on this type of a cut shot is never hit the object ball first. Here are the guidelines for making this shot:

- When the cue ball is at position A (slight angle), and the object ball is frozen to the rail, you can pocket the object ball by aiming at the imaginary ball (see illustration) but make sure that you hit the rail and the object ball at the same time. Remember, never hit the object ball first.
- When the cue ball is in between position A and position B above, you can pocket the object ball by hitting rail first.
- When the cue ball is between position B and position C, you can pocket the object ball by hitting rail first together with the right amount of english, left english in this case. When I say right amount of english, I mean that as the angle increases towards 90 degrees, you will need to have more english on your shot.
- When the cue ball is at position C (90 degrees), it is actually not very difficult to make this shot. All you need to is hit rail first and the maximum side spin on the cue ball or maximum left english in this case.

Stop Shot, Revisited

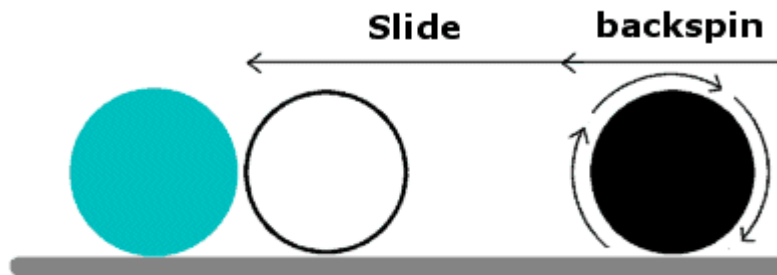
By admin

Date: Wed, Apr 9 @ 03:30:07 CDT

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

In a previous article on the Stop Shot, I discussed the proper execution of the shot. This lesson will revisit the topic of the Stop shot and explain in more detail the state of the cue ball as it travels towards the object ball that makes the cue ball stop at the moment it impacts the object ball.

Refer to Figure 1 below. At the moment the cue ball impacts the object ball, the cue ball does not contain any spin on it, i.e. no backspin or forward spin. At this state, right before impact, the cue ball simply "slides" through the cloth. I shall refer to this as "Slide" as illustrated in the graphic below.



On shots where the object ball is close to the cue ball, all you need to do in order to execute a Stop Shot is to "slide" the cue ball towards the object ball. This can be done with a center ball hit on the cue ball. However, on longer shots you cannot just slide the cue ball towards the object ball. As discussed previously, friction takes effect at a certain distance that the cue ball travels, therefore, as friction takes effect, the cue ball that was previously just sliding through the cloth will now generate forward spin. To counter this effect, you will need to apply backspin on the cue ball so that as friction takes its effect, the backspin will simply be converted into "slide". Refer to the example above. Let's say you have a long distance between object and cue ball. You will hit the cue ball with below center stroke creating backspin. At a certain distance, the friction on the cloth takes effect and removes the backspin on the cue ball. At this point, the cue ball no longer has spin and it is at this moment that it should contact the object ball which will result in a Stop Shot.

Now, there's still the question of when you should hit the cue ball with a center ball hit and when you should use a below center hit. How low should I hit the cue ball? How much spin should I put on the cue ball? How much speed? These questions can only be answered through practice. You now have all the knowledge to explain how the stop shot works, the next step is to apply this knowledge at the table.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article49.html> to view the video.

Draw Shot, Revisited

By admin

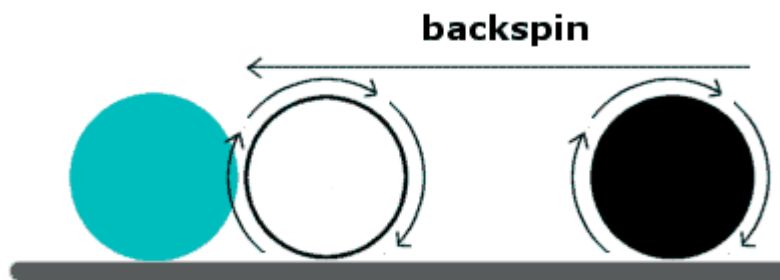
Date: Sat, Apr 12 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

In our first article on the Draw Shot, I discussed the proper execution of the draw shot. This lesson will revisit the topic of the Draw shot and explain in more detail the state of the cue ball as it travels towards the object ball that makes the cue ball draw back after it impacts the object ball.

In another article on the stop shot, we discussed the state of the cue ball when executing a Stop Shot. We know that in order to stop the cue ball dead in its tracks after contacting the object ball, the cue ball must be what I refer to as a "Slide" state where the cue ball does not have any spin, backspin or forward spin. At longer distances, the cue ball must start out with a backspin and eventually, due to friction will again be in a "Slide" state as it approaches and impacts the object ball.

The Draw Shot is slightly different than the Stop Shot. The state I refer to as "Slide" should be non-existent. Instead, the cue ball must have backspin all the way through the moment it impacts the object ball. Refer to the illustration below.



The distance that the cue ball draws back depends on the amount of backspin and the speed of the cue ball. Another factor is the type of cloth on the table. Smoother cloths will have less friction thus allowing the cue ball more momentum to draw back as opposed to a rougher type of cloth where friction will hinder the momentum of the cue ball a lot more.

Again, the amount of backspin and the amount of speed that you should put on the cue ball depends entirely on how much distance you want your cue ball to travel. Practice is the key. With this new found understanding of the Draw Shot, you should be able to practice more efficiently.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article55.html> to view the video.

The Follow Shot, Revisited

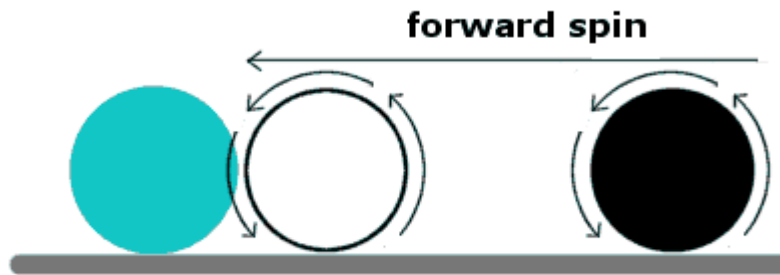
By admin

Date: Fri, Apr 11 @ 07:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Shots & Shotmaking

In our first article on the Follow Shot, I discussed the proper execution of the follow shot. This lesson will revisit the topic of the Follow shot and explain in more detail the state of the cue ball as it travels towards the object ball that makes the cue ball follow towards the direction of the object ball after it impacts the object ball.

As you already know, the follow shot is the exact opposite of the draw shot. Therefore, knowing the factors involved in the execution of the draw shot from previous lessons, we can assume that the reverse effect is involved in the execution of the follow shot.



An important factor to consider is that it is possible to follow the cue ball by hitting the cue ball with center ball or even below center. As long as the cue ball contains forward spin at the moment it contacts the object ball.

How is it possible that a below center hit will create a follow shot? Let's look at an example. Suppose you have a long shot at the object ball, let's say the cue ball and the object ball is 7 feet apart. You execute your shot by hitting the cue ball below center with medium soft speed. Initially, the cue ball will contain backspin due to the below center hit. As it travels further down the table towards the object ball, friction takes effect removing the spin on the cue ball. At a certain distance before the cue ball reaches the object ball, friction again takes effect on the cue ball which now has no spin. With no spin on the cue ball and it traveling forward, the effect of friction naturally creates forward roll on the cue ball. With forward spin on the cue ball, it follows the object ball upon impact.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article53.html> to view the video.

IV - BASIC POSITION PLAY

This section covers the basic principles of playing shape. These basic techniques will enable players to move ahead to more advanced principles after mastering the basic principles.

- » [Basic Position Play - Stun](#)
- » [Basic Position Play - Draw](#)
- » [Basic Position Play - Follow](#)
- » [Principles of playing position - Part I](#)
- » [Principles of playing position - Part II](#)
- » [Principles of playing position - Part III](#)
- » [Speed and Cue ball direction](#)
- » [The Professionals Pocket All The Easier Shots Better](#)
- » [Blackjack's Myths & Facts About Cue Ball Control](#)

Basic Position Play - Stun

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 23:25:12 CST

Topic: Basic Position Play

Now that you are familiar with the Stop shot, Draw shot, and the Follow shot, you are now ready to take on the basics of playing position. Playing position or cue ball preparation as I normally call it is simply the process of controlling where you should position the cue ball in preparation for your next shot (assuming of course that you pocket the object ball first). Knowing where the cue ball goes after impact of the object ball and learning to position the cue ball so that it makes it easy for you to pocket the next ball is vitally important if you want to win the game. At this point, it is no longer enough to pocket just one ball per turn. You should strive to pocket as many balls as you can when it's your turn to play. This lesson will give you a basic understanding of cue ball control.

Stun Shot

Let's start by defining what a *Stun Shot* is. By definition, a Stun Shot is a shot where the cueball does not have any forward or backward roll at the moment it collides with the object ball. If you recall the lesson on *Stop Shot*, the Stun is executed with a stop shot stroke speed regardless of whether or not you have a straight in shot or a cut angle.

Refer to the illustration below. Figure 1 shows you that pocketing the 15-ball with a stop shot will give you perfect cue ball position (indicated by the black circle) for the eight ball to win the game. To stop the cue ball dead in its tracks, you need to execute the Stun stroke.

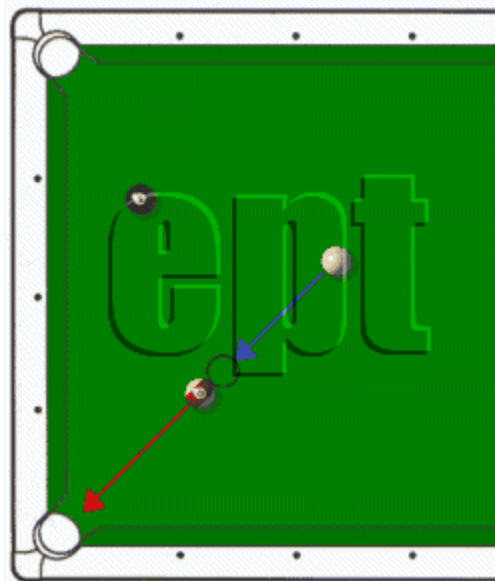
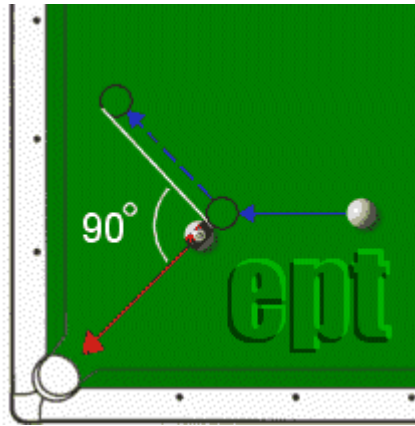


Figure 1

Most of the shots you will do in the game of pocket billiards will have some angle or cut on it. Therefore, it is important to know where the cue ball goes when doing cut shots.

The first one that I will explain is the stop ball hit or the *Stun* hit of the cue ball at an angle. Refer to the illustration below. As you can see on a cut shot using a Stun stroke on the cue ball, the cue ball will travel at a 90 degree angle from the direction of the object ball.



You need to keep in mind that a Stun stroke is not necessarily a center ball hit on the cue ball. Remember, a stun is any shot where the cueball has no forward or backward roll at the moment of impact to the object ball. So how do we execute the stun? It depends entirely on factors listed below:

- How far apart is the object ball to the cue ball? Depending on the distance between balls, you may need to hit the cueball at center or below center.
- How much speed will you be putting on the cueball? Speed also determines whether or not you will need to hit the cueball center or below center. Refer to the lessons on the Stop Shot and Draw shot.

Please continue to the next lesson,
[Basic Position Play - Draw](#)

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article7-pg-1.html> to view the video.

Basic Position Play - Draw

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 23:25:12 CST

Topic: Basic Position Play

The Figure below shows you a situation using a draw shot with a straight-in shot. The cue ball position for the draw shot (indicated by a black circle) draws the cueball a few inches and still gain acceptable position for the eight ball.

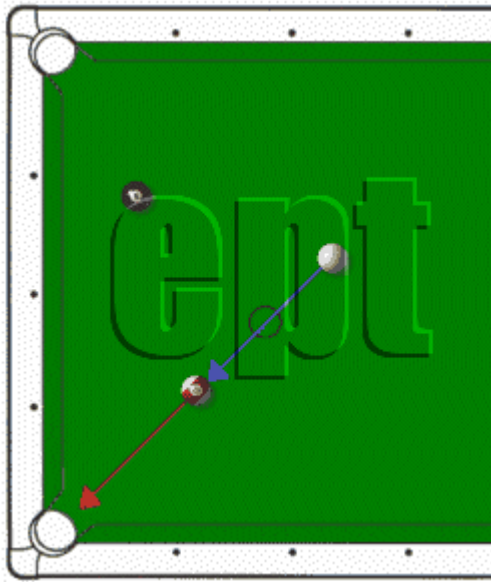
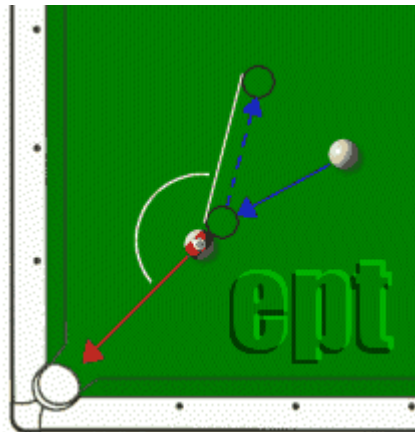
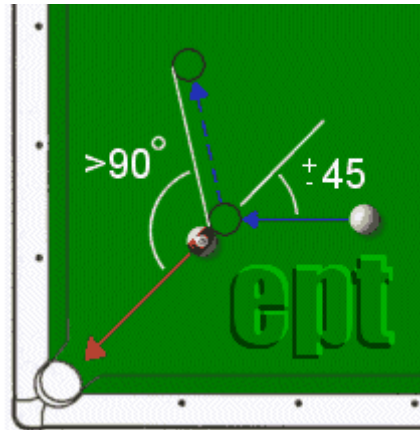


Figure 1

So how does the cue ball react when using a Draw stroke on a shot with a cut angle?

Refer to the illustrations below. On a below center ball hit on the cue ball, the cue ball will travel at more than 90 degree angle from the direction of the object ball. This will vary depending on the amount of cut or angle and the amount of draw or underspin that you put on the cue ball. As you can see on the first illustration, the angle of the cut is more or less around 45 degrees so the direction of the cue ball after impact is slightly over 90 degrees. But on the second illustration, there is very little angle so the direction of the cue ball after impact is almost up to 180 degrees! 180 degrees is of course a straight in shot using draw (see animation on the Draw Shot lesson).



Keep in mind that as the angle of the cut increases, the direction of the cue ball after impact decreases towards (but never reaches) 90 degrees. As the angle of the cut decreases up to the point where it is almost a straight in shot, the direction of the cue ball increases towards almost 180 degrees.

Please continue to the next lesson,
[Basic Position Play - Follow](#)

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article253.html> to view the video.

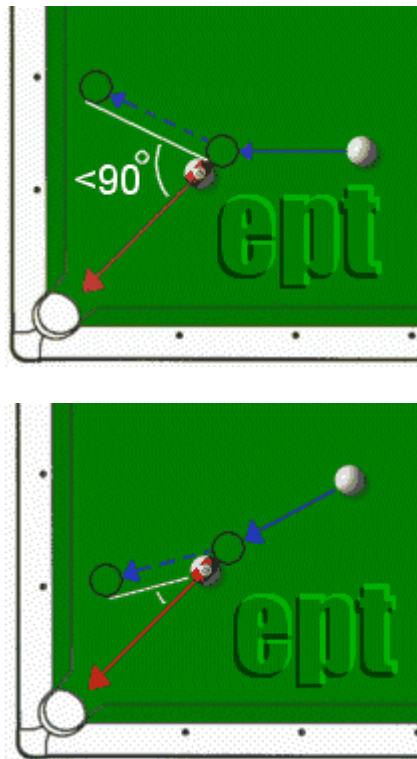
Basic Position Play - Follow

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 23:25:12 CST

Topic: Basic Position Play

Next is the follow shot or above center hit on the cue ball. Refer to the illustrations below. This will be the opposite of the draw shot in the previous lesson. On an above center ball hit on the cue ball, the cue ball will travel at less than 90 degree angle from the direction of the object ball. This will also vary depending on the amount of cut or angle and the amount of follow or topspin that you put on the cue ball. For this type of shot, keep in mind that as the angle of the cut increases, the direction of the cue ball after impact also increases towards (but never reaches) 90 degrees. As the angle of the cut decreases up to the point where it is almost a straight in shot, the direction of the cue ball also decreases towards almost 0 degrees. Just be aware that with very little angle and a follow shot can cause the cue ball to follow the object ball and scratch (cue ball goes into the pocket).



There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article254.html> to view the video.

Principles of playing position - Part I

By admin

Date: Sat, Apr 19 @ 00:00:00 CDT

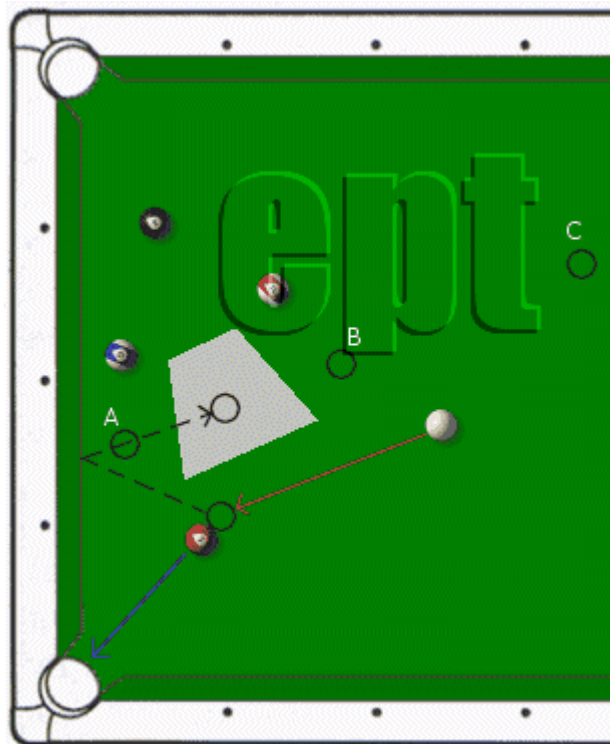
Topic: Basic Position Play

Now that you have a basic idea of where the cue ball goes after contacting the object ball and perhaps even control the position where the cue ball halts to a stop, you are now ready to learn these basic principles to play position of the cue ball the right way. This simply means that there are many ways to position your cue ball for your next shot but there are a few ground rules for playing it right.

Okay, now let's start with identifying some of the things you need to do in order to have a smooth run-out of your object balls.

Controlling the speed of your cue ball

This is a very important principle in position play and cannot be overlooked. You have to learn to gauge the speed of your stroke and know how much speed is needed for your cue ball to travel to the desired position. Beginner players normally tend to hit the cue ball too hard and as you gain experience you should pay special attention to the different speeds you need for the cue ball to travel where you want it to be. Let's look at an example illustration below.



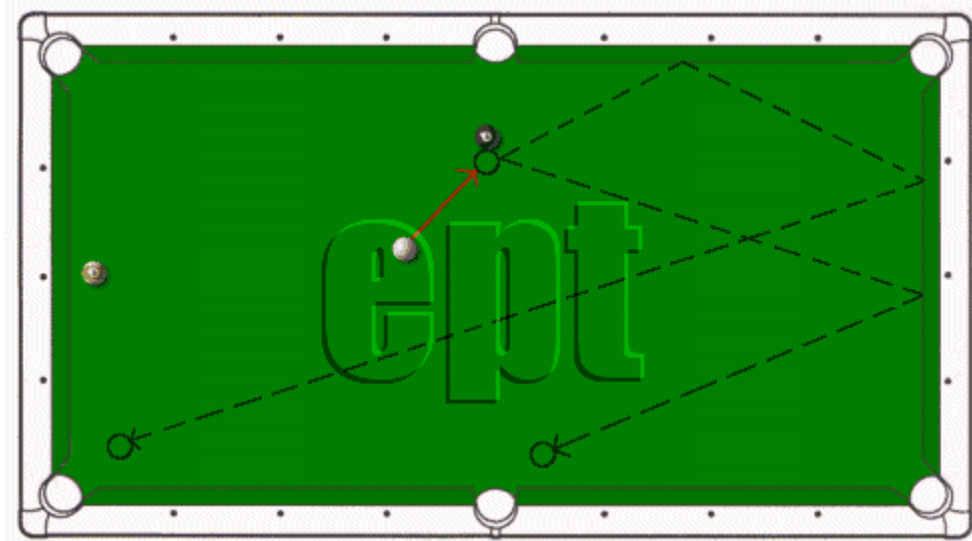
In the above illustration, a medium speed is necessary to position the cue ball around the area where we want it to be indicated by the gray box area. Hitting too softly (position A) might place the cue ball behind the 10-ball and hitting too hard (position B) might place the cue ball behind the 11-ball. Hitting even harder (Position

C) might place the cue ball farther giving you a very thin cut on the 8-ball which is a very difficult shot!

Keep in mind that the following factors affect the speed of the cue ball:

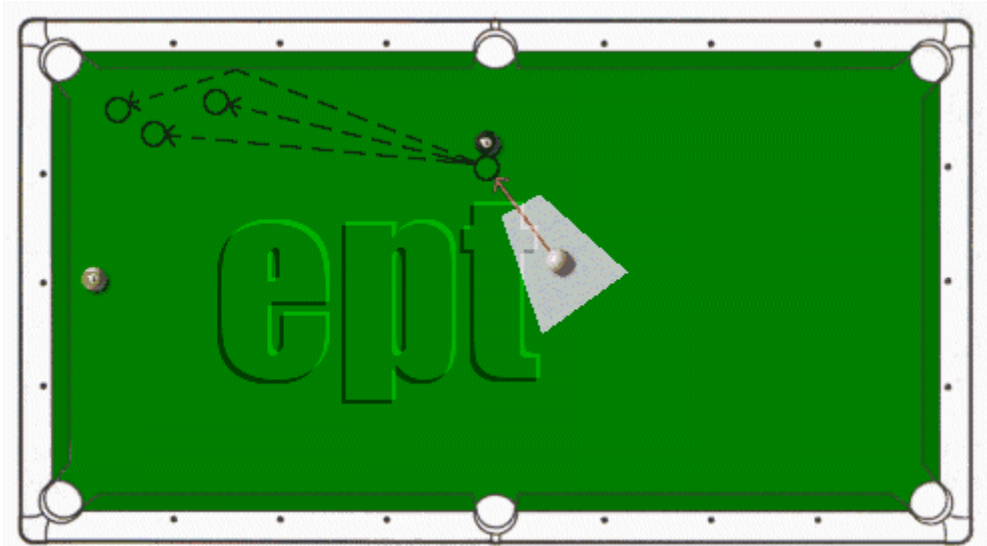
- The type of the table cloth, the rougher the surface of the cloth, the more friction therefore less speed. The smoother the cloth, the less friction, therefore more speed on your cue ball. If you use the same stroke speed for both types of cloth, your cue ball will obviously not arrive at the same location on the table. So you need to be able to adjust your stroke speed depending on the playing conditions presented to you.
- The condition of the cushion. Newer cushions have more bounce therefore the cue ball travels longer after bouncing off the cushion. Older cushions become soggy and less "bouncy" (this may not be a word:)) therefore the cue ball travels at a shorter distance after bouncing off the cushion. Again, try to adjust your stroke speed accordingly.
- The condition of the balls. Same thing with the balls, the older the balls the less bounce they have therefore the cue ball travels less.
- Follow shot and Draw shot. Shooting with follow or top spin will make the cue ball travel farther because the cue ball has forward momentum. Using the same speed of stroke with draw will make the cue ball travel less because of the reverse spin on the cue ball. Take note of this when you are trying to gauge the speed of your stroke.
- Clean and dirty tables. Dirty tables have more dust and small particles that makes for more friction thus the cue ball will travel at a shorter distance. Always clean the table before playing.

Let's say for example you made your target ball and you have a nice position for the next target ball, however your cue ball is on the WRONG side of the table to be able to play position for the next target ball! This is illustrated below.



Notice that you had good position on the eight ball to make it on the side pocket, however look at the path the cue ball has to travel. The examples given above are just two examples that shows you that you are faced with the possibility of

scratching! It is still possible for you to make good position on the 9 ball but your margin of error is very small making your shot more difficult. The problem here is the cue ball is on the wrong side (i.e. it is on the left side of the eight ball in this case). It would have been easier if the cue ball is on the right side of the eight ball as shown in the next illustration below.



So to sum up this discussion, you should always be aware where you should position the cue ball. Think ahead 2 or more balls and try to find the easiest route. As you gain more experience, it will become second nature to you and you should be able to think ahead 2, 3, 4 or even more balls.

Principles of playing position - Part II

By admin

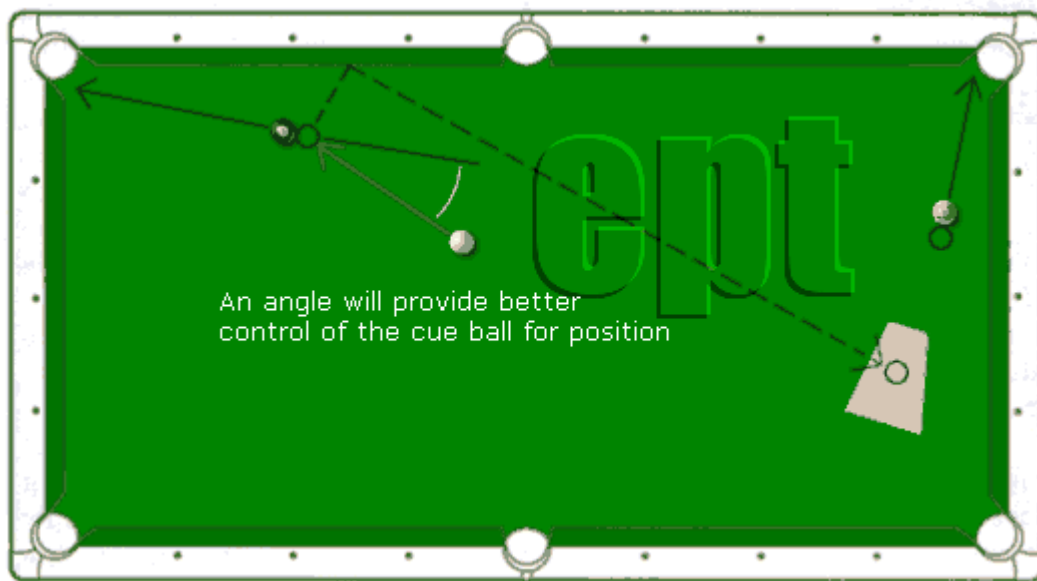
Date: Mon, Apr 21 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Position Play

Here are two more principles that you can use as guidelines when playing for position.

Leave an angle for your shot

What this simply means is that it is always a good idea to have some angle on your shot. Having a little cut shot allows for better control of the cue ball as opposed to a straight in shot where the cue ball can only go forward or backwards on the same line. It is always ideal to have some angle on your shot because this generally gives you a lot more flexibility to position the cue ball in virtually any spot on the table. Let's look at an example illustration below.

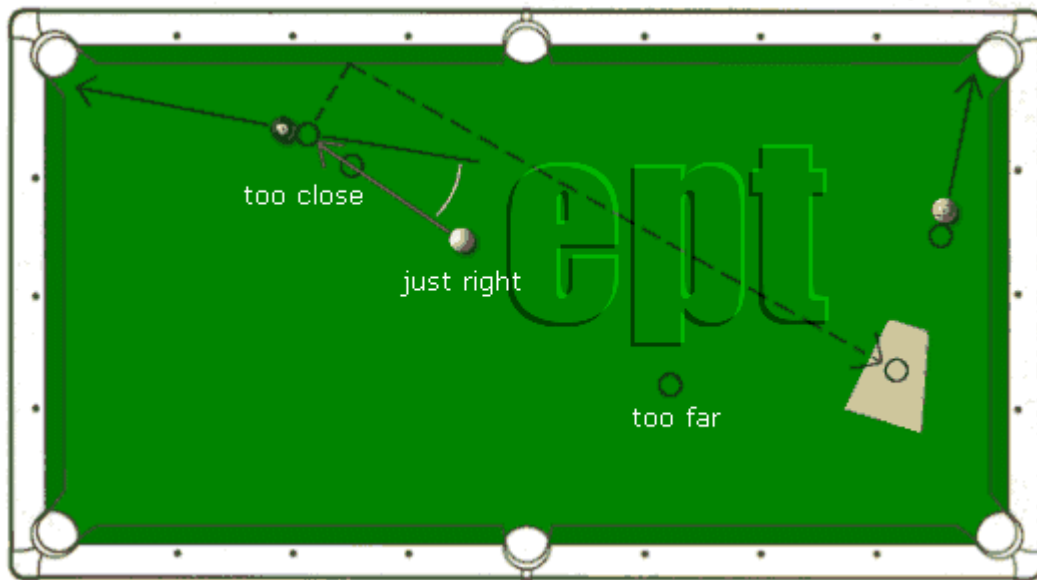


In the above illustration, the ideal position of the cue ball after pocketing the 8 ball is indicated by the grayed-out area. In order to achieve this position for the cue ball, you must have an angle on your shot for the 8 ball. If you have a straight-in shot on the 8 ball then there's virtually no way to position the cue ball on the ideal spot.

Using your knowledge of where the cue ball goes after hitting the object ball (discussed in previous lessons), you can determine how much of an angle you need to position the cue ball for your next shot. As you gain more experience you should be able to calculate the approximate angle you need and this process will become automatic and second nature.

Keep in mind that these principles serve only as guidelines and that there are exceptions to these so-called guideline rules. In the above example, you will notice that you have a straight-in shot on the 9 ball. That is okay, as a matter of fact this is ideal because the 9 ball is the last ball you need to pocket to win the game.

Let us start by using the example illustration below.



If the distance between the cue ball and the object ball is too far, then the chances of missing the shot is increased. Long shots are generally more difficult because it decreases your shooting accuracy. First of all, for long shots, you need more speed on your stroke which generally makes it more difficult to hit the cue ball with the tip of your cue accurately. Second, using english on long shots is also more difficult.

If the distance between the cue ball and the object ball is too close, some players find it more difficult to aim while other players find it more difficult to control the speed of the cue ball.

To free yourself from the above mentioned problems, you should leave enough distance between your cue ball and object ball. The distance should be ideal for you to feel comfortable shooting the ball. This is generally a matter of "feel" and in time, you will automatically know how much distance you need for each shot.

To summarize this lesson, you should leave enough angle and enough distance to create an ideal shot to play good position on your next object ball.

The next lesson will discuss a couple more principles of playing position. Until then, practice what you have learned today and be ready for the next set of principles.

Principles of playing position - Part III

By admin

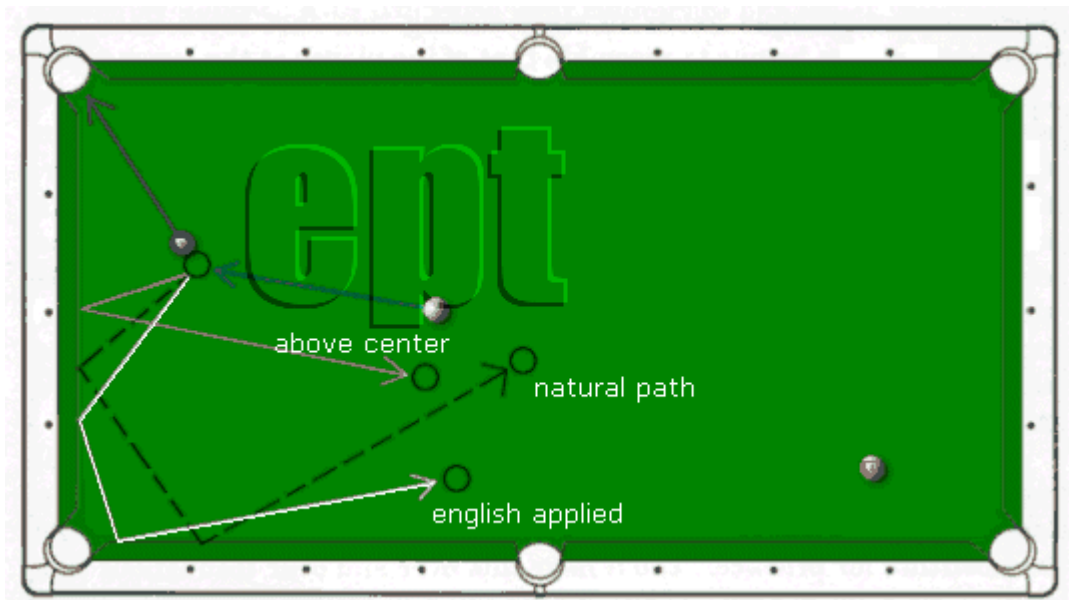
Date: Thu, Apr 24 @ 06:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Position Play

Choose the natural path of the cue ball

The term "natural path" here means that when the cue ball is hit with centerball stroke (the natural stroke), the cue ball will then travel its natural path. You are probably wondering why this is important. The main reason why most good players choose the natural path of the cue ball whenever possible is because it is very easy to determine exactly where the cue ball will travel. You know that hitting the object ball (at an angle) with centerball stroke and medium speed on the cue ball will result in the cue ball to travel at a 90 degree angle from the direction of the object ball (refer to this lesson on basic position play). Playing the natural path is the only way for you to be absolutely sure where the cue ball will travel, where it will hit the rail, etc.

Hitting the cue ball above center or below center or with english presents you with a lot of different combinations of where to hit the cue ball. For example, hitting the cue ball with left english... you can hit the cue ball with 1/2 tip on the left of center or a full 1 tip off center. Now, these varying degrees of left english that you will put on the cue ball will generate different paths that the cue ball will travel after hitting the object ball therefore it is difficult to predict exactly where the cue ball will travel and how much angle it will create off the rail.

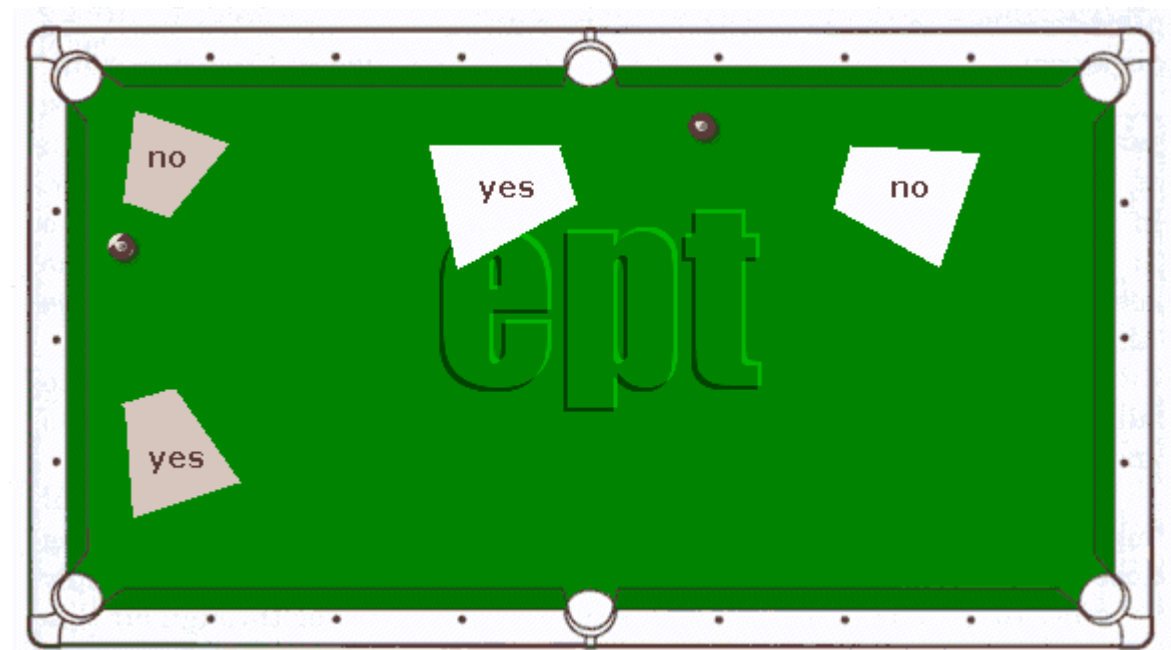


The sample illustration above shows you the natural path of the cue ball (indicated by the black dotted line) and the path that the cue ball *might* travel with left english applied on the cue ball (indicated by the white line) and also the *probable* cue ball path with the cue ball hit above center (indicated by gray line). You'll notice that with centerball stroke, you'll know exactly what path the cue ball travels... all you need to

worry about is your speed control to position the cue ball exactly where you want it to be.

Position the cue ball on the long side of the table when possible

The basic idea behind playing position is to make it easy for you to pocket the object balls in succession. You probably notice that professional players don't usually have any difficult shots... and that's exactly what they intended to happen and they accomplish what they want by playing perfect position all the time! With this in mind, here's another important principle for position that will make your life easier on the pool table. With this in mind, let's look at the example below.



In example A, the object ball is close to the top corner pocket. Positioning the cue ball on the short side (indicated by the shaded box "no") will make the shot more difficult. First, the cue ball will be too close to the object ball and that makes aiming a little difficult (refer to the previous lesson regarding the ideal distance between the object and the cue ball). Second, there is not much room for proper follow through because the cue ball is too close to the object ball... and without proper follow through, it limits your options for controlling the cue ball and even decreasing your chances of pocketing the object ball.

Therefore, for example A the ideal position of the cue ball will be on the long side (indicated by the shaded box "yes"). In this position, you have ample distance between the cue ball and the object ball giving you the chance for a proper execution of the shot with follow through thus increasing your chances for making the object ball as well as controlling the cue ball. Another advantage of positioning the cue ball on the long side is that the object ball is actually closer to the designated pocket therefore it needs to travel less towards the pocket thus increasing your chances for pocketing it. Generally, the closer the object ball is to the pocket the more margin for error you can have therefore the more chances for success.

Let's look at example B. The same reasoning applies here. Although positioning the cue ball on the short side will still give you enough distance between the object ball and the cue ball, you will be faced with the fact that the object ball has to travel a long way to get the opposite end of the table towards the top left corner pocket. Again, it is easier to pocket this object ball to the top right corner pocket because it is closer to that pocket.

This principle is not always going to be the right way to play for position. Some situations will require you to play the cue ball on the short side in order to play position on the next object ball. You should apply good judgment depending on the situation presented to you. Once again, only with practice and experience will you be able to automatically know what to do.

Speed and Cue ball direction

By admin

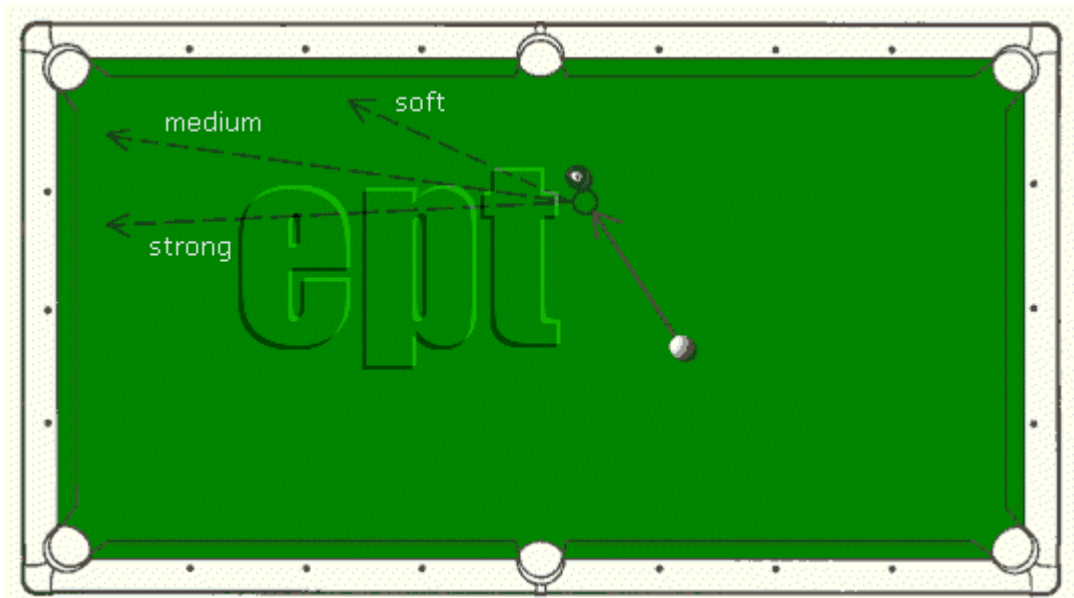
Date: Wed, Apr 30 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Basic Position Play

Speed is a very important aspect for cue ball control. This lessons discusses more into detail about how the speed of stroke changes the direction of the cue ball after it hits the object ball. The illustrations will let you clearly see where the cue ball generally goes after hitting it on the same spot but with different speed on your stroke. These illustrations are more than enough to show you what I mean without explaining the process in so many words.

Center Ball Hit at different speeds

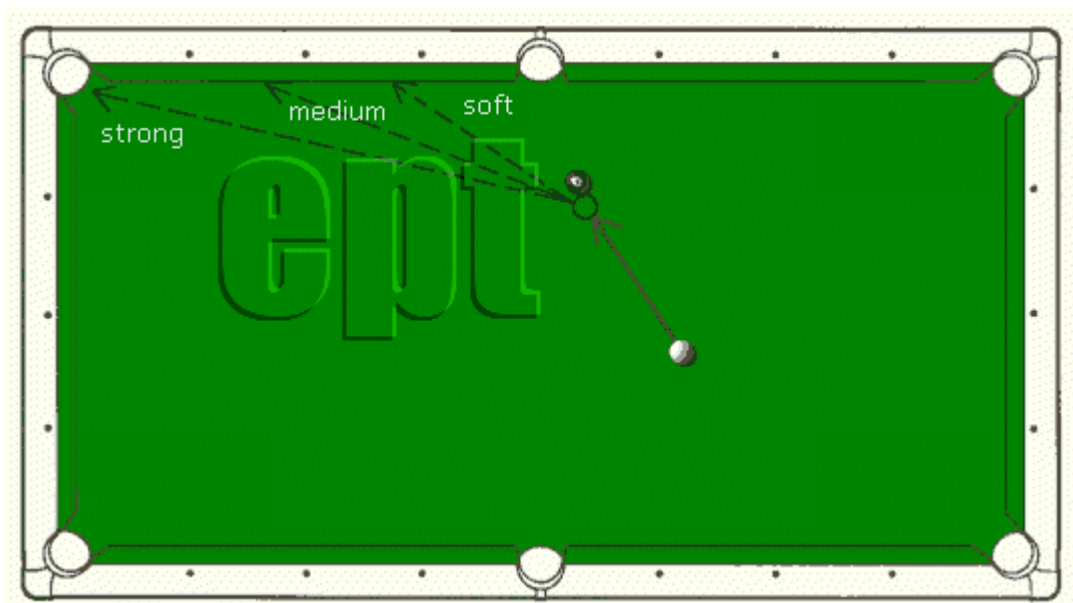
First, let us examine the normal center ball hit. Center ball hit means that no english is applied on the cue ball and it should be hit at the exact center of the cue ball. Let us proceed... refer to the illustration below.



In the above illustration, notice the direction of the cue ball after it hits the object ball. Hitting it soft will have the cue ball travel towards the second dot from the foot rail. Hitting it with medium speed will have the cue ball travel towards the foot rail just a couple of inches from the corner pocket. Hitting it strong will have the cue ball travel towards the foot rail just a couple of inches after the first dot. When executing a center ball hit, always pay attention to where the cue ball goes after hitting the object ball and try out the same shot with different speed of stroke so you will have a feel of where it goes. This is not only important for cue ball positioning but also to avoid scratching the cue ball.

High Ball Hit at different speeds

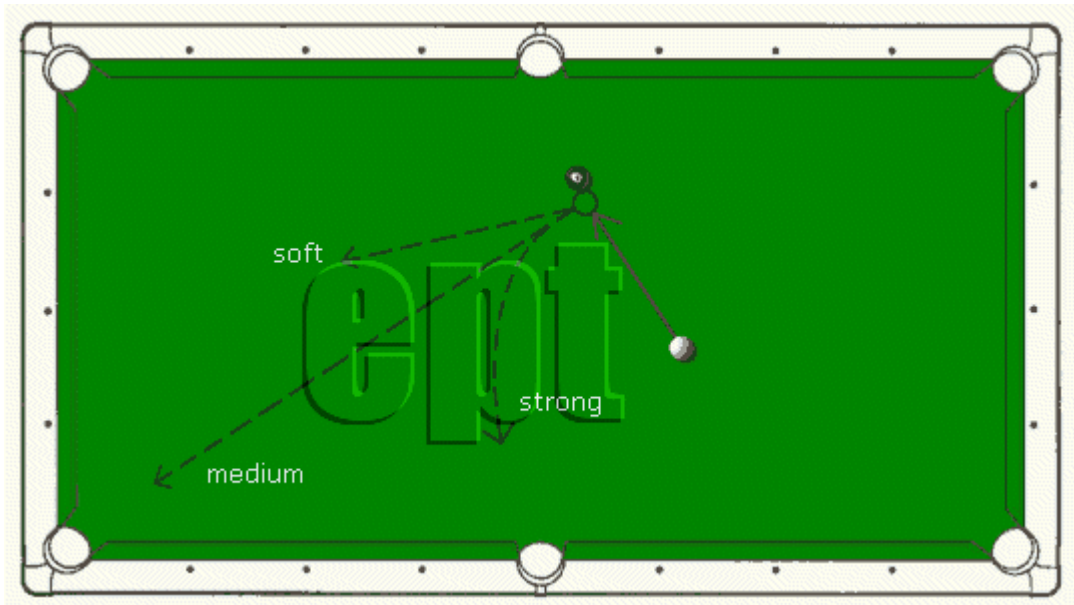
Second, let us discuss the follow or high hit on the cue ball. Again, no english is used in this example. Let us proceed... refer to the illustration below.



In the above illustration, notice the direction of the cue ball after it hits the object ball at soft, medium and soft strokes using high hit on the cue ball. As discussed on the lesson about Basic Position, hitting the cue ball high will have the cue ball travel at less than 90 degrees perpendicular to the direction of the object ball and the above illustration shows you the general path of the cue ball at different speed of stroke. Note that your calculation of speed may be different than mine, i.e. your "soft" stroke might be softer or harder than what I call a "soft" speed. The illustration above serves as an example to show you the different paths the cue ball travel at different speeds. You will need to pay close attention to where your cue ball goes after each shot you make and always compare it at different speeds so that you will have a basis and knowledge to play better position. With enough hours of practice, you should instinctively know where the cue ball will go.

Below Center Hit at different speeds

Last but not least, let us discuss the draw or below center hit on the cue ball. Again, no english is used in this example. Let us proceed... refer to the illustration below.



Again, notice the direction of the cue ball after it hits the object ball at soft, medium and soft strokes with the use of draw or below center hit on the cue ball. As discussed on the lesson about Basic Position, hitting the cue ball below center will have the cue ball travel at more than 90 degrees perpendicular to the direction of the object ball and the above illustration shows you the general path of the cue ball at different speed of stroke. You can also see that there is a little curve on the cue ball when hitting it with a strong stroke. This is caused by the reverse spin on the cue ball (physics stuff)... just accept it and move on. Once again, practice this type of shot at different speeds and pay attention to where the cue ball goes.

The Professionals Pocket All The Easier Shots Better

Date: Sun, Apr 4 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Basic Position Play

Thinking ahead and playing for shape is just about as important as pocketing a ball. After the break shot the lay out of the table should be surveyed. Thinking at least three balls ahead if not the whole rack. Look for the pattern in which enable the best choice to run balls. Also take one shot at a time by taking your time from one shot to the next. Survey the table in between each shot. Play for the percentage shots, meaning if you are only 60 percent sure on pocketing the ball play safe. This gives you a good opportunity to receive ball- in- hand. Placement of the cue ball is important due to the lay out of the table. playing the shot with the natural roll of the cue ball path and "in line shooting" is the best choice. Always try to come into your next shot rather than across the angle of approach, because speed control of the shot is the hardest to control. Your speed has to 100 % pure on all shots shot this way. Shooting the cue ball with natural directional roll after the object ball impact and the cue ball rolling naturally towards your next shot is key in position play.

The reason why the pros play so good and run racks is because they shoot all the easier shots better, why is this? because their cue ball control is better. The pros keep it as simple as can be from shot to shot thus leaving them a real high percentage to pocket each and almost every ball they shoot at. Watch a pro in action when they run rack after rack and they just some how make it look to easy. That's cue ball control, and the pros have it mastered. There's a big difference when a player can get within a 6 inch diameter with positioning of the cue ball than a pro who can reach inside a 3 inch diameter of their positioning. Note: keep it simple and shoot into the shot naturally and out of the shot naturally, and back into the next shot naturally.

Blackjack's Myths & Facts About Cue Ball Control

By David Sapolis

Date: Wed, Jun 15, 2005 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Basic Position Play

The Cue Ball

Contrary to popular belief, the cue ball will not do anything that you don't tell it to do. Read that over and over until it sinks in. If you miss a shot or position, guess why. You told it to do what it did. The prerequisite for cue ball control is self control.

Myths Vs Facts

Myth:

I must always carefully plan my position routes and strategies from behind the cue ball.

Fact:

Actually, it is a pretty good idea to check out the shot and the position from behind the object ball as well. It gives you a different perspective and it also gives you time to think through the planning stages of what you are trying to accomplish. It is also a stress reliever when you walk to the other side of the table. Never be afraid to take your time.

Myth:

Mastering and applying advanced english techniques improve my game considerably.

Fact:

Well, yes, and no. A long time ago I was told that almost every shot can be made without applying any english. A long time later I completely agree. George Fels (author of the book Mastering Pool) gives the best advice in this area. Mr. Fels advises us that when we can run the balls with no english, then you can begin to apply english to the cue ball. Blackjack says "a good angle keeps it simple". That's not original, I stole that one from Buddy Hall. By that, it means that as long as I have an angle, I don't need to complicate things by using excessive spin on the cue ball. That is the beauty of staying in the center of the table.

Myth:

In games like 9 ball where the cue ball has to travel a bit more than say, straight pool, it is essential for me to learn intricate position routes and patterns so that I can get out more often.

Fact:

This is a half truth. Though knowledge in this area is essential, we should always look for the least complicated position route or pattern. Pool is a game that is best played when it is played in its simplest form. In 9 ball, I recommend starting your cue ball and ending your cue ball in the center of the table on all shots.

Why is this?

a) I'm likely to have a shot (and an angle) from there.

- b) it's easier to see the entire lay of the table from there.
- c) There are no pockets there.

When I break, I should break and stop the cue ball in the center of the table. My cue ball position should leave the center of the table only when it is absolutely necessary, and after accomplishing what I have to, I should return to the center of the table immediately.

Position Rules

The position rules I will pass along are very basic, and they are very simple. I recommend that in pool, you keep everything very simple.

Understand how the cue ball works. Nothing here is going to make any sense to you if you do not understand how and why the cue ball does the things it does. Understand that the cue ball is a sphere (not flat) and that it will react like a sphere. The exact center of the cue ball sits at its equator for 360 degrees around it, AND it is about the size of a pin head. Understand that the cue ball rolls and spins. It should not slide or skid unless you want it to. Understanding what the cue ball does, and how it reacts to your manipulation is the key to attaining mastery.

Find the easiest route and take the easiest route. Avoid flashy, difficult or complicated routes to your next shot. If you can get shape on the next ball by using one rail, do not use two or three.

Use and apply english only when it is absolutely necessary. Most beginners love to throw some hot mustard on the cue ball, mainly to show off for the railbirds. If you can make the cue sing, dance, rollover and play dead, hey...I'm impressed. I hate to burst your bubble, but you won't win many games with that crap.

LEARN TO POCKET THE BALLS CLEANLY AND CORRECTLY!!

Getting shape is useless if you can't get the object ball into the pocket. There is a such thing known as The Perfect Rolling Ball. It is a beautiful sight to see and an even more beautiful sight to create. The way to create it is by using a direct center hit on the cue ball (easier said than done) into the exact center of the object ball. The absence of english causes the ball to roll cleanly, end over end. When you impart any spin on the cue ball, that spin is transferred to the object ball. If the object ball inadvertently comes in contact with the tips of the pockets, that spin could mean the difference of the object spilling into the pocket, or getting spit out of the pocket. So eliminate the english, french, or whatever else you are applying to the cue ball. **KEEP IT SIMPLE.**

Watch and learn from the greats. When talking cue ball control, one name pops into my mind: Buddy Hall. He's got a few books out there as well as videos. Consider them highly recommended. When I play, I can still hear Buddy telling me "You're doing great! Now just stay in line and don't get stuck behind anything." Buddy Hall is the best teacher of *Simplicity*.

Credits: *Feel Free to visit my website for many more articles, diagrams, and book excerpts. Feel free to drop me a line to let me know how this article has improved your game.* (<http://www.geocitites.com/blkjackds12>)

V - RULES OF THE GAME

This section contains official and unofficial rules of various pool games.

- » [GENERAL RULES OF POCKET BILLIARDS](#)
- » [Game Rules for 8-Ball](#)
- » [Open Table Rule for 8-Ball](#)
- » [Game Rules for 9-Ball](#)
- » [Game Rules for 10-Ball](#)
- » [Game Rules for Straight Pool \(14.1\)](#)
- » [Game Rules for One-Pocket](#)

GENERAL RULES OF POCKET BILLIARDS

By admin

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 23:37:08 CST

Topic: Rules of the Game

This document provides the general rules for playing pocket billiards.

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

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1. **TABLES, BALLS, EQUIPMENT.** All games described in these rules are designed for tables, balls and equipment meeting the standards prescribed in the BCA Equipment.
2. **RACKING THE BALLS.** When racking the balls a triangle must be used, and the apex ball is to be spotted on the foot spot. All the balls must be lined up behind the apex ball and pressed together so that they all have contact with each other.
3. **STRIKING CUE BALL.** Legal shots require that the cue ball be struck only with the cue tip. Failure to meet this requirement is a foul.
4. **FAILURE TO POCKET A BALL.** If a player fails to pocket a ball on a legal shot, then the player's inning is over, and it is the opponent's turn at the table.
5. **LAG FOR BREAK.** The following procedure is used for the lag for the opening break. Each player should use balls of equal size and weight (preferably cue balls but, when not available, non-striped object balls). With the balls in hand behind the head string, one player to the left and one to the right of the head spot, the balls are shot simultaneously to the foot cushion and back to the head end of the table. The player whose ball is the closest to the innermost edge of the head cushion wins the lag. The lagged ball must contact the foot cushion at least once. Other cushion contacts are immaterial, except as prohibited below.

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 foot cushion, (3) the ball drops into a pocket, (4) the ball jumps the table, (5) the ball touches the long cushion, (6) the ball rests within the corner pocket and past the nose of the head cushion, or (7) the ball contacts the foot rail more than once. If both players violate automatic-loss lag rules, or if the referee is unable to determine which ball is closer, the lag is a tie and is replayed.

6. **OPENING BREAK SHOT.** The opening break shot is determined by either lag or lot. (The lag for break procedure is required for tournament and other formal competition.) The player winning the lag or lot has the choice of performing the opening break shot or assigning it to the opponent.

7. **CUE BALL ON OPENING BREAK.** The opening break shot is taken with cue ball in hand behind the head string. The object balls are positioned according to specific game rules. On the opening break, the game is considered to have commenced once the cue ball has been struck by the cue tip and crosses the head string.
8. **DEFLECTING THE CUE BALL ON THE GAMES OPENING BREAK.** On the break shot, stopping or deflecting the cue ball after it has crossed the head string and prior to hitting the racked balls is considered a foul and loss of turn. The opponent has the option of receiving cue ball in hand behind the head string or passing the cue ball in hand behind the head string back to the offending player. (Exception: ball in hand on the whole table: see rule 1.3 for 9-Ball). A warning must be given that a second violation during the match will result in the loss of the match by forfeiture. (See Rule 28.)
9. **CUE BALL IN HAND BEHIND THE HEAD STRING.** This situation applies in specific games whereby the opening break is administered or a player's scratching is penalized by the incoming player having cue ball in hand behind the head string. The incoming player may place the cue ball anywhere behind the head string.

The shooting player may shoot at any object ball as long as the base of the object ball is on or below the head string. He may not shoot at any ball, the base of which is above the head string, unless he first shoots the cue ball below the head string and then by hitting a rail causes the cue ball to come back above the head string and hit the object ball. The base of the ball (the point of the ball touching the table) determines whether it is above or below the head string.

If the incoming player inadvertently places the cue ball on or below the head string, the referee or the opposing player must inform the shooting player of improper positioning of the cue ball before the shot is made. If the opposing player does not so inform the shooting player before the shot is made, the shot is considered legal. If the shooting player is informed of improper positioning, he must then reposition the cue ball. If a player positions the cue ball completely and obviously outside the kitchen and shoots the cue ball, it is a foul, if called by the opponent or referee.

When the cue ball is in hand behind the head string, it remains in hand (not in play) until the player drives the cue ball past the head string by striking it with his cue tip.

The cue ball may be ADJUSTED by the player's hand, cue, etc., so long as it remains in hand. Once the cue ball is in play per the above, it may not be impeded in any way by the player; to do so is to commit a foul.

10. **POCKETED BALLS.** A ball is considered as a pocketed ball if as a result of an otherwise legal shot, it drops off the bed of the table into the pocket and remains there. (A ball that drops out of a ball return system onto the floor is not to be construed as a ball that has not remained pocketed.) A ball that rebounds from a pocket back onto the table bed is not a pocketed ball.
11. **POSITION OF BALLS.** The position of a ball is judged by where its base (or center) rests.

12. **FOOT ON FLOOR**. It is a foul if a player shoots when at least one foot is not in contact with the floor. Foot attire must be normal in regard to size, shape and manner in which it is worn.
13. **SHOOTING WITH BALLS IN MOTION**. It is a foul if a player shoots while the cue ball or any object ball is in motion (a spinning ball is in motion).
14. **COMPLETION OF STROKE**. A stroke is not complete (and therefore is not counted) until all balls on the table have become motionless after the stroke (a spinning ball is in motion).
15. **HEAD STRING DEFINED**. The area behind the head string does not include the head string. Thus an object ball that is dead center on the head string is playable when specific game rules require that a player must shoot at a ball past the head string. Likewise, the cue ball when being put in play behind the head string (cue ball in hand behind the head string), may not be placed directly on the head string; it must be behind it.
16. **GENERAL RULE, ALL FOULS**. Though the penalties for fouls differ from game to game, the following apply to all fouls: (1) player's inning ends; (2) if on a stroke, the stroke is invalid and any pocketed balls are not counted to the shooter's credit; and (3) any ball(s) is respotted only if the rules of the specific game require it.
17. **FAILURE TO CONTACT OBJECT BALL**. It is a foul if on a stroke the cue ball fails to make contact with any legal object ball first. Playing away from a touching ball does not constitute having hit that ball.
18. **LEGAL SHOT**. Unless otherwise stated in a specific game rule, a player must cause the cue ball to contact a legal object ball and then (1) pocket a numbered ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a cushion. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.
19. **CUE BALL SCRATCH**. It is a foul (scratch) if on a stroke, the cue ball is pocketed. If the cue ball touches an object ball that was already pocketed (for example, in a pocket full of object balls), the shot is a foul.
20. **FOULS BY TOUCHING BALLS**. It is a foul to strike, touch or in any way make contact with the cue ball in play or any object balls in play with anything (the body, clothing, chalk, mechanical bridge, cue shaft, etc.) EXCEPT the cue tip (while attached to the cue shaft), which may contact the cue ball in the execution of a legal shot. Whenever a referee is presiding over a match, any object ball moved during a standard foul must be returned as closely as possible to its original position as judged by the referee, and the incoming player does not have the option of restoration.
21. **FOUL BY PLACEMENT**. Touching any object ball with the cue ball while it is in hand is a foul.
22. **FOULS BY DOUBLE HITS**. If the cue ball is touching the required object ball prior to the shot, the player may shoot towards it, providing that any normal stroke is employed. If the cue stick strikes the cue ball more than once on a shot, or if the cue stick is in contact with the cue ball when or after the cue ball contacts an object ball, the shot is foul. If a third ball is close by, care should be taken not to foul that ball under the first part of this rule.
23. **PUSH SHOT FOULS**. It is a foul if the cue ball is pushed by the cue tip, with contact being maintained for more than the momentary time commensurate with a stroked shot. (Such shots are usually referred to as push shots.)
24. **PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY FOULS**. The player is responsible for chalk, bridges, files and any other items or equipment he brings to, uses at, or causes to approximate the table. If he drops a piece of chalk, or knocks off a mechanical bridge head, as examples, he is guilty of a foul should such an

object make contact with any ball in play (or the cue ball only if no referee is presiding over the match).

25. **ILLEGAL JUMPING OF BALL.** It is a foul if a player strikes the cue ball below center ("digs under" it) and intentionally causes it to rise off the bed of the table in an effort to clear an obstructing ball. such jumping action may occasionally occur accidentally, and such "jumps" are not to be considered fouls on their face; they may still be ruled foul strokes, if for example, the ferrule or cue shaft makes contact with the cue ball in the course of the shot.
26. **JUMP SHOTS.** Unless otherwise stated in rules for a specific game it is legal to cause the cue ball to rise off the bed of the table by elevating the cue stick on the shot, and forcing the cue ball to rebound from the bed of the table. Any miscue when executing a jump shot is a foul.
27. **BALLS JUMPED OFF TABLE.** Balls coming to rest other than on the bed of the table after a stroke (on the cushion top, rail surface, floor, etc.) are considered jumped balls. Balls may bounce on the cushion tops and rails of the table in play without being jumped balls if they return to the bed of the table under their own power and without touching anything not a part of the table. The table shall consist of the permanent part of the table proper. (Balls that strike or touch anything not a part of the table, such as the light fixture, chalk on the rails and cushion tops, etc., shall be considered jumped balls even though they might return to the bed of the table after contacting items which are not parts of the table proper).

In all pocket billiard games when a stroke results in the cue ball or any object ball being a jumped ball off the table, the stroke is a foul. All jumped object balls are spotted (except in Nine Ball) when all balls have stopped moving. See specific game rules for putting the cue ball in play after a jumped cue ball foul.

28. **SPECIAL INTENTIONAL FOUL PENALTY.** The cue ball in play shall not be intentionally struck with anything other than a cue's attached tip (such as the ferrule, shaft, etc.). While such contact is automatically a foul under the provisions of Rule 19., if the referee deems the contact to be intentional, he shall warn the player once during a match that a second violation during that match will result in the loss of the match by forfeiture. If a second violation does occur, the match must be forfeited.
29. **ONE FOUL LIMIT.** Unless specific game rules dictate otherwise, only one foul is assessed on a player in each inning; if different penalties can apply, the most severe penalty is the factor determining which foul is assessed.
30. **BALLS MOVING SPONTANEOUSLY.** If a ball shifts, settles, turns or otherwise moves "by itself," the ball shall remain in the position it assumed and play continues. A hanging ball that falls into a pocket "by itself" after being motionless for 5 seconds or longer shall be replaced as closely as possible to its position prior to falling, and play shall continue.

If an object ball drops into a pocket "by itself" as a player shoots at it, so that the cue ball passes over the spot the ball had been on, unable to hit it, the cue ball and object ball are to be replaced to their positions prior to the stroke, and the player may shoot again. Any other object balls disturbed on the stroke are also to be replaced to their original positions before the shooter replays.

31. **SPOTTING BALLS**. When specific game rules call for spotting balls, they shall be replaced on the table on the long string after the stroke is complete. A single ball is placed on the foot spot; if more than one ball is to be spotted, they are placed on the long string in ascending numerical order, beginning on the foot spot and advancing toward the foot rail.

When balls on or near the foot spot or long string interfere with the spotting of balls, the balls to be spotted are placed on the long string as close as possible to the foot spot without moving the interfering balls. Spotted balls are to be placed as close as possible or frozen (at the referee's discretion) to such interfering balls, except when the cue ball is interfering; balls to be spotted against the cue ball are placed as close as possible without being frozen.

If there is insufficient room on the long string between the foot spot and the foot rail cushion for balls that must be spotted, such balls are then placed on the extension of the long string "in front" of the foot spot (between the foot spot and the center spot), as near as possible to the foot spot and in the same numerical order as if they were spotted "behind" the foot spot (lowest numbered ball closest to the foot spot).

32. **JAWED BALLS**. If two or more balls are locked between the jaws or sides of the pocket, with one or more suspended in air, the referee shall inspect the balls in position and follow this procedure: he shall visually (or physically if he desires) project each ball directly downward from its locked position; any ball that in his judgment would fall in the pocket if so moved directly downward is a pocketed ball, while any ball that would come to rest on the bed of the table is not pocketed. The balls are then placed according to the referee's assessment, and play continues according to specific game rules as if no locking or jawing of balls had occurred.
33. **ADDITIONAL POCKETED BALLS**. If extra balls are pocketed on a legal scoring stroke, they are counted in accord with the scoring rules for the particular game.
34. **NON-PLAYER INTERFERENCE**. If the balls are moved (or a player bumped such that play is directly affected) by a non-player during the match, the balls shall be replaced as near as possible to their original positions immediately prior to the incident, and play shall resume with no penalty on the player affected. If the match is officiated, the referee shall replace the balls. This rule shall also apply to "act of God" interference, such as earthquake, hurricane, light fixture falling, power failure, etc. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, replay the game with the original player breaking. This rule is not applicable to 14.1 Continuous where the game consists of successive racks: the rack in progress will be discontinued and a completely new rack will be started with the requirements of the normal opening break (players lag for break). Scoring of points is to be resumed at the score as it stood at the moment of game disruption.
35. **BREAKING SUBSEQUENT RACKS**. In a match that consists of short rack games, the winner of each game breaks in the next. The following are common options that may be designated by tournament officials in advance: (1) Players alternate break. (2) Loser breaks. (3) Player trailing in games score breaks the next game.

36. **PLAY BY INNINGS.** During the course of play, players alternate turns (innings) at the table, with a player's inning ending when he either fails to legally pocket a ball, or fouls. When an inning ends free of a foul, the incoming player accepts the table in position.
37. **OBJECT BALL FROZEN TO CUSHION OR CUE BALL.** This rule applies to any shot where the cue ball's first contact with a ball is with one that is frozen to a cushion or to the cue ball itself. After the cue ball makes contact with the frozen object ball, the shot must result in either (1) a ball being pocketed, or (2) the cue ball contacting a cushion, or (3) the frozen ball being caused to contact a cushion (not merely rebounding from the cushion it was frozen to), or (4) another object ball being caused to contact a cushion to which it was not already in contact with. Failure to satisfy one of those four requirements is a foul. (Note: 14.1 and other games specify additional requirements and applications of this rule; see specific game rules.)
An object ball is not considered frozen to a rail unless it is examined and announced as such by either the referee or one of the players prior to that object ball being involved in a shot.
38. **PLAYING FROM BEHIND THE STRING.** When a player has the cue ball in hand behind the string (in the kitchen), he must drive the cue ball to a point outside the kitchen before it contacts either a cushion or an object ball. Failure to do so is a foul if a referee is presiding over a match. If no referee, the opponent has the option to call it either a foul or to require the offending player to replay the shot again with the balls restored to their positions prior to the shot (and with no foul penalty imposed). Exception: if an object ball lies on or outside the head string (and is thus playable) but so close that the cue ball contacts it before the cue ball is out of the kitchen, the ball can be legally played. If, with cue ball in hand behind the head string and while the shooter is attempting a legitimate shot, the cue ball accidentally hits a ball behind the head string, and the cue ball crosses the line, it is a foul. If with cue ball in hand behind the head string, the shooter causes the cue ball to accidentally hit an object ball, and the cue ball does not cross the head string, the following applies: the incoming player has the option of calling a foul and having cue ball in hand, or having the balls returned to their original position, and having the offending player replay the shot.

If a player under the same conditions intentionally causes the cue ball to contact an object ball behind the head string, it is unsportsmanlike conduct.

39. **CUE BALL IN HAND FOUL.** During cue ball in hand placement, the player may use his hand or any part of his 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.
40. **INTERFERENCE.** If the nonshooting player distracts his opponent or interferes with his play, he has fouled. If a player shoots out of turn, or moves any ball except during his inning, it is considered to be interference.
41. **DEVICES.** Players are not allowed to use a ball, the triangle or any other width-measuring device to see if the cue ball or an object ball would travel through a gap, etc. Only the cue stick may be used as an aid to judge gaps, etc., so long as the cue is held by the hand. To do so otherwise is a foul and unsportsmanlike conduct.
42. **ILLEGAL MARKING.** If a player intentionally marks the table in any way to assist in executing the shot, whether by wetting the cloth, by placing a cube

of chalk on the rail, or by any other means, he has fouled. If the player removes the mark prior to the shot, no penalty is imposed.

Game Rules for 8-Ball

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 13:03:23 CDT

Topic: Rules of the Game

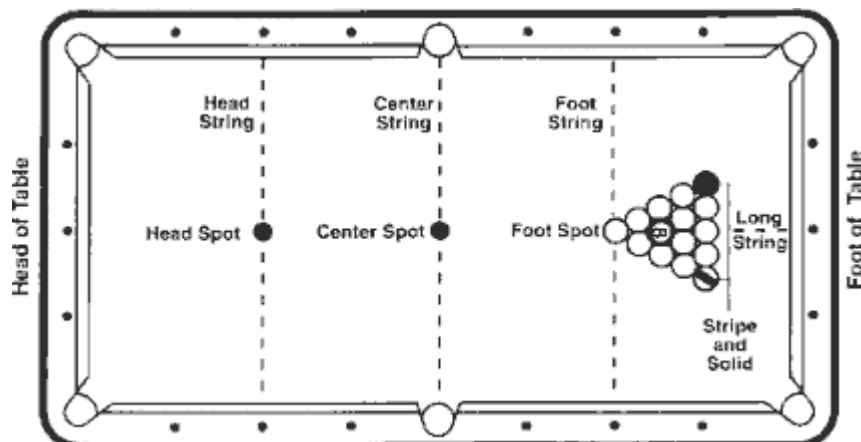
This document provides the rules for playing the game of 8-Ball.

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the [General Rules](#) of Pocket Billiards apply.

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1. **OBJECT OF THE GAME.** Eight Ball is a call shot game played with a cue ball and fifteen object balls, numbered 1 through 15. One player must pocket balls of the group numbered 1 through 7 (solid colors), while the other player has 9 thru 15 (stripes). THE PLAYER POCKETING HIS GROUP FIRST AND THEN LEGALLY POCKETING THE 8-BALL WINS THE GAME.
2. **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 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 his next shot so long as he has legally pocketed any object ball on the break.
3. **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 footspot, a stripe ball in one corner of the rack and a solid ball in the other corner.



4. **ALTERNATING BREAK.** Winner of the lag has the option to break. During individual competition, players will alternate breaking on each subsequent game.
5. **JUMP AND MASSE SHOT FOUL.** While "cue ball fouls only" is the rule of play when a match is not presided over by a referee, a player should be aware that it will be considered a cue ball foul if during an attempt to jump, curve or masse the cue ball over or around an impeding numbered ball that is not a legal object ball, the impeding ball moves (regardless of whether it was moved by a hand, cue stick follow-through or bridge).
6. **LEGAL BREAK SHOT.** (Defined) To execute a legal break, the breaker (with the cue ball behind the headstring) must either (1) pocket a ball, or (2) drive at least four numbered balls to the rail. If he fails to make a legal break, it is a foul, and the incoming player has the option of (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or (2) having the balls reracked and having the option of shooting the opening break himself or allowing the offending player to rebreak.
7. **SCRATCH ON A LEGAL BREAK.** If a player scratches on a legal break shot, (1) all balls pocketed remain pocketed (exception, the 8-ball: see rule 9), (2) it is a foul, (3) the table is open.

PLEASE NOTE: 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 headstring and causes the cue ball to come back behind the headstring and hit the object ball.

8. **OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE 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 (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or (2) taking cue ball in hand behind the head string and shooting.
9. **8-BALL POCKETED ON THE BREAK.** If the 8-ball is pocketed on the break, the 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 begin shooting with ball in hand behind the headstring.
10. **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. Note: The table is always open immediately after the break shot. When the table is open it is legal to hit any solid or stripe or the 8-ball first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid. However, when the table is open and the 8-ball is the first ball contacted, no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter. The shooter loses his turn; 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.
11. **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. 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.
12. **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 (1)

pocket a numbered ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a rail.

PLEASE NOTE: It is permissible for the shooter to bank the cue ball off a rail before contacting his object ball; however, after contact with his 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.

13. **"SAFETY SHOT"**. For tactical reasons a player may choose to pocket an obvious object ball and also discontinue his 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, he must declare a "safety" to his opponent. 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.
14. **SCORING**. A player is entitled to continue shooting until he fails to legally pocket a ball of his group. After a player has legally pocketed all of his group of balls, he shoots to pocket the 8-ball.
15. **FOUL PENALTY**. Opposing player gets cue ball in hand. This means that the player can place the cue ball anywhere on the table (does not have to be behind the headstring except on opening break). This rule prevents a player from making intentional fouls which would put his opponent at a disadvantage. With "cue ball in hand," the player may use his hand or any part of his 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. (Also see Rule 39 in the **General Rules of Pocket Billiards**)
16. **COMBINATION SHOTS**. combination shots are allowed; however, the 8-ball cannot be used as a first ball in the combination except when the table is open.
17. **ILLEGALLY POCKETED BALLS**. An object ball is considered to be illegally pocketed when (1) that object ball is pocketed on the same shot a foul is committed, or (2) the called ball did not go in the designated pocket, or (3) a safety is called prior to the shot. Illegally pocketed balls remain pocketed.
18. **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 spotted in numerical order according to General Rules for spotting balls.
19. **PLAYING THE 8-BALL**. When shooting at the 8-ball, a scratch or foul is not loss of game if the 8-ball is not pocketed or jumped from the table. Incoming player has cue ball in hand. Note: A combination shot can never be used to legally pocket the 8-ball.
20. **LOSS OF GAME**. A player loses the game if he commits any of the following infractions:
 - a. Fouls when pocketing the 8-ball (exception: see 8-Ball Pocketed On The Break).
 - b. Pockets the 8-ball on the same stroke as the last of his group of balls.
 - c. Jumps the 8-ball off the table at any time.
 - d. Pockets the 8-ball in a pocket other than the one designated.
 - e. Pockets the 8-ball when it is not the legal object ball. Note: All infractions must be called before another shot is taken, or else it will be deemed that no infraction occurred.

21. **STALEMATED GAME.** If, after 3 consecutive turns at the table by each player (6 turns total), the referee judges (or if no referee, both players agree) that attempting to pocket or move an object ball will result in loss of game, the balls will be reracked with the original breaker of the stalemated game breaking again. The stalemate rule may only be used when there are only two object balls and the 8-ball remaining on the table. PLEASE NOTE: Three consecutive fouls by one player is not a loss of game.

Open Table Rule for 8-Ball

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 13:09:35 CDT

Topic: Rules of the Game

This document provides additional rules for playing the game of 8-Ball.

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the [General Rules](#) of Pocket Billiards apply.

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This portion of the rules should not be considered an amendment to the current rules for 8-Ball, but instead an interpretation provided by Staff of the Billiard Congress of America to better clarify the rule.

10. 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. Note: The table is always open immediately after the break shot. When the table is open it is legal to hit any solid or stripe or the 8-ball first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid. However, when the table is open and the 8-ball is the first ball contacted, no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter. The shooter loses his turn; 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.*

"When the table is open it is legal to hit any solid or stripe or the 8-ball first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid."

This is straight forward. It means that when the table is open, any ball can be legally hit without resulting in a foul. This is not a new rule for players in the United States.

"When the table is open and the 8-ball is the first ball contacted, no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter."

This sentence may seem to contradict the first, but it doesn't. It says that although it is legal to hit the 8-Ball first on an "open table", if a player does, he/she forfeits their turn whether they pocketed something or not. There is no foul, and the incoming player accepts the cue-ball in position with the table still open.

This part of the rules is derived from the old European rule where it is illegal to hit the 8-Ball first anytime during the game.

Illegally Pocketed Balls Are spotted. No penalty is imposed beyond fouls associated with the stroke. Jumped Object Balls Are spotted -- no penalty. Cue Ball After Jump

or Scratch Incoming player has cue ball in hand behind head string. Penalty for Fouls
Incoming player has cue ball in hand behind head string.

Game Rules for 9-Ball

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 13:14:56 CDT

Topic: Rules of the Game

This document provides the rules for the game of 9-Ball.

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the [General Rules](#) of Pocket Billiards apply.

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1. **OBJECT OF THE GAME.** Nine Ball is played with nine object balls numbered one through nine and a cue ball. On each shot the first ball the cue ball contacts must be the lowest-numbered ball on the table, but the balls need not be pocketed in order. If a player pockets any ball on a legal shot, he remains at the table for another shot, and continues until he misses, fouls, or wins the game by pocketing the 9-ball. After a miss, the incoming player must shoot from the position left by the previous player, but after any foul the incoming player may start with the cue ball anywhere on the table. Players are not required to call any shot. a match ends when one of the players has won the required number of games.
2. **RACKING THE BALLS.** The object balls are racked in a diamond shape, with the one ball at the top of the diamond and on the foot spot, the nine ball in the center of the diamond, and the other balls in random order, racked as tightly as possible. the game begins with cue ball in hand behind the head string.

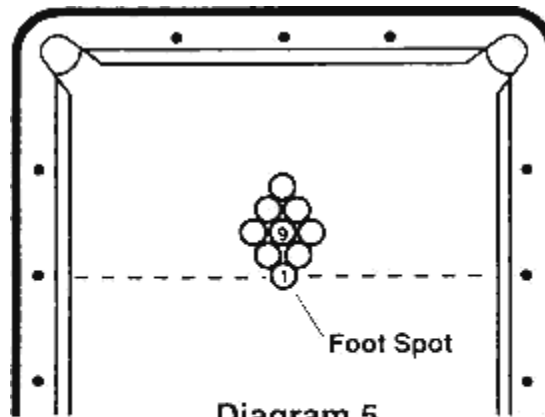


Diagram 5

Diamond Shaped Rack

1-Ball must be on the foot spot.
9-Ball must be in the center of
the rack.

3. **LEGAL BREAK SHOT.** The rules governing the break shot are the same as for other shots except:
 - a. The breaker must strike the 1-ball first and either pocket a ball or drive at least four numbered balls to the rail.
 - b. If the cue ball is pocketed or driven off the table, or the requirements of the opening break are not met, it is a foul, and the incoming player has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.
 - c. If on the break shot, the breaker causes an object ball to jump off the table, it is a foul and the incoming player has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table. The object ball is not respotted (exception: if the object ball is the 9-ball, it is respotted).
4. **CONTINUING PLAY.** On the shot immediately following a legal break, the shooter may play a "push out." (See Rule 5.). If the breaker pockets one or more balls on a legal break, he continues to shoot until he misses, fouls, or wins the game. If the player misses or fouls, the other player begins his inning and shoots until he misses, fouls, or wins. the game ends when the nine ball is pocketed on a legal shot, or the game is forfeited for a serious infraction of the rules.
5. **PUSH OUT.** The player who shoots the shot immediately after a legal break may play a push out in an attempt to move the cue ball into a better position for the option that follows. On a push out, the cue ball is not required to contact any object ball nor any rail, but all other foul rules still apply. The player must announce his intention of playing a push out before the shot, or the shot is considered to be a normal shot. Any ball pocketed on a push out does not count and remains pocketed except the 9-ball. Following a legal push out, the incoming player is permitted to shoot from that position or to pass the shot back to the player who pushed out. A push out is not considered to be a foul as long as no rule (except rules 7. and 8.) is violated. An illegal push out is penalized according to the type of foul committed. After a player scratches on the break shot, the incoming player cannot play a push out.
6. **FOULS.** When a player commits a foul, he must relinquish his run at the table and no balls pocketed on the foul shot are respotted (exception: if a pocketed ball is the 9-ball, it is respotted). The incoming player is awarded ball in

hand; prior to his first shot he may place the cue ball anywhere on the table. If a player commits several fouls on one shot, they are counted as only one foul.

7. **BAD HIT**. If the first object ball contacted by the cue ball is not the lowest-numbered ball on the table, the shot is foul.
8. **NO RAIL**. If no object ball is pocketed, failure to drive the cue ball or any numbered ball to a rail after the cue ball contacts the object ball on is a foul.
8. **IN HAND**. When the cue ball is in hand, the player may place the cue ball anywhere on the bed of the table, except in contact with an object ball. He may continue to adjust the position of the cue ball until he takes a shot.
9. **OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE**. An unpocketed ball is considered to be driven off the table if it comes to rest other than on the bed of the table. It is a foul to drive an object ball off the table. The jumped object ball(s) is not respotted (exception: if the object ball is the 9-ball, it is respotted) and play continues.
10. **JUMP AND MASSE SHOT FOUL**. If a match is not refereed, it will be considered a cue ball foul if during an attempt to jump, curve or masse the cue ball over or around an impeding numbered ball, the impeding ball moves (regardless of whether it was moved by a hand, cue stick follow-through or bridge).
11. **THREE CONSECUTIVE FOULS**. If a player fouls three consecutive times on three successive shots without making an intervening legal shot, he loses the game. The three fouls must occur in one game. The warning must be given between the second and third fouls. A player's inning begins when it is legal for him to take a shot and ends at the end of a shot on which he misses, fouls or wins, or when he fouls between shots.
12. **END OF GAME**. A game starts as soon as the cue ball crosses over the head string on the opening break. The 1-ball must be legally contacted on the break shot. The game ends at the end of a legal shot which pockets the 9-ball; or when a player forfeits the game as the result of a foul.

Game Rules for 10-Ball

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 13:23:42 CDT

Topic: Rules of the Game

This document provides the rules for the game of 10-Ball.

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the [General Rules](#) of Pocket Billiards apply.

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The players decide who plays first, the break shot player must alternate for each frame. The balls are set and the cue ball is played from any point on or behind the baulk line by the on-player. The on-player scores points by potting reds and colors alternately starting with a red ball. When a red ball is legally potted the player may continue his play and attempt to pot any of the colors on the table, every colored ball must be clearly nominated before striking the cue-ball. The value of the first colored ball legally potted during each individual break denotes the value of all of the colored balls throughout that break. i.e.. if the first colored ball potted during the break is the blue ball, all of the colored balls on the table for that break are worth 5 points. The colored balls revert to their original value when the on-player fails to pot a ball. When the final red ball is potted and the next colored ball played, the colored balls are then potted in ascending order of their original set value, starting with the Green Ball (3 points), finishing with the Ten Ball (10 points).

2. The Break Shot

The frame starts with the first strike of the cue-ball. The cue-ball must hit the APEX red ball of the diamond configuration, breaking open the balls, so that at least four red balls hit the cushions or pockets of the table. If during this break shot (or at any stage during the frame) more than one red is potted in a single stroke, the player scores one point per potted red ball, continues his play, and must attempt to pot the same amount of colors as potted reds, but only in succession. If the cue-ball or a colored ball enters a pocket during the break shot it is deemed to be a foul, all of the potted balls are respotted.

3. Continuation of Play

The player about to play or in-play is the on-player and remains so until completion of the stroke or break. A ball must touch a cushion or be potted for a stroke to be deemed legal. If a red ball is legally potted it remains out of play. If a colored ball is legally potted after potting a red ball, it is replaced on its original position before the next stroke is made. The next player plays from where the cue-ball comes to rest. If the frame has not reached a conclusion when the only remaining ball is the Ten Ball,

the first score or foul ends the frame. A red ball potted during an illegal stroke or off the table is repositioned on the center spot. If a foul stroke has been played all of the potted balls are respotted. If, whilst re-spotting any ball, the deemed spot is occupied, the ball is placed on the highest available spot, or if no spots are available the ball is placed at the nearest point to it's designated spot, in direct line with the top cushion. If the cue-ball has been potted or is off the table, it must be replaced on the Brown ball spot, or if occupied, either the Green ball spot or the Blue ball spot. If all three spots are occupied, the cue-ball must be placed on the baulk line between the Blue ball spot and the Green Ball spot. If at the end of the frame the scores are equal, a shoot out decides the game. The Ten Ball is spotted on the Center Spot, the players draw lots for choice of playing and the cue-ball is placed on the Brown Ball Spot. The players take it in turns to attempt to pot the Ten Ball , resetting the scenario after each strike. The first pot after an even amount of turns, or a foul, ends the frame. This style of shoot out may also be used to decide the breaking player. A ball cannot be removed from the table and cleaned unless there is a foreign object on it. Chalk dust is not deemed to be a foreign object.

4. Penalties

If a foul is committed all balls shall remain where positioned, except if potted, or off the table, whereby they shall be correctly spotted. A jump shot is not deemed to be a foul stroke. All points scored before the foul stroke are allowed. When a foul shot has been played, the NEXT player has the option of taking the cue-ball in-hand OR adding 10 points to their score, either playing the cue-ball from its resting position or requesting the previous player to play again from the resting position. The resting position is also the respotted position - if the cue ball has been potted or is off the table. If the on-player decides to play in-hand, the cue-ball may be positioned anywhere on the table and played in any direction. ALL fouls incur this choice of penalty apart from one: On the break shot, if four balls do not touch a cushion or the cue-ball does not strike the Apex red ball first, the next player has the option of either playing in-hand or requesting the previous player to break again.

The following are deemed to be fouls:

- When playing at a red ball, the cue-ball strikes any ball on the first strike other than a red ball (Apex red on break shot).
- When playing at a colored ball, the cue-ball strikes any ball on the first strike other than the nominated colored ball.
- When playing at a red ball, the on-player pots any ball other than a red ball.
- When playing at a colored ball, the on-player pots any ball other than the nominated colored ball.
- When playing at a colored ball, the on-player does not nominate a colored ball before striking the cue-ball
- The cue-ball does not strike a ball during a stroke
- Striking when the balls are not at rest
- Striking the cue-ball more than once
- Playing a stroke with both feet off the floor
- Playing out of turn
- Pushing the cue ball or playing a push stroke (if however, the cue-ball and an on-ball are almost touching, it shall be deemed a fair stroke if the cue-ball clips the finest possible edge of the on-ball)

- Forcing a ball off the table If during a stroke, no balls touch a cushion or are potted (a ball at rest on a cushion is not deemed to have hit the cushion during the stroke)
- If the on-player strikes any ball other than the cue ball, or touches the cue-ball with anything other than the tip of the cue
- Playing at red balls in successive strokes
- Uses a ball, other than the nominated cue-ball, as the cue-ball
- If players are deemed to be taking an abnormal amount of time over strokes.
- If players conduct themselves in a manner which is unsportsmanlike

A player will lose the frame if they commit three successive fouls. Players will be warned by the referee that they are liable to be disqualified if they persist in any of the above fouls. If a player refuses to continue a frame or they conduct themselves in a manner which, in the opinion of the referee is willfully or persistently unfair, they shall lose the game. A foul is any act which contravenes these rules.

5. Generally accepted Cue Game Rules

The next player plays from where the cue-ball comes to rest. If the cue-ball is deemed to be touching another ball the on-player must play away from this ball. This is not a foul stroke.

All balls being respotted shall be spotted on their original spot. If the deemed spot is occupied, the ball is placed on the highest available spot, if no spot is available the ball is spotted on the nearest point to it's designated spot, in direct line with the top cushion.

If when playing a stroke it is discovered that a ball is not correctly spotted, if on the table it will be considered to be correctly spotted, if not on the table it will be spotted before the next stroke. It is up to the striker to ensure that all balls are correctly spotted before striking. If a ball is moved other than by the striker it shall be repositioned an agreed position by the players.

The off-player shall at all times try to avoid moving whilst in the on-player's sight line, especially when the opponent is about to strike.

In games with more than two players each side shall open the frames in turn. If playing in teams, at the beginning of each frame the order of play is decided and must remain the same throughout the frame. The players with in a team however may change the order of play at the commencement of each frame. Players on the same side may confer during a game but not whilst one of the players is playing at the table or after the first stroke of their break.

Wheelchair players must remain seated with their feet on footplates or blocks which must be clear of the ground. Officials and other players are allowed to assist wheelchair players who are having difficulty placing and removing ancillary equipment from the table during play.

The referee shall be the sole judge of play and whether it is deemed to be fair or unfair. The referee shall intervene if there is any contravention of the rules, if a player is color blind to call the color of the balls on request or clean any ball if

necessary or requested. The referee shall not answer any question not authorized in the rules, indicate to a player that they are about to play a foul stroke or give any advice or opinion which may affect the game. If a referee has not been appointed, decisions must be made by the players in a fair and rational manner.

Game Rules for Straight Pool (14.1)

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 13:29:58 CDT

Topic: Rules of the Game

This document provides the rules for the game of Straight Pool or 14.1

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the [General Rules](#) of Pocket Billiards apply.

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1. **OBJECT OF THE GAME.** 14.1 is a nomination game. The player must nominate a ball and a pocket. The player is awarded one point for every correctly nominated and pocketed ball on a legal stroke, and is allowed to continue his turn until he either fails to pocket a nominated ball or commits a foul. The player can pocket the first 14 balls, but before he can continue his turn by shooting at the 15th (and last remaining) ball on the table, the 14 pocketed balls are racked as before, except with the apex space vacant. The player then attempts to pocket the 15th ball in a manner so that the racked balls are disturbed and he can continue his run.

The player who scores the pre-determined point total for a game (usually 150 in major tournament play or any agreed upon total in casual play) prior to his opponent, wins the game.

2. **PLAYERS.** 2, or 2 teams.
3. **BALLS** USED. Standard set of object balls numbered 1-15, plus cue ball.
4. **THE RACK.** Standard triangle rack with the apex ball on the foot spot, 1-ball on the racker's right corner, 5-ball on left corner. Other balls are placed at random and must touch their neighbors.
5. **SCORING.** Any ball legally pocketed counts one point for the shooter.
6. **OPENING BREAK.** Starting player must either (1) designate a ball and a pocket into which that ball will be pocketed and accomplish the shot, or (2) cause the cue ball to contact a ball and then a cushion, plus cause two object balls to contact a cushion. Failure to meet at least one of the above requirements is a breaking violation. Offender's score is assessed a two point penalty for each breaking violation. In addition, the opponent has the choice of (1) accepting the table in position, or (2) having the balls reracked and requiring the offending player to repeat the opening break. That choice continues until the opening break is not a breaking violation, or until the opponent accepts the table in position. The three successive fouls rule does not apply to breaking violations.

If the starting player scratches on a legal opening break, he is charged with a foul and assessed a one point penalty, which applies toward the "Successive Fouls Penalties." The incoming player is awarded cue ball in hand behind the head string, with object balls in position.

7. **RULES OF PLAY.**

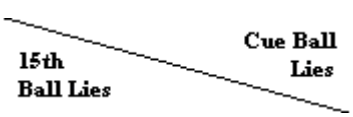
1. A legally pocketed ball entitles a shooter to continue at the table until he fails to legally pocket a called ball on a shot. A player may shoot any ball he chooses, but before he shoots, must designate the called ball and called pocket. He need not indicate any detail such as kisses, caroms, combinations, or cushions (all of which are legal). any additionally pocketed ball(s) on a legal stroke is scored as one point for the shooter.
2. On all shots, a player must cause the cue ball to contact an object ball and then (1) pocket a numbered ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a cushion. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul. When an object ball is not frozen to a cushion, but is within a ball's width of a cushion (referee to determine by measurement if necessary), a player is permitted only two consecutive legal safeties on that ball using only the near rail. If such safety play is employed, that object ball is then considered frozen to the rail on the player's next inning. The General Rules of Pocket Billiards "Frozen Balls" requirements apply if the player chooses to make his first cue ball contact with that object ball on his third shot.

(Note: If a player has committed a foul on the shot immediately before or the shot immediately after playing this ball, then he must immediately meet the requirements of the "Frozen Ball" rule when playing this object ball. Also, if he has committed two consecutive fouls, he must immediately meet the requirements of the "Frozen Ball" rule when playing this object ball. If such player fails to meet the requirements of the "Frozen Ball" rule, he is considered to have committed a third successive foul and the appropriate point penalty is assessed as well as one point for each of the previous fouls. All fifteen balls are then reracked and the player committing the infraction is required to break as at the beginning of the game.)

3. When the fourteenth ball of a rack is pocketed, play stops momentarily with the fifteenth ball remaining in position on the table; the fourteen pocketed balls are then racked (with the space at the foot spot vacant in the triangle). Player then continues, normally pocketing the fifteenth (or "break" ball) in such manner as to have the cue ball carom into the rack and spread the balls to facilitate the continuance of his run. However, player is not compelled to shoot the fifteenth ball; he may shoot any ball he desires.
4. A player may call a safety rather than an object ball (for defensive purposes). Safety play is legal, but must comply with all applicable rules. Player's inning ends when a safety is played, and pocketed balls are not scored. Any object ball pocketed on a called safety is spotted.
5. A player may not catch, touch, or in any way interfere with a ball as it travels toward a pocket or the rack area on a shot (to include catching a ball as it enters a pocket by having a hand in the pocket). If he does,

he is charged with a special "deliberate foul" and is penalized one point for the foul and an additional fifteen point penalty, for a total of sixteen points. The incoming player then has choice of (1) accepting the table in position with the cue ball in hand behind the head string, or (2) having all fifteen balls reracked and requiring the offending player to shoot under the requirements of the opening break.

6. If the fifteenth (unpocketed) ball of a rack and/or the cue ball interferes with the triangle being lowered straight down into position for racking, refer to the diagram , which indicates the proper manner of relocating balls. (The lined out boxes are those situations in which there is no interference, both balls remain in position.)
7. When a player has the cue ball in hand behind the head string (as after a scratch) and all object balls are behind the head string, the object ball nearest the head string may be spotted at his request. If two or more balls are an equal distance from the head string, the player may designate which of the equidistant balls he desires to have spotted. 14.1 - What to do if:

 15th Ball Lies Cue Ball Lies	IN THE RACK	NOT IN THE RACK AND NOT ON HEAD SPOT*	ON HEAD SPOT*
IN THE RACK	15th Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in kitchen	15th Ball: head spot Cue Ball: in position	15th Ball: center spot Cue Ball: in position
POCKETED	15th Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in kitchen	15th Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in position	15th Ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in position
BEHIND HEAD STRING, BUT NOT ON HEAD SPOT	15th Ball: in position Cue Ball: head spot		
NOT BEHIND HEAD STRING AND NOT IN THE RACK	15th Ball: in position Cue Ball: in kitchen		
ON HEAD SPOT*	15th Ball: in position Cue Ball: center spot		* On spot means to interfere with spotting a ball on the head spot

- 8.
9. **ILLEGALLY POCKETED BALLS.** All spotted. No penalty.
10. **OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE.** The stroke is a foul. Any jumped ball(s) is spotted after the balls come to rest.

11. **CUE BALL AFTER JUMPING OFF THE TABLE OR SCRATCH.** Incoming player has cue ball in hand behind the head string, unless the provision of Rule of Play 7.2., 7.5. or 12." (below) apply to the offender's foul and dictate alternate choices or procedures.
12. **PENALTIES FOR FOULS.** One point deducted for each foul; NOTE: more severe penalties for deliberate fouls (Rule of Play 7.5.) and third "Successive Fouls" (12. below). Incoming player accepts cue ball in position unless foul was a jumped cue ball, pocket scratch, deliberate foul (Rule of Play 7.5.) or third successive foul.
13. **SUCCESSIVE FOUL PENALTIES.** When a player commits a foul, he is penalized one point (or more as appropriate) and a notation is made and posted by the scorer that he is "on a foul." The player remains "on a foul" until his next shot attempt, at which time he may remove the foul by successfully pocketing a called ball, or completing a legal safety. If he fails to meet these requirements on his next turn at the table, he is penalized one point. The notation is changed to "on two fouls." If he fails to meet the requirements of successfully pocketing a called ball or completing a legal safety on his third consecutive turn at the table, a penalty of fifteen points is assessed. The commission of a third successive foul automatically clears the offender's record of fouls.

All balls are then reracked and the player committing the infraction is required to break as at the beginning of the game. Rules for the opening break apply. It should be emphasized that successive fouls must be committed in successive turns (or playing attempts), not merely in successive innings. For example, if a player ends inning 6 with a foul, steps to the table for inning 7 and fouls (he is "on two fouls"), and then starts inning 8 with a legally pocketed ball before scratching on his second shot attempt of the inning, he has not committed three successive fouls, even though there were fouls in three successive innings. As soon as he legally pocketed the ball to start inning 8, he cleared the two fouls. he is, of course, "on one foul" when he plays the first stroke attempt of inning 9.

14. **SCORING** NOTE. The deduction of penalty points can result in negative scores. A running score can read "minus one," "minus two," "minus fifteen," etc. (a player can win a game with a score of 150 while his opponent has scored but two fouls. The final score would read 150 to -2.) If a player fouls on a shot that has not pocketed a ball, the point penalty is deducted from his score at the end of the previous inning. If a player fouls and pockets a ball on the same shot, that ball is spotted (not scored) and the point penalty is deducted from his score at the end of the previous inning.

Game Rules for One-Pocket

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 13:32:32 CDT

Topic: Rules of the Game

This document provides the rules for the game of One Pocket

[Standardized World Rules 1997]

Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the [General Rules](#) of Pocket Billiards apply.

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TYPE OF GAME: One Pocket is a form of pocket-billiards in which the opposing sides each have one of the foot pockets in which to sink their balls. They can not have the same foot pocket as their pocket. The winning player is the one to first score eight balls in his pocket (any eight balls).

PLAYERS: The game may be played by two individuals, or by two teams.

BALLS USED The standard set of object-balls numbered 1-15, plus cue-ball.

THE RACK: A triangle rack with the apex on the foot spot. There is no particular order to the position of the balls in the rack.

OBJECT OF THE GAME: To win by getting any eight balls in your pocket.

SCORING: A player scores a ball in his pocket when he legally pockets a called ball in his pocket, or when his opponent shoots a ball(s) into his pocket (whether the opponents stroke was legal or not).

OPENING BREAK: The player winning the lag has choice of breaking, or assigning the break to his opponent. The starting player, called the breaker, will choose which one of the foot pockets will be his pocket. His opponent will have the remaining foot pocket. The starting player must then either pocket a called ball in his pocket, or cause a ball from the rack, or the cue ball (after hitting an object-ball), to make contact with a cushion. Failure to do so is a foul, and the player's inning is ended and a 1-point penalty is applied.

RULES OF PLAY: A player will continue his inning so long as he legally pockets a called ball in his pocket.

Any balls which fall into a pocket other than one of the foot pockets will be spotted at the end of the player's inning. If there are no more balls on the table and a player's inning is still alive then any balls in illegal pockets will be spotted so the player can

continue his inning. (An illegal pocket is any pocket other than one of the foot pockets).

Safety play is allowed. Any ball(s) which are pocketed on a safety stroke will be spotted, unless they fall in the opponent's pocket (they count for the opponent as legally scored balls).

Safety play on a ball frozen to a cushion (any ball within a cue-ball's width of a cushion) requires the following for a legal safety. Normal safety play applies unless the ball remains frozen. If the frozen ball has not become unfrozen after each player has played two safeties on it then the third, and any subsequent, safety on said ball (until it becomes unfrozen, or a different object-ball has been played) must either: drive the frozen object-ball to a cushion other than the one it is frozen to, or the cue-ball must contact a cushion after contact with the frozen ball, or the shooter may play a different object-ball. Failure to play a frozen ball as outlined above is a foul. Any ball which falls into the opponent's pocket will count for the opponent (even if the stroke was foul).

LOSS OF GAME: A player loses the game if his opponent scores eight balls before he does. A player will lose the game for committing any foul in each of three successive innings.

WINNING THE GAME: A player wins the game when he has eight legally pocketed balls in his pocket. A player may win the game by pocketing balls in his opponent's pocket if the opponent does not call attention to the fact that the balls have been scored in the wrong pocket before the required number of balls for the game have been scored. If the opponent notifies the shooter that he has been pocketing balls in the wrong pocket, before the shooter has reached the number required to win the game, then all balls the shooter pocketed will count for his opponent.

PAYING PENALTIES: Normal penalties for fouls, scratches, and such will apply. In the event the penalized player does not have any balls to pay the penalty with he will owe the table those balls.

VI - RATE YOUR POOL GAME

Tools that tests your current skill rating at the pool table.

- » [Tracking your progress](#)
- » [The Mid-Term Exam](#)
- » [The StrEight Pool Ranking Program](#)

Tracking your progress

By BadAndy

Date: Mon, Mar 31 @ 13:26:40 CST

Topic: Rate your Pool Game

Sometimes it is good to have a written record to see progress. One method is to track the number of strokes it takes to run a rack of nine ball. Do it for five games then write it down. After 10 sessions you can have a 50 game average which should be an accurate assessment of your 9 ball abilities. It can be broken down in any segment you like but I find more than five starts to get tedious.

Count the break as one stroke and each hit of the cue ball as another stroke. A perfect run without sinking the 9 ball before its time and no balls on the break would be 10 strokes, one for the break and one for each ball. If you pocket the 9 ball through a combination that would count just as in a real game of nine ball. If one could sink the 9 ball early on every game that is a skill that should be reflected in the skill rating. If the 9 ball is made on the break, that would be a one stroke game. It is a tool to chart progress, if your goal is to determine only rack run skills and not real 9 ball rules then ignore the 9 ball on the break and disallow combinations on the nine. It's your tool, use it to support your goals.

The Mid-Term Exam

By The Monk

Date: Sun, May 11 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Rate your Pool Game

It is a long long road to world class. A journey filled with many ups and downs. But in the end the reality is there. World class is not found in the winning of tournaments, or the victory over our opponents. It is found within our performance. It is found within our hearts. Not only do we play at a world class level, we have become world class people. Rarely do you see a fine pool player who is not a fine person.

In my book "The Lesson", I have a mid term exam. If you have any trouble or weakness in your game, the mid term exam will reveal it to you. The numbers don't lie. In the mid term exam you rack up a rack of nine ball and break the rack with your best stroke. This is the first inning. Take the lowest two balls off the table, and begin with ball in hand. Run out. You can keep the inning alive if you complete the run out. Break the rack again. The first successful rack gives you one point and allows you to attempt a second rack. If you are successful in the second rack, you will receive four total points. That will complete inning number one. If you fail in the first rack of the inning, the inning is over. In order to get to the second rack, and have a chance at four points, you must be able to run the first rack. Your mid-term exam will include four innings. At any time during your mid-term exam, when you break the balls, you have the option of running out from there. If you make a ball, and have a shot on the one ball, you can declare. You must say the words, "I declare". If you succeed with the declare, you receive five points and that's the end of the inning. So if you take the mid-term exam, run everything, including a declare, you have a perfect score of twenty one points. When you can score a sixteen or better, three times in a row, you are a world class player. If you are having trouble with the mid term exam, a weakness is revealed to you. Determine what it is, and spend some time working on it.

If I am discouraged by my low scores, I know that I am not focusing on the performance. I have my eyes on the scores. In this journey, if you know where you are going, you will not be discouraged. The ups and downs are simply a part of the game. Once I take my eyes off the scores and go about the task of making balls, my scores go up and up.

Take the mid-term exam and begin to build your game. Define the type of player you are and take this world class game to that venue. Stay within your element. Stay focused. May all the rolls go your way.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

StrEight Pool Ranking Program

By Gary Addison

Date: Thu, Jun 24 @ 16:11:07 CDT

Topic: Rate your Pool Game

In 1954, Willie Mosconi ran 526 balls during a straight pool exhibition in Springfield, MO.

Today players from all nations have the opportunity to measure their game against the master's world record setting run.

"The Run" as it is referred to today sets the ultimate offensive shot-making standard for players of every skill level.

Your skills determine your rating.

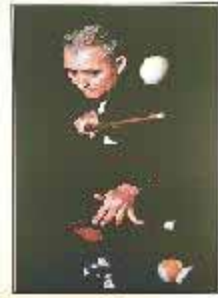
From the highest ranking of seventh degree Black (professional level) all the way down to first degree white (novice), the [StrEight Pool International Ranking Program](#) ranks players at every stage of their game.



Developed as an evaluation program by a BCA instructor, the StrEight Pool International Rating Program is sanctioned by the Billiard Congress of America, and has now been fully integrated with Easypooltutor.com.

What good is a lesson unless there is a test?

The StrEight Pool International program is the test! It effectively tests all offensive, strategy and positioning skills. It tests your endurance (526 balls). It tests your mental fortitude.



Willie Mosconi - Multiple World Champion and BCA Hall of Fame

Today players can quickly test and know exactly where they stand in the overall scheme of offensive shot-making skills compared to the world's greatest pocket billiard's player of all time.

Knowing one's ranking is important. One of the most important aspects to improving our game is goal setting. With other games, goal setting is most difficult, if not impossible; however, with the StrEight Pool Programs goal setting is simple. Players know exactly where they rank and what they must do to improve their ranking.

Rankings are arranged by color and degree. Following the order of the primary colors of standard billiard balls, players are ranked from White I (1st degree White) all the way to the highest level of Black VII (7th degree Black, professional level).

The question remains...

Exactly where is your game? White III, Blue I, Orange II, Black I ???

Whether you are a beginner just picking up a cue or a seasoned master...

With the StrEight Pool International Rating Program you can know your provisional rating in as little as 1-6 hours.

The answer is only 120 balls away.



**Your ranking is posted at one of the InterNet's most popular billiard sites.
Easypooltutor.com**

Go to the StrEight Pool International Rating Program now, print out your score sheets and rules and get started!

Challenge yourself.

Push your game to its limits.

You will never know where you're at until you take the challenge.

Take the StrEight Pool Challenge Now!

VII – HANDICAPPING METHODS

Different handicapping methods that can be used for evening out mismatched competition of 2 or more unequal skill levels of pool players.

» [Handicapping your opponent in 8 Ball](#)

Handicapping your opponent in 8 Ball

By Anonymous

Date: Tue, Dec 28, 2004 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Handicapping Methods

If you are to win 8-Ball racks against a player that is at least 3 times better than you and you are just a beginnerthen here are some techniques to help you even up a bit.

First devote yourself to winning the break...Never ever let your opponent take the first break.

Now do a medium paced break so that you make the 2 solid wing balls and at least 2 stripes are jumbled up with the 8 ball. NOTE: Never go for a FULL Power Break.

NOW look at the table ... Solids should always have an upper hand in the table. Now whatever you do just call for solids and nail down at least 2 balls. NOTE: before playing a shot figure out where the cue ball is going to land up and make sure that if you miss then your opponent does not have an open shot or is snookered and has to make an effort to just touch a ball.

Now when you play shots, lower your power level a bit so that even if you miss the shot that ball just hangs along the pocket. This gives you another advantage... now your opponent can't pocket his balls in that pocket.. This is what I call pocket Holding technique.

Now look where most of his balls are and the obvious pockets to pocket them ... now try Holding technique on that pocket. and don't pocket that ball until it is absolutely necessary to do so.

If you HAVE FURTHER QUESTIONS mail me at theguy_in_blue@yahoo.com

VIII - ADVANCED SHOTS & SHOTMAKING

This section covers the more advanced shots and the execution needed to become an advanced shotmaker.

- » [Combination Shots](#)
- » [Combination Shots Made Easy](#)
- » [Shooting Hard with English](#)
- » [How Did I Miss That Easy Cut Shot?](#)
- » [Long Straight-in Shot](#)
- » [Razor thin cut shots](#)

Combination Shots

By sputnik

Date: Tue, Aug 5 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

When the ultimate object ball is near the pocket, it is easy to apply English on the cue ball to set up the next shot (on the same immediate object ball). But if the ultimate object ball is far from the pocket, and there is no other choice but to combo, here is one tip in aiming.

- 1] Set the aiming point at the top of the ultimate object ball to the pocket.
- 2] Connect an imaginary string from the set point to the pocket.
- 3] Set the aiming point at the top of the object ball to the set aim point of the ultimate object ball.
- 4] Connect an imaginary string from the set point of the object ball to the set point of the ultimate object ball.
- 5] Execute a shot without English using a medium to strong stroke.

We have seen great players miss on seemingly simple shots in world-class tournaments. Yes, the combination where the ultimate object ball is far from the pocket is a high risk shot. But then again, the assumption is that there is no other choice.

Remember that any spin applied to the cue ball will throw the object ball off-track, hence, leaving guesswork with the ultimate object ball. The strength of the stroke will depend on how the action of the impact between the object balls will leave the immediate object ball. Predict the path of the immediate object ball and the cue ball for a decent set-up for the next shot.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article152.html> to view the video.

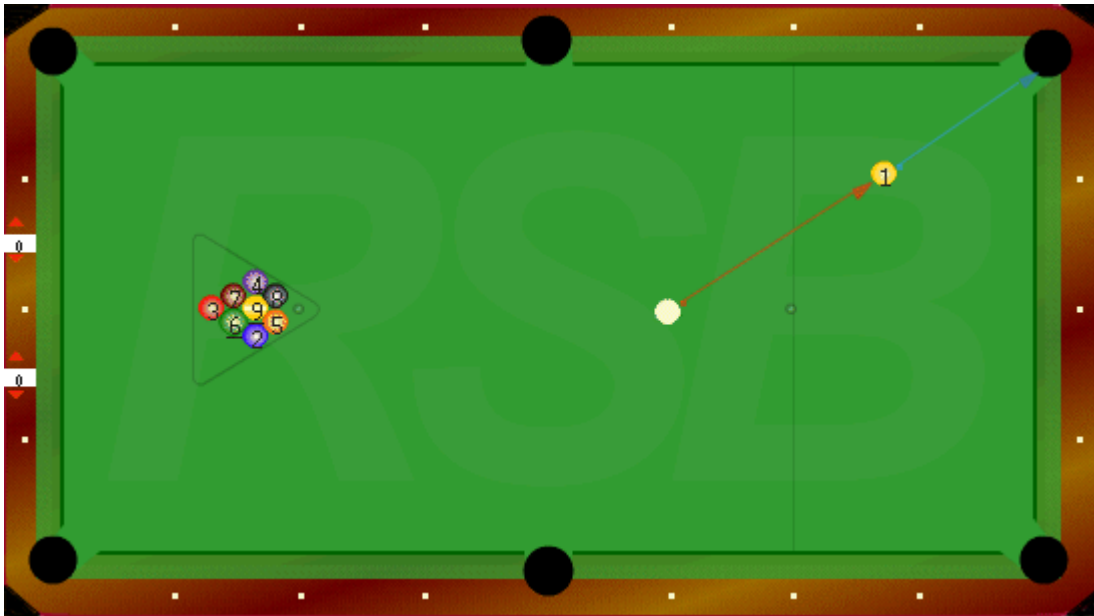
Combination Shots Made Easy

By Joe D'Aguanno

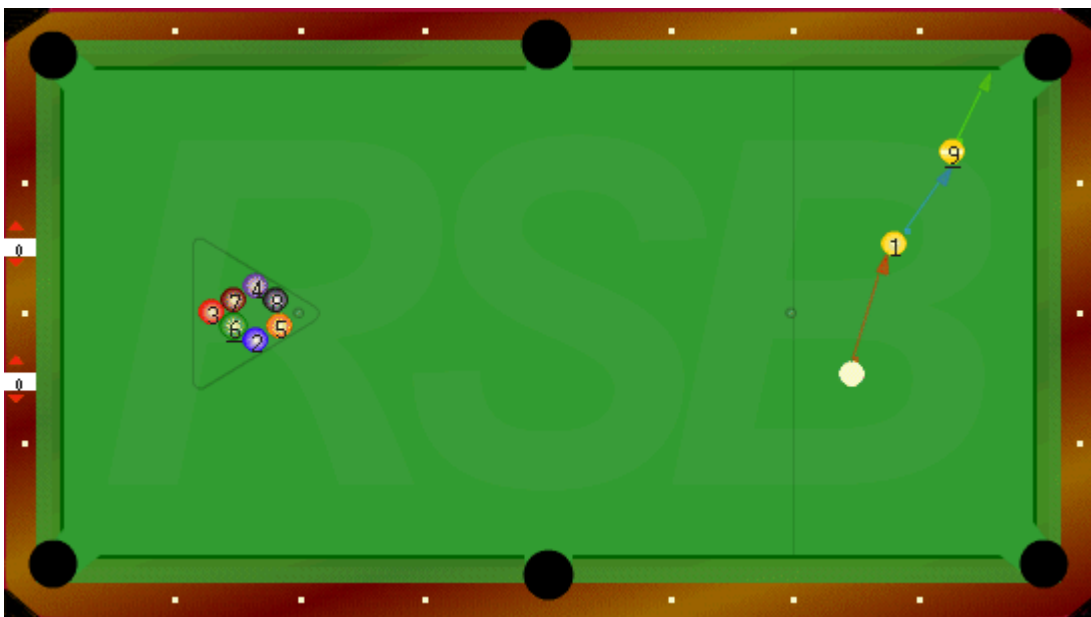
Date: Tue, Sep 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

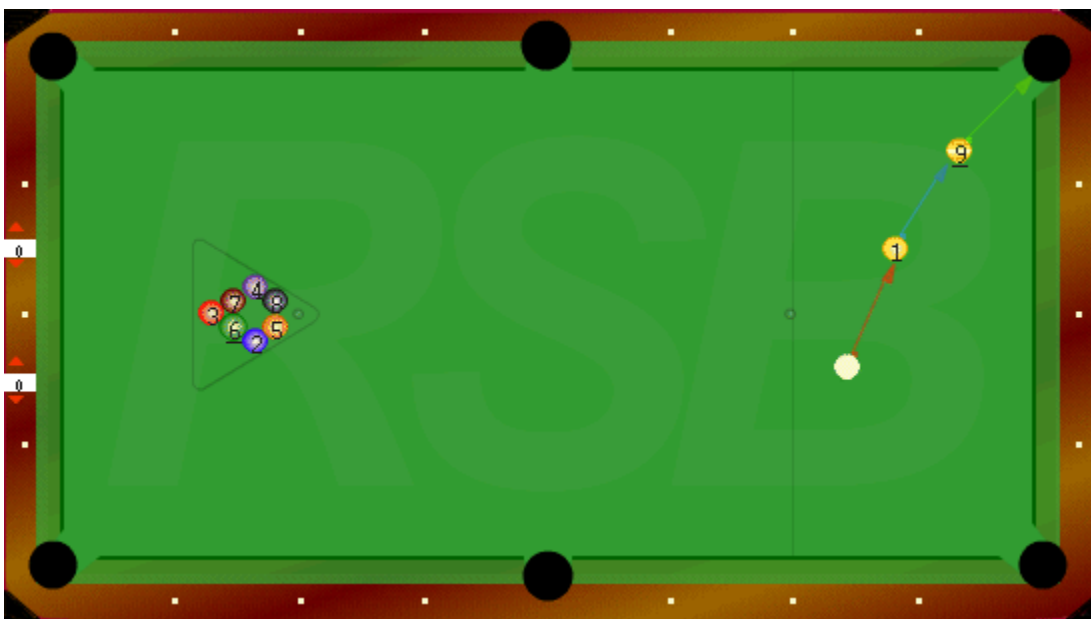
Combination shots are shots that are usually avoided unless there is no other alternative. In 9 ball a combo on the 9 can easily win you the game and often gives you a chance to win a match against a better player. If you understand the interaction between the cue ball and the object ball you will greatly increase your chance of making the shot. **Object ball deflection is the key to the making the combination shot.** If you don't understand object ball deflection please read the lesson **How Did I Miss That Easy Cut Shot**. This lesson is just a logical extension of the **Cut Shot** lesson of which I will go over the more important parts again. When the cue ball is struck in the center without applying english the cue ball doesn't deflect off the line of aim and goes directly to it's intended target. This is show in the diagram below.



However if the cue ball contacts the object ball at an angle even without english being applied to the cue ball and the speed at contact with the object ball is great enough the object ball and cue ball will deflect away from each other along the line of aim. This is demonstrated in the diagram below where the cue ball contacts the 1 ball at the correct aim point but is deflected to the right causing the nine ball to miss the pocket to the left.



In the diagram above the 1 ball must be hit a little ($1/16''$ to $1/4''$ or greater depending on how hard the cue ball is hit) to the right of the aim point to correct for the deflection as shown in the diagram below. Below I have exaggerated with the red arrow where the contact point on the 1 ball is changed to clearly show the direction of the change (to the right) from the original point of aim.



The last thing you need to know is at what cue ball speed does the cue ball cause the object ball to deflect off the line of aim. Fortunately for this type of deflection the type of stick you are using doesn't matter. A Predator cue for example will not aim any better than any other cue on a shot where no english is used. It is all strictly a matter of the speed of the stroke. For me I find this speed to be slightly greater than a soft shot on shots within 1' to 2'. If the shot is a longer shot then the speed changes to soft medium to medium. Remember it is the speed of the cue ball at

contact with the object ball that determines when deflection takes place not the speed of the cue ball when it leave the tip of the cue. You should have figured out by now that if the cue ball speed is below the deflection speed you don't adjust your point of aim. A little practice on the table with a combination shot set up will quickly show you how much to adjust your aim for deflection. If you miss the shot just watch where the combo ball hits the rail. If it is hitting the rail you are not adjusting your aim enough for the deflection of the shot. The farther up the rail it hits the more you need to adjust.

It could be argued that if you shoot all of your combos softly you don't have to worry about deflection. The problem with that in 9 ball is if you miss the combo when shooting softly you often leave it set up for an even easier combo for your opponent. I normally shoot the shot at a faster speed to guarantee deflection and to make sure that I don't leave an easy 9 ball combo.

Any questions or comments can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Jack Up and Rail Shots

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, May 30 @ 00:13:33 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Have you ever missed your shape and ended up frozen against the rail or another ball with the object ball 3/4 of the way down the table with a difficult angle to the pocket? This is a sure end to most runouts for the average player. I have learned 3 techniques over the years that help me with these type of shots. I still miss some of them but I now make a lot more than I miss. First of all it should be common sense that you don't shoot these type of shots with a hard stroke. Keep your stroke in the soft to medium range to maintain your accuracy. The biggest reason these type of shots are missed is because the tip of the cue stick bounces off the cue ball unless you shoot very softly.

There are 2 techniques to keep the tip on the cue ball and minimize the deflection of tip after contact. The first one is difficult for me to use when I shoot over another ball as I have relatively short fingers. It does however work well when I shoot off the rail. Simply squeeze the shaft in the V between your thumb and forefinger (with the end of your forefinger rolled underneath) and keep it clamped down throughout the stroke. Make sure your hands and stick are clean as you may have difficulty stroking. You might have to use some powder to make the cue slide the way it should.

The second technique works pretty much the same except instead of applying pressure to the tip end of the stick apply it to the butt end of the stick. Many players have a loose grip which allows the proper wrist action to keep the cue in the plane of the shot. The problem with a loose grip when shooting off the rail or over a ball is that it allows the butt of the cue to deflect in the opposite direction of the deflection of the cue tip. If you grip the butt tightly (don't choke the crap out of it) it can't deflect which will help keep the tip in the proper position to complete the shot. When gripping the butt don't grip it with all of your fingers. Only squeeze it with the ring that is formed with your thumb and forefinger as it wraps around the butt. By only gripping with the thumb and forefinger you will not impede the wrist action that is necessary to complete the shot. You can combine both of these techniques to keep your cue absolutely straight when you have to jack up or are stuck on a rail.

The last technique that works in conjunction with the 2 above is to make sure you don't drop your elbow when you complete your stroke. Most people including me have a tendency to use their whole arm to complete the stroke when they are in an awkward stance. Make sure the part of your arm below the elbow is the only part that moves.

I'm sure that if you learn these 3 things your ability to make jack up and rail shots will greatly improve. Any questions can be addressed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Shooting Hard with English

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Jun 6 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

One of the stumbling blocks that prevents a midlevel player from moving up to the next level is the ability to shoot a longer distance shot with english hard enough to move the cue ball around the table using 2 or more rails. Normally I don't believe in shooting the cue ball with a hard stroke especially when using english. There are some cases however that leave little choice unless there is a viable safety available. I have seen many good B Level (7 to 8 rated in Arizona) players that get stuck with one of these shots. Using english they shoot harder than normal and usually end up with close to perfect shape. The only problem is that they almost always miss the shot. If you understand the mechanics of shooting the cue ball harder with english you will have another weapon to help move you to the next level.

First you must divide your stroke up into at least 10 levels of power with 1 being the softest. The huge majority of your shots should be shot with a 1 1/2 to 3 level of power. Any advanced player knows that they need to compensate for throw when they use english. They also know about cue ball deflection when using english and most have learned to keep their shot power level low enough to minimize this deflection. The problem arises when they are faced with a shot that requires english and a significant increase of power level beyond what they are comfortable with.

The 2 keys to understanding how to adjust your aim when using english is the power level of your stroke and the amount of english you apply. When shooting using english (I normally use 1 to 1 1/2 tips) and your power level is approximately 2 or lower you must compensate for throw. Let me say here that the stroke power levels where these principals take effect will vary from cue stick to cue stick depending on the amount your shaft deflects the cue ball. The principles however will remain the same. The softer you shoot and the more english you use under the approximate power level of 2 the more you compensate for throw. **As your stroke speed exceeds an approximate power level of 2 you need to shift from compensation for throw to compensating for deflection.** In other words if you are shooting an object ball to a pocket on your left and are using right english you normally aim more to the left to compensate for the throw. With this shot (using right english) as you increase your stroke power the cue ball will begin to deflect to the left (it would deflect to the right using left english) and you would need to adjust your aim on the object ball to the right. If you shoot hard at say level 5 using english you might have to adjust your aim a 1/2 inch or more to the right to compensate for deflection. This might have you aiming in thin air if the contact point is less than 1/2 inch from the edge of the object ball. Don't forget that when you shoot harder it also makes the cue ball deflect more off the object ball which will definitely affect where the cue ball strikes the rail and where it finally ends up. If you think about it a little further you can find the perfect stroke speed using english where the throw and deflection cancels each other out and you aim dead nuts at the point of contact. For me that is around a 2 1/4 to 2 1/2 power level.

Once you have experimented with the principals above and begin to get a feel for it you will be able to shoot hard enough to practically rip the pockets off the table, pocket the ball and make perfect shape. Your rival though will attribute it to pure

luck though as everyone knows that you can't pound the balls and still control the cue ball.

Any comments or questions can be addressed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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How Did I Miss That Easy Cut Shot?

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Thu, Jul 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Have you ever had an easy cut shot that you shot a little hard without english and missed the pocket by a couple inches or more. You probably attributed the miss to your stroke, eye alignment or a myriad of other things. The chances are though your aim and stroke were dead on. The probable reason for your miss was object ball deflection*. Huh? You say you're an advanced player and know all about cue ball deflection which occurs when you strike the cue ball hard enough using english but how can the object ball deflect without any english being applied? The answer is that the same principle applies to both object ball and cue ball deflection. It is not the english being applied that causes the deflection but rather that the contact point on the ball being hit is off center. When a cue ball is hit off center with the tip of a cue stick both the cue and stick will deflect away from each other off the line of aim. The same is true when a ball contacts another ball off center if the speed is sufficient. Both balls will deflect away from each other. The harder you hit the greater the deflection off the line of aim. Object ball deflection will occur at a lower speed than cue ball deflection. The reason for this is that with cue ball deflection you have chalk applied to the tip of the cue which keeps the cue tip on the cue ball longer. With object ball deflection you have 2 polished balls colliding with each other both of which deflect right away.

Below the 15 ball is shot into the corner with soft to medium speed. The line of aim from the cue ball to the object ball is dead on to the point of contact made by a line running from the center of the pocket through the center of the object ball. In this case there is little or no object ball deflection.

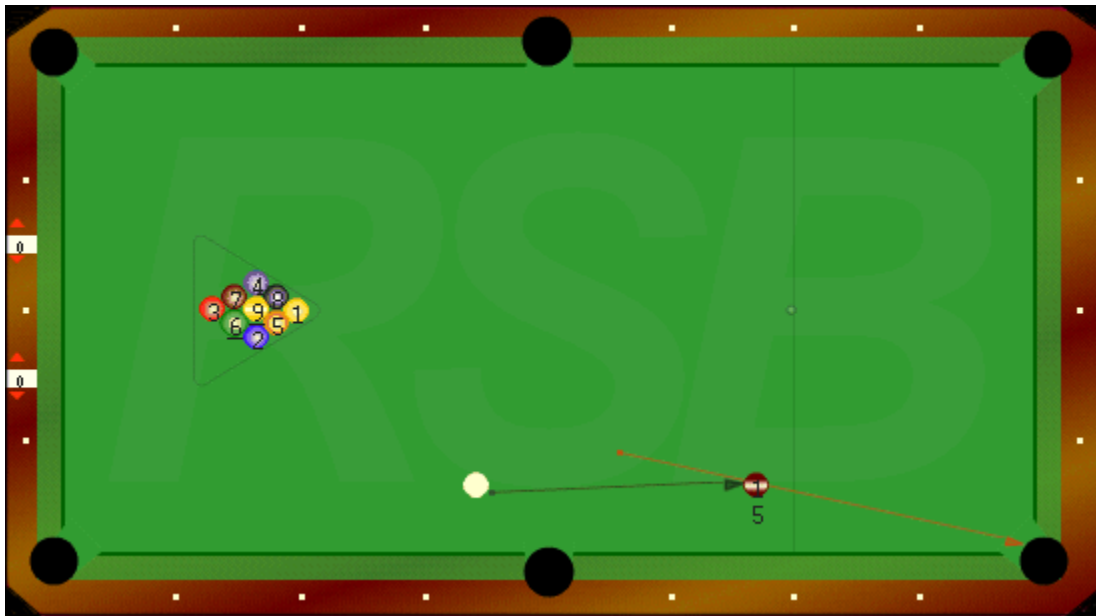


Diagram 1

If you decide to shoot the 15 ball with hard draw and don't compensate for object ball deflection the 15 ball will deflect and hit the long rail up a few inches away from the pocket as in the diagram below.

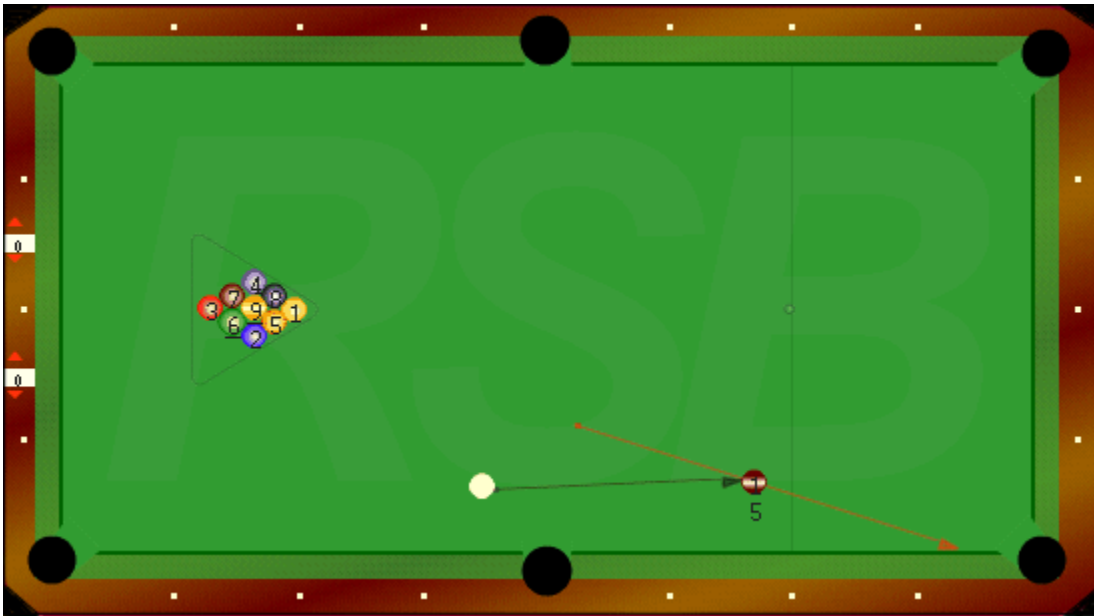


Diagram 2

If you adjust your aim about 1/8" or slightly more (depending on the amount of power you use) to the right on the 15 ball which would aim it to the short rail on the left of the pocket your shot will deflect dead into the pocket. In the diagram below the yellow represents the normal line of aim while the grey represents the adjusted aim.

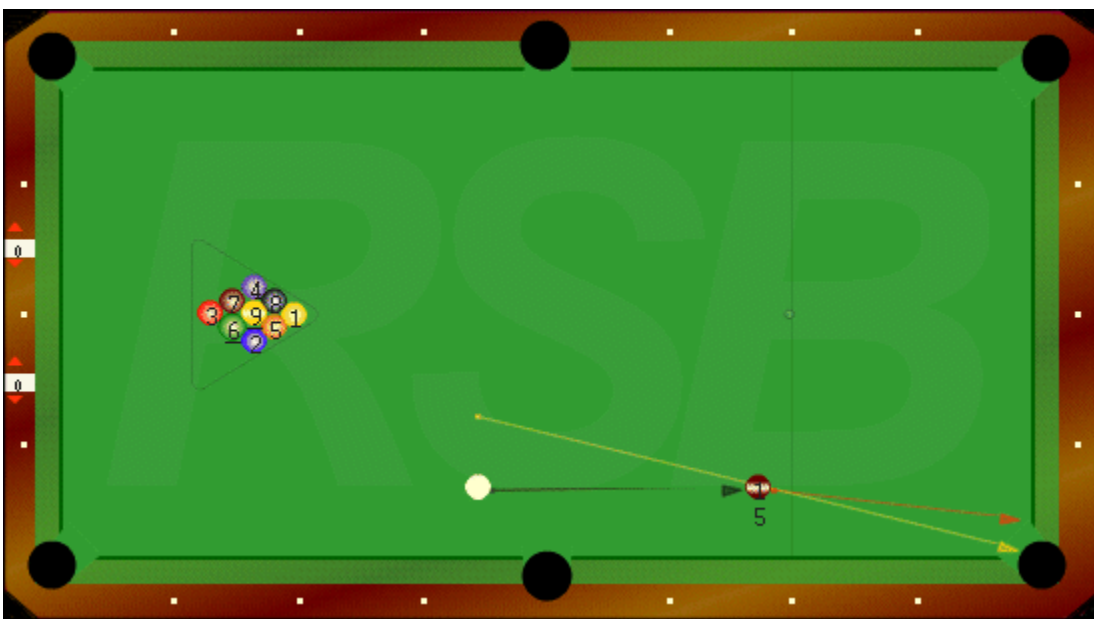


Diagram 3

Now when you shoot the ball hard without using english you don't have to miss.

*If you don't understand cue ball deflection read the lesson on "Predator Blues" then finish reading this lesson.

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Long Straight-in Shot

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Aug 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

For many players the most difficult shot in pool is the long straight in shot. I must admit that at one time this was also one of my most difficult shots. Over the years I developed an aiming system that have made long straight in shots relatively easy for me and it should work for you too. I won't go into detail on the aiming system here as I have already addressed that in another lesson but will give you the part that is essential for making a long straight in shot. Most players pick out a spot on the object ball and aim at that.

That works well when the cue ball isn't too far away from the object ball. It's pretty easy to hit a point on a ball when it isn't too far away. Unfortunately as the cue ball distance from the object ball increases any errors in your form or alignment are magnified in an angular context. That means being off 1/1000th of an inch with your aim at the cue ball would be several thousandths by the time it get to the object ball. If you don't understand angular measurement just make a V with you two middle fingers. You will see that the distance between the fingers where they join the hand is small. As you look down your fingers the distance get wider the closer you get to the tips. To make it worse at a long distance your eye can't focus on as small a spot on the object as it could when the object ball is closer.

Where my aiming method differs from most aiming systems is that I pick out a contact point on the cue ball to hit the contact point on the object ball. This requires a little visualization as you can't physically see the contact point on the cue ball when you are aiming through it. Fortunately with a long straight in shot that imaginary point is exactly opposite the point of contact that you can see (unless you are using english) where the tip of the cue contacts the cue ball. As you are aiming down your cue through the imaginary contact point on the cue ball, project (you have to visualize this) where the line will hit the object ball. Align this point by adjusting your aim if necessary with the contact point on the object ball that is required to make the shot (should be dead center of the object ball). After you have aligned the 2 points simply shift your concentration to the contact point on the object ball and keep it there until you have completed your shot. After a little practice you should soon see an improvement in your ability to make straight in shots.

If you use english on the shot you will need to adjust for either throw or cue ball deflection depending on the power level of your stroke.

Any questions or comments can be addressed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Razor thin cut shots

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Fri, Oct 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Ah, the razor thin cut shot that ranks right up there in difficulty with the long straight in shot.

I used to hate those shots as they almost always stopped my run out. It was sort of like the lottery tickets, the kind that you scratch off to win a few bucks. I would make one just often enough to keep my poor brain thinking I could make it the next time. I learned that trick where the object ball is frozen to the rail and you shoot to just miss it with inside english but it didn't help much with the balls that were not on the rail. As it so often happens with inspirations this one just came out of the blue. I was stuck with another run ending razor thin cut shot. I just sort of stood there in a daze looking at the object ball and cursing my inability to pull the shape I needed. I stared at it long and hard enough for my eyes to go slightly out of focus which caused a halo effect around the outside of the ball. That's when the inspiration hit me. **Don't aim at the edge of the ball aim at the halo.** Well for me the rest is history. I amaze a lot of people with my ability to cut in balls that look impossible. It's also nice to look on the face of someone who thinks they have played a good safety on me only to learn they made a big mistake at letting me see the ball. To see the halo just look at the edge of the object ball for 5 to 10 seconds with your eyes relaxed and slightly out of focus. You should soon see a transparent glow about 1 to 2 mm thick around the ball. It's not like a light but more like a distortion. Shift your concentration to the glow and keep it there. On very thin cuts just aim at the outside of the glow. You can also aim in the middle of the glow if the cut is not as steep. This is also very helpful when playing safeties because you can thin the object ball leaving it pretty much where it is and sending your cue ball the length of the table by shooting very softly.

Comments or questions can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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IX - HOW TO USE SIDE SPIN

This section deals primarily on the use of side spin or english on the cue ball to play for position.

- » [Understanding English - The Basics](#)
- » [Understanding English - Deflection/Squirt](#)
- » [Understanding English - Throw](#)
- » [Understanding English - Curve/Swerve](#)
- » [Inside and Outside English](#)
- » [More on Throw \(A lesson in English\)](#)
- » [Cue ball control using english](#)
- » [Effects of english off the rail](#)
- » [Using english to change a natural angle off a rail](#)
- » [Two Kinds of English](#)
- » [Cuts and stamina - How the pro's cope...](#)

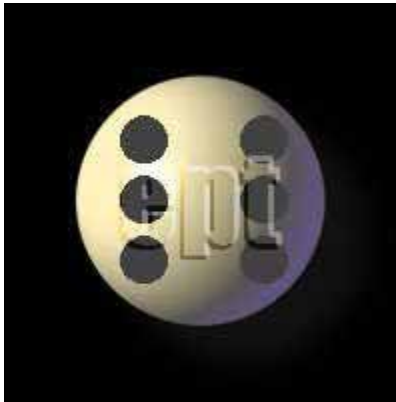
Understanding English – The Basics

By admin

Date: Sun, Apr 13 @ 09:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

English or Sidespin is an advanced technique in billiards. I would advise newer players not to use english until they have a good understanding and enough experience with the basic (no side spin) shots like stop (center ball hit), draw (under spin), and follow (top spin). English makes the process of aiming a little more difficult because of the effects of curve and throw. I will discuss these terms next. First, take a look at the different ways you can hit the cue ball to apply english or sidespin(see illustration below).



As you can see from the illustration above, you can apply english or sidespin in a number of ways. You can hit the cue ball on the left side which is normally called LEFT english or you can hit the cue ball on the right side normally called RIGHT ENGLISH. You can also apply the stop (centerball hit), draw (below center hit) or follow (above center hit) with english. English applied with draw is normally called low english while english applied with follow is called high english.

Please continue to the next article,
[Understanding English - Deflection](#)

Understanding English – Deflection/Squirt

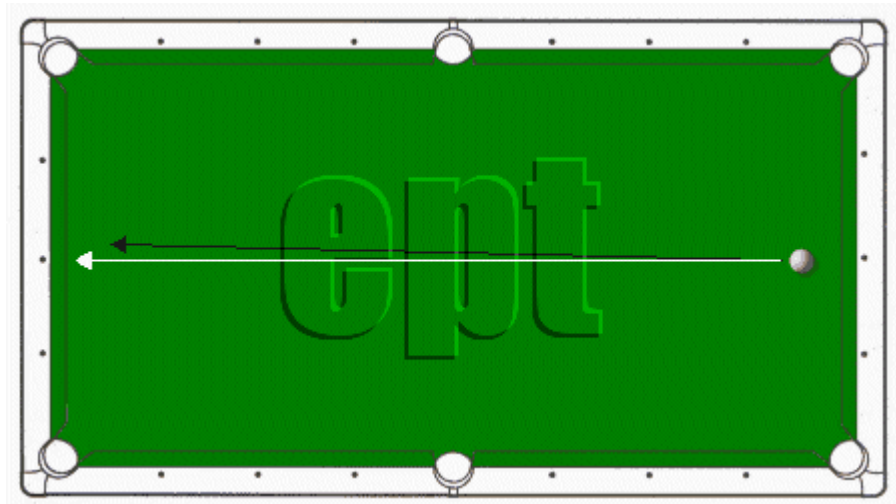
By admin

Date: Sun, Apr 13 @ 09:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

Deflection

One of the effects of english or sidespin on the cue ball is what is called *Deflection* or *Squirt*. Basically, the cue ball does not travel the same path that your cue stick is aiming when english is applied to it. Because of the sidespin, the cue ball will tend to slightly travel in the opposite direction of your english. In other words, if you put a left english or left side spin on the cue ball, the cue ball will travel slightly to the right and vice-versa. Refer to illustration below. The white line indicates the path of the cue ball when hit with no english or sidespin, the black line indicates the path of the cue ball when hit with left english. Notice the deflection effect towards the right?.



One thing that makes english difficult is that it is hard to estimate the amount of deflection that you will get on the cue ball. Only with enough experience will you be able to make a good estimate unless you're a genius at math and you can figure it out using your own mathematical formula :-). Anyway, like I said the amount of deflection is dependent on the following:

1. The distance between the cue ball and the object ball. The longer the distance, the more deflection on the cue ball.
2. The amount of spin on the cue ball. Generally, the more spin, the more deflection on the cue ball.
3. The speed of the stroke. Generally, the stronger the stroke, the more deflection on the cue ball.
4. The type of cloth on the table. Again, the issue of friction comes into play. With a rough cloth, more friction therefore more deflection on the cue ball. On a smoother cloth with less friction, the spin on the cue ball does not have as much effect on the cue ball because the cue ball just tends to slide through the cloth.

Please continue to the next article,
[Understanding English - Throw](#)

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article250.html> to view the video.

Understanding English – Throw

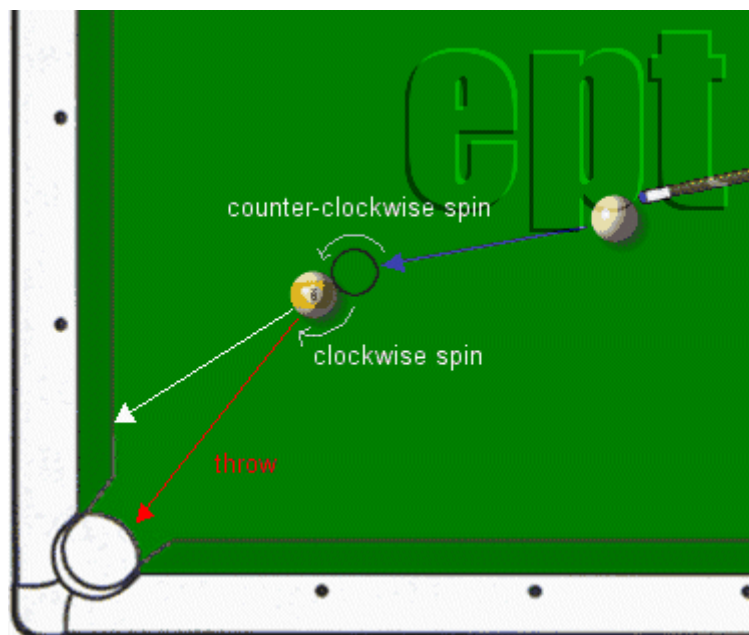
By admin

Date: Sun, Apr 13 @ 09:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

Throw

Another effect of english is what is known as "*throw*". When a cue ball with sidespin hits the object ball, the spin is transferred to the object ball but in the opposite direction. For example, a cue ball is hit with right english so it spins to the right or counter-clockwise... upon hitting the object ball, an opposite spin (clockwise) is transferred to the object ball. The spin generated by the object ball causes it to be "thrown" to the direction opposite the spin on the cue ball. Whew! I think this calls for an illustration. See Figure 1 below.



So to make things simple, a cue ball with right english "throws" the object ball to the left while a cue ball with left english "throws" the object ball to the right. Let us examine the illustration above. In this illustration, the cue ball is hit with right english causing it to have a counter-clockwise spin. Upon contact with the object ball, a transfer of spin is generated causing an opposite (clockwise) spin on the object ball. This clockwise spin causes the object ball to be thrown to the left (indicated by the red line). Note that a fuller hit on the object ball is done allowing the "throw" effect to pocket the object ball. The white line indicates the normal path of the object ball if no english was done on the cue ball.

The amount throw generated is generally dependent the following:

1. The amount of spin on the cue ball. The more spin on the cue ball, the more "throw" is generated on the object ball.
2. The speed of the stroke. A softer stroke generally results in more "throw" effect than a harder stroke.

Please continue to the next article,
[Understanding English - Curve/Swerve](#)

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article251.html> to view the video.

Understanding English – Curve/Swerve

By admin

Date: Sun, Apr 13 @ 09:00:00 CDT

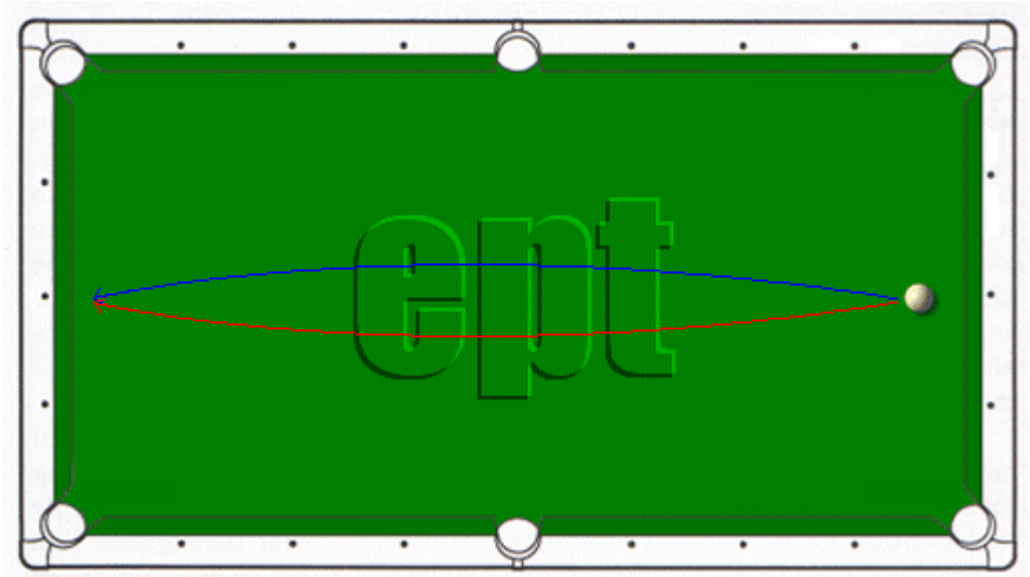
Topic: How to use Side Spin

Curve

Another effect of english is what is known as "*Curve*" or "*Swerve*". When a cue ball is hit low with a downward stroke using english, the cue ball tends to curve instead of moving in a straight line. This is a similar effect, though to a much lesser degree, to the masse shot. The illustration below shows you what I mean. Notice that the cue stick is at a downward angle hitting the cue ball low. If you put english on this type of shot, an effect called "curve" will be the result.



The direction of the curve will be the same as the direction of the spin. That means that if you have a low right english on the cue ball, it will curve to the left and back to the right. If you have a low left english on the cue ball, it will curve to the right and then back to the left. See the illustration below; the red line indicates a curve generated when low right english is applied with a downward cue stick and the blue line indicates a curve generated when a low left english is applied with a downward cue stick.



The amount curve generated is generally dependent the following:

1. The distance between the cue ball and the object ball. At longer distances, more curve is generated.
2. The amount of spin on the cue ball. The more spin on the cue ball, the more "curve" is generated on the object ball.
3. The speed of the stroke. A softer stroke generally results in more "curve" effect than a harder stroke.
4. The downward angle of the cue stick. The more angle on the cue stick, the more curve is generated.
5. The type of cloth also plays a role here. Again, more friction means the cloth has more "hold" on the cue ball thus the effects of curve is more.

All these factors come into play at the same time so you should adjust your shot with consideration for all the above factors.

Now with all these effects: Deflection, Throw, and Curve... you will need to consider all these things when using english. Only with enough practice will you be able to learn instinctively how the cue ball will react to all these effects.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article252.html> to view the video.

Inside and Outside English

By admin

Date: Thu, May 1 @ 03:20:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

You may have heard other players use the terms "inside" and "outside" english. To help you understand these billiard terms, I will try to explain them with a couple of illustrations.

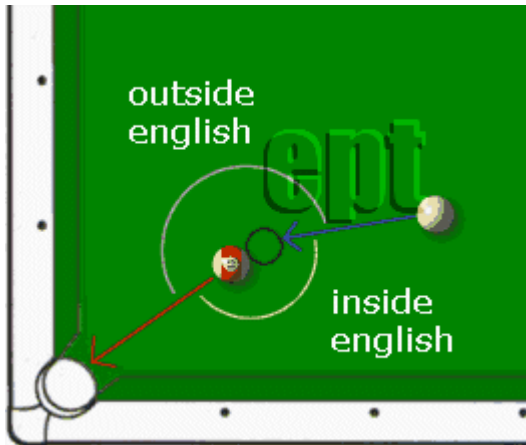


Figure 1

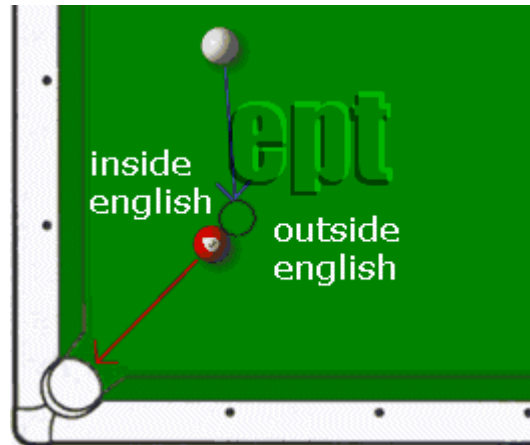


Figure 2

These terms are a little confusing at first but once you get the idea, it should be simple enough. Let's start with "inside" english. Refer to the first illustration on the left. Here you are shooting the object ball to go to the left (from the shooter's point of view) into the corner pocket. If you apply left english on your cue ball, this is called "inside" english. If you apply right english on the cue ball, this is called "outside" english.

Still confused? Let's look at the next illustration. Here you are shooting the object ball to the right (again, this is from the shooter's perspective) into the corner pocket. Applying right english on the cue ball is called "inside" english while applying "left" english is called "outside" english. So, what have we learned? To summarize, if the direction of your english is the same as the direction of the object ball into the pocket, you are using "inside" english. If the direction of your english is opposite that of the direction of the object ball into the pocket, you are using "outside" english.

Another way to understand inside and outside english is to look at the angles. Refer to the first illustration on the left. If you use left english on the cue ball, you are on the "inside" or smaller angle. If you use right english, you are on the "outside" or the bigger angle.

More on Throw (A lesson in English)

By admin

Date: Thu, May 1 @ 15:20:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

In the lesson about using english or spin, I have discussed briefly about throw. In this lesson, I will discuss this aspect in a little more detail.

As you have previously learned, *throw* is caused by friction between colliding balls. When the cue ball contacts the object ball, there is a brief moment where both balls contact and therefore causes friction between them. In the lesson on "Understanding English", we have discussed a type of throw called *english or spin throw*, which is of course, the throw produced on the object ball by a side spinning cue ball. In this lesson, we will be discussing what I would call *contact throw*, which differs from *english throw* in a sense that the cue ball is not spinning sideways upon contacting the object ball (i.e. the cue ball is hit with a center ball and no english is applied).

What is Contact Throw?

Contact Throw occurs when the cue ball is hit with a center ball hit (no spin) and contacts the object ball. Upon contact, the object ball will move *very slightly* forward before bouncing off towards the planned direction. In a sense, the object ball will be sent slightly off-track. Let's look at the illustrations below for a clearer understanding of the subject:

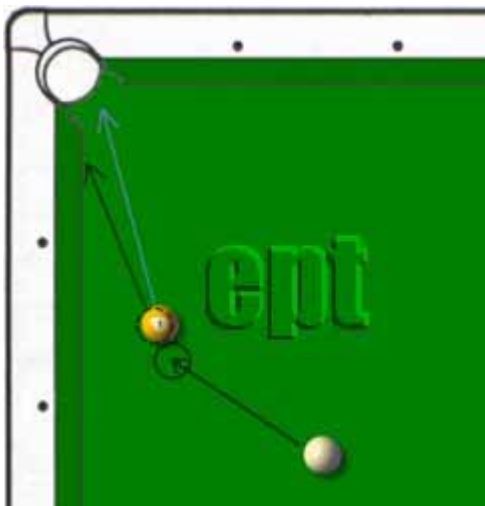


Figure 1

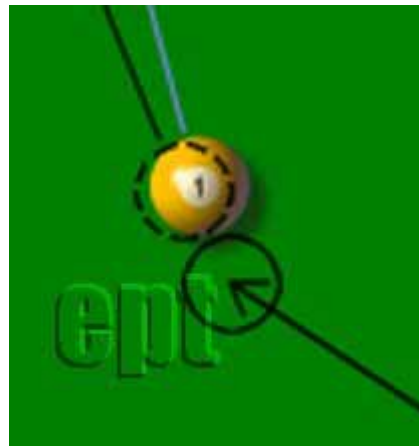


Figure 2

Notice that in Figure 1, when using the ghost ball aiming method (See article on Aiming - Part I, II, and III), *throw* can cause a player to miss. In Figure 2, you can see that throw has pushed the object ball forward after contact with the cue ball and therefore sent it off track and a miss occurs. So whenever you encounter a miss that you think you should have made, then throw might be the reason why it happened the way it did.

So in review from what we have learned previously about *throw*, cue ball speed plays a big role in the amount of throw that is generated. Generally, a softer speed will produce more throw. Therefore, when cutting balls at soft speeds, adjust for a thinner hit on the object ball but keep in mind that these adjustments are very, very minor and with enough practice, should become automatic.

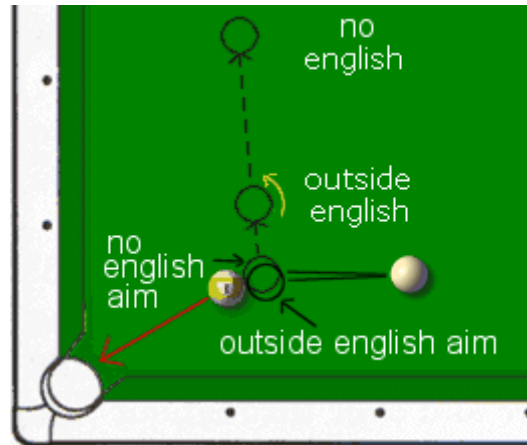
Cue ball control using english

By admin

Date: Wed, Apr 16 @ 03:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

Inside and outside english can be used to control the speed of the cue ball after making contact with the object ball. This is illustrated below.



You can control the position of the cue ball even without it bouncing off the cushion as illustrated above. This is more relevant to shots with smaller angles like the one shown above (although it is still applicable, to a lesser degree, to shots with more angle).

When using no english with medium speed, the cueball naturally stops at the point indicated by "no english" in the illustration above. If, however, we want the minimum cueball movement, we can use outside english and the cueball would stop at the point indicated by "outside english" in the illustration above.

There are two factors that are involved that resulted in a very slight movement of the cue ball when using outside english:

1. Remember that when using outside english, you will need to aim a little thicker on the object ball. See "Outside English aim" in the illustration above. Aiming thicker minimizes the movement of the cueball.
2. When using outside english, an effect called "throw" is generated. Throw will pocket the object ball. Refer to the lesson, Understanding English - Throw.

Keep in mind that these example uses the same speed of stroke for both no english and outside english.

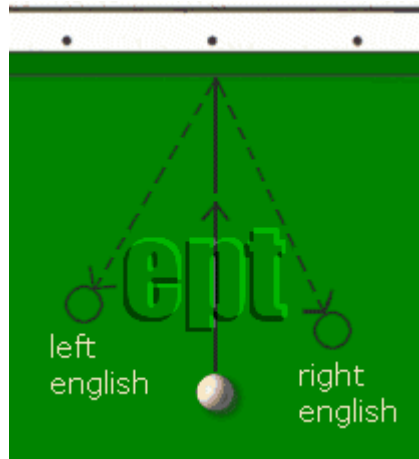
Effects of english off the rail

By admin

Date: Tue, Apr 15 @ 12:00:00 CDT

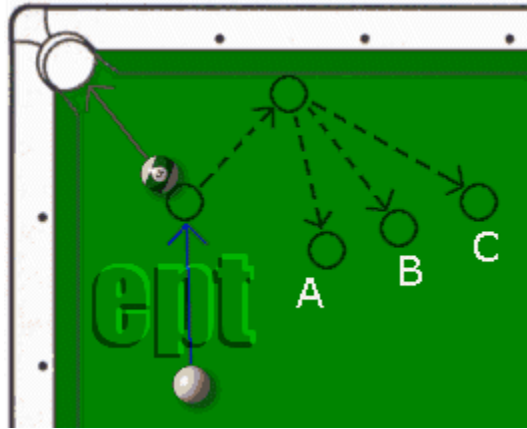
Topic: How to use Side Spin

In this article, I will discuss how english affects the direction of the cue ball after it hits the rail cushion. As illustrated in the picture below, when left english is applied on the cue ball, it will bounce to the left side after hitting the cushion. Similarly, when the cue ball is hit with right english, it will bounce to the right side after hitting the cushion.



Now, with this newly found knowledge of pool, let's take a look at an example about how this works. See the illustration below. The cue ball is hit with center ball stroke. Note that "center ball stroke" here means that the cue ball is hit in the middle of its vertical axis whereas "english" is when the cue ball is hit either on the left or right of its horizontal axis. (see the previous articles on Stop, Follow, Draw, and English for more explanations). Now let's go back to the article in hand, the illustration below shows 3 different positions of the cue ball after it hits the cushion.

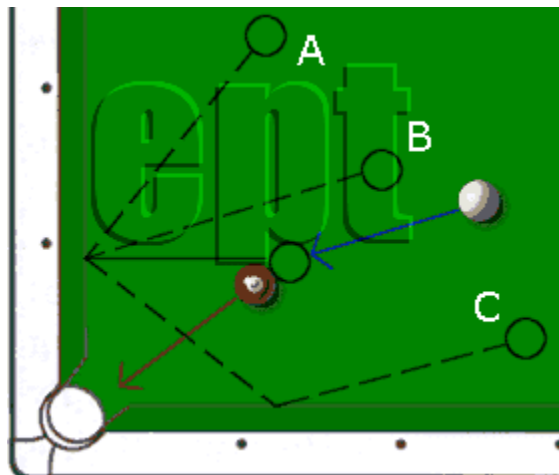
- Position A is the result of hitting the cue ball with center ball stroke and applying left english. Notice how the use of "left" english cuts the angle severely from its normal path.
- Position B is the result of hitting the cue ball with center ball stroke and NO english. This is the normal path of the cue ball.
- Finally, Position C is the result of hitting the cue ball with center ball stroke and applying right english. Notice how the use of "right" english increases the angle from its normal path.



Once again, there are numerous things that you will need to keep in mind in determining how much angle will the cue ball have off the cushion. Here are some guidelines to help you gauge the angle:

- The condition of the cushion is one factor. Newer cushions tend to have more "bounce" than older cushions. Therefore older cushions tend to produce less angle on the cue ball off the rail.
- The amount of spin on the cue ball. In the illustration above, if you applied more left english on the cue ball, then the angle would be less than the one shown in Position A. With more right english, the angle would also be more than the one shown in Position C.
- The speed of the stroke. Generally, the stronger the stroke, the less angle will be generated by the cue ball off the cushion.

Below is another example of the effects of english on the cue ball off the rail. This is a good example that very clearly explains the different effects of left and right english on the cue ball when it makes contact with the cushion.



- Position A is the result of hitting the cue ball with high (above center) and applying right english. Notice how the use of "right" english increases the angle severely from its normal path.

- Position B is the result of hitting the cue ball high and NO english. This is the normal path of the cue ball.
- Finally, Position C is the result of hitting the cue ball high and applying left english. Notice how the cue ball reacts after hitting the cushion. Because of the left spin on the cue ball, it bounces to the left and also bounced off the long rail. Also notice that the angle at which it bounced off the second cushion. The left spin produced an increase in the angle of bounce.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article61-pg-1.html> to view the video.

Using english to change a natural angle off a rail

By Martin Misa

Date: Sun, Apr 20 @ 08:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

There are good defensive players who try to get us out of our rhythm, forcing us to take legitimate shots off the rail just to avoid fouls. There are also times when we make mistakes in preparing for the next shot where the object ball becomes completely obscured. It is hard enough to make a legitimate shot using natural angles off the rail. But what if there is no natural angle? English will help us **estimate** where the white can divert from its natural course if a parallelogram (see "Of Parallelograms..." article) is not available.

The idea is to get the most out of the available angle and apply an estimated english. First, draw an imaginary line a natural shot will take the cue ball to. Then apply english. But how will you know how much english to apply? Only experience will take you to a good shot.

Here is a good exercise with the premise that the stroke has a soft follow through for a rolling shot, and not a stun shot nor any other forceful stroke. Put the white in the middle of the table directly in front of a table marker. Aim straight to the marker with varying english, starting from the center of the ball going out wide. Remember to always chalk before taking exaggerated spins, and do not be afraid to hit the outer edge of the white. Do this over and over (left and right spin) until you get a good idea where different degrees of english will take the cue ball to. Then hit the rail **at an angle** with varying degrees of english, both left and right spins. But before hitting an angled rail, first mark where the cue will travel with a natural shot. Then remember the deviation. The wider the english on a favored angle, the less force is needed because the white will travel faster. On the other hand, the wider the english on a reverse angle, the slower the cue ball goes out of the rail.

This is why pool is such an interesting game. Majority of the aspects in the game requires precision, but there are many more aspects in the game that require estimation... and it works!

Credits: Martin Misa is the President of the Billiard Buddies Association of the Philippines (BBAP). Being exposed to the wizardry of Filipino pool masters, he has picked up concepts in the game that he is sharing with us. He can be reached thru e-mail at mbmisa@mydestiny.net

Two Kinds of English

By Martin Misa

Date: Sat, Apr 5 @ 06:25:00 CST

Topic: How to use Side Spin

There are two techniques in putting English on the cue ball. One is the regular kind that you normally see being done by majority of pool players, including the Pros. The other is the kind whose execution you do not see, and which is used by most Filipino masters of the game. I'd like to call it "*Carabao English*".

With the regular english application, imagine the cue ball resting on an ice skate. The skate will mark a line wherever the cue ball travels on the table. Then imagine two parallel lines at both edges of the Cue Ball sandwiching the skate mark. Now you have a road with lane paint in the middle. With this technique, you have to have your entire cue stick on either side of the road, parallel to all the imaginary lines you have drawn on the green.

Carabao English is harder to learn because it requires more imagination and calculation. You will be surprised that many international players do not even know how to speak Carabao English. Put an object ball a foot away from a pocket. Line up the cue ball and the object ball along a straight shot to a distance of one inch left of a pocket. Aim your stick at the skate (dead center). If you release the cue without English, the object ball will land one inch to the left of the pocket. But if, as you release your cue, you move your shooting arm so your cue tip will hit the cue ball at a spot quarter of the cue ball to the left, you will make that shot. The wider the cue tip goes, the wider the angle will be reacted on by the object ball. Carabao English produces a more exaggerated reaction to the both the cue and the object balls.

The Carabao English technique tells us two things. One is that if you do not have a straight swing, your object ball will most likely take a tour around the table. Also, as long as there is a clean line to the center of the object ball, it is not yet the end of the world for you.

Credits:

Martin Misa is the President of the Billiard Buddies Association of the Philippines (BBAP). Being exposed to the wizardry of Filipino pool masters, he has picked up concepts in the game that he is sharing with us. He can be reached thru e-mail at mbmisa@mydestiny.net

Cuts and stamina - How the pros cope...

By Tim carter

Date: Sun, Oct 5 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to use Side Spin

How do they do it? well lets start with a simple cut shot. I like to use a "rule of thumb" on these shots that makes pocketing them much easier, If I were to shoot a cut to the right, I'd want to use outside english to the shot, or in this case left hand spin. This eliminated friction between the cue ball and object ball and applies what I like to call "rolling english" and this is what makes some cut shots that seem impossible possible.

When you apply "rolling english" the shot will always be in your favor, I've seen shots made that looked like bank shots and still went in, and until I figured out what was happening I just thought those players were lucky.

They probably didn't even know what they were doing when they did it, some players over the years ,maybe because their stroke wasn't straight or whatever, they developed the means to pocket balls even if they couldn't get "dead stroke" and I use this term loosely because a player who can incorporate "rolling english" in his or her game can easily beat a "straight shooter" or vice versa.

Have you even seen someone cut the eyes out of an object ball and wonder how they did it? or maybe you have tried these shots and can't get them to work for you? Try using outside english to the shot and you may be surprised at the outcome

As some may know at some angles you must over cut a shot to pocket it, well, that's when that infamous "rolling english" can cure this, by using outside english to the shot, you don't have to over cut it, the english you apply to the cue ball will actually put a little spin on the object ball and will help it travel to the desired target.

This can be applied to almost any shot. So the next time you see someone cutting balls like crazy take a moment and see if you can pick up on what I'm saying.

I use it, not always but more often than not, I do. Especially when I'm winding down getting tired I'll always incorporate a little "rolling english" to my game to stay on top, and this is one little "secret" I feel the pros use to stay on top also, no-one can put 110% in every shot for 3 or 4 days in a row, not unless your in extreme condition both mentally and physically. More likely than not most are not. So when they might be up and in a "comfy" lead they might ease up on the concentration to get a break, all the while pocketing balls making you live a nightmare. The really good players can do this because they understand what I'm talking about and can and will use this against you. This is why some players can play right up there with the pros and never beat any of them.

I teach hard work and extreme concentration but, this is also part of my training. This is for those of you trying to master the game but can't quite get that stamina and can't figure out how some of the players can go so long without rest. .Most of the time it's the little things in our game that make all the difference like "rolling english".

X - ADVANCED POSITION PLAY

This section deals with more advanced types and techniques for playing position.

- » [Spin and the Tangent Line](#)
- » [Advanced play, speed and carom control](#)
- » [The exit angle and rebound angle combined](#)

Spin and the Tangent Line

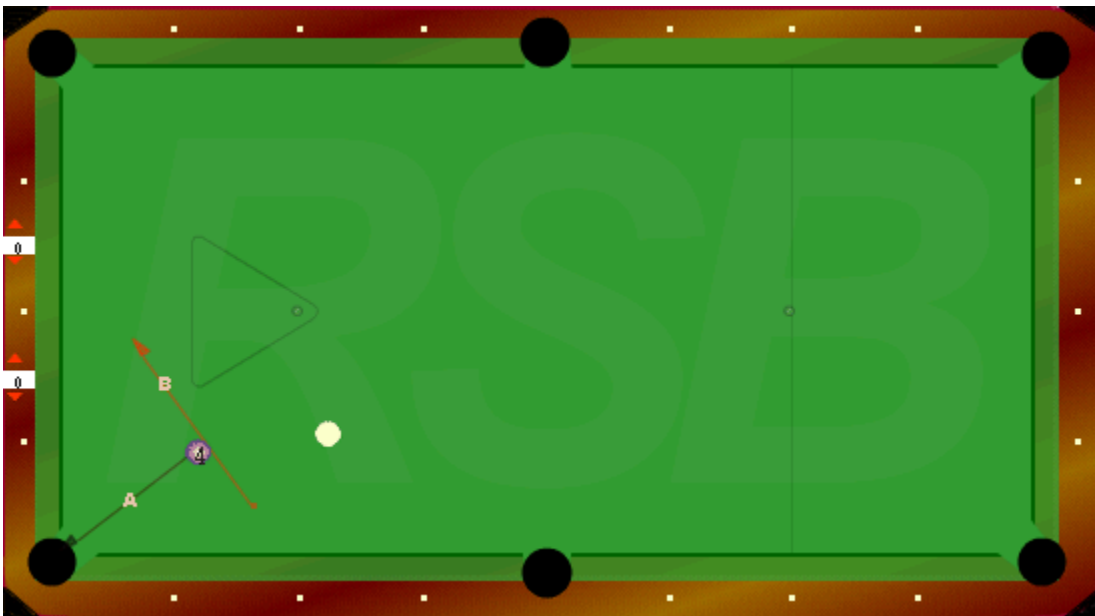
By David Baranski

Date: Wed, Apr 16 @ 00:57:02 CDT

Topic: Advanced Position Play

English is a necessary evil in the world of pool. English allows the cueist to alter the natural path of the cue ball (CB). Sometimes, the natural path of the object ball (OB) can be affected also, but that's a topic I'm not covering in this article. I term english a "necessary evil" because sidespin can cause numerous problems as well as rewards, many of which have been expounded in the "[Understanding English](#)" lesson posted by the Admin. This particular lesson will deal with using english and various other spin techniques to control the CB.

Before I continue, let's define a few terms. The term "english" refers to sidespin only. "Draw" is produced by striking somewhere on the bottom half of the CB. "Follow" is created by striking somewhere on the top half of the CB. "Center ball" is just that, striking the dead center of the CB. If you imagine a clock face, draw would be at 6 o'clock, and follow would be at 12 o'clock. Left would be 9 o'clock, and right would be 3 o'clock. Draw, center ball, and follow are not english as they are on the vertical axis of the CB and therefore create no sidespin. Left and right sidespin are english. Hitting the CB off the vertical axis creates sidespin. The distinction between english, draw, and follow is important because they affect the path of the CB in different ways. I'll get into that shortly. The "tangent line" is the line perpendicular to the line to the pocket (see diagram 1).

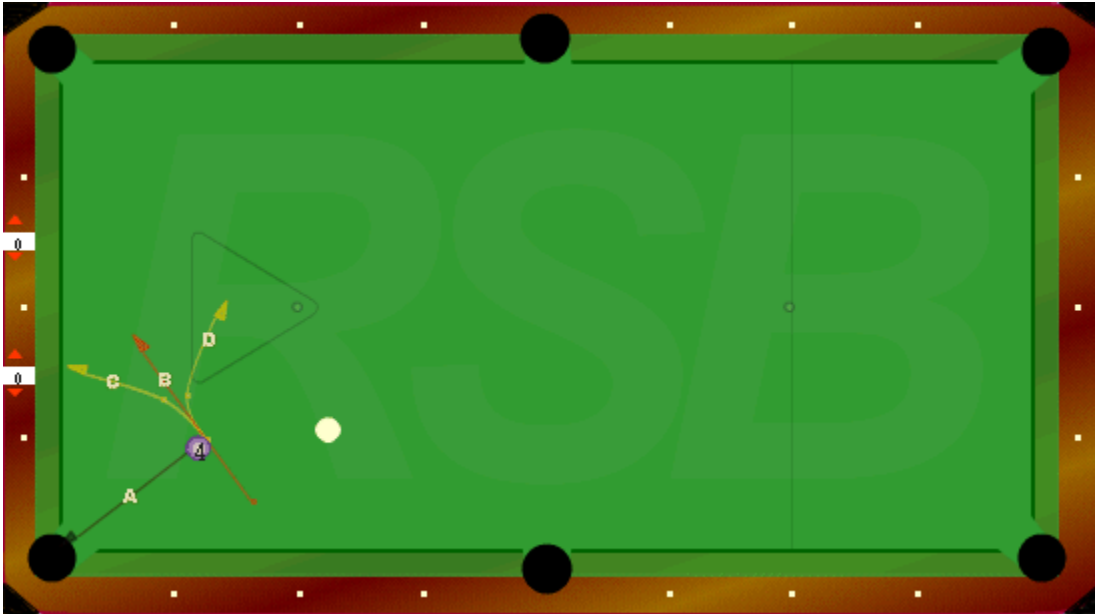


In this diagram, Line A is the line to the pocket, Line B is the tangent line. Line B is perpendicular (makes a right angle) with Line A. If we use a medium pace stroke with a center ball hit on the CB, the CB will travel more or less along this line.

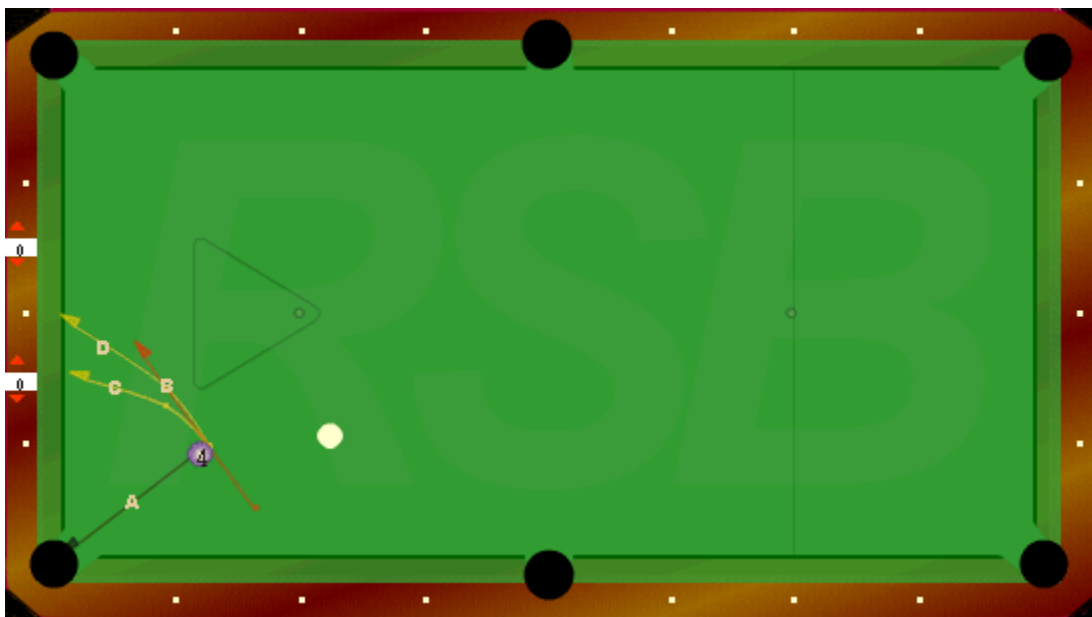
Before learning to use english, it is extremely important to understand the tangent line. The tangent line tells us where the CB is going to travel if we don't use any english, draw, or follow. Once we understand where the CB will go without any spin,

then we can use spin to alter that path. We can use the tangent line as a reference to determine the natural path, and then use our knowledge of spin to change that path.

Follow and draw will alter the path of the CB after it contacts the OB. Follow will cause the CB to roll forward of the tangent line, draw will cause the CB to come back from the tangent line (see diagram 2).



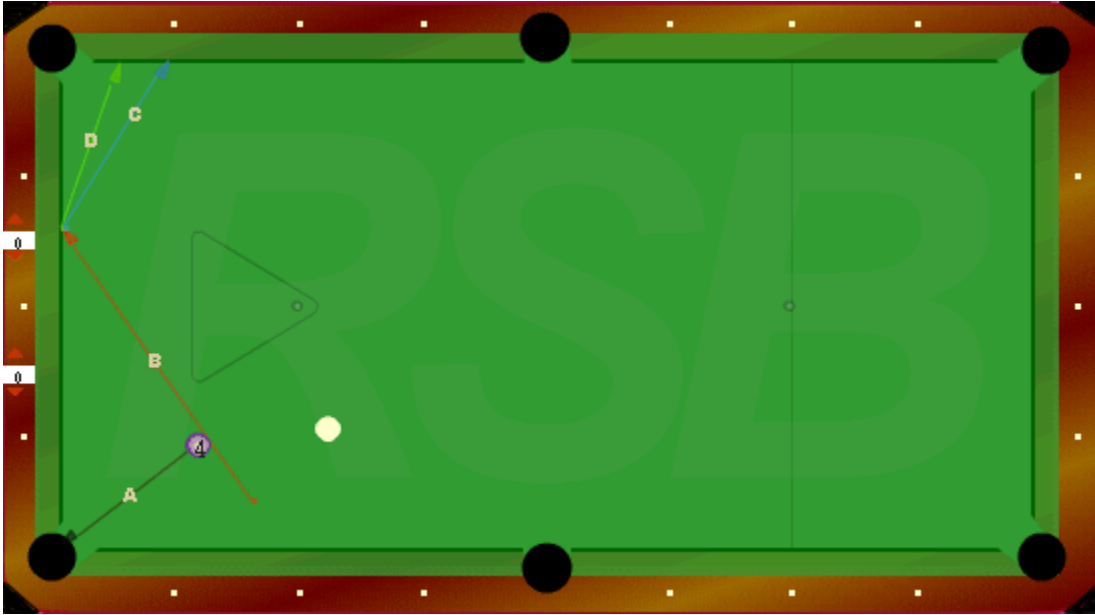
Line C is the path of the CB when using follow. Line D is the path of the CB when using draw. Notice that the CB follows the tangent line before rolling forward or coming back. This path is actually a parabola. Once the CB contacts the OB, it follows the tangent line until friction grabs the ball and the spin causes it to move forward (follow) or backward (draw). If the CB is struck harder, it stays on the tangent line longer. If we use follow and strike the CB hard, it would follow this line (see diagram 3).



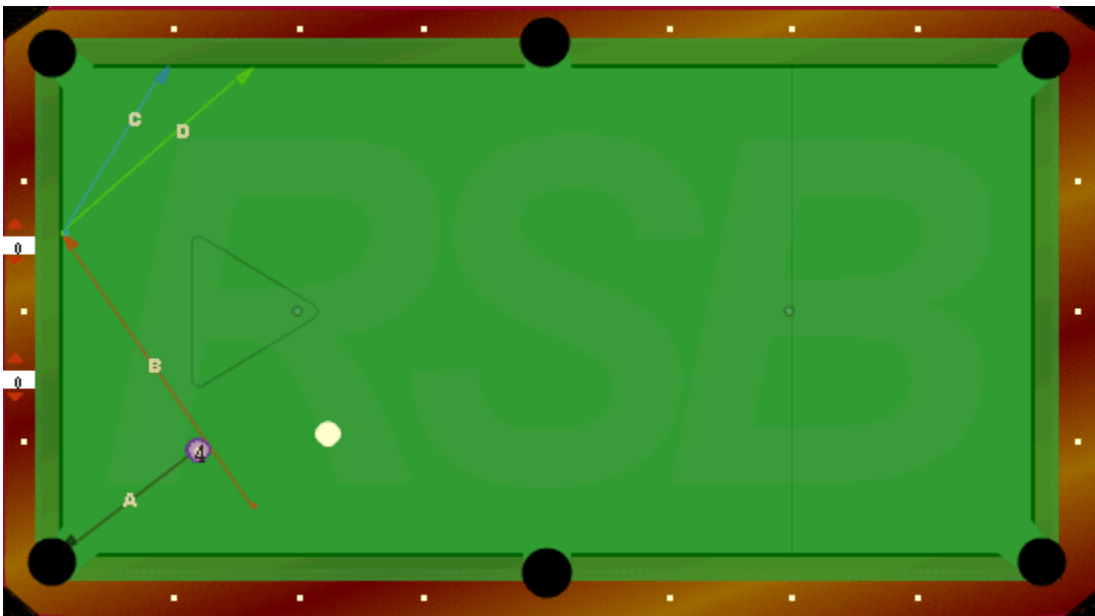
Line C is the path of the CB when using follow with a medium stroke. Line D is the path of the CB when using follow with a hard stroke. Notice that the CB path stays on the tangent line longer before moving forward to the short rail. The same parabolic path applies to draw, just on the opposite side of the tangent line.

Follow and draw alter the path of the CB after contact with the OB. English, on the other hand, alters the path of the CB after it contacts a RAIL. English has no effect whatsoever on the path of the CB if the CB doesn't touch a rail. Some players will swear that this last statement is false. I assure you, my statement is true. There are two shots that prove this. 1) Set up a short straight in shot. Use left english with no draw or follow (dead 9 o'clock). Stroke firmly with a level cue. Pocket the OB. The CB should just spin in place. 2) Set up the cut shot in the diagrams above. Use left english with no draw or follow (dead 9 o'clock). Stroke firmly with a level cue. Pocket the OB. The CB will follow the tangent line, it will not roll forward or backward of the tangent line. The CB will react differently once it contacts the rail, however.

There are two types of english: running and reverse. Running english "opens" up the rebound angle off the cushion and helps the CB "run" around the table. "Opening the angle" means that the angle created when using running english is larger than it would be if no english were used (see diagram 4).

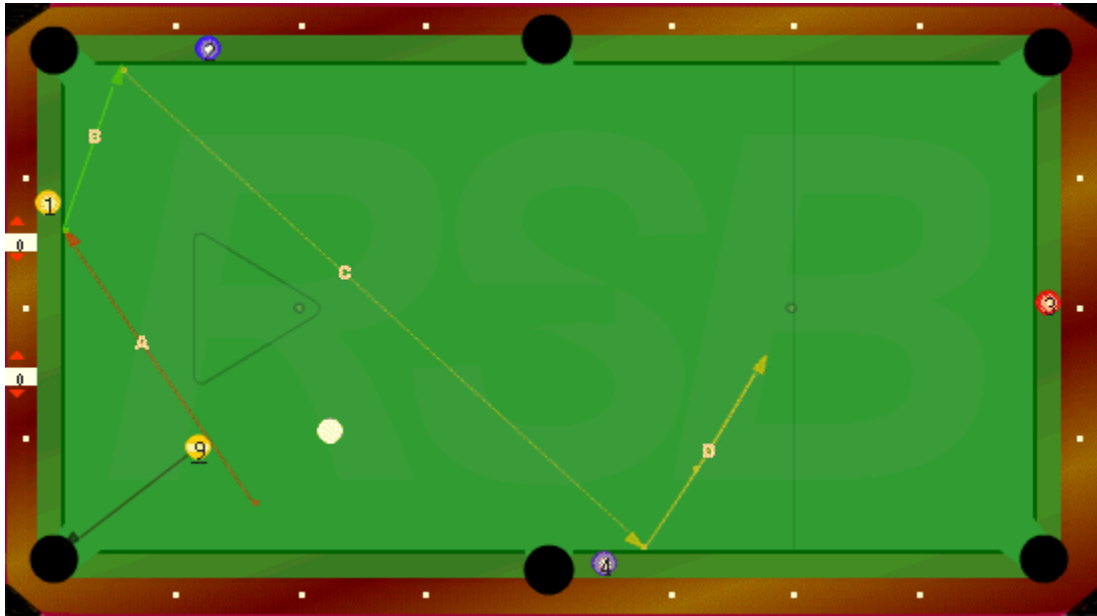


Line C represents the natural path of the CB (no draw, follow, or english is used). Line D represents the path of the CB if we use running english, in this case, right english (3 o'clock). Note that the angle created by BD is bigger than the angle created by BC. This is an example of opening the angle. Reverse english "closes" the rebound angle off the cushion (see diagram 5).



Line C represents the natural path of the CB. Line D represents the path of the CB if we use reverse english, in this case, left english (9 o'clock). Note that the angle created by BD is smaller than the angle created by BC. This is an example of closing the angle. Reverse english tends to slow the CB down when it contacts the rail, which is why it is also known as "kill" english.

In the 2 previous examples, right english was running and left english was reverse. How did I determine this? Face the rail the CB is going to contact. If the CB is traveling to the right as you face the rail, right english is running and left english is reverse. If the CB is traveling to the left as you face the rail, left english is running and right english is reverse. It's important to keep in mind that running and reverse english are determined relative to the rail the CB is going to contact. Look at this diagram.



In this diagram, I've numbered the rails using balls. The left rail is 1, top is 2, right is 3, and bottom is 4. In this example, I'm using right english to alter the natural path of the CB. Facing rail 1, the CB moves right, therefore right english is running english. When the CB strikes rail 1, it is with running english, so the angle opens. Facing rail 2, the CB moves to the right, therefore right english is running english. When the CB strikes rail 2, it is with running english, so the angle opens. Facing rail 4, the CB moves to the LEFT, therefore right english is reverse english. When the CB strikes rail 4, it is with reverse english, so the angle closes. Remember that running and reverse are determined relative to the rail.

Now we know how to alter the path of the CB after it contacts the OB. We also know how to alter the path of the CB after it contacts a rail. We can combine english with draw or follow to result in beautiful CB movement around the table. The purpose of knowing these things is to enable us to get the CB into position for the next shot. There are several steps involved in determining the correct spin necessary to accomplish the goal of position.

1. Determine the target position area. This means find the area where you want the CB to be for the next shot. It is important to pick out an area that is on the correct side of the next shot. In other words, pick an area so position to the next ball is easier.
2. Calculate the natural path of the CB. This step simply means find the tangent line. If the CB is going to strike a rail or rails, use the angle in = angle out method to determine where the CB will go after contacting the rail(s). This

- will give a rough estimate of the natural path of the CB. If the natural path of the CB goes to or through the target position area, the only thing you have to worry about is ball speed, and we can use just a center ball hit to accomplish the goal of position.
3. When necessary, use your newly discovered knowledge of draw, follow, and english to alter the natural path of the CB to get the CB into your target position area. This may mean using draw, follow, english, a combination of draw and english, or a combination of follow and english. Keep in mind that draw and follow affect the path of the CB after contacting the OB, english affects the path of the CB after contacting a rail. If the CB is not going to contact a rail, there is no need to use english. Use english only when necessary! English introduces many variables into a shot (see the "Understanding English" Lesson); therefore use it only when necessary to minimize the number of things that can go wrong.
 - o Try to use the simplest route possible to get to the position area. Use as few rails as possible. The farther the CB has to travel, the finer your ball speed intuition must be. Don't use 3 rails for position when 1 will work just as well.
 - o Try to have the CB travel on a line going into the shot. Imagine a line going through the next OB and its intended pocket. Try to get the CB traveling on this imaginary line whenever possible. Try to avoid having the CB traveling sideways through the position area; this may result in getting on the wrong side of the next shot.
 - o If there are too many balls to work around in order to gain good position, try to get the CB into the middle of the table. This may leave a harder shot, but at least it's a shot. The middle of the table will usually allow you to play the hard shot, or even a safety. The middle of the table is an excellent place to play from to give yourself options. Don't try to play difficult position and leave yourself without a next shot. This is called "taking what the table gives you." Having no shot at all can be disastrous, especially in today's ball in hand games.
 4. After visualizing and plotting your path, get down and stroke it! Maintain a level cue throughout the stroke, regardless of spin being applied.

Rule 3 is not set in stone. Different situations dictate different tactics; use your best judgment. Also, if you only know one way to attain position, do it; use what you know. Match play is not the time for experimentation.

"Spinning the rock" and CB control are necessary to become a good pool player. Beginners should practice using center ball hits to fine-tune ball speed first. Get comfortable with pocketing balls and using the tangent line for position. Only then should english be introduced. English will frustrate, amaze, and astound, but a greater understanding of sidespin will increase run out percentages because run outs are dependent on CB positioning. You can't run out if you don't have a shot. Use spin to gain better position and increase your run out percentages.

Advanced play, speed and carom control

By Ron Kurtz (badandy)

Date: Sat, Sep 13 @ 01:19:34 CDT

Topic: Advanced Position Play

Speed and Carom control are two essential elements of position play and is very important in a game like nine ball that is heavily position play dependent.

Speed control is making the CB travel as far as you want it but not too far. It takes practice and patience. One method of practice is to set up a shot and place a piece of paper on the table in the path of the CB and try to make it stop on the paper. Do it till you get reasonable with that shot then change the angle of the hit and do the same. That is a good drill but I get tired of drills after a couple of minutes. Another way to get a lot of practice is to play smart. When playing do not just think I want to get down over there somewhere but pick an ideal spot and try to get to it then watch your results. If you never think of a spot to land the CB you will not pay much attention to the resulting speed and your progress on speed control will be very slow. If you deliberately shoot for speed and pay attention to the result during regular games it will help a great deal in learning speed.

The same is true with CB carom, very important in position play. If you want to learn the angle the CB will travel after hitting the OB, predict the angle / location on cushion the CB will go after it hits the OB then watch it and see how close you were. Keep doing that and you will get good at it, which is essential for position play. If we just concern ourselves with watching the OB go down the hole we will be missing half the game and not progress. It is important to watch the CB after the stroke to learn advanced play.

The exit angle and rebound angle combined

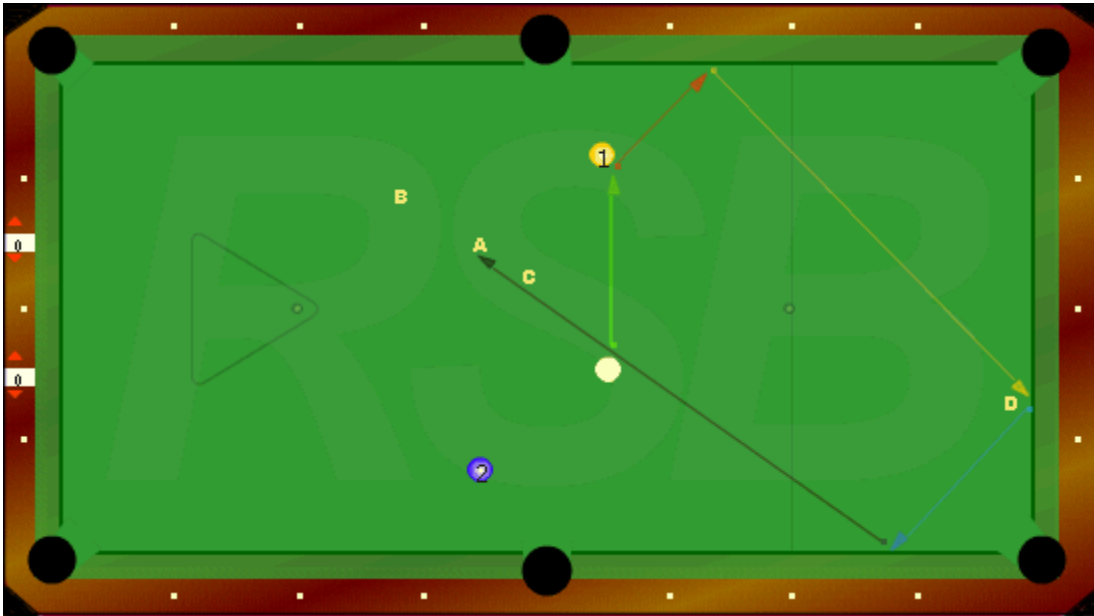
By Lester Raymond Dulawan

Date: Mon, Nov 15 @ 01:19:34 CDT

Topic: Advanced Position Play

Greetings pool fanatics the world over! It's been quite a while since I got the chance to share a new lesson with you. My thanks to admin for being so lenient with me during my extended absence. Let's start off this lesson with an overview of what I discussed last article. I mentioned the existence of an "exit", a "rebound" and an "entry angle".

It is a known law of physics that every action has an equal and opposite reaction, which we all know too well in pool. So, with this in mind I present you with a training drill that will test the limits of your patience and determination to master the three lines I mentioned earlier. Let's take a look at the position of the one ball and the cue ball, it's a fairly easy shot into the side pocket. Anyone can make this shot but what happens next is an all new perspective. That cue ball is going to exit to the right of that one ball to points unknown if you don't know any basic navigation skills.



Fortunately, we do have a system by which to help us visualize the path that cue ball takes after collision. Do this.... Pocket the one ball in the side with top spin, applying a moderately fast stroke. You know it's going to contact that side rail right? Good, now imagine, yes, **imagine that cue ball rolling** towards that same side rail with the activated top spin. It's gathering momentum as it hits and now try to visualize that hit that it makes into the rail.... If you see the path it takes on it's exit from the collision with the one then you know that it'll still be gathering momentum even after contact with the side rail. It will be at this point that you will experience being "ahead" of that cue ball's path. **"Ahead" meaning you're now starting to see things a split second before they happen.**

Professional players spend a lifetime trying to extend that split second into a full second, a couple of seconds and then more. Enough to allow them to play in a fixed

pattern all the time. That's why it looks like clockwork when they're running a rack. The thinking pattern is advanced based on what they CAN do. What you can do now is to practice getting that split second thinking faster than that cue ball can drift into position so that you can safely brag to yourself, and to your buddies that you knew it was going there all the time because you saw the path beforehand. They don't believe you? try predicting the outcome of their shots when you become familiar with identifying the exit, rebound and entry angles.... That'll stamp your point across the room.

Ok now it's back to this drill, your goal is to try and take the one in the side and come off three rails into position "A". This is the optimum position for you to take the two ball into the opposite side, go three rails and then try to get back into the initial position of the cue ball as you shot the one in the side. Re-spot the one ball just before you try to take it again and repeat the process if you can. The goal is to try and see how good you are in judging the optimum pace required when playing a delicate shot, kind of like this one. I do not kid you people, this is a very hard drill. It takes a tremendous amount of patience and practice to master this one. The payback is of course worthwhile. We don't want to overrun position into say, position "B". It'll be almost impossible for you to go three rails from this position. Position "C" is also a bad place to be in when you want to play a three rail shot for the second ball. I've marked a position "D" on the table, I want you to take notice of the spot the cue ball contacts on it's second rail. Try to notice the size of the angle and the line it produces for the approach into position "A". Hit the shot too hard and the entire path changes, too soft and it loses steam. Remember to **grip that cue ever so lightly** and to **keep your head above the cue when shooting**.

Concentrate on relating the way you shot and the outcome it produces so you won't be so dumbfounded when trying to predict and select the most appropriate path for the cue ball.... Till next time folks. Keep on shooting! Keep on winning!

***Credits:** Pool Players Academy is an instructional center that uses scientifically based programs developed to produce highly skilled players for the sport of pocket billiards. Its content and teaching range is much more advanced than any textbook can offer.*

XI - SAFETY & DEFENSE

This section covers some of the techniques for playing defense against an opponent.

- » [Game plan for safety play](#)
- » [Tips on Safety Play](#)
- » [Advanced Safety Play with multiple objectives](#)

Game plan for safety play

By Buddy Lory

Date: Wed, Aug 20 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Safety & Defense

After deciding to play a safe, a lot of players have no idea of what to do next. Listed below are some of the criteria I use for executing a safety and hints for good safety play.

Criteria:

1. Snooker or hide opponent so he cannot shoot directly at the object ball.
2. Do not put the object ball near a pocket.
3. If the situation dictates that you cannot hide or snooker the opponent. Leave him a bank; preferably long one or a short bank with a bad angle.
4. On certain safeties leaving a long straight in shot will work.
5. Leave the cue ball on the rail or cushion, this will cut down the area on the cue ball he can hit.
6. Another good safety is to leave your opponent over a ball (jacked up), where he is forced to elevate the butt of the cue.

Hints:

1. Travel of the cue ball or the object ball should be kept to a minimum. If both balls are traveling long distances they are harder to control. I usually pick one or the other, if I choose a cue ball safety I will hit object ball thin (little movement) then try to place the cue ball in a safe position. If I choose an object ball safe I will stop or stun the cue ball (little movement) shooting the object ball to a safe position.
2. When shooting a soft safety where both balls are close together and will not travel far, use a very short stroke. Using a long stroke will make it difficult to stop the cue stick. Try this, using a long stroke hit the cue ball and make it travel around 1 or 2 inches, very hard if not impossible to do. Now try the same shot with a very short stroke.

I cannot count the number of times I witnessed games being won with a good safety. Defense is just as much a part of playing high level pool as is running out. Armed with these criteria and hints I hope your safety play will improve.

Credits: Student and teacher of pool.

Tips on Safety Play

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Jun 13 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Safety & Defense

Good safety play will win you more pool games than any other technique that you will learn. I make this statement with the assumption that you are capable of running at least 3 or 4 balls when you have ball in hand or an open shot. Good safeties frustrate your opponent and often results in ball in hand for you. **Probably the most important tip I can give you on playing a good safety is to try to precisely control where either the cue ball or the object ball ends up but not both.** You do need to be aware of general direction where the ball that you are not trying to control is going. It doesn't do any good to hide the cue ball and have the object ball roll around the table and end up where your opponent can easily hit it and play a better safety on you. About 90% of the safeties I play involve controlling where the cue ball ends up rather than the object ball.

When the object ball is on or close to the rail mostly centered between pockets with the cue ball at a steep acute angle (90 to 60 degrees) to the shot a thin soft cut with english usually works best. Inside english on the cue ball will keep the object ball from moving very far after it strikes the rail. Outside english will make the object ball roll farther. As the object ball is stationary in this type of shot it will not move very far as there is very little transfer of energy from the cue ball to the object ball. The cue ball on the other hand will travel quite a distance because it retains most of the energy gained from the impact of the cue. As you are shooting the shot soft you will have much greater control of the cue ball and where it ends up.

Thin cuts often work when the object ball is not close to the rail. Just shoot softly and use english if necessary to change the direction of the cue ball to bury it behind a cluster of balls or leave it on the other end of the table.

If you have a straight on shot where the object ball is close to another ball shoot a stop shot to keep the cue ball behind the second ball. Of course you don't want to shoot the stop shot hard because the object ball will probably roll around the table and make itself visible to the cue ball. In this case shoot soft draw just hard enough where the cue ball will quit spinning backwards when it strikes the object ball. The end result is the same as a stop shot using center ball with no english.

If you are playing a weaker player in a handicap match that where they are under rated and you have to give them a game or 2 on the wire there are 2 methods that will help you win. In this case we are talking about a 5 or 6 rated player that actually shoots 6 or 7 speed (Arizona ratings that goes from 4 to 10) and you are either a 7, 8 or 9. The first method is very simple. Play as many safeties as you have to until you get to a point where you can comfortably run out the table. The other method is to simply give this player a shot they can make early in the game. The huge majority of underrated 6 or even 7 rated players can't run out the table with either ball in hand or an open shot. After they make 3 or 4 balls you should have no problem finishing the rack.

Of course the best safety of all is to break and run the rack.

Any questions or comments can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Advanced Safety Play with multiple objectives

By Anonymous

Date: Thu, Oct 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Safety & Defense

Safety play is essential with most pocket billiard games, especially 8-ball, which we'll concentrate on here. Most mid-level players have a basic understanding of safeties, but few achieve successful safety shots when an important game is on the line.

The key difference between a typical league-level safety shot and a professional safety shot is that the professional shot achieves two or more things. Simply hooking your opponent behind a ball is not sufficient in most competitive scenarios. We've all had instances in games where we hook an opponent, and they simply kick the cue ball off of a rail into their ball. These games usually result in the opponents kicking at their balls until one of them finally has a shot at something. Again, most average players at this point are only trying to avoid a foul, and any goals or plans on how to run the table and win the game are forgotten.

The key to safety play is not only hooking your opponent and making him try a difficult shot, but improving your own table as well. For instance, your opponent, playing solids, may have his three-ball blocking a pocket with four of your striped balls sitting around it in a traffic jam. One option for you is to attempt to cheat one of your balls around the three-ball, or carom your ball off of the three and into the pocket. Depending on how the three-ball sits, this might be the best option. But sometimes there is no way to get your balls into that pocket, and out of frustration a typical player will attempt to spread the balls to another part of the table, or try a very difficult cut shot into another pocket.

A safety option for this situation is what I call 'stealing your opponent's shot'. What you want to accomplish, of course, is to take your opponent's three-ball shot (what he might think of as his 'insurance' ball, or 'goalie' ball) away from him by pocketing it yourself! This is the first goal. The second goal is to free up that pocket for your own balls. The third goal is to hide the cue ball amongst your own balls, hopefully glueing it to one or more of them so your opponent has to attempt a two- or three-rail kick to get to his own balls (remember, he doesn't have his easy three-ball to shoot anymore). You must also, obviously, carom the cue ball off of one of your own balls and then into his three-ball to make a legal hit. This type of shot is very simple, and advanced players know it well, but it is one of those options average players simply don't see, and is a perfect example of accomplishing several things with one shot.

Another example is a ball-in-hand situation. Your opponent has ran all of his balls but hooked himself on the eight-ball. After his foul, you have ball-in-hand. All of your balls are spread out well except for three balls in a cluster along a rail. Many times a player will attempt a break out shot by slamming a ball into a pocket and sending the cue ball flying into the cluster. This is unwise for at least two reasons: hitting hard makes the balls do unpredictable things, and 'breaking up' the balls at that velocity might very well form other clusters somewhere else on the table.

An option here, depending on how the cluster sits, is to 'tap' the cluster at fairly close range, again accomplishing multiple goals: your cluster is broken (at a manageable speed so you can somewhat control where the balls end up on the

table), and you freeze the cue ball in a spot where your opponent has to pull off a three rail kick shot with his cue at a sixty-degree angle just to avoid giving you another ball in hand!

There are countless ways this principle applies, especially in position-oriented games such as eight-ball and one-pocket. Against a skilled opponent, every shot must take into account multiple objectives. On a crowded seven-foot table, an expert player playing eight-ball, or nine-ball for that matter, will not attempt to run his balls until he has everything right where he wants it. This may mean taking care of a cluster, clustering his opponent, adjusting a key ball, etc. I've known a few players who, if they deem it necessary, will, with a wide-open table, play four evil safeties in a row in order to adjust the ball spread. By evil I mean safeties in which my cue ball was frozen to at least one of his balls or a rail, and virtually no legal shot was available.

When playing safe, always take into account all the factors: Where will my balls be after this shot? Where will my opponent's ball be? Is he just going to safety me back?

Also, give yourself leeway. Don't attempt a shot which, if your speed is off just a little bit, your opponent will have an easy run-out. A good benefit of multiple-objective safeties is that even if one of the goals isn't met, the other one probably will be.

Finally, always ask yourself how the shot is benefitting you, not just how it will hurt your opponent. Safety play requires foresight, not just making your opponent shoot a difficult shot.

Credits: 15 years of shooting balls into pockets, three years of actually playing pool.

XII - THE MENTAL GAME

This section deals with the mental side of the game of pool.

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Consistency

By The Monk

Date: Mon, Mar 31 @ 16:12:11 CST

Topic: The Mental Game

In my workshops, I always ask the students what they are having the most trouble with. Almost every single time, they answer, "consistency". Most players are working to bring consistency to their game. After all, if they could perform the way they are capable of performing, and do this every time, they would win more games, raise their league average and win more tournaments.

If you are an inconsistent player, you are having problems in your fundamentals. It stands to reason. An inconsistent player does not hit the cue ball the same way every time. Therefore, he/she cannot expect consistent results. And once you miss-hit the cue ball, your mind begins to play tricks on you. You start to think you are having mental problem, something is wrong with you, and then you begin to get down on yourself. You go into a slump. You have no confidence. Your stroke is unsure and tentative and things can only get worse. You begin to change your stance, your grip, your style of play. And once in a while, on that special night, you click into your real self and shoot lights out. Everything works and you are once again drawn into the game with all the enthusiasm of a world class player. "If I can only play like this all the time", you dream, "I could be a real good player".

Inconsistency has everything to do with fundamentals. It is measured in the quality of hit on the cue ball. If you are not a master of the fundamentals, you will never strike the cue ball the same way. Each shot will be an adventure in timing. In order to build good sound skills, skills that will serve you well, you must be able to hit the cue ball with a clean pure stroke. The cue tip must go through the cue ball on an exact plane. There can be no slipping, no bouncing, and no pushing. Everything must be pure.

If I can help you become a more consistent player, you will win more game, enjoy the game, and be satisfied with your performance. Consistency builds good trust skills. It helps you reserve energy for those tough matches late in the tournament. It gives you confidence. Begin work on your fundamental approach to every single shot and you will raise your level of play. You will begin to trust your game. You will be able to trust your performance.

When you become a more consistent player you will always be ready for that match, should it come along. How many times have you heard a player say, "I'm playing so bad, I don't think I will even show up to play tonight." Remember, the reason you are playing so bad is because you are not hitting the cue ball the way you intend to. Things are not working like we expect. We must strive for a clean pure hit on the cue ball, and the winning will take care of itself.

Inconsistency is not a curse. It is not something you are condemned with. It is a simple case of not hitting the cue ball the way you intend to every time you shoot a shot. We can fix it.

Next month, I am going to take you through a stroke sequence that will give you confidence and help you become the fine player you really are. Until then, "May All The Rolls Go Your Way."

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Consistency - Part II

By The Monk

Date: Sat, Apr 5 @ 06:45:00 CST

Topic: The Mental Game

If you hit the same shot the exact same way every time, you will become a consistent player. Almost every student I encounter is looking for consistency in their game. And why not? If you can trust yourself to turn in a fine performance, you will win more game, more tournaments, and raise your league average. In addition, you will enjoy this game. No longer will you hold your breath to see which one of you shows up for the match. Sometimes the good players shows up and gets you off to a big lead, then, in the middle of the match, the good player changes heads with the bad player and you can't make three balls in a row. Consistency is worth working for. And it takes a professional approach to the fundamentals in order to achieve consistency in your game.

First of all, you need a good grip. A firm grip. If your grip changes, even the slightest, it will change the shot. So we must master a firm grip. Place an object ball near the number one diamond on the long rail. Put your cue ball on the back rail. You are about a foot away from the object ball, on the rail. Shoot this shot down into the corner pocket with your normal grip. Now shoot it with a tight grip. At the moment of impact, squeeze the cue in your hand. Notice the difference. Your hit is solid. The cue tip goes through the cue ball in a nice tight solid manner and gives you a truer response.

We must go through the cue ball with absolute precision. Those who have developed good speed dynamics are using the exact same grip on every shot. There is no give, or hop or inconsistency in their play. Therefore they become more confident in their game. They experience better trust skills. When the money is on the line, they can trust themselves to deliver the winning stroke. They win more games simply because they know they are going to deliver a quality hit on the cue ball. This gives them confidence.

Next time you get a chance, compare a quality grip to a choke stroke. You will see a vast difference.

Grip is directly related to a good stance. You cannot have a good grip with a poor stance. Remember, the true measurement of a good grip and stance is in the quality of hit. You will not rise to the top if you are constantly fighting your grip and stance. The grip and stance must work for you. It must serve you so you can conserve energy for the tough matches. If you experience fatigue late in a tournament it can be traced to your struggles with grip and stance. You are working too hard, wearing yourself out. You are not letting your grip and stance work for you.

Your stance must put you in position to see the angle of the shot. If you are having a hard time seeing the shot, it can be corrected in your stance. It must be well balanced. If someone pushes you while you are in your stance, you should not fall over. For right handers, your right shoulder needs to be in a direct line with your target. Pretend you are looking at the shot from an eye in your right shoulder. Your left foot is in line with the shot. And your inner right thigh is in line with the shot. Once you accomplish this solid stance, all you need to do now, is deliver a quality hit

on the cue ball and let the shot work for you. In my book *Point TheWay*, I talk about the shot shooting itself. Let it happen. May All The Rolls Go Your Way.

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Consistency - Part III

By The Monk

Date: Fri, Apr 18 @ 05:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

If I can help you become a more consistent player you will win more tournaments, more matches and raise your league average. It's hard to go to a tournament with a winning attitude if you are not sure how you are going to play. You may play well for a while, and then play poorly. If this is your experience in pocket billiards, it is hard to develop the confidence you need to become a winner. If you are to win a tournament you must believe in yourself. You must have good strong trust skills. In addition, your will skills must be solid and determined.

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to say, "I am here to win the tournament. I know I am going to play well. All I need now, is a few good rolls"? Now that would be a nice attitude.

You lean into a shot, your grip is a few inches off, your right leg is not perfectly in line, and you miss hit the cue ball. Your mind begins to tell stories of how awful you really are. Your trust skills are gone, your will is sapped, and you are ready to quit. Suddenly, your opponent becomes God and is incapable of missing a shot. All this because of a poor stance and grip. And we think our lady of good fortune is having an affair.

When your grip is off, and your stance is off, you have a hard time seeing the shot. Once that happens you lose confidence. Then without confidence, you cannot deliver a committed stroke. It is all very simple. What we have here is failure to communicate. A breakdown in our fundamentals.

I asked one of my opponents if his kids were happy. His mortal fear was that, since he was a pool player, he might not be good father. Once he thought about how happy or sad his kids were, he tensed up, his grip got too tight, his stance was not right, he rushed his shots, and he lost the match.

I asked another player if he ever had trouble with this strange cloth we were playing on and he became so concerned about the cloth that he shot all his shots harder than his normal routine. He lost the match.

Once your mind is diverted from the fundamental approach to shooting balls, you will have problems. It all comes down to the one shot in front of you. Nothing more than the shot you are facing. And in order to succeed with that shot, your eyes must be coming right out of your stance. You see the shot, and you shoot the shot and the ball goes in. Keep doing this until you run out of shots.

Line up fifteen balls across the table from diamond number one on the long rail. Lay your cue down on the bottom rail in line with a ball. Step into the shot, and shoot it one handed into the far corner pocket. Shoot all the balls into any of the corner pockets. Do it again. On the third time, once you lean into your shot, place your left hand on the rail for a bridge. You should be in a perfect stance. Shoot this rack very hard. Make a nice hard sound.

Stand along side the table near the side pocket and lean into your stance. Place your cue on the rail. There will be a line between the rubber rail, and wood. This line runs down the rail. Stroke the cue back and forth on top of the rail, and note how the cue stays on that line. If it wobbles off the line, you are not in a good stance. Your arm is not straight. Get yourself back in line and you will be making more shots.

Take a coke bottle and lay it on the table. Stroke the cue tip in and out of that bottle in a rapid-fire fashion. Spend some time on these fundamental measurements on the accuracy of your stroke. Remember, we must be hitting the cue ball the same way every time. That is, our quality of hit, must be pure. No bounce, no push, no give. A solid pure hit. May All The Rolls Go Your Way.

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Kaizen in Pool

By rbold

Date: Tue, Apr 1 @ 12:39:27 CST

Topic: The Mental Game

Kaizen is a Japanese term for "continuous improvement". I have adopted this principle from my work into pool. Every month for the past few months now, I've recorded the substantial learnings I incurred from practice and/or watching good players. Being able to store pool knowledge into your arsenal from time to time, as well as being able to realize & execute them when needed measures how one has improved in the game.

Preparation of the Mind

By David J. Baranski (DoomCue)

Date: Wed, Apr 2 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: The Mental Game

Once the physical aspects of pool (stance, grip, bridging, stroking, etc) have been learned, pool becomes mostly a mental game. The ability to focus and to concentrate fully is what separates the hackers from the professionals. I've seen players with a superior stroke lose to lesser players simply because the player with the superior stroke failed to properly focus on a key shot. Why do these things happen? Is it fate or destiny? Does a Higher Power reach out and knock the sense out of the player with the superior stroke? The answer lies in the mind. A lapse in concentration leads to a lack of focus on the task at hand, which leads to disaster.

Proper preparation is necessary to enable full focus and concentration. Preparation exists in a couple of different stages. There is the preparation of practice, and there's the preparation before a shot during a match. These are two distinct states.

We use practice as a way to learn how to shoot certain shots - how to move the cue ball around the table, and how to pocket the object ball. During practice, we should constantly think about what we're doing with the stance, grip, bridge, and stroke. We should find what works by using the process of trial and error. Certain questions must be addressed during practice: Where do I contact the cue ball? Where is the point of contact? Where is the aiming point? How do I get the cue ball into my target area? How much force is necessary? (This is not an exhaustive list; there are other questions which need to be answered.) Stance, grip, bridge, and stroke - all of these must be a part of the solution to these questions. The point of all this is to consciously think about the factors in making a successful shot. There should be a conscious effort to think about the ramifications of the physical stroke. The reason we think about these things during practice is so we don't have to think about them during a match. Practice should enter shots into your mental computer's database, to be pulled up at the right moment during a match. Practice is simply Stage One of preparation. Stage Two is the pre-shot routine.

If practice has been done properly, your mind will have stored hundreds upon hundreds of shots. During match play, you simply have to pull the appropriate shot out of your memory banks and apply it to the situation before you. No conscious thought is necessary. All conscious thought should have been done during practice. During a match, your focus should be on the task at hand - moving the cue ball to its desired position and pocketing the object ball. Trust your mind to do its job and pull the proper shot out of the memory bank. This is where the pre-shot routine comes into play.

A pre-shot routine adds to the consistency necessary to perform the repetitive task of bending over, aiming, and shooting. Just as you should want everything during the stroke to be the same from shot to shot, you should want everything before the stroke to be the same. The pre-shot routine gets your mind ready for its task. The pre-shot routine involves looking at the table layout, assessing the situation, pulling the proper shot out of the memory bank, and using the physical aspects of pool to accomplish the goals of pocketing the ball and moving the cue ball to its desired position. Look at the table. Imagine the path from the cue ball to the object ball. Imagine the path of the cue ball after contact. Visualize these things. Allow your

mind to pull up the proper shot to accomplish the desired result. During these stages of the pre-shot routine, some players will unconsciously move the cue stick back and forth in their hands. The mind is preparing the body to shoot the shot. Next, align the physical aspects of pool - stance, grip, bridge, and stroke. Address the cue ball by picking out the desired contact point between the cue and cue ball. Focus on the object ball and your aiming line. Do not allow anything into your thoughts besides moving the cue ball to the point of contact. If something doesn't feel right, STAND UP! Proper mental focus requires commitment to the shot. You cannot commit to the shot if something feels wrong. After standing up, restart the pre-shot routine from the beginning. Standing up after bending over takes discipline. Do not allow yourself to shoot a shot with which you're not fully comfortable. Finally, after committing to the shot, stroke it. There is nothing more gratifying than to prepare properly for a task and see it come to fruition.

Volumes have been written about the mental game in many sports. There is a famous one for the sport of tennis. I highly recommend Phil Cappelle's "A Mind for Pool: How to Master the Mental Game." It has 300 pages of information(!) about pool and the mental game. All sports, including pool, require superb physical and mental training. Both are necessary to attain the highest level of achievement. Here's to hoping you've taken the first step to good pool mental health.

Pacing yourself on long nights

By Martin Misa

Date: Thu, Apr 17 @ 05:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

One tool you can use in your game is Pacing. If you go all out with every shot on a long night, you might tire and fizzle out just when it matters most. Nurture your concentration by letting your mind rest once in a while. Just assure yourself that you know when you are relaxing so that you will not get real emotional after missing shots and get affected all the way through; and so that you can react to a wake-up call on critical shots. Be aware of that switch which you will turn on and off. A good time to relax is when the table is tight. You can set the game up by letting your adversary take the hard shots. You can also relax taking an easy shot, especially when the remaining balls are flirting with the pockets. It is also a good time to do whatever psych-war you want to work on while relaxing. If you lose your game because of a relaxed shot missed, don't take it too hard. Part of the game. You can't always win. At least it's better than missing an intense shot. Besides, you can always try harder next game. Remember - relaxed or intense, you must always plan at least three shots ahead and decide on what kind of shot to execute before getting down to make your bridge. If you have second thoughts, get up again.

The real good thing about pacing yourself is that you can enjoy your game better, win or lose. Isn't that what matters?

Credits: Martin Misa is the President of the Billiard Buddies Association of the Philippines (BBAP). Being exposed to the wizardry of Filipino pool masters, he has picked up concepts in the game that he is sharing with us. He can be reached thru e-mail at mbmisa@mydestiny.net

Sometimes, all we have left is instincts

By themonk

Date: Mon, Apr 28 @ 08:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

Quality of hit is vital to pocket billiards excellence. And the quality we find in our stroke is directly related to our ability to concentrate. Our ability to concentrate is directly related to how strong our will skills are. Will skills breed desire. Desire breeds energy. If we arrive at a tournament without a clear desire to win we negatively effect our will skills. And this breaks down our ability to deliver a quality to our stroke.

There are times when you are exhausted from a day of competition. It is getting late and you are suffering from fatigue. Still, you are close to winning the tournament. But your ability to concentrate is severely drained. Your will skills are almost gone. Remember, will skills breed desire. Your ability to focus on the field of attention has become a struggle. You are working hard at something that should be natural. And this struggle, in itself, is interference.

There are professional gamblers who look for players who have lost their will skills. they look for this syndrome in players. Once they see it, they will bet on the opposition. A tired pool player has a difficult time winning. It all comes down to the ability to deliver a crisp clear hit on the cue ball. When you are tired, your stroke become tired.

Have you ever heard the term, "battle fatigue?" When you are tired, everything becomes a battle. How ironic. A battle is called for when you have the least of energy. Sometimes, pocket billiards can be a cruel mistress. When a battle is called for, we need to turn away from the calling and learn to operate on our instincts.

When you limp into the finals and can no longer focus on the field of attention, focus instead, on the sound of the hit. Do nothing but wait for the sound. Listen for a nice crisp click on the cue ball. Listen, and it will happen.

Remember, I am tired. I cannot visualize the shot. But I can listen for the hit. I can wait, and let my stroke work for me. When you visualize, you must be able to repeat what is in your mind. What you see, a nice clear shot, does not fit with the way you feel. You are tired. You are forcing yourself to see something you cannot perform. So you set up a conflict. Let the visualization go for now. Change over to your instincts. It will carry through this match and gain you the prize. Stop looking and listen for the sound of a nice clear hit on the cue ball. Listen, let it happen. The shot will shoot itself.

When I am faced with a tough shot for the money, I tell myself there are two things that will happen here. Not, can happen, but will happen. And only two things. I will make the shot or I will miss the shot. Therefore, I must not be preoccupied with results. I cannot worry about results. I must deliver a nice clear crisp stroke and let the results become what they will. "I may miss this shot, but I will look good missing it." I tell myself to listen for the sound of a nice crisp pop on the cue ball. Nothing tentative, nothing done in fear, everything done with confidence. Listen for the sound.

I relish the times when I have limped home to victory while I was tired and unable to perform. There are times when you simply must dig a little deeper. May all the rolls go your way.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Welcome to World Class

By themonk

Date: Fri, May 2 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

Many of my students desire to become world class players. Not all of them want to join the tour and compete. They simply want to become world class players. I admire them for their sincere desire to pursue pocket billiards excellence. It is pure joy to be able to run racks and achieve mastery over this game. Mastery over this game means that you succeed with the shot in front of you. Pocket billiards will always have the final say, but we who are skilled, can visit this mistress and come away with a good feeling. We have spent time with greatness, and measured up to the high standards she demands.

What is world class? Has anyone ever really defined what world class level really is? In my book *The Lesson*, I have several exercises. When you can succeed with them, a number of times in a row, you are a world class player.

I had a student visit the Monk Billiard Academy. We began to work on The Monk 101 program. He blew right through the material. By the time we reached the second day of his three day session, I determined I had nothing to teach him. He was a master. He had developed his skills to a world class level. "I can do all the things in your lessons Monk, but I can't win tournaments." He complained.

His problem was not inner game as one might suspect. Inner game problems come when you are not sure of what you are doing. He was a master player. He could execute every single stroke with precision. He put up world class numbers in the mid term exam. He handled my exercises with ease. But he could not win tournaments. Since there was nothing further I could teach him, and he still had one more day left in his session, I decided to play matches with him. We would play a match at The Monk Billiard Academy, then go to Boston Billiards for another match, with a final match down by the seashore in Portsmouth New Hampshire. The winner would buy dinner. I can tell you, we had a great day and I am not going to tell you who won.

It was during our session that I discovered why he could not win tournaments. This was a big break through. The reason he could not win tournaments was because he was not a tournament player. He was a match player. When it came to match play, he was a master. He put up world class numbers because he was in his element. And when he left the Monk Billiard Academy, he vowed to stay within his field of expertise. He would play the game that suits him the most. Match play.

A little side bar on what a match player is. He plays for money, but is not a gambler. He does not seek to make money. He only likes pressure on the match. He loves the one on one competition, and will only play a specific match. He will not get involved in a marathon of wills. And he will not back down from anyone. Therefore he is always prepared. He likes to set up a match, prepare for it, and arrive with cue in hand. He simply loves the game. And when the game is over, he can cheer as loudly for his opponent as he can for himself. He is a fan of the art of pocket billiards. Never, will he let this art become destroyed by the focus on gambling. He hates gamblers and will always turn down a match from a gambler. The match player is on the look out for the art of pocket billiards excellence. Tournaments, leagues, social play and gambling are not the art of pocket billiards. Match play is. And he will play

for as much as a hundred thousand dollars. The amount he wagers is just enough to hurt him should he fail to win. For two players like us, dinner on the docks was plenty incentive to strive for pocket billiards excellence.

I put up world class numbers that day, and I was richly rewarded by the satisfaction a fine performance can bring. I was beaming when I paid for the dinner, for the match player always wins. He gets to spend time with a true artist and sees the true art of pocket billiards played out. May all the rolls go your way.

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A Special Lesson

By The Monk

Date: Mon, May 5 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

Once you master the techniques found in my book "The Lesson" you will need to turn your attention on the mastery over self. It is time we sort out how we are going to approach winning. It is one thing to run a rack, it is quite another thing to win. The closer we move to that ultimate victory, the more we are bothered by interference. Shots that were easy and routine before, suddenly look harder now. This interference comes from our own confusion about winning. For some of us, we want to win, but we are not sure we want the responsibility of winning. We are not sure we want to stand in the spotlight, or listen to the jealous rumblings from those who lost. In the winning experience we are about to tread in uncharted waters and this brings uncertainty. Remember, the brain does not want to deal with uncertainty and will do everything it can to keep you away from it.

At some point in your pool career you must define what it is you want from this game. I have recorded a tape "I Came To Win" that deals with this subject. Once you figure out what you want, you have a value. This value drives you on. It gives you energy.

There are two kinds of drives. The one you move towards and the one you move away from.

Take the value, "I want to win" That's a good drive. "But I don't want to cause disappointment in others". That's a moving away from value. When we play someone who is of lesser skill level, we have a hard time turning in our normal good game. "I want to win" but I don't want to raise my level of expectation. How many times have you complained when you were moved up a level? "I want to win" but I am embarrassed to stand in the spotlight. How many time have you apologized for playing great?

Do you see the conflict here? One value to move towards, and one value to move away from. We want to win, but we do not want to experience the discomfort winning brings. When we are working our way through the winner's bracket, our brain begins to think of the discomfort winning brings and little by little we begin to sabotage our performance. We are playing this game with conflict. We must reduce the conflict if we are to realize our true potential. When we play this game with unresolved conflict we often tire out before the tournament is done and fall victim to our own fatigue.

Change your value and you change your destiny. Learn to seek the uncertainty of winning. Learn to enjoy the disappointment on the face of your opponent and learn to enjoy the spotlight winning brings.

Make as your value, your only value, "I CAME TO WIN" That is what you are all about. And measure your life by the moment. Once you do that, you will have no limits. Your moment, is the shot in front of you. Did you shoot that shot like you CAME TO WIN? May all the rolls go your way.

Credits: [*The Monk Billiard Academy*](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Let go of your dream

By The Monk

Date: Fri, May 23 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

One you set your personal goals in this game, you must then be willing to let go of them. You begin your pocket billiards journey with the end in mind. And then you go about the process of getting yourself there. Sit back and relax. Close your eyes and visualize what it will be like when you reach your goals. Put this picture in your minds eye. Make it a natural part of who you are. Now, turn this picture over to the Universal Mind. Some fancy words here, but don't let that scare you. Turn this goal over to the Universal Mind and simply go about your business. You must be willing to let go of your goals in order to realize your goals. If your eyes are on the goals, you will not see the task in front of you. Remember, the mountain climber does not keep his eyes on the top of the mountain. If he did, he would slip and fall. He must be concerned with each step along the way and let go of the end results. They will take care of themselves once you have them firmly placed in the hands of the Universal Mind.

The Universal Mind is the part of you that drives you on. Your intent to do something, is what gives you energy. Intentions breed desire. You cannot have success without a clear desire to pay the price success demands. Therefore, once you have laid out your intentions and placed them in the Universal Mind, you will have the desire to carry it out to the completion. It is only when you get confused that your goals become muddled and you cannot see the end results. If you are not focused on what you want to accomplish, you will have difficulty doing the simple things that will get you there. If you are not sure which mountain you want to climb, you will not be able to choose the right trail. All sorts of evil will befall the one who is on the wrong trail.

Since you are striving for something that is basically beyond your comprehension and ability, you cannot trust yourself to do all the right things to get you there. When I decided I wanted to be a world class player, I certainly could not understand what it meant to be world class. That was something beyond my comprehension. Still, I wanted to get there. This is why I needed to turn this goal over to the Universal Mind. Once I turned the end results over to a power greater than myself, I had the energy to get about the task of getting there.

I had a student who wanted to play at the world class level. The first thing we worked on was the four strokes of pool. She did not understand why I was paying so much attention to this fundamental approach to pocket billiards. Later, as she developed her game, she realized that this was the right way to reach the goals she had set for herself. She set the goals, turned it over to a power greater than herself, (me) and went about the work that was assigned to her.

There is no real glamour in the climb to the top. The glamour only comes when you reach the summit. On your way to world class level you must work on the fundamentals until they become a part of you and with each growth spurt, you move closer to your goals. Begin with the end in mind, and then turn it over to a power greater than yourself. Work on your trust skills, knowing full well, that you will arrive at the top. Read and re read and work and re work on The Lesson material, mastering each lesson, and you will burst through to the level of play you have been

dreaming about. Never let the vision get fuzzied by confusion. Know you are on the right road and stay the course until you reach to top, May all The Rolls Go Your Way.

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Steps taken by a self possessed man

By The Monk

Date: Sun, Jun 1 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

"I climbed the mountain and I looked around. I saw the snow covered hills....." A line by Stevie Nicks. "Then I saw my reflection....." When you reach the top, what will your reflection flash back at you? It is not enough to reach the summit of pocket billiards excellence. There is more. A master of pocket billiards must be the master of himself. For to conquer in battle a thousand men a thousand times, he who conquers himself is the greatest of warriors" These are the words found in the Dharmapada.

Along the way we can be tempted to give in to our impulsive nature and win a few matches through intimidation and sharking. One who uses these techniques has not conquered self and therefore is not a master. Thus, he is not a winner. He is not a champion. Though he may win a tournament or many tournaments, he is still a man out of control, subject to the whispering winds of illusion. On the mountain it is not the view that counts. It is the person who has arrived.

"What must I do to become the greatest warrior of pocket billiards?" Asked an eager student. "You must rise above the act itself. Overcome your compulsive desire to win every match. Be at peace with who you are. The Journey of a thousand miles still leaves you with a thousand miles and yet another thousand miles and another thousand miles. Only when you can be the pool cue, the balls, the table, the champion, the warrior without the performance, you have become the master. You have arrived at true mastery. When you have nothing to prove, you have become the master of self." These are the words from my book, *May All the Rolls Go Your Way*.

One trophy, one tournament, one match, or a hundred trophies, a hundred tournaments, a hundred matches cannot compare with the steps taken by a self possessed man. This is the ultimate prize in pocket billiards.

If your mastery of pocket billiards does not find itself in the service of others, you have wasted your time. Once you become a master, you must be willing to help others along the way. Send them a copy of my book, or my videos. Spend a few moments with a straggler who has lost his way. Be a model in your league. If you are willing to help others you have become a true champion and it will come back to you a thousand times.

If I think a player wants to learn this game so he can go out and gamble on the action road to hell, I will not help him. For he does not want to master pool, he wants to master the art of the hustle. There is a difference between the match player and the gambler. In another article I will compare the two players. For now, *May All The Rolls Go Your Way*.

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Preparing for Competition

By DavidSapolis-Blackjack

Date: Wed, Jun 11 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

How do we prepare for competition? Fact is, that most of us do not prepare at all. This is sad, but true. Most of us merely putter around all week, wandering aimlessly until tournament day. We jump into competition unprepared with no strategy or game plan. It's kind of like going into battle without any battle plan. We get our butt kicked and then sit around wondering what is wrong with our stroke, our cue, or the table. Somehow we have come to the realization that there is probably something wrong with our approach.

Some pool players are like boxers that get in the ring every day and get beat up. The bell rings - POW!!! Get back up - POW!!! In between rounds you come to the realization that you do not possess the skills to be in the ring, but instead of throwing in the towel, you tear off little pieces of the towel, throwing the towel in a piece at a time, yet never surrendering completely. The match usually ends with you being carried out on a stretcher with the onlookers hoping you have learned your lesson. Nevertheless, the next day, as soon as you can get there, back in the ring. POW!!!!

That might seem ridiculous, but it's not as far off as you might think. We all know somebody like that. You know the guy. The guy that comes to the pool hall every day, loses and never gets any better. He's hoping and praying that somehow this might make him a better player. This is complete insanity, but I've seen this guy in every room I've ever walked into. The key here is to not get back into the ring until you possess the skills necessary to compete at a competent level. This means that you need to learn from what happened and fine tune the weaker point of your game to ensure that it does not happen again. This will not take care of itself, nor will it be taken care of overnight. There should be a period of development where the player should allow for the skills to become "natural". All skills should be looked at and developed. This way you do not become a "one punch wonder". At first, you should never bite off more than you can chew. Challenging the local hotshot will probably still garner you a butt kicking, so you don't learn a few punches and challenge Mike Tyson on first time out. There is no crime in taking your time. Understand that when we set goals for ourselves, we should get a timeline for completing those goals. The time frame, as well as the specified goal, should be realistic and achievable. Give yourself time. The small victories add up and sooner or later build into the bigger ones. If you need to step down a few notches in competition, do so. Sometimes we need to take a few steps back so that we can see the entire picture, yet most of us are there with our nose against the mirror wondering why we cannot see our shoes.

Prepare - To make ready beforehand; to plan in advance; to get ready

Preparation - The action or PROCESS of getting something ready

Complacency - Self satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies;

Looking at these definitions, we can see where as players, we all fit in there somewhere. Complacency kills. Preparation is essential in competition whether you are a boxer or a pool player. It doesn't matter whether you play in tournaments, leagues, or if you are an occasional money player, preparation goes a long way. In most cases, competency just doesn't cut it.

Physical Preparation

So how do we prepare? Do we perform endless drills and patterns until we are bored stiff? I believe that this is where the problem arises. Don't get me wrong, drills and patterns have their place in practice. Your practice sessions should be challenging, yet they must have variety. Boring yourself into oblivion develops the wrong attitude towards practice. Practice should be fun and challenging. You should want to practice. Short term goals are achieved in practice. I don't care if you are practicing banks shots or your break shot. The physical practice should be conducted with short term goals in mind. We also need to scout our opponents and prospective competition. This is the key to preparing for pool competition. Want to mess with someone's head? Carry a notebook around at leagues and tournaments. Every time the guy you are scouting misses a shot, scribble something down in the book. You could be drawing cartoons in the book, but he doesn't know that. Make sure you do it to where he notices it. I have a hundred dollar bill for the first person that tells me that this doesn't work. It works whether you are playing him or not. He'll wonder what you are up to, and believe me, this will carry over into the next match you have with him as well. This works well at tournaments as well as every day at the local room AND - it works with everybody, trust me. It serves a dual purpose:

A) You learn his weaknesses

B) You do this at the expense of his curiosity

When preparing for certain opponents, it is extremely important to know their strengths and weaknesses. Know what shots they make consistently, know what shots they miss consistently. This will change from week to week. Keep a notebook. Most of us go to the tournaments and BS between matches. Find out who is in the flight of your bracket and scout their matches. Take note of their expressions and mood swings, especially when they are in trouble or if they have missed a shot. Watch their eyes when they miss. Watch their eyes when they are planning their routes around the table. Try to understand how and why they make their choices at the table. Pool is a game where you must think against your opponent. Especially during a safety battle. Knowing how and why your opponent makes certain choices is extremely advantageous. Don't be shy. I wish I had a dime for every time I innocently complimented someone on a good match only to have them explain what they were thinking and why they made the choices that they made. On the other hand, you now know not to do that. A quiet player is usually the best player. It's like huntin' wabbits. Be vewwy vewwy quiet. Don't let anybody in on your strategy, and don't pass along what you are learning to anybody. Identify strengths and weakness and learn what you can capitalize on.

Play the table and make the layout your friend. Though this might seem like basic, generic advice, it is rarely adhered to. The layout of the table can either be your enemy or your friend. If you are playing 8 ball and your opponent is running his balls down to the 8, understand and realize that the balls that are still on the table are to

his disadvantage. Do not let him forget that. Don't clear the table for him unless you have a good chance to run out. Use the traffic on the table to your advantage. If you are playing 9 ball, and you are shooting the 3 ball, noticing that the 7,8,4,& 9 are tied up, and a run out is not probable, no law says that you MUST make the 3. If you do, you are then committed to making contact with the 4, and possibly opening up the table for him. I've been playing pool for over 30 years, and in that time I have not seen one medal awarded for heroic run outs. Not one. Let him deal with the clusters. Keep yourself in control of the table, not him. Make the shots you should make and when faced with no shot, leave him no daylight. These are the situations you should concentrate on during your practices.

Having a Game Plan

Understand that most pool players don't plan to fail, they fail to plan. It's not so much about having a game plan, but executing it effectively. Having a strategy and executing a strategy are two completely different things. When it is your turn at the table, understand that it is just you, the cue ball, and the object balls. The cue ball doesn't move until you move it. The table doesn't move, and contrary to popular belief, The pockets don't move either. That little voice inside your head that tells you what and what not to do - needs to know what he's talking about. How many times have we argued with that voice? That voice is our inner coach. It can either love us or hate us, but it is all we have. Make that voice your friend. If we teach that voice to say destructive things about our game, it will become our enemy. If that voice tells us that we're not good enough to beat (insert name), we will start to believe it as true. This is what makes mental preparation just as important as physical preparation.

Visualization is a subject I have talked about before. Mental rehearsal does not have to take place while laying on a couch with your eyes closed. You can do it before each shot. See the ball going into the pocket. See yourself winning the game or match, then get out there and make it an accomplished fact. It will be fuzzy at first, but as time goes by, the images get clearer and the process will be easier. Make every victory and accomplished fact before the match starts. Most players have more mental deficiencies with their game than physical ones. The mental affects the physical and vice versa. Prepare yourself mentally every day as well as physically and you will see a definite change in your win/loss ratio.

Prepare for Success As well As Failure

It is one thing to prepare for the pitfalls, but prepare for the successes as well. The more you move up the ladder in a tournament, the more your preparation comes into play. Winning the match in the first round leads you to round two, round three and so on. Many players get nervous playing in the finals of the tournament, or are scared of the moment. This is a very natural thing. Just tell yourself that this is what you have prepared for all along. If you've done your homework and practiced hard and diligently, then you BELONG there. Act like it. don't enter the match with that deer in the headlights look on your face. If your opponent is worth his weight in BS he'll pick up on it and use your fear against you. Fear, anxiety and guilt have no place inside your head during competition. Win and win quickly. Leave nothing behind, and give it your all. Leave the mistakes and bad shots at the table. Mentally rehearse what you are going to do when you get back at the table. If the other guys

runs the rack, learn from what you just witnessed, which was obviously good shooting.

What I Have learned

Having a pool table in your home can turn you into a hermit if you are not careful. What happens is that you never get out anymore. You need competition and opposition so that you can get to that next level. If you have the luxury of a home table, do not underestimate the importance of getting out of the house every so often. All tables play and react differently. Get to know as many tables as you can. Take notes on tables as well as you opponents. Playing well on your home table under no pressure is different than going into a pool hall and playing on a commercial table under pressure. Learn how the pockets react, learn the speed, and know how the rails react on different tables.

Play everybody and anybody. Familiarize yourself with different players and their styles. Educate yourself on the do's and don'ts with different opponents. Learn how to identify when you are out of your league. Know that in pool, anything can happen. You can squeak out victories from people that should beat you. I know, I've done it and you probably have too. The one thing predictable about pool, is that it is unpredictable.

Credits: Blackjack David Sapolis is a former professional player, is the author of *Stroke of Genius*, *The Growling Point*, *Building the Perfect Game*, *Lessons in 9 Ball*, and *Chasing the Dream*. Blackjack is available for private instruction and seminars and can be contacted at: blackjackds@elp.rr.com blkjackds12@yahoo.com Ph. 915-757-3547

The Champion in you

By Tim carter

Date: Thu, Jun 12 @ 08:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

I am basing this article on a book I may write someday. I believe everyone and anyone who ever picked up a cue has the ability to become a champion. So what does it take?

How many players do you know that are bound to percentages? What I mean is that you see players playing flawlessly and all of a sudden they miss a shot that should have been duck soup or they end up playing position so badly they cannot get out. They are falling victim to percentages. It's a mental block that pressures players into missing. I can teach any player to overcome this block by helping them develop the mental and physical toughness to overcome this unnecessary feeling we all have as players.

I'm only addressing this to serious players who have the desire to become more than they are as a player. If your just wanting a quick fix for your game, my ideas aren't for you. What I teach takes dedication and hard work. We all have a champion inside but it takes a special knowledge and know how to bring it out. I am that very rare breed of a man that has been through the trials of battle all my life, fighting for every ounce of respect, living the pressures of competition as a daily diet. Through my battles, a Champion was born.

My football coach once told me, son you have the "eye of the tiger!". I was 8 years old and my desire only grew as I got older, then when I was 16 I found the game of pool, I had never been so mentally challenged, I had been very physical all my life and pool confined my physical abilities. I was so frustrated because I couldn't use those abilities to win, then it happened... I met Chan Whitt Jr. We went to school together and he was a celebrity at our school, we became friends and he invited me to come to his dad's pool hall. Well, I was only interested in trick shots and reverse english at the time, and I mostly watched Chan practice. After awhile I started to really pay attention and I noticed he had the "eye of the tiger"! At this point I realized I could use my gifts in the game, and Chan was really busy at the time so I went to his dad, Chan Whitt Sr. I told Chan I wanted to play "better" so he played me a race to three for 5. Oh, I lost and lost and lost. I got so discouraged I didn't go back for months, I played elsewhere learning the game and practicing to get my money back, I went back to Chan's place (now I'm on a personal vendetta against a man that makes world champions. lol) I was ready and that night I was pushed by my desire to win to the extent I surpassed my abilities as a player. I shot masse shots, I kicked, I banked, and I lost. Chan told me not to be discouraged that I found a little piece of the champion inside of me, I told Chan I just felt that no matter how hard I tried I couldn't win. He said give me 5 years and I'll make you the next world's champion.

I'm now 28 and I never give Chan the 5 years. Shortly after I had started my training Chan Whitt Jr. was killed in a car accident and I was all broken up inside, and so was Chan Whitt Sr. He was stronger than I was, I feel he had to be strong for me as well, I felt discouraged and angry and I basically gave up. I went back to Chan's on occasion and through the years that have passed every time I'm on the

verge of becoming what I set out to be, I let go. I deny myself the right to become a champion, I will never be the player Chan Whitt Jr. was.

I do have what it takes to become a champion, so what's stopping me? Fear, I suppose I just feel that even if I win a world's championship somehow I'd let Chan down. I don't ever want to take anything away from who he was and the greatness he achieved. Through these trials I learned the secrets to becoming a champion, not by choice but by fate. I hear a lot of people asking for help with the mental side of the game, and how to overcome pressure, I tell you its the pressure you should strive for, this is one key element that will push you in the right direction, but you must be able to channel your emotions into positive actions. When you feel nervous and jittery just remember to be still, let your adrenaline work for you, not against you. This is the champion trying to reveal itself to you, but we don't trust and don't believe this is a good thing, our heart pounds, you feel nervous and sweaty and you discredit the very means to become all the player you can be. Let go of the idea that you are going to miss because your adrenaline is causing you discomfort. Breathe freely and open your eyes. Let the tension go and channel these feelings into the task in front of you. Don't think about what your doing just be aware of what you want to accomplish.

Any player can do this but it takes discipline and hard work to develop all the tools necessary to become a champion. You must teach yourself muscle memory to help control the adrenaline when it comes to you. You must teach your mind to control the nervousness through controlled breathing so that you are able to be still. Recognize the eerie feeling as a positive boost and amplify its effects by letting it flow. This is the fine line between a champion and a good player, a good player can run out just about whenever there is an opportunity and the game is going their way, but when pressure rears its ugly head, most players give in to the idea they have reached their limits and fall short of becoming a champion or it may be a novice trying to run their first rack, no matter what the skill level of a player all can achieve the power of a champion where you take it is up to you. This is just a small part of what a champion can do and how they are set apart from the rest. If I ever write a book, it will be on this subject and will be in depth a guide to becoming a champion.

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Credits: Chan Whitt, Fate and the power of champions...

The Match Player

By The Monk

Date: Sun, Jun 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

What happens when a Match Player competes with a Gambler? Nothing. A Match Player will not compete with a Gambler. There is a distinct difference between the two players. The Match Player is seeking the ultimate game, while the Gambler seeks to destroy. The sweetest words a gambler will hear is "I am broke" while the words that sing the melody of this great game to the Match Player are, "nice game".

I have been involved in Match Play for a lot of money. And the money was not an issue. I have risk it all for that one moment when gentlemen meet gentlemen and the true art of pocket billiards is performed. I have taken as much delight in my opponents play as I have taken in my own performance. The Match Players seeks the true art of pocket billiards. He seeks to be able to succeed when the pressure is on. What a thrill that is. What a joy it is to come through in a tough match. The art of pocket billiards is found when two champions go head to head. Remember, if a player is seeking money, using sharking techniques, or bullying his opponent, he is no champion.

There is a fine line between the Match Player and the Gambler. Both will play for money. Both enjoy the risk. They like to put it on the line. The difference is found in the match itself. The Gambler sees his contest as a battle of wills. He is ready to go on and on until one player runs out of money. This is not the art of pocket billiards. This is the art of destruction. The ultimate prize is to break your opponent. The Match Player seeks to win the match. The match itself is important to the Match Player, therefore he will engage in one match only. There is no need to go on and on. He is looking for one match. The ultimate contest. And it has nothing to do with beating another person. It has everything to do with the performance. The Match player is more interested in the performance than he is in the outcome of the match. He wants to be able to perform under extreme pressure, and thus he puts himself into a situation where he will be demanded to perform. The Match Player loves to schedule the match so he can go into training and takes as much pleasure in the preparation as he does the match itself. You will rarely find the Match Player engaged in a meaningless game of social pool where no one keeps score and the conversation goes on while each player is shooting. This game is more than just a game of balls and pockets and cues. It is a higher order and must be respected. It is the choreography of a thousand angles with sacred lines going in every direction. It is the alter of the highest calling. Pocket billiards must be respected and revered. When someone sharks another person, he has broken the Match Players heart and tempted him, just for a moment, to take his cue and destroy the poor sport. A gambler is no match for the Match Player.

There is a band of Match Players all across this land. They play for high stakes. Some as much as one hundred thousand dollars on one match. But it is not the money. It is the love of the game. The ultimate game. When two Match Players get together you are in for a rare and beautiful treat. You will be taken back in time when being a gentleman was the highest calling.

I was playing a match in Michigan. It was a great contest. The kind that went back and forth. His name was Clark Gravedoni. I tried a break shot and failed. He needed

only a few more balls so I sat down with the loss in my mind. I sat there for the longest time. I didn't want to watch. I was going to listen for the sound of balls falling into the leather pockets. But I heard no sound. Nothing happened. I looked up and Clark was staring at me. "What happened?" I asked.

"I just fouled." He said.

I got up and ran out. At the time I was not surprised at all that he would call a foul on himself. He was a Match Player. I ran out and took him to the finest restaurant. The match is the expression of his art. Therefore he plays only one match. There can be only one match between two Match Players. May all the rolls go your way.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Goal Setting

By David Sapolis

Date: Wed, Jun 18 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

Excerpt from "The Growling Point"

Goal Setting

It's one thing to want to be the best, and it is something completely different when you sit down and write out a pattern of attack and figure out how you are going to get there. Developing skills for competition and killer instinct is important, but without a map on how we plan to get where we want to go, our attempts can be futile. You can have all of the killer instinct available in the universe, but if you do not have an effective game plan, you'll be off in the wind like a bullet without a target. If we turn that around, we can have an awesome plan of attack, but if we do not possess the ability or mindset to drive the stake through the heart of our competition, we can be perceived as passive.

Why must we have killer instinct? You need to possess the ability to take out your opponent quickly and effectively, and unmercifully. This can and will be developed slowly. First you need to learn how to win, then you can learn how not to lose. Then we can work on winning at will. By doing this, you can win games, matches and tournaments through simple observation of your opponents. You will learn how to detect weaknesses, and you will learn how to use those weaknesses against your opponent. This is where having an effective game plan comes into use. Phil Capelle and I both agree that many tournaments are not won by the "best" player. Most tournaments are won by the player that had the best game plan displayed the best adaptability to the competition, the equipment, and the surroundings. It might sound complicated, but over a period of time you will develop this into one of your major weapons. By learning these skills, you will not just be "showing up at a tournament" and hoping to play well. You will have a designed pattern of attack, and you will be able to show up and WIN, not just showing up.

As I explained , just showing up is not good enough. Lots of players show up at tournaments, but only a few show up to "WIN". At this url:

www.azbilliards.com

I have an article called "The Purpose of Practice". Read it. In there I explain that when we do not perform well, it is human nature to blame it on something external, such as the table, the rolls, the atmosphere, etc. It is usually always something internal that is the problem, but our egos get in the way and deflect the blame. Developing an effective practice routine is also necessary. Remember that if you have a disciplined practice routine, it will shine through your game. Discipline is a must. Merely tossing the balls out on the table, or just playing nine ball doesn't cut it. Practice can be broken down into four stages. Remember the words

Walt Disney World, or W-D-W. This stands for the following:

Warm-up

Drills

Weaknesses

You should first do warm up exercises where you can evaluate your stance, breathing, bridge, sighting and stroke. From there you can move on to drills, and then you work on weaknesses. During the warm up you can identify weakness areas in each of the categories of sighting, breathing, bridge, stance and stroke. It's one thing to miss a shot, and it is another thing to know why. It is extremely important to know EXACTLY why. This is why drills and warm ups are vitally important. You should practice them every day. As far as weaknesses go, you should work on the things that cost you games and matches in the recent competitions you were in. Those are the weaknesses that need to be turned into strengths. Every day you should add variety to your practices so that you do not get bored with it. Practice is NOT A ROUTINE. Routines end up being abandoned. That is explained in "The Purpose of Practice".

When I take on the responsibility of training a player, I like to go out to dinner and sit down and develop some short term, mid term and long term goals . For me to effectively work with any player, this is vital. If I am to help you get where you want to go, we both need to identify where you are now, where you want to go, and how you plan on getting there. That way we will both be on the same sheet of music. We will then be able to look at avenues of attack, all which will be designed in getting you moving towards the top level of pool. Do I believe that you can do it? That's not important. YOU have to believe that you can do it. As an instructor, if I don't believe that you have the desire, the talent, and the determination to get where you want to go, I'll be honest with you and tell you. It's up to you to make your dream and accomplished fact in your mind. To do this, you need to have clear and concise, achievable goals. For homework, it is suggested that you do the following:

1. Come up with Three (3) short term goals, with the most important one at the top as described below :

(example only)

Short term 1 - Win Local 9 ball tournament

Short term 2 - Defeat player X in tournament X

Short term 3 - Improve my stroke from X to X

This is designed to do #3 first, then move on to number 2, and when that is accomplished (and only when it is accomplished) we move up the ladder to the next short term goal. Place time limits on the goals as well. This is very important. All short term goals should have a time limit of less than 3 - 6 months. We then look at our mid term goals, which have a time period of 6 months to one year. We then have our long term goals which are 1- 3 years. After we complete all of our short term goals, our mid term goals will become our short term goals, and our long term become our mid term goals. Before long, your long term goals of playing on the pro tour will be a short term goal. That is why DEVELOPING properly is very important. I don't want you to get up there and feel as if you have been thrown to the wolves. I

want you to be prepared. Ultra-prepared. So come up with three short term, mid term and Long term goals. That is your homework. Also, for each goal, I want you to write a few pages about what price you would pay if you did not achieve that goal. After you do that, I want you write a few pages about what you would gain by achieving that goal. Do this for each goal. When you have done that, I want you to write a short action plan on how you plan to achieve each goal. The more specific you are in this area, the easier it will be to get out there and tackle the objective. Be clear, be specific. If you are vague in your approach, your efforts will come off as being half-assed, and to quote Fast Eddie Felson "If you go into this thing half-assed it won't be good for anybody, take the plunge Vincent...."

Also, something that is very important..... Keep a copy of these goals where you can see them every day. Don't write them in a notebook and forget about them. Write about achieving them every day. Keep a notebook, a journal that chronicles your progress every single day. Being the best does not happen by accident. It's hard work. Work hard at it. The best way to keep your dreams alive and string is to keep them in front of you. Have those goals hanging on your bathroom mirror. They should be the first thing you think of in the morning and the last thing you think about at night. Keep them as your highest priority. When you get together with your coach/instructor, you can look at the goals and devise a plan of attack, and work towards getting them off the ground....but don't wait for me or anyone else to jump start your motivation. Your goals should be challenging, yet realistic. Start achieving some short term goals now. I cannot design your goals, they are yours. Goals are dreams with a deadline. They are your goals, not mine. My goal as an instructor is simple, and that is to train you to reach your true full potential as a player. That's not easy either. It will be lots of work. You're going to hit bumps in the road and you will get discouraged. Most that will be self imposed, and it is my job to keep you motivated and keep you focused on the ultimate prize. Now be good and go do your homework.

Blackjack David Sapolis

Credits: Blackjack David Sapolis is a former professional pool player and is the author of Stroke of Genius, The Growling Point, Building the Perfect Game, Lessons in 9 Ball, and Chasing the Dream. Blackjack is available for private instruction and seminars and can be contacted at : blackjackds@elp.rr.com blkjackds12@yahoo.com Ph. 915-757-3547

All Things are equal

By The Monk

Date: Sun, Jun 22 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

My wish is that you come to terms with this great game. We are just players in a vast arena. We are part of it all and for many of us, we hold our heads up high. For we are the champions of the game. The measure of a great player is in how he handles the ups and downs of pocket billiards. How you handle the tough loss is just as important as how you handle the incredible victories. For to swagger over a win, or cry over a loss, is to lose either way. We must be the champions we strive to be. And whether we stand in the winners circle surrounded by fans, or weep in the losers corner we know in our hearts that "this too will change." We are but pilgrims on a never ending journey. It is great to be in the game.

The game of pocket billiards has a unique way of making us all equal. We come from all walks of life, different stations, different income levels, different professions, yet when we walk to the table we are united in the same classroom of life. We are on equal terms. I have friends who are multi millionaires with PhD's and have become equal friends with those who do not have a job and struggle through life, for the bond that brings us together is our love of pocket billiards.

This web site, and Chris Abaya is really a labor of love. Chris truly works for the love of the game. In your journey through this great game, be kind to those who are just starting out. Be patient with the beginner for, not so long ago, you too were a beginner. And by all means, lend a helping hand. Reach out and teach a stroke to someone who is struggling and help them along the way. Buy a book or video for them. Hand that young player a chance to enjoy this great game.

But most importantly, pay tribute to this sport by being a good example in both winning and losing. Remember, people come to see the dance, not the dancer. The game is bigger than us and will always be the main focal point in our lives. Make up your mind you will be a credit to pocket billiards. You will strive to be the best you can be, and take winning and losing with the same grace and charm that brings you to this game.

Our minds are like the darting wolf in the forest. Always on the prowl, pacing back and forth. Seeking a victim. We must quiet this mind. We must bring it under control. And once we do, we have this awesome predator at our beck and call. We are always testing to see if we can maintain our mindfulness and concentration when we are in the field of battle. When strife and anxiety come into our camp, we must be able to maintain our poise and confidence that we will prevail in both this battle and this life. We must be able to tame the wolf.

When the wolf stands on the bank and looks into the pond he does not intend to cast his reflection upon the water. The pond has no mind to receive his image. We go through this life and game letting things happen as they will, ever mindful of the higher power that controls the events. We are but players in a wonderful game where there are only winners. Until I see you on the road, May all The Rolls Go Your Way

Credits: [*The Monk Billiard Academy*](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Achieving Dead Stroke

By David Sapolis

Date: Wed, Sep 17 @ 17:48:06 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

What is "Dead Stroke"?

Dead Stroke is characterized by several different occurrences within your mind and your surroundings. You feel as though you can beat anyone. You feel as though you are capable of doing anything at the table, engrossed in your task and oblivious to your surroundings. The cue IS an extension of your arm and you perform flawlessly as you maintain complete control over your emotions and your actions. Throughout your performance, you maintain high self-confidence, strong focus on the task at hand, a fearless attitude, and self composure. Quite simply, your mind and body are working in complete harmony to create the phenomenon of "Dead Stroke".

But how do we get there?

The first step to answering that question is to let you know how you will not get there. You can't "force" yourself into playing in the zone, It just doesn't work. What usually happens, is that you frustrate yourself more by believing that your game will get better by you getting angry at it. This is counter-productive, and you will play worse. Though you can't "force" your way into the zone, there are 5 keys to "entering" the zone.

The password is C-I-L-A-S.

C- Confidence in your ability

I- Immersion into the task

L- Letting go of mistakes

A- Autopilot

S- Stay in control

Confidence in your ability

It is impossible to enter the zone when you are not confident in your abilities. If YOU are not confident in your abilities, who will be? What is self confidence? Self confidence is the strength of your belief in how well you can play. You can tell yourself over and over that you are the best, but if you don't believe it deep down inside you gut, it doesn't mean a thing. The key to this is being realistic in your evaluation of your true abilities. Knowing your limitations is just as important as knowing your strengths. Telling yourself you can win a match doesn't help much if you don't have the physical abilities to back it up. Confidence can be worked with, though. Identify the things that boost your confidence as well as the things that drag it down. Don't just identify the key factors, identify everything down to the smallest detail, including the way you interpret the general atmosphere of the room when you are slipping and rising. By identifying these key cues, you begin to see exactly where

"the line" exists between the two. You will recognize the signs of slipping confidence earlier in competition and be able to treat the symptoms more effectively. Getting to know your game and how you react to it (positively and negatively) is extremely important, but often neglected by scores of frustrated pool players.

Immersion: Can you become immersed in the task?

Most of know how to concentrate, but do we know how to immerse ourselves in the task we are faced with? This relies on focus. We are what we focus on. We focus with our eyes, and our attitudes. If we focus our eyes within the six rails and the playing surface of the table, we can remain focused, but what if it is negative focus? What if we don't like what's going on there? Nobody feels good when the other guy is rattling off rack after rack and we sit in the electric chair awaiting our next chance at the table. Later on, I will discuss momentum, but for now let's look at ourselves as we sit helpless in the chair. Identify your emotions and your thoughts while this is occurring. It is quite normal to have negative thoughts and feelings, but that can be turned around. It will be impossible to go to the table and expect "Dead Stroke" after you just sat in a chair for 5-10 minutes telling yourself how bad the entire situation is. Adjust your attitude while sitting in the chair. Remain focused on the table while the other guy is shooting, reading the rack, seeing patterns, etc. Concentrate on your breathing and remain "centered". This way you remain at the table, even though the other guy is shooting. Mentally, you avoid getting "cold" and you will keep a good attitude. This can be practiced by watching others play.

While you are at the table, you can remain immersed by concentrating on the playing surface of the table. This is harder than it sounds, but recognize and identify the things that pull your eyes from the table. By doing so, you can see where your focus is being detracted. Every time you lose focus, focus need to be reapplied. Set up a routine that gets you back into focus, and add it to your pre-shot routine.

Letting go of Mistakes

It's not so much the fact that you blew the last shot, it's how you process the information from that experience into your subconscious. When you make a bad shot, or miss position, can you put it all behind you and move forward? It's bad enough that you missed the shot, but don't make the situation worse by attacking yourself. Most of us defeat ourselves by dwelling on the negative occurrences that occur during competition. We don't need that baggage hitting us in the butt as we're bending down to run the next rack. Prepare a plan to deal with mistakes and errors immediately. Understand that mistakes, errors and bad luck happen to the other guy too. We want to be a step ahead of the game and deal with our mistakes positively so that the missed shot doesn't effect our next shot.

Errors and mistakes show us what to work on in practice. They are not designed to drag us down, they are designed to show us how and where we need improvement.

Autopilot - Can you make it feel automatic?

Darn right you can! Through repetition, any task can be made to feel automatic and second nature. It's the same thing with focus and concentration. The more it is practiced and applied, the more familiar you become with the task. This takes time,

it won't happen overnight. After applying what I call "super focus" you will begin to see a change in your approach to the table.

Control: How to maintain it

To be in control of what is happening on the table, you must first be in control of what is happening inside of your head. Our emotions are fueled by our reactions to situations. Our reactions are filtered through our attitudes. In pool, remember that there is a fine line between being "overly excited" and being "pumped". Crossing that line can lead us into anxiety, fear and a myriad of other negative emotions. We need to achieve focus, but when there we must maintain it by keeping our goals directly in front of us. Never push your ultimate goal to the side, or move past it in haste. Remain focused on achieving your goals during competition.

Momentum: Where to get it!

So you're sitting in the chair helplessly watching the other guy dissect rack after rack. You've got calluses on your butt, but all the while you try to remain calm, self coaching yourself, and reassuring yourself that you'll soon enough reclaim your table. In cases such as this, remember the pendulum theory: Momentum swings both ways. Also, if an object has momentum and it goes far enough in one direction, it's bound to crash into something sooner or later.

So how do you create momentum when you don't have it?

Follow this 4 step plan!

1. Always remember that when wanting the momentum to swing your way, you must start somewhere!!!! Mulling over the situation helps nothing but to drag your confidence and motivation down further. Keep your focus applied at the table, and when it is your turn to shoot, make it count!
2. View each shot and every opportunity at the table as a chance to turn it all around!!!!!! Going to the table with a poor attitude will bring about poor results. Maintain an attitude geared towards positivity rather than negativity.
3. Don't wait for momentum to happen by chance!!! Momentum is closely related to your confidence level. Momentum does not swing towards the side that believes he is doomed. Believe in yourself and your abilities and CREATE momentum by boosting your confidence.
4. Believe that every single shot is a spark that lights your flame of confidence. Every shot made should add to your flame of confidence. The more the flame grows, the bigger the fire becomes. It can blaze, or it can smolder. This depends on many factors, but it is an excellent example of imagery.

Credits: *Blackjack David Sapolis is a former professional player, is the author of Stroke of Genius, The Growling Point, Building the Perfect Game, Lessons in 9 Ball, and Chasing the Dream. Blackjack is available for private instruction and seminars and can be contacted at: blackjackds@elp.rr.com blkjackds12@yahoo.com Ph. 915-757-3547*

Feel free to visit Blackjack's site for free articles, picture diagrams, and book excerpts. All of the information at his site is absolutely FREE.

The Art of Concentration

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Jul 11 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

There was once in your life when your ability to concentrate was supreme. It was long before you learned how to think or understand what words were. It was when you were a helpless baby. Your brain was empty and like a sponge. You were able to focus completely on what was at hand without any distracting thoughts. As you grew older, learned how to talk and then to think you gradually became aware of that inner voice that that is constantly with you today. It is that inner voice that you can't shut up no matter how hard you try that interferes with your ability to complete running the rack or winning a match. It is ever present telling you that the shot is too hard, that you are going to miss, that the other guy has all the luck and on and on and on. One of the worst times for me is when I am close to winning a match against a really good player, that little voice kicks in telling me how good I am. It's telling me how everyone is going to think what a great player I am when I win. The next thing I know I've got my head stuck so far up there I'm screwing up about everything I try.

The ability to concentrate has a direct correlation on your ability to quiet that voice inside your head. Think about it. If you aren't so busy talking to yourself you can devote as much attention to the task at hand as you want. The only problem is that they taught you how to turn that voice on inside your head but didn't give you a clue on how to turn it off. Here is where you can spend the next 10 years of your life in a Zen meditation school learning the word ohmmmmmmmmmm. If you don't have that much time on your hands I have a shortcut that will save you about 9.9 years. **The key to quieting the voice is letting the unwanted thought go when it enters your mind.** You let the thought go by relaxing you mind like you do when you get ready for sleep. You can't force the thought out because by using force you are reacting to the thought. You have to let yourself go, totally ignoring everything around you including your ego. Once you have become a lifeless statue with no thoughts of your own you let in the thought that you want. The thought that tells you what you want to do with the shot. By letting this thought in it is automatically fed to your subconscious. Your subconscious is like a trained computer. It analyzes your thought of where you want to pocket the object ball and the shape you want to pull on the next ball. If you have trained it well enough the subconscious comes back with where to aim, how hard to shoot, what English if any to use, where the cue ball will end up, the correct position on the next ball to obtain the correct position on the 3rd ball. Unfortunately if you let other thoughts in, the subconscious will also return a lot of other information relating to those thoughts. If you are thinking about making the shot and impressing someone watching you play, your brain would divide up its concentration among the 2 different thoughts. It shouldn't be surprising if you fail to make the shot using only half a brain. If you think about missing the shot your subconscious will be only too happy to provide you with its best information to help you miss. Concentrate on the mechanical aspects of making the shot such as the point of contact on the object ball. Build your concentration by engaging the thoughts that are beneficial to the shot and letting go of all other thoughts through the relaxation process as they creep into your mind. Soon you will be able to keep you mind in a relaxed state all throughout your matches. The results will amaze you.

Any comments or questions can be addressed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Pool Hall Survival

By David Sapolis

Date: Fri, Apr 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

The following is an excerpt from my book, **Building the Perfect Game**. This selection is taken from Chapter Two, entitled Positive Strokes. It has been modified into article form.

Analyzing My Relationships

The structure of your game is merely the shell that contains the skills and abilities, knowledge, and traits necessary to play the game of pool. When we buy a house or rent an apartment, it is always wise to check out the neighborhood. While researching the material for this book I spoke to hundreds of pool players and found that many of them had built their existing structures in bad neighborhoods. By this, I mean that they had surrounded themselves with the wrong people.

Complacent people usually seek out complacent people as friends. I have seen many a good player hit a dead end by surrounding themselves with a bunch of pool room idiots that have nothing to offer. One of the best things I did as a player was to separate myself from what I call The Pool Hall Hierarchy. If I am going to surround myself with anyone in the pool hall, I ask myself 3 simple questions:

How can this relationship help me as a player?

How can this relationship hurt me as a player?

What are this person's motives?

You would be surprised at how many times I have disassociated myself with many local players because their motives were less than admirable. As a room owner, believe me, you are associated with and grouped with the company that you keep. I know more people by who they hang around with, not by their name. If you are stuck in a bad neighborhood, what do you do?

Start asking yourself the above 3 questions with every person that you come in contact with at the pool hall. If you are like most I have worked with, you will be surprised at how many worthless relationships you have. I know that sounds harsh, but I take this game seriously. I am a professional player. When I practice, it is because I am preparing myself for competition.

Many players in my area know that I am preparing for competition, yet they still will interrupt my practice sessions to discuss pointless issues, or to gossip about this pro or that pro. Nothing personal, but I don't have time for that. I am a busy man. Playing pool is not my only career. I politely answer and go back to shooting pool, hoping that whoever it is will catch on. If they don't catch on, I will say something a bit more direct, but I remain polite. I am businesslike in my approach at all times.

I want you to be the same way. Just because I taught you those 3 questions does not mean I am trying to turn you into the pool hall asshole. I don't want you to isolate yourself from everybody either. What I am recommending is that you take inventory in some of your relationships to see what you are getting out of them, and what they are getting out of you. Your game will jump two levels just by completing this one task.

Your neighborhood has to meet your needs. I'm not saying change pool halls, but if you believe that is necessary at first, feel free to change your environment for a little while. Nothing is permanent. Our environment is very important.

Negativity

Negative people are like a disease in pool halls. I remember a guy back in my home room in New Jersey that would always say things that were aimed to discourage me. "You can't run that rack. You're not there yet."

Sure enough, I'd get to the six-ball and leave myself something I couldn't make, to which he'd add, "See, I told you that you wouldn't get out."

That was Rick. There was word that rhymed with "Rick" that I used to call him, but that's another story. This guy really infuriated me. Whenever I played straight pool, he'd watch for a while. After I had run 20-30 balls, he'd come over and start making his comments. This went on for years, and I allowed him to do this even after I had won a Junior National Championship. This guy knew exactly what to say and when to say it. I hated him for this, and I eventually stopped frequenting that pool hall for the simple reason that I hated Rick's guts. Rick would always say that I would never be anything more than a good "A" player, and added "that's a stretch." Trouble was that when I was around him and his attitude, everything Rick said was true. I played bad, and not anywhere near my potential.

Years later, I learned the hard truth that nobody can make you feel "average" without your permission. If you have a "Rick" eating your lunch at the pool hall every day, my advice is to turn down the volume. Years later I had the satisfaction of going back to that pool hall and running 7 racks of 9 ball in succession on my good ol' pal, Rick. Not only did that shut him up, but it proved that everything he ever said about me and my game was BS.

Most guys that are like "Rick" need to keep others down in order for them to feel good. Like Fast Eddie said to Bert, "You can't live unless you make everything else dead around you!" Bert treated Eddie like a loser, and he made Eddie feel like a loser. After a while, Eddie started to act like one. It wasn't until Eddie broke away from Bert's spell that he figured out that he was a winner all along. Eddie just didn't know it.

Leeches

Pool halls are filled with these guys. There are different kinds of leeches, but I'll primarily look at the guy that is friend just because he knows he can win money from you every so often. My advice to you is that for the next 6 months, stop playing for money. See how many of these "friends" either disappear or start talking about

you behind your back. Above all other relationships I will cover, this is the most useless and the most destructive. I could go on forever describing the different methods they use, and what they do, but quite simply do as instructed, watch what happens, and I'll let you decide.

Creeps

This is sort of a general term, but they're everywhere. The most common type is the guy that doesn't look you in the eye when he talks to you. The whole point to this section is to develop worthwhile relationships that will aid you in achieving your goals. The rest of the other relationships are not worth pursuing. Have more associates than friends. An associate will try to win the last \$20 you have. A friend will give you his. Learn to know the difference.

The bare naked truth is that there are not many "friends" waiting for you at the pool hall. Pool halls are filled with people that are out to get something *from* you; they are not there to aid you in your development. Friends are very few and far between, and friendships contain that magical ingredient called "mutual respect". Friends don't try to clean out your wallet, and they definitely don't try to set you up for somebody else. I've had both happen to me, and I know I'm not alone here.

Knowing who to hang around and who to stay away from is usually learned the hard way by scores of players. Many people get ripped off, backstabbed, and cheated several times before they learn how to take hold of their relationships in the pool hall. This is a vital piece of the puzzle when Building the Perfect game. If you cannot master and control your relationships in pool, your climb to the top will be very difficult. The key is finding the right people to surround yourself with. I surround myself with positive people.

Quite frankly, I do not have time for any of the negative people or occurrences that happen in the pool hall. If it's not positive, uplifting, or beneficial to me, I don't want to hear it. This goes for gambling arguments, gossip, war stories of how you got screwed in the tournament last Friday, along with anything else you want to dump on me about your personal life. Remember the term "Garbage in-Garbage out". This is a very important term to remember when choosing and developing your relationships at the pool hall.

Examining this part of your game is vital to your growth as a player. It will assist you in staying focused on your goals and not on the amount of money you are winning and losing. Many players make the mistake of measuring their game by the amount of money they have won, or by wins and losses. By charting your progress with preset goals, you will know exactly where you are, and where you are headed.

By eliminating distractive, non essential relationships from your life, you are removing obstacles from your path. It may sound harsh and cold to say that, but nobody gets to the top by surrounding themselves with negative and destructive relationships that hold no value.

Credits: Feel free to visit my website for free instructional material. I have the largest amount of instructional advice available at my web site for a great price - FREE. Yes, I do sell books, and I do hope that you buy one, but my goal is to make better pool players, not money. Feel free to drop me a line and let me know how this

material has helped your game.

URL: <http://www.geocities.com/blkjackds12>

Consistency

By David Sapolis

Date: Fri, Jul 15, 2005 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Mental Game

Decisions + Actions = Success

Consistency.

The art of being able to perform at will, in a harmonious connection with our thoughts and actions. Confidence is a prerequisite for consistency. Confidence is nothing more than having faith in our abilities. Faith that we can and will achieve a certain task or goal. Faith that we can and will be successful. Consistency is the road to success. Success is the reward for hard work. So how to we get there?

There are as many answers as there are people in this world. I will begin by saying that there is no way to become successful without working hard at it. Success is earned. It doesn't fall on your lap or fall from the sky like condor shit, it's earned. Plain and simple. If confidence is the prerequisite, and consistency is the road, what is the vehicle? Opportunity. Learn that word. Know it, know where to find it, know how it smells, know what it looks like coming at you, and what it looks like going past you. Learn to hear it, speak it, and ride it. There is no vehicle more powerful on the road to success and glory. It is the Porsche on the road to success. There is no substitute. Once we have the vehicle, and we are traveling on the right road, we need to get to our destination. We'll need fuel (determination), food (positive reinforcement) and preventive maintenance (support).

Now we are ready to start the vehicle we call opportunity. For this we need the keys, which is an open mind, and willingness to do whatever we have to in order to achieve our goals. Now that we have the keys, we must start the engine, just starting the engine doesn't mean we're going anywhere, now does it? We need to put the car in gear (get up off of our asses) and point ourselves in the proper direction. How do we get pointed in the proper direction? Identify our goals. Be specific, and be realistic without selling yourself short. DECIDE exactly what you want to achieve, and then go there.

Decisions.

To decide, means to take action. Decisions without actions are worthless. You can decide to take the trash out, but it will sit there until you take some kind of action to get where it needs to go. THIS IS TRUE. TRY IT !!! If we do not take action, we do not not get a result. Now that we have made our decisions and we are on the road, we can now watch as we pass the others we see on our road to success. There are "the doormats" we walk over as we calmly walk through another opened door. "The doormats" give us that puzzled, stepped on look. There are "the watchers", who do nothing but watch the success of others. There's the people waiting on the bus.... "the coulda-woulda-shoulda's" and "the wish-I-was", and their cousin "the I'll-never-be".

They are all waiting on the bus. They are wishing and hoping that someday it will stop and pick them up and TAKE them down the road of success. Someday.....!?!

Oh....and look over there! There's "The talker". He sure does talk about getting there, but damn, he's going nowhere fast... and he's going the wrong way! There's "the faithful companion"...latching on to somebody else's coat tail... being followed closely behind by "the critic" and "the poser"!!! In our vehicle of opportunity, we drive right by, heading straight for our predetermined destination. Why? Because now you are "a do-er". Do-ers believe in action. Actions complete things. Actions complete goals. If we stay in the right direction, maintain our intensity, and always believe in what we are doing, we will get to our destination.

These rules can be applied to pool as well as in life. I follow a three part rule:

#1 Always try !!!

#2 If trying doesn't work, try harder !!!

#3 Never, never, never give up !!! In pool, nobody ever got good by accident.

It takes thousands of hours of applying Perfect applications of the basics. Perfect pool relies on the fundamentals and basics in much the same way a chain relies on its links. Weaken one link and the chain becomes useless. If you have a weak link, you must identify it. Once it is identified, you must work hard to make your weakness your strength. EXAMPLE Max Schmeling once said, "I can beat Joe Louis. I've found a weakness." And he did. Bigger than anything, Joe Louis was knocked out by Schmeling and laid on the canvas as if he was fast asleep. It was a picture nobody ever thought they would see. SO they asked Max how he did it. "I found a weakness. He drops his guard during a certain combination of punches and I found a way to get my punch in there." Well, Joe Louis read that. In the next fight he damn near killed Schmeling. He found out what his weakness was and he did something about it.

What's your weak link? An erratic break shot? Poor position play? Piss poor safeties? Lack of concentration? Do you miss the easy ones? I can guarantee you that every 100+ runner evolved from similar defects in their own games. Learning to overcome obstacles is what it comes down to. I hope this has been useful and helpful to you.

Credits: *Feel free to visit my website for more free articles, diagrams, and book excerpts. Feel free to drop me a message to let me know how this article has helped your game.*

URL: <http://www.geocities.com/blkjackds12>

XIII - THE BREAK

This section covers the techniques used for creating an effective break.

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The 9-Ball Break

By Timothy J. White

Date: Sun, Mar 30 @ 23:45:58 CST

Topic: The Break

One of the most rewarding and physiological parts of the game is the break. The majority of pool players say that the break is the most important shot...not true! The ability to understand the most important shot, "the stop shot", and to incorporate this knowledge into your break is the key.

The break can lead us to defeat or victory in that split second moment, especially in the game of nine ball. So how do we master this moment? First and foremost we need to understand things backwards, so we'll start at the end of all motion. What has happened? Energy has been split and split and re-split again until all has neutralized. As we send our cue ball crashing into the rack, energy is dispersed. How much and how fast it transfers is most important. Basically, we want all the balls in the rack to have fractions of the energy totaling up to the energy the cue ball had at impact. If all the energy is transferred into the rack, as in a stop shot, the cue ball can remain very close to the center of the table with no energy, therefore no movement, while the remaining object balls come to rest. Energy in equals energy out. Seems simple, right? Well it is... We all make it seem difficult because we all think that if we don't create this massive explosion on the table, that we can't pocket any balls. Power is not the single answer, Aim is not the only answer, Speed is not the exact answer; CONTROL is the answer!!

Power through! Body positioning and movement through the stroke will increase your power. First, and I think most important is to keep your cue as level as possible. Keep in mind that it is totally impossible to have a perfectly level cue on the break because of the rail. Since this is true, the cue ball will leave the table at impact. The distance the cue ball travels before landing back on the surface depends on the speed. The faster the cue ball is traveling the greater the distance the cue ball will travel above the surface of the table. Second, place the cue ball within the field of your ability. The further away from the center point (left or right), the more precise you must be. Practice with the cue ball close to the center and as you improve gradually move it towards the rail. Also, place it far enough away from the head rail in order to maintain the closest level cue. The distance of your bridge, from the cue ball, should be adjusted an additional one to two inches from your normal backstroke distance. Be sure not to allow the ferrule to touch your bridge when you bring the cue back. Third, set the cue tip close (within $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) to the cue ball and apply the 90 degree perpendicular position of the grip to the elbow. You should continue to form your comfortable stance around the cue with your toes pointing towards the rack. Now we need to understand that power comes from the way our body moves. We ask ourselves, where are the balls I want to break? Forward.... Many people try so hard to break a rack behind them. To increase power, simply move your body forward, toward the rack, during the follow through. As in martial arts, we know that the slightest forward movement will create a tremendous amount of power. The left elbow (right handed players) should be bent just slightly in the full backstroke (pause or stop) position and bent at approximately 90 degrees in the set position. Work these positions back and forth as you get comfortable and ready. This will allow your body to collapse forward through the stroke. Bend both knees and spread your feet slightly wider than your shoulders, while continuing to become more comfortable and stable. Allow yourself three or four warm up strokes (very slowly).

Your upper body should pivot back and forth on the front ankle, with your cue close to your body. Be sure that you move in a horizontal line with your cue and not up and down. To execute the final stroke, be sure to STOP for at least one second at the final set and pause positions. As you finish, move your body with your stroke, allowing all forward movement to increase your power. Try to stay fairly relaxed, allowing freedom of movement.

Aim straight! How we aim is really up to the individual. There are many different aiming methods all part of one theory. Most important is that our perception is accurate. What to aim at is really most important. How you go about aiming is built into you by nature. Unless your constantly walking into things, I think your aim is pretty good. First, you need to see the two points you are going to aim at. The first one being the core of the cue ball and the second being the point where the first ball (1 ball in a 9 ball game) touches the felt. This point is the exact center of that ball. Position your head so that you can clearly see both points and then draw an imaginary line through them. Focus distances will vary depending on each individual's vision. The higher your head is from your cue the more your body weight will tend to move upward, so try to stay as low as possible. Set the cue tip slightly below center at the cue ball, as this will help you focus on the aim point through the cue. It will also prevent the cue ball from interfering with the rack as it separates. In this way, the cue ball will draw or jump back out of the way and hopefully come to rest near the center of the table (where you want it). During your warm up strokes, follow the intended path of the cue ball, with your eyes, point to point...slowly! Your eyes should be adjusting the focus time as your body feels for the connection. At the pause position, on your final execution, remain focused at the base of your object ball.

Speed things up! The key is to keep control of your highest speed. The greater control you have over your body's movement, the more speed you can generate. Speed is sometimes thought as synonymous with acceleration. So let's not confuse the two. Maximum speed at the moment you make contact with the cue ball will give you the best consistent result. The final rate of acceleration based on the maximum speed is pinpointed when the acceleration becomes zero. The maximum speed position is highest at the zenith point in the arc, which is also a mirror image of a perfect pendulum. The maximum acceleration is reached at about the one-fifth point, not at the zenith, which is the half way point. The maximum speed position needs to be located and perfected. Where is this position? Well, we hope it is at the bottom of your natural stroke. The area where you make contact with the cue ball (the sweet spot). When this is correct, all forces must come together at an instant. Your cue stick must continue forward effortlessly through the path of the cue ball and downward into the felt. The tip of your cue should continue forward a minimum of 10-12 inches, along the felt, on the exact aim line beginning 3-5 inches past the original cue ball position. Speed is basically the key. But how much speed is really most important. Remember that speed determines the distance the cue ball travels off the table. We want the cue ball to land on the table just a hair before the rack. The optimum point of contact would be a simultaneous hit on the rack when the cue lands. Using slow motion video analysis; with the cue stick as level as possible, at the moment of impact and a speed of 28 mph., the distance the cue ball will travel off the table is 58 inches. This distance (9ft. table) is perfect for the player who can generate this much speed and who breaks off the side rail (3 inches behind the second diamond). Since most players don't generate this kind of speed the bouncing of the cue ball must be adjusted with the speed and the aim for the best possible

results. Start with your greatest possible speed and the work backwards. This speed can be accomplished with this knowledge and practice!

Many players, these days, have switched to a lighter break stick. The reason is that the science of the break has come a long way in the last few years, and one thing we've learned is that cue stick speed is more important than the weight you put behind it. It's much easier to propel a lighter cue faster. A lighter cue stick (17oz-19oz's) allows greater speed, whereas a heavier stick will create more spin on the ball. So find a weight that gives you maximum speed without losing control.

By using your pendulum stroke with a relaxed grip you should be able to perform a much smoother and more effective break by controlling each one of these most important points. Find what works for you and stick with it until it is perfected. So "Rack'em" baby!

Credits:

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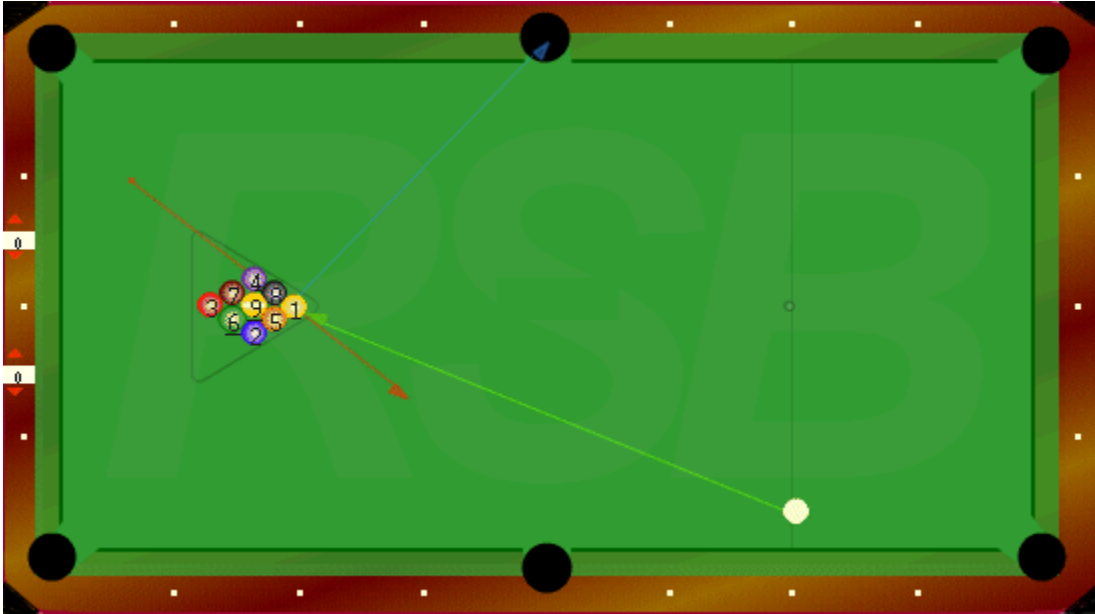
Controlling the Nine Ball Break

By David J. Baranski

Date: Tue, May 20 @ 18:28:33 CDT

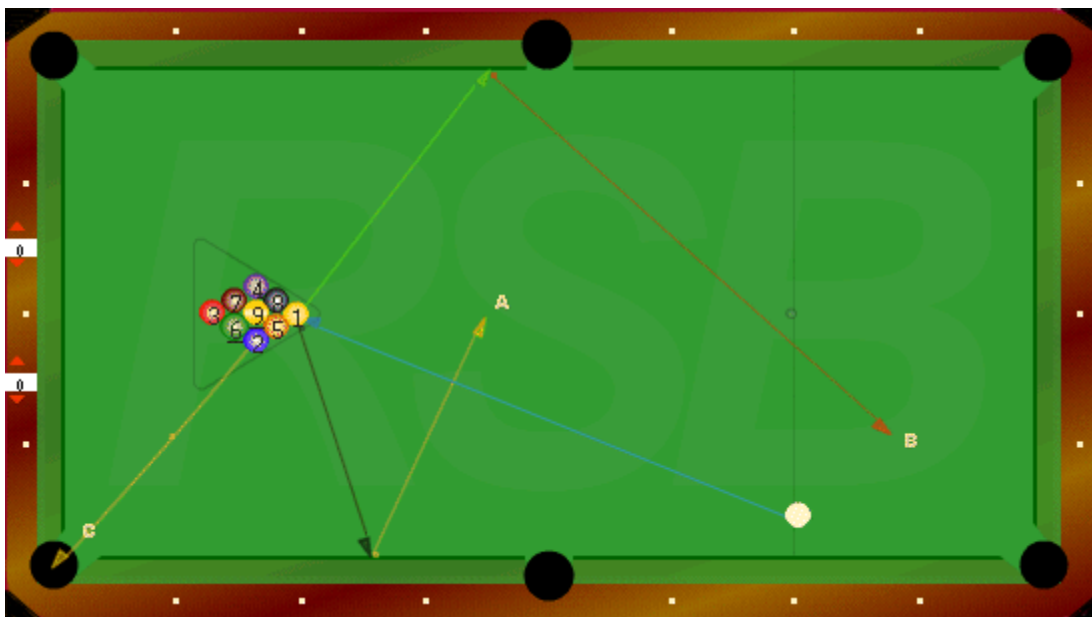
Topic: The Break

It is possible to consistently make the 1 ball on the break in the side pocket. The most important factors are the contact point, and the speed of the break.



In this diagram, I've drawn a line through the 4, 8, and 1 balls. Aim for the point on the one where this line goes through. This will be slightly left of center as you look from your rail bridge. Apply just a touch of draw. **USE NO ENGLISH!** Using english on a power break will only cause the aim to go off and waste energy. The CB should bounce to the side rail you broke from and back out to the middle of the table. Play around with the speed of the break, keeping the contact point the same, and the 1 ball should head toward that side pocket.

IMHO, this really is not a useful break. Here's my reasoning. There are three balls on a 9 ball break that you can predict paths for: the CB, the 1 ball, and the corner ball. If you make the 1 on the break, that means you need to have shape on the lowest ball to continue to run out. Well, that means you're relying heavily on luck, since you never know where that lowest numbered ball is going to be. As seen by my diagram on the previous page, it is possible to control the 1 ball to the point where it heads toward that side pocket. If you can consistently get the 1 ball to MISS the side pocket and head toward the corner (but not drop it), you can control the lowest numbered ball on the table, and thus increase run-outs. I think the perfect break spreads the rack, keeps the CB in the middle of the table, pockets a corner ball, and moves the 1 ball to the corner where you broke from. If you can consistently drop the corner ball, consistently keep the CB in the middle of the table, and consistently have a shot on the 1 ball, you should be able to maintain control of the table throughout the match.



In this diagram, point A is where the CB should end up, point B is where the 1 should end up, and C is where the 2 ball should go. This should leave a good shot for the 1 ball. You may need to move the CB around the headstring to find the proper place to achieve this break - it isn't always along the side rail.

Another method of control would be to use the soft break. This break became prevalent due to Corey Deuel's successful use of it, and the advent of the Sardo Rack. At the 2001 World Pool Championships and the 2002 US Open, the soft break was used almost exclusively, simply because it controls the big three and does so in a consistent, predictable manner. That made for some lopsided matches, because players were running out 5 or more racks at a time! Pool players are getting smarter - they're finding ways to spread the balls and get good chances to run out without having to "smash & hope." "Smash & hope" is smash as hard as you can into the rack, hope something falls, and hope the CB gets lucky shape on the lowest-numbered ball. Smash and hope can work, but it's not consistent. Sometimes you'll pocket a ball and get good shape on the lowest-numbered ball, sometimes you won't. You can't predict what's going to happen. That can lead to more chances at the table for your opponent, which can be devastating when matching up with a good player.

All that being said, there is always a luck factor on the break. Let's say you control the 1 and CB perfectly, and drop the corner ball. You're still relying on luck to make sure no balls land between the CB and the 1. However, minimize the luck factor by controlling the things you can control on the break: the corner ball, the CB, and the 1 ball (the big three). That should increase your ability to maintain control of the table, and thus keep your opponent sitting in his chair, or kicking when he gets out of it.

Good pool is all about working the percentages in your favor. Tilt the percentages in your favor by controlling everything which can be controlled on the break. My break technique is just one example. My break is still a power break, but it's a CONTROLLED power break. I only break as hard as I can while still being able to

control the CB. There's no point in over-hitting the break if it doesn't result in a shot afterwards, just as there's no point in pocketing a ball if there's no way to get shape on the next ball. Control is far more important than power, which is why the soft break is being used more and more.

The break is the most important shot in 9-ball. It sets the table (no pun intended) for the rest of the rack. As such, it should be practiced just as much as any other shot. Don't just bash the rack in practice, though. It might feel good to slam the balls around, but it's not productive. When practicing cut shots, bank shots, shots with english, etc., the point is to learn the shots so they can be reproduced time after time. The same mindset should be applied to the break shot.

The lesson here is to use whatever means necessary to keep yourself at the table after the break, with a good chance at the lowest-numbered ball. The hard part is finding the method which works for you. That can only be found by spending many, many hours at the table.

Power Breaking

By David Baranski

Date: Sun, Jul 13 @ 05:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Break

Power isn't nearly as important as full contact on the one ball. Pros generally break in the 20 mph range. The fastest breaks are just over 30 mph, but you'll never see pros breaking that hard because of a loss of control. You should break only as hard as you can control.

That caveat being given, I'm going to share some tips on generating power on the break.

In baseball, faster pitches are generated with the legs, not the arm. Faster bat speeds are generated by the hips, not the arms. In basketball, longer jump shots are generated by the legs, not the arms. In golf, faster club speed is generated by the hips, not the arms. So what does this mean? It means that transfer of body weight is far more important than arm speed or strength.

Bustamante, Archer, and Pagulayan can all crush the rack. None of them are built like a Hercules. How do they break so hard? They're masters of weight transfer. They generate power by transferring their weight from the back leg to the front, which is why you see a lot of players' back legs fly up off the floor when they break. The best demonstration of weight transfer is simply to lift one leg off the floor. The leg which remains on the floor **MUST** have all the weight on it.

There are a few techniques which can be used for weight transfer. One technique is to rock back and forth. This accomplishes the task of transferring weight from the back leg to the front leg, but it has a big downside. That rocking can cause excessive head movement, which decreases accuracy. It can also cause the bridge hand to move, which also decreases accuracy. Some players will actually lift their front legs before the final stroke, causing weight to be transferred to the back leg, then stomp that front leg down on contact. Once again, I feel this is excessive body movement, leading to decreased accuracy. I feel the best method of weight transfer is through rotation of the hips. Ask a golfer how they generate club head speed, and he'll tell you it's in the hips. The same thinking should be applied to the break shot in pool. For right-handed players, the normal stance has the left hip slightly in front of the right hip facing the shot. The break stance should have the left hip well in front of the right hip, allowing the hips to rotate through the break stroke. My personal technique has my hips almost in line with the cue as I address the ball, which means that the position of my feet is a little different on the break shot. Instead of having my left foot at a 45 degree angle with the line of the shot, it's pretty much in line with the shot. This requires lots of flexibility, which is another thing those power breakers have in common. I shoot normal shots with my chin on the cue; on the break shot I raise my head about 6" above the cue.

So that's the stance, let's discuss a couple of other physical aspects of the break shot: bridge and grip. You should increase your bridge length by a few inches. Since the stick will be reaching a higher velocity, you've got to give it more time to reach that maximum velocity. The only way to do this is to increase the distance the tip is going to travel, hence the increased bridge length. Since the bridge length is going to be longer, you'll need to grip farther back on the cue. Get into your break stance

and place the cue tip within 1/8" of the CB. The point on the cue which allows your arm to be 90 degrees to the floor is where you should grip.

Now that we've discussed technique, let's put it into play. Get into your stance. Get that right hip (left if you're a lefty) rotated as far back as you can. You'll notice that you can rotate it even farther during the backswing. Address the CB by taking a few practice strokes. Concentrate on hitting dead center on the CB. Any spin transferred to the CB takes away power, as energy will be used to spin the CB instead of being used to propel the CB. When your right arm comes forward at address, your right hip should come forward a little, too. This is your body's way of automatically transferring weight. Before you strike the cue ball, pick out your contact point on the one. At this point in addressing the CB, you have a choice. Some players concentrate on the CB at contact, some people concentrate on the one ball. On normal shots, you definitely should focus on the object ball, but the break shot tears up the rule book when it comes to convention. That choice is going to come down to personal preference on the break shot. I used to focus on the CB during the final stroke, but I now focus on the one ball, trusting my body to get the cue to contact the center of the CB. Either way, find the best method for you by PRACTICING. Now you're ready to strike the CB. Pull the cue back slowly, rotating your hips as you do. You'll be coiling yourself up like a spring. Now, uncork it! Push the cue through the CB, allowing your right hip to come forward with your right hand. This will force your weight to transfer to your left foot, and may also cause that back foot to raise up. If it wants to come off the floor, let it. Don't waste energy trying to keep your foot on the floor. On the other hand, don't waste energy trying to lift it up if it doesn't want to come off the floor, either. Let your body naturally do what it wants to do. Maintain your head position until contact, this will maintain accuracy. After contact, FOLLOW THROUGH! In fact, follow through so much that the cue looks like it's going to hit the one ball. The reason you do this is to allow the stick to decelerate naturally. A short punchy break stroke wastes energy, as you have to use energy to stop the stick. Allow all of your energy to transfer to the CB by letting the cue stick stop naturally. Some players follow through down into the table, causing the stick to bend. Most players follow through with an upward motion, causing them to stand up after contact. I do this, and I have to make sure I **don't stand until after contact**. I can't stress that enough. Standing up before contact leads to unpredictable results because of decreased accuracy. Now watch the results!

The break shot, just as any other shot in pool, must be practiced with vim and vigor. It is the most important shot in 9 ball, it sets up the game, and can lead to short easy victory if done well, or long hard defeat if done badly. When first practicing the break, you'll notice that you don't get the results you want. That's because your mind is training the body, which means that the mind has to consciously control each and every little movement. This leads to what is known as "purpose tremor," which will cause tension through the break shot. You can read an excellent article on [purpose tremor](#) by Max Eberle at AZBilliards. Only after dedicated practice will the mind allow the body to naturally do what it was trained to do, so don't expect sledgehammer breaks during your first practice session. Don't allow that to discourage you, as with all good things, it takes time. And remember, break only as hard as you can control. Using too much power at the expense of accuracy is pointless.

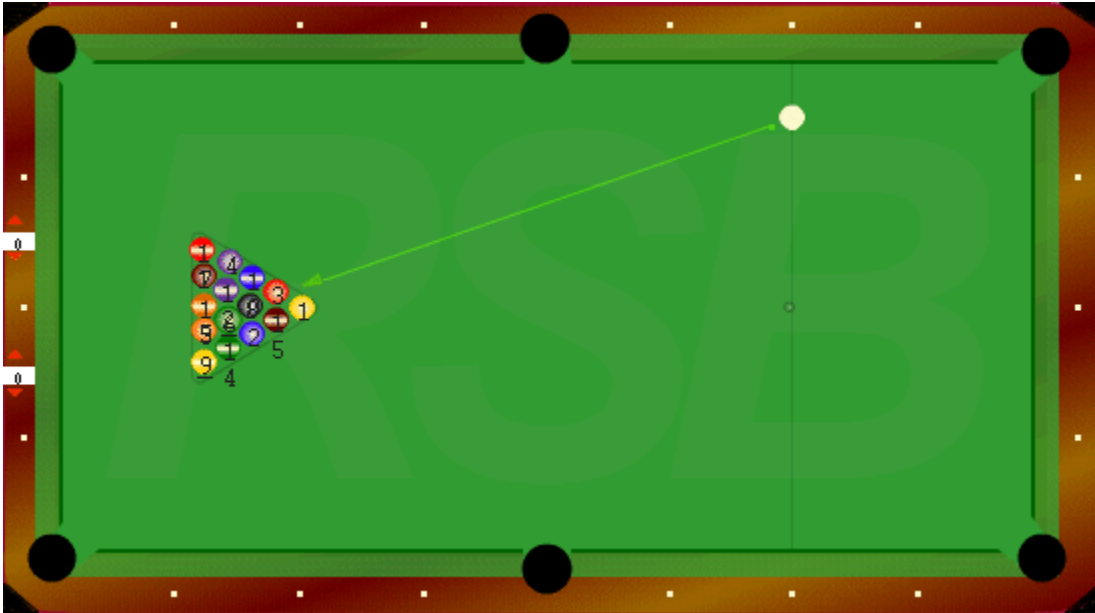
Do a better Break shot (8-Ball)

By Zero3 - Cam

Date: Mon, Aug 18 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Break

This is one of the shot that can be crucial in all pool/billiard games, the break shot. The way that I have done and still use for 8-ball pool for years is to shoot the cue ball (to me, since I am a righty) between the 1 ball and 3 ball, that is if it was set up like I have shown. I have not yet tested this yet on 9-ball or any other format of pool/billiards, but if this does work on other formats, leave me a comment on the name of the format and how it was done, in your own words.



A better 8 Ball break

By Jim Lamastus

Date: Wed, Dec 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: The Break

In response to your better break shot article I have found that different tables play differently, I usually watch how others are breaking the rack. and measuring there success, but I will always try breaking from the far left or right of the 2 diamond spot using 2 to 3 fingers distance off from the rail To place the Q-ball

if breaking from the right I use low right about 5 o'clock 1 and 1/2 tips down from and right of center cue ball English hitting the 2nd ball from the head ball just missing the head ball as my aim spot.

you may need to adjust the position of your cue tip hit on the q-ball to match your shooting style and the type of Q tip you are using- multi layered tips for example hold english a little better than a single layer tip - low right from right side of tasble or low left from left side of table is still the best location of Q-tip to Q-ball hit for your break.

From the left side of the table I use low left English as stated above.

Study the rack you will see that the rack will not be set up square to the table - meaning that the rack will be slightly slanted in one direction or other this provides more of an exposed side showing over the other witch in turn shows more exposure of surface of the 2nd ball in the rack. That is the side you want to use to make your break shot.

Bottom line is the bigger Q-ball entry to rack angle as compared to your example also shorter exit angle to rail from rack break that in turn drives the q-bqll back into the expanding rack that helps expand the break

Try the break shot to rack at the most exposed ball that is second in the rack.

Break speed of cue should be strong hard but not as hard as a Q ball head on break shot. Break speed is the key to this break style and should provide a least one pocketed ball on break a little practice and you will be happy to add this style to your arsenal .

Enjoy and i hope this will help your game.

jim lamastus

A fine break

By Lester Raymond Dulawan

Date: Sun, Sep 14 @ 22:18:07 CDT

Topic: The Break

The game of nine ball is fast gaining popularity and interest all over the world. It is evident in the good number of tournaments shown on television sports channels. Ten years ago, rotation race to 61 was the game of choice in the Philippines, now nine ball is finding its way into mainstream Filipino pool.

I recently had the opportunity and good fortune to compare notes with international players on their breaking techniques for nine ball and found some strong similarities with my own teaching methods for the break. We all know that the break for nine ball plays such an important role in starting the game right. We take for instance, the break of Mr. Mika Immonen, who's break I consider to be highly accurate and consistent wherever he plays. Mr. Francisco Bustamante's break, who's power delivery and muscle coordination is unmatched. These two players possess the much desired break shot that gives them an edge at international tournaments.

Highly skilled pool players know that you must consider learning three things for you to develop a powerful and effective nine ball break. The first thing to consider is the aim. A right handed player should consider using the left side of the table when breaking, a lefty should practice at the right. Take your aim at the diamond rack and try to hit the one ball straight on. Now aim to hit the cue ball below center and apply stun to your shot. The most important thing to consider at this point is the application of stun, because if you fail to stun the shot you will draw the cue ball back to you rather undesirably.

The third aspect to learn is the application of leverage. Mr. Francisco Bustamante has turned his mastery of leverage into a certain grace during his turn to break. You should note that when he kicks his right foot up, he is using leverage from the floor, which is a definite, firm base. Try to bend both your knees and kick up with your back foot as you execute your break. The indications that you are on track with developing a proper break are the wing balls and one ball being pocketed at the side and corner pockets more frequently.

Practice with varying speeds on different tables until you learn to adjust to different playing conditions. Keep your spirits up, and your hopes high! Till next time!

Credits: *Pool Players Academy is an instructional center that uses scientifically based programs developed to produce highly skilled players for the sport of pocket billiards. Its content and teaching range is much more advanced than any textbook can offer.*

Break Cues: Light or Heavy?

By David Baranski

Date: Sun, Jan 4 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: The Break

There has been an argument over whether break cues should be light or heavy for years. My definition of light cues is 18 oz. or less. My definition of heavy cues is 20 oz. or more. I base this on an average cue weight of 19 oz. Having done some reading on the subject, I came to the conclusion that it comes down to personal preference. However, that wasn't good enough for me, so I did a little more research, and came up with some physics arguments which seem to favor lighter break cues.

Break cue weight preference should be based on simple physics. Here's the "simple" physics:

The momentum of the cue ball is what matters, relative to the rack. The equation for Momentum is Mass X Velocity. The mass here isn't the mass of the stick, it's the mass of the CB. That mass is always around 6 oz, it isn't going to change. Therefore, velocity is the only factor we need to take into account. All we have to worry about is propelling the CB as fast as possible (while still maintaining control, of course). This is known as Impulse. Impulse is Force X Time. Force is Mass X Acceleration. Time is contact time between cue stick and cue ball. This mass is the mass of the cue stick, acceleration is the change in velocity of the cue stick from rest to contact.

Summary of equations:

Momentum of CB = Mass of CB X Velocity of CB

Impulse of CB = Force generated by cue stick X Contact Time

Force generated by cue stick = Mass of cue stick X Acceleration of cue stick

Intuitively, it looks as though, since mass (of the stick) and acceleration have an equal effect on Force, that a higher mass cue will result in more Force, which in turn creates a higher Impulse, which in turn creates more Momentum for the cue ball. However, look closer. A lighter cue will allow the acceleration component to increase. For instance, let's say we have a 21 oz break cue. Let's say we can generate 20 mph with that cue. That creates a force of 420. Let's lighten that cue by 3 oz to 18 oz. Now we might be able to generate a little more speed, let's say up to 25 mph. Now the force is 450. Obviously, there is a point of diminishing returns at either end of the mass spectrum (I used weight of the cue instead of mass for these calculations, but you should get the gist). Extremely heavy cues CAN increase force, but only if acceleration isn't diminished to a point where it hurts the amount of force being applied to the CB. So, the current trend in thinking is that lighter cues are better because they allow higher velocity, increasing the acceleration slightly more than the decrease in mass, which generates more force. As is the case with everything else in pool, you'll have to find the cue weight which allows the highest force applied FOR YOU. It isn't the same for everybody.

I prefer a lighter cue because it seems easier to generate velocity. It seems to take more effort to generate velocity with the heavier cues for me. However, I've never done any empirical tests on this. I know Bob Jewett and Robert Byrne have, though, and they found that lighter cues up to a certain point do increase the Force applied to the CB.

The Break

Date: Sun, Mar 28 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: The Break

A good break is a huge "advantage" over the other players that don't have what it takes as far as consistency, control, and power/speed go's. It's not only the opening break shot, on the break is playing to pocket either the head ball or a corner ball plus a few extras as far as 9-ball go's. But in the same token playing for shape off of the break by controlling the cue ball leaving it towards the center of the table. This gives the player better odds on position of a ball for the next shot. Strictly keeping it as simple as a player can. Power or speed is very important but not as important as controlling the cue ball and better yet consistency is the key factor here overall. To develop a power break shot you must first learn to master tip position, this is based on muscle memory that the mind accumulates over a period of time and practice, or some kind of instinct. Over the many years of playing the game I've witnessed numerous attempts of a player trying to perfect the power break without having the proper basic fundamentals that this requires leading to a miscue or jumping the cue off the table. What's so good about the break if a player lacks these basic fundamental (stance, hand bridge, tip position, stroke, speed/power, control, and consistency. without this your dead in the water, and the break becomes the players disadvantage, thus giving the apposing player the opportunity of advantage. If a player has good fundamentals and masters tip position into their stroke (meaning pin point accuracy on the cue ball at high speed) then the power/speed will follow. Then it's a matter of controlling the cue ball and accuracy, and then consistency.

The player on the break should alter (shift) their body weight slightly towards their front upper body. Also the players cue tip should be roughly about an 1/8 of a inch from the cue ball and at the same time their arm should be parallel to the ground and a 90 degrees off the elbow at the bottom of the pendulum arch of their stroke. The stance should form a 45 degrees between the two feet and the hand bridge placement. also note: if your right handed then your left foot should be pointing towards the "line of aim" the direction that the cue ball path will follow.

Using a break cue is key since every time the cue tip makes contact with the cue ball it changes the shape of your cue tip., with every hit. the more times you shape your tip the sooner you'll be replacing it. the tip will shape it self over game play according how the player plays and how much english they apply to the cue ball will determine the outcome of their tip shape. Other wards try not to use your playing cue for a the break cue.

What weight size is best for breaking? most players use a lighter cue other than the one they shoot with. Since the speed in which the cue stick comes through on the ball logically has a higher speed at point of contact rather than stroking a cue that weighs 2000 lbs and only traveling at maybe 1 mph. That's breaking in a nutshell.

How to be consistent at making the wing ball on a 9-ball break

Date: Tue, Feb 15 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: The Break

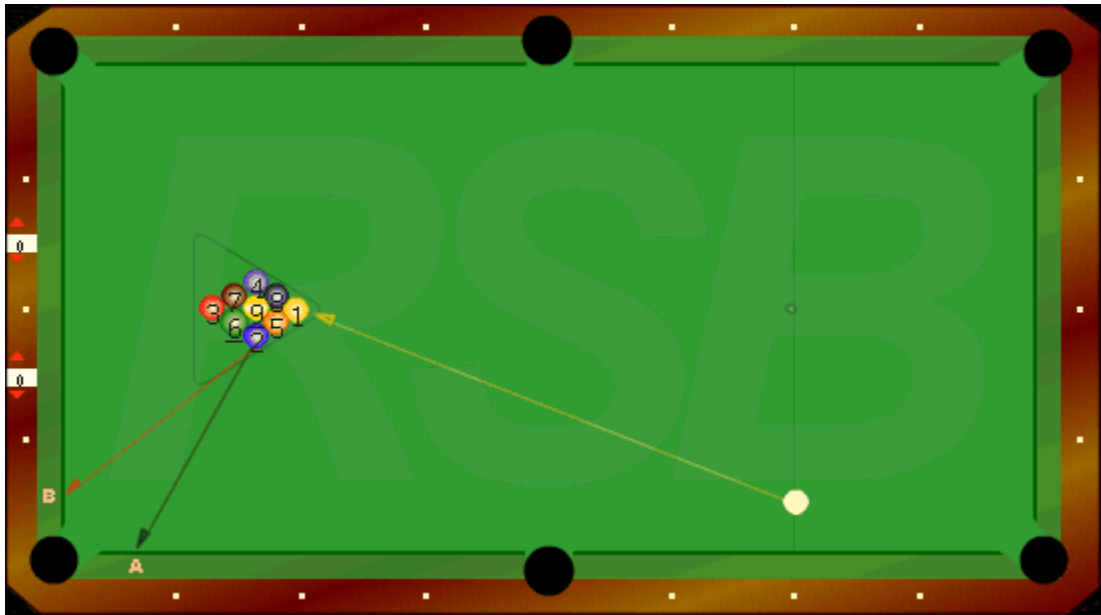
I used to play 14.1 without the use of a safety so I got a lot of practice of hitting a rack of balls and calling a ball on the break. Not a suggested shot but for fun it provided a lot of physics experience with a solid rack of balls and I got pretty good at it. You can by using this knowledge learn how to consistently make the wing ball on a nine ball break. This is ideal because the head ball (one ball) will typically go down the other end of the table close to the corner pocket from where the cue ball was hit. Once you learn where to hit the head ball to sink the wing ball you can experiment on leaving the cue ball in the middle of the table. I am not saying every break will be a beautiful thing, but you can make many more that way by paying attention to the wing ball on the break. It is best to not slam with all you have until your form is good, a firm controlled break with a sunk ball and a clean shot on the one is much better then an atom smasher. The power comes later little by little.

The concept is the same no matter where the cue ball is located but this illustration is for the cue ball in the typical location for a 9 ball break. If located else where, it will take experimentation but the principle applies of shoving the rack with the cue ball.

Each person is different in the way they break, spin, power, also the table size etc so the exact spot may be different for your break but by watching the wing ball and seeing where it hits the cushion will tell you where to move your aim point on the head ball. It may also change slightly as you play, but you can adjust by keeping an eye on the wing ball contact point. Just the time you think you have it figured out, sinking multiple balls on every break it goes dry, nothing goes in time after time. Sound familiar?

Start by hitting the head ball head on as in the diagram, I suspect the wing ball will drift towards point B. if so, hit the head ball slightly more to the right to shove the rack to the left and move the wing ball more to the left towards the pocket. If the wing ball hits more towards point A, then target the head ball slightly more to the left to shove the rack to the right and the wing ball more towards the pocket. Experiment and you will see you can direct the wing ball and sink it in the pocket fairly consistent. Draw can slightly help to push the rack further in the direction of hit as well, In my experimentation english seems to have little or no effect on the wing ball, it is too far removed from the impact.

Use english, draw, high, what ever you need to get the cue ball back in the middle of the table. I find with me it varies how I am hitting and stroking at the time and have to adjust for cue ball position and is harder to be consistent then making the wing ball.



XIV - BANKING AND KICKING TECHNIQUES

This section covers the techniques used for calculating the correct angles to execute a successful bank shot and kick shots.

- » [The Bank Shot - Part I](#)
- » [The Bank Shot - Part II](#)
- » [The Bank Shot - Part III](#)
- » [Half Ball Bank Shots](#)
- » [How to Easily Make a Bank Shot](#)
- » [Of Parallelograms, Tangents, and Oil](#)
- » [A little trick for your banks in a pool hall for beginners](#)
- » [Gutsy last Ball Bank](#)
- » [One Rail Kick Shots](#)
- » [Two Rail Kick Shots](#)
- » [Angled Kick shot](#)
- » [Diamond System Simplified](#)
- » [How to Make a Kick Shot](#)

The Bank Shot - Part I

By admin

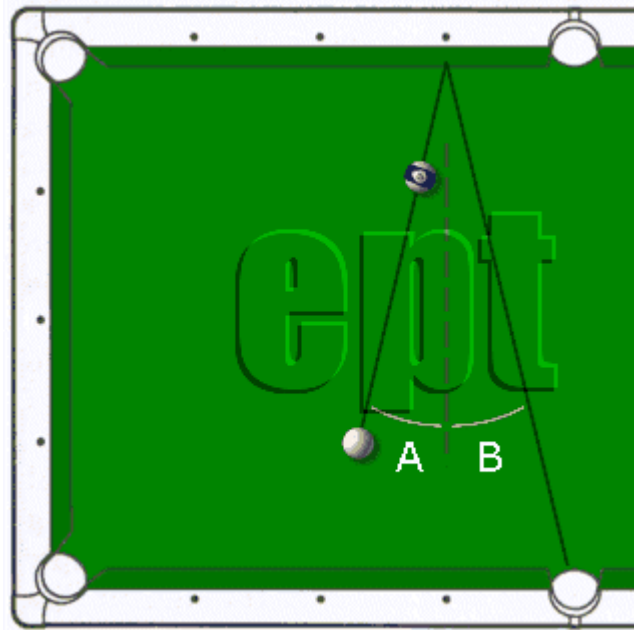
Date: Tue, Apr 22 @ 08:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

There are times in a game of billiards when you are left with only one option to pocket the object ball... the bank shot. In this lesson, I will explain the basic steps in executing the bank shot correctly.

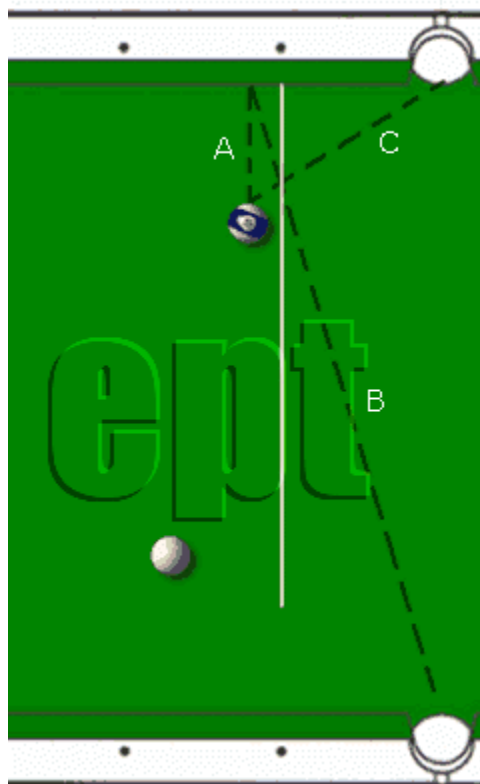
Angle In equals Angle Out

If we were to use our knowledge of geometry in explaining the bank shot it would be a simple "Angle In" equals "Angle Out" theory. To illustrate this, we refer to the illustration below.



In the above illustration, notice that the angle coming into the cushion (referred to as "A") is the same as the angle coming out of the cushion (referred to as "B"). For this to work, the right amount of speed is required with center ball hit on the cue ball. As I will be discussing on the next lessons about bank shots, english has a different effect on the angle of the bank. So for now, start with only center ball hit and make sure that no english is applied on the cue ball.

Here's a very common system for banking that I learned a few years back. This system basically calculates the exact point on the cushion to aim the object ball. Refer to the illustration below.



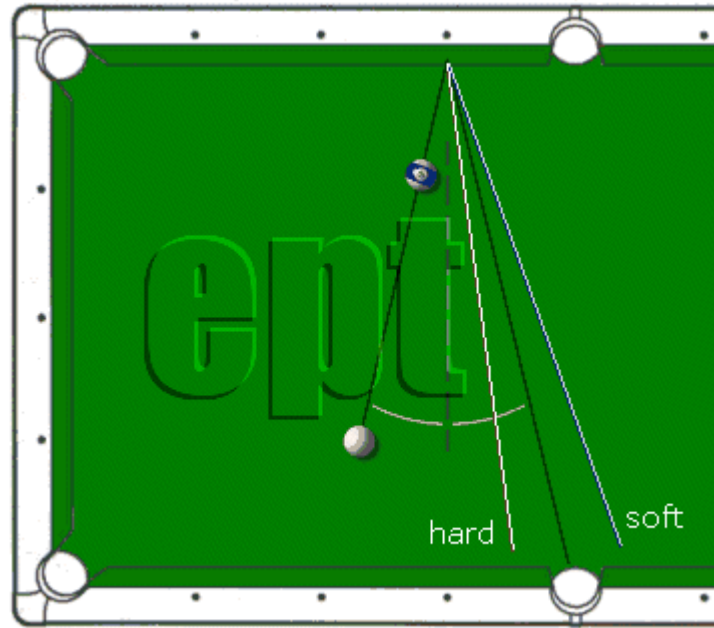
Draw a line from the middle of the object ball into the cushion which is parallel to the opposite end of the table (line A). Next, draw a line from the point on the cushion pointed to by line A and into the pocket where you plan to pocket the object ball (line B). Next, draw another line from the middle of the object ball into the opposite side pocket (line C). From these three lines, find the point where line B and line C intersect and draw a line from that point into the cushion parallel to line A (white line in the illustration above). The point at which this line hits the cushion is where you should aim the object ball to hit in order for it to go into the cushion.

Keep in mind that the system explained should be used with center ball hit on the cue ball with the right amount of speed. This will be similar to the "Angle In" equals "Angle Out" theory. Also bear in mind that you should use this system only as a guide whenever you have difficulty calculating the exact point of aim on the cushion. After executing several bank shots, you should be able to be familiar with where to aim the object ball by feel.

Effects of Speed in Bank Shots

Speed plays an important role in the angle of the bank shot. This lesson explains the effects generated by different types of speed on the cue ball with center ball hit.

If we were to use our knowledge of geometry in explaining the bank shot it would be a simple "Angle In" equals "Angle Out" theory. To illustrate this, we refer to the illustration below.



In the above illustration, when the ball is hit too hard (white line), the angle coming out of the cushion is decreased and when the ball is hit too soft (light blue line), the angle coming out of the cushion is increased. Both speed causes the object ball to miss the pocket. So always pay attention to the speed that you use when executing a bank shot. Remember that in bank shots, more speed means less angle off the cushion and less speed means more angle off the cushion. You can adjust the speed or you can adjust the point at which to aim on the cushion depending on the speed of your stroke.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article72-pg-2.html> to view the video.

The Bank Shot - Part II

By admin

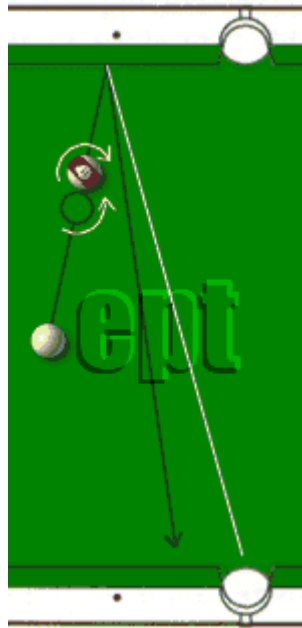
Date: Thu, May 8 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

Using Inside English

This lesson will explain how the use of english affects the angle at which the object ball banks off the cushion. The first part of this lesson will be discussing the effects of inside english.

Refer to the illustration below. The illustration shows the cue ball being hit with inside english. When the cue ball contacts the object ball, a transfer of spin is applied on the object ball. The spin on the object ball is the reverse from that of the cue ball, therefore the object ball now carries "outside" english. You have learned from the lesson about position play that reverse english decreases the angle of the ball off the cushion.

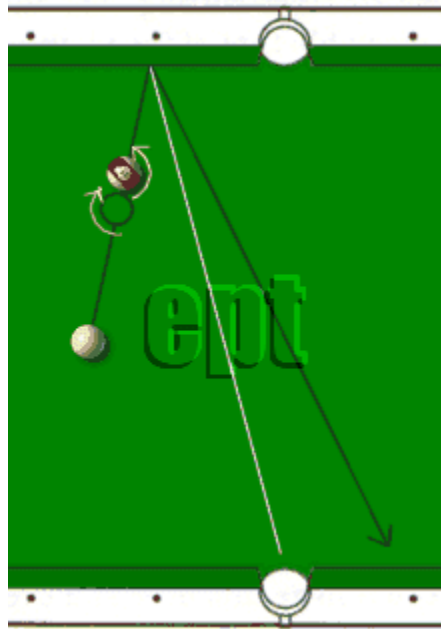


In the above illustration, the white line indicates the normal path of the ball when no english is applied on the cue ball and the correct amount of speed is also applied. This is "angle in equals angle out" as discussed in the previous lesson on bank shots. The black line indicates the path of the object ball when inside english is applied on the cue ball causing a transfer of spin to the object ball that is opposite the spin of the cue ball. This opposite spin on the object ball then causes a decrease in the angle of bank of the object ball off the cushion.

Study this illustration carefully and try it a few times and you will start to get a feel of how the balls react using inside english on the cue ball at different stroke speeds.

Using Outside English

This next page will explain the effects of using outside english on the cue ball. As you may have already guessed, this effects will be exactly opposite from the effects discussed in the previous page.



In the above illustration, the cue ball is hit with outside english. When the cue ball contacts the object ball a transfer of spin to the object ball takes place. The spin of the object ball is opposite from that of the cue ball therefore "inside" english will be applied on the object ball and as expected "inside english" on the object ball increases the angle at which the object ball banks off the cushion. Again, the white line indicates the normal path of the object ball if the cue ball is hit without english at the right amount of speed.

One thing to keep in mind is that the effects of spin on the object ball is still dependent on the speed at which the object ball bounces off the cushion. The effects of spin on the object ball decreases at higher speeds. At certain speeds, the effects of spin on the object ball is virtually non-existent and is overshadowed by the effects of speed. For example, at a soft or slow speed on a object ball having inside english, the angle of the bank off the cushion will increase a lot more. At very strong or hard speed, the effects of spin on the object ball is almost unnoticeable as the effects of speed cancels out the effects of spin on the object ball. Take a few hours to practice banks shots using inside and outside english on the cue ball at different speeds and you will understand better what I mean.

The Bank Shot - Part III

By admin

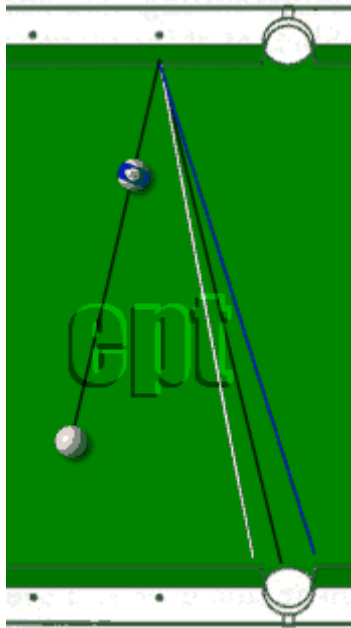
Date: Fri, May 16 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

Using Draw/Follow on the cue ball

This lesson will explain how the execution of draw and/or follow on the cue ball affects the angle at which the object ball banks off the cushion. Unlike the effects of english or speed, the effects of draw/follow on the cue ball is not so noticeable. The angle of increase or decrease is very minimal, however it is still helpful to know it.

Refer to the illustration below. When you apply follow or above center hit on the cue ball (with no english), there is a slight decrease in the banking angle of the object ball off the cushion. This is indicated by the white line on the illustration. The amount of decrease in angle is dependent on the speed at which the object ball travels as it hits the cushion as well as if english was applied on the cue ball. As we have discussed in the previous lesson on "bank shots", the more speed on the object ball the less angle it will have off the cushion. At some point, the effects of executing follow or draw on the cue ball will be overrun by the effects of speed and/or english.



Opposite the effect of following the cue ball, applying draw or below center hit on the cue ball (with no english) increases the angle at which the object ball banks off the cushion (indicated by the blue line). Similar to "follow", the angle of increase depends on speed and english.

These are the important factors that you will need to keep in mind when attempting a bank shot. Speed has the most effect as far as the angle of the bank followed by English and then Draw or Follow. You will need to practice and try out all the different combinations of these factors at hand.

Half Ball Bank Shots

By naga65

Date: Tue, Aug 26 @ 00:00:00 CDT

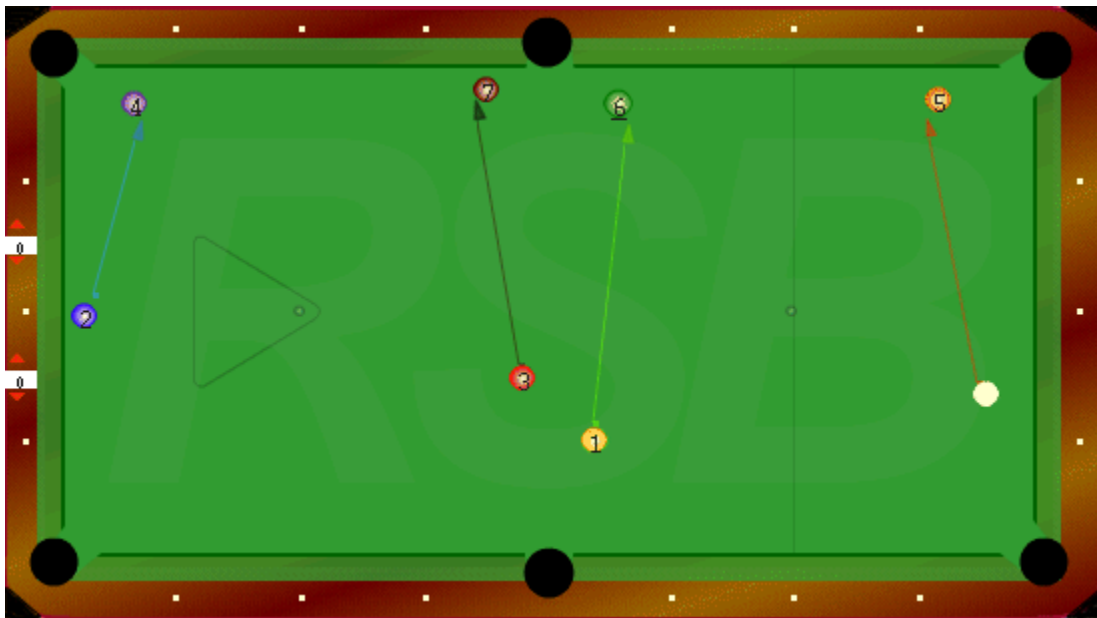
Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

Whenever someone asks me what is the proper way to bank, my answer would always be "feel". Because if you go through all those measuring and calculation of angles, you still have to get the proper speed and also consider all the other factors that affect the path of the OB. So, here's a little drill that would help a beginner or maybe an intermediate player to start "feeling" a simple bank shot which usually comes up in an actual game.

Use center ball, half ball hit, soft to medium stroke in all of these shots. Once you get comfortable with these types of bank, you might want to try experimenting with a tad of english and move on with various speeds.

Please take note that these shots are all within a diamond from the intended pocket and the OB is no farther than 4 inches from the rail. I have used the CB, 1B, 2B, 3B as cue balls to pocket the 4B, 5B, 6B, 7B respectively. Obviously, the intended pocket is the pocket from where you are cueing the OB.

You may want to try cross banking the length of the table also.



How to Easily Make a Bank Shot

By Mick Turner

Date: Mon, Jan 26 @ 01:13:40 CST

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

When shooting bank shots, many factors come into play. English, speed, and angle of the cut (which causes contact throw) will all play a part in the path of the OB.

To see the differences in speed of a shot, (see Diagram 1) if you center hit a left angle bank shot with no english, medium speed, it will come out at (A), then try to do the exact shot again, only with a harder stroke, the angle of rebound on the OB will come up narrow (B), again with slow speed and the OB will go wide (C). Why? The speed of the ball hitting and compressing the cushion causes different secondary effects. Speed of the bank shot is very important and can be used to advantage.

In this discussion, "english" is defined as only side spin on the CB, it does not include draw or top-spin.

To see the differences in english (CB side-spin throw on the OB) on a bank shot; center hit a left angle bank shot with no english (Diagram 1), medium speed, the OB will come out at (A), then try to do the exact shot again, only with a 1 tip of left english on the CB, the angle of rebound on the OB will come up narrow (B) again with 1 tip of right english on the CB and the OB will go wide (C). Why? Because the some of the english on the CB is transferred in reverse (the gear effect) to the OB causing it to hit the bank and come off at more or less of an angle, depending on direction of imparted CB english.

There are also effects of rebound that occur depending on whether the OB is "back-spinning" or "stunned" (not spinning) off the cushion, but those are more advanced topics not covered here. The assumption is that the OB will be hit by the CB and then will begin rolling forward somewhat on all the shots I cover in this exercise.

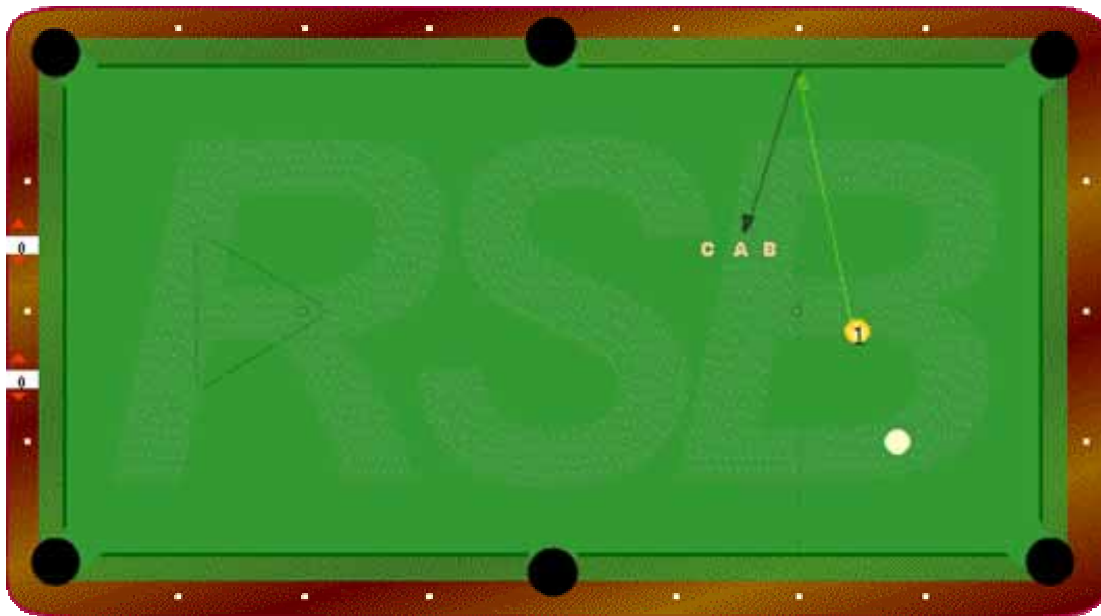


Diagram 1

Now that the technical aspects of how hard it may be are behind us, what I want to talk about here is how to "Easily Make a Bank Shot". How do you measure the angles of a shot into and off the cushion? How do you know where to hit? How do you know if more/less speed, or english is necessary? You may have heard of "angle-in vs angle-out". It works assuming other factors are taken into account, such as speed and english, as noted above. What about those times where those angles are not obvious, or where the position of the balls makes it almost impossible to observe angle-in/angle-out? The most important question, is how do you do bank shots consistently?

What I have done is taken some tried and proven techniques from various instructions from various pro's and condensed it into understandable steps.

Looking at diagram (2) below for reference, if you follow the steps you will understand.

Align any side bank shot with the OB and CB at the approximate positions shown in the diagram, then;

Step1: Draw a straight line from the OB to the cushion you intend to bank from. (Line A) (Where the CB is does not matter, as long as it is in position to make the bank.)

Step 2: Put your cue tip on the cushion where line A ends.

Step 3: Put the other end of your cue in line with the pocket you intend to bank to. Here I use an "orange" line, Line B. (make sure you put the pocket end of Line B at the best point of pocket entry to assure the best odds of making the shot. In this example, I have it going into the pocket away from the near cushion tip.)

Remember Line B, the orange, line points to your target pocket on all the below diagrams.

Step 4: Identify the pocket opposite on the table from the target pocket. (in this case the opposite side pocket)

Step 5: Visualize a line between that opposite pocket and the center of the OB. (Line C). This is also called "drawing the X" because line B and C cross.

Step 6: Where Line B and C intersect, draw a line parallel to line A to the same banking cushion, -- Black line, to Point D. Point D is where OB needs to rebound to make it back in the opposite side pocket.

Your contact point on the OB is directly on the opposite side of point D on the OB. Aim your CB at the OB with center hit (no english, top or bottom) and hit at medium speed. The OB will contact the cushion at point D, and bank into Pocket on opposite side.

If you come up short, you hit too hard...long you hit too soft, assuming you put no side english on the CB. In that case you will throw the OB off path either way depending on english. Remember if you use english here the effect on the OB is reversed from what you put on the CB. That is why I suggest, until your skill is more advanced, shooting these shots with NO english or top/bottom so the effects of ball speed, cushion compression/rebound, and english are minimized.

Once you master this technique you can move on to hard/soft and english variations. Sometimes those shots come in handy if other balls are in the OB or CB path.

Another note on this shot, if the CB is near the same position...say within a foot in any direction, you can use the same angle of cushion bank point (D) and contact point on the OB, you just need to aim the CB at the 1 ball a bit differently to maintain the "D" OB contact point hit but be aware of possible secondary collisions between OB and CB. This is nice because your calculated angle into and out of point "D" is good for a wide variety of CB positions. Once you do this many times in practice you will learn to closely approximate the position of point D, thus making all this measuring unnecessary. The more you do it, the better you get at it!

Remember, point D will be the same regardless of CB position (assuming you can make the bank)... but you do have to account for the possibility of secondary collision between CB and OB, or possible scratch.

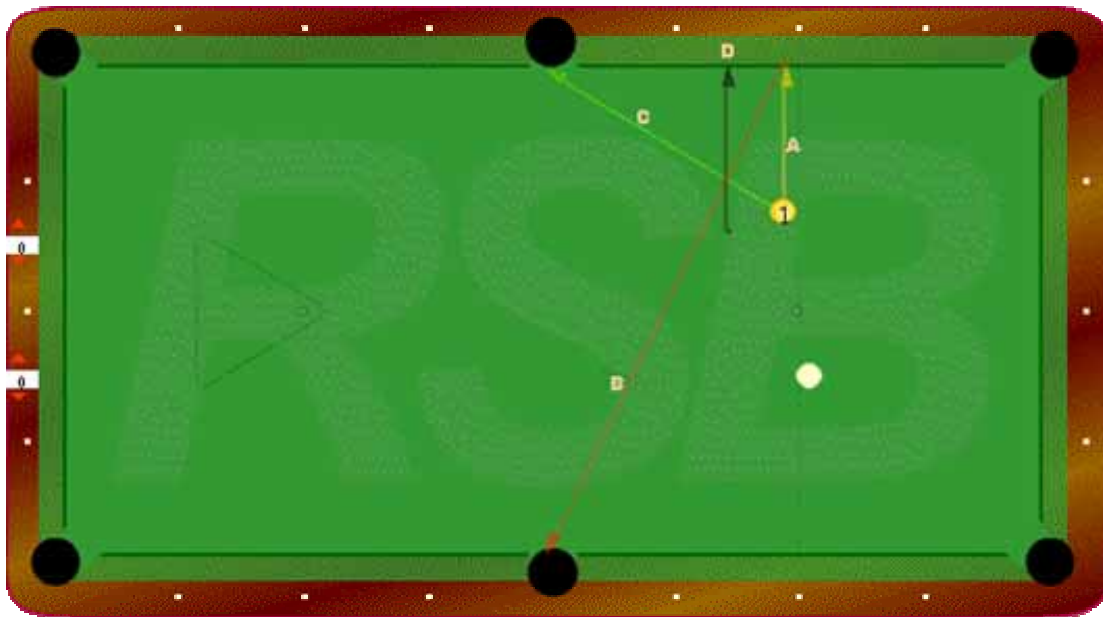


Diagram 2

The next diagram (3) will show much the same process but with a cross corner shot. (To make this consistent the steps below are exactly like those above, but this is a cross corner shot rather than a cross side shot.)

Step 1: Draw a straight line from the OB to the cushion you intend to bank from. (Line A) (Where the CB is does not matter, as long as it is in position to make the bank.)

Step 2: Put your cue tip on the cushion where line A ends.

Step 3: Put the other end of your cue in line with the pocket you intend to bank to. Here I use an "orange" line, Line B. (make sure you put the pocket end of Line B at the best point of pocket entry to assure the best odds of making the shot. In this example, I placed the "orange" line there but have it going into the pocket away from the near tip.)

Step 4: Identify the pocket opposite on the table from the target pocket. (in this case the opposite corner pocket)

Step 5: Visualize a line between that opposite pocket and the center of the OB. (Line C). This is also called "drawing the X" because line B and C cross.

Step 6: Where Line B and C intersect, draw a line parallel to line A to the same banking cushion, -- Black line, to Point D. Point D is where OB needs to rebound to make it back in the opposite corner pocket.

Your contact point on the OB is directly on the opposite side of point D on the OB. Aim your CB at the OB with center hit (no english, top or bottom) and hit at medium speed. The OB will contact the cushion at point D, and bank into Pocket on opposite side.

Again, if you come up short, you hit too hard...long you hit too soft, assuming you put no side english on the CB. In that case you will throw the OB off path either way depending on english. Remember if you use english here the effect on the OB is reversed from what you put on the CB. That is why I suggest shooting these shots with NO english or top/bottom so the effects of ball speed, cushion compression/rebound, and english are minimized. Once you master this technique you can move on to hard/soft and english variations. Sometimes those shots come in handy if other balls are in the OB or CB path.

As with the above diagram, the if the CB is near the same position...say within a foot in any direction, you can use the same angle of cushion bank point (D) and contact point on the OB, you just need to aim the CB at the 1 ball a bit differently to maintain the "D" OB contact point hit.

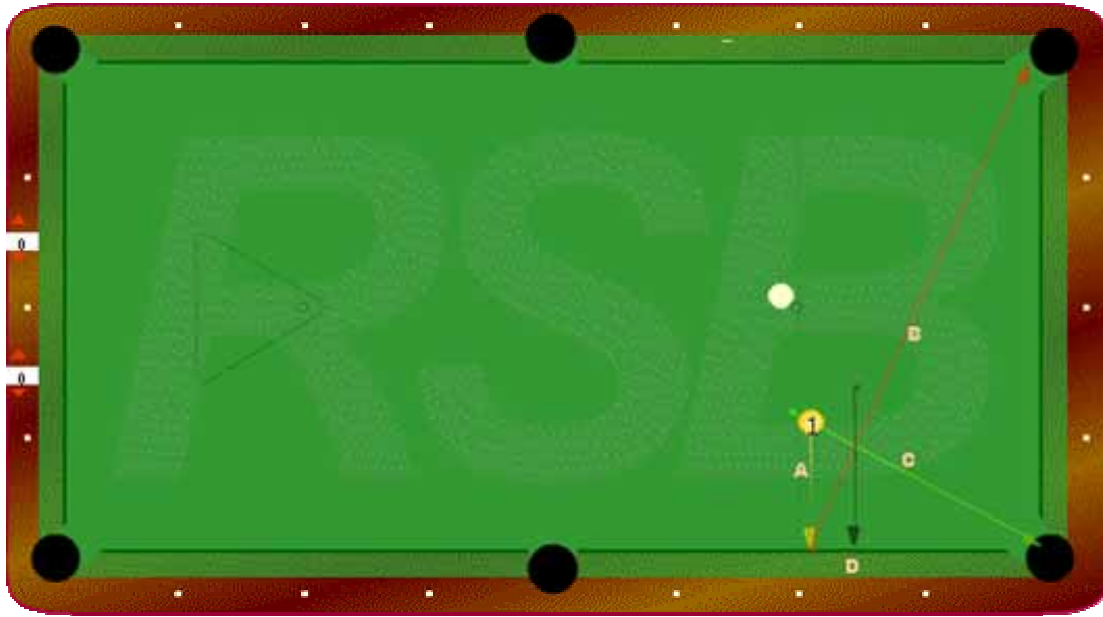


Diagram 3

The next diagram (4) will show much the same process but with a cross corner end table shot. (To make this consistent the steps below are exactly like those above.) Just follow the steps but substitute different pocket designations.

Note: in this shot, if you move the CB to several different points within 2 feet of it's marked position, the shot is the same on the OB contact point, only the CB to OB aim is different. On different positions of the CB, be aware of possible secondary collisions between OB and CB...also be aware that on long angle shots like this if you hit too hard, not only will it affect the angle of rebound on the OB, but it can also make the OB "rattle" out of the target pocket if you hit the leading edge of the top cushion going into the pocket. Shoot these shots at medium speed, enough to make the ball roll straight, but not too hard, or too soft ...you wouldn't want the OB to stop on the way to the pocket on that fantastic long bank shot.

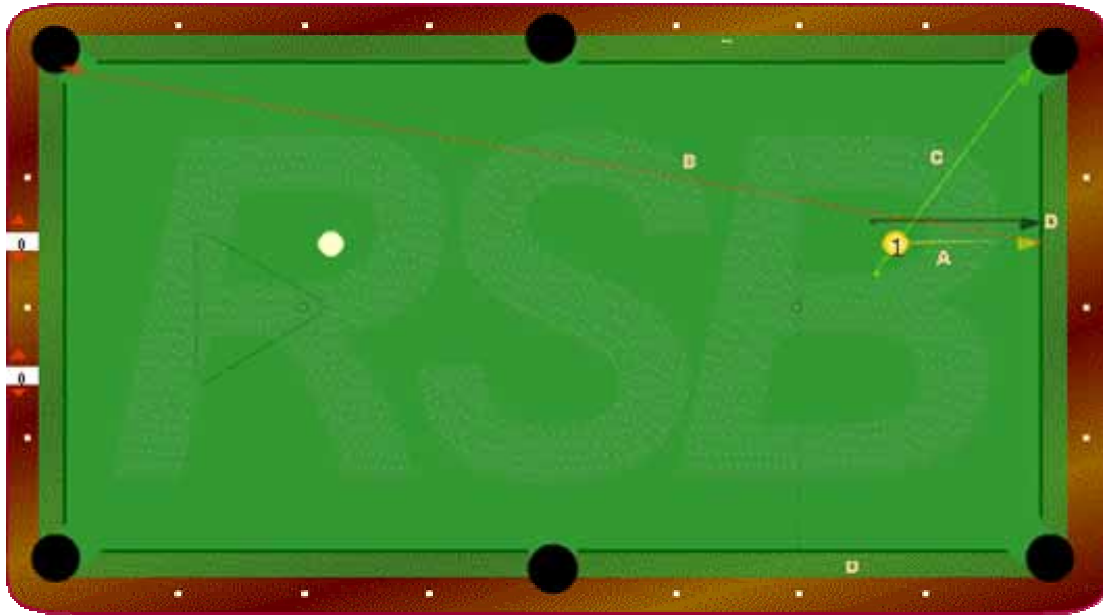


Diagram 4

The next diagram (5) will show much the same process but with a long table far cross corner shot. (To make this consistent the steps below are exactly like those above.) Just follow the steps but substitute different pocket designations.

Note: in this shot, if you move the CB to several different points within 1 foot of it's marked position, the shot is the same on the OB contact point, only the CB to OB aim is different. On different positions of the CB, be aware of possible secondary collisions between OB and CB or scratch potential.

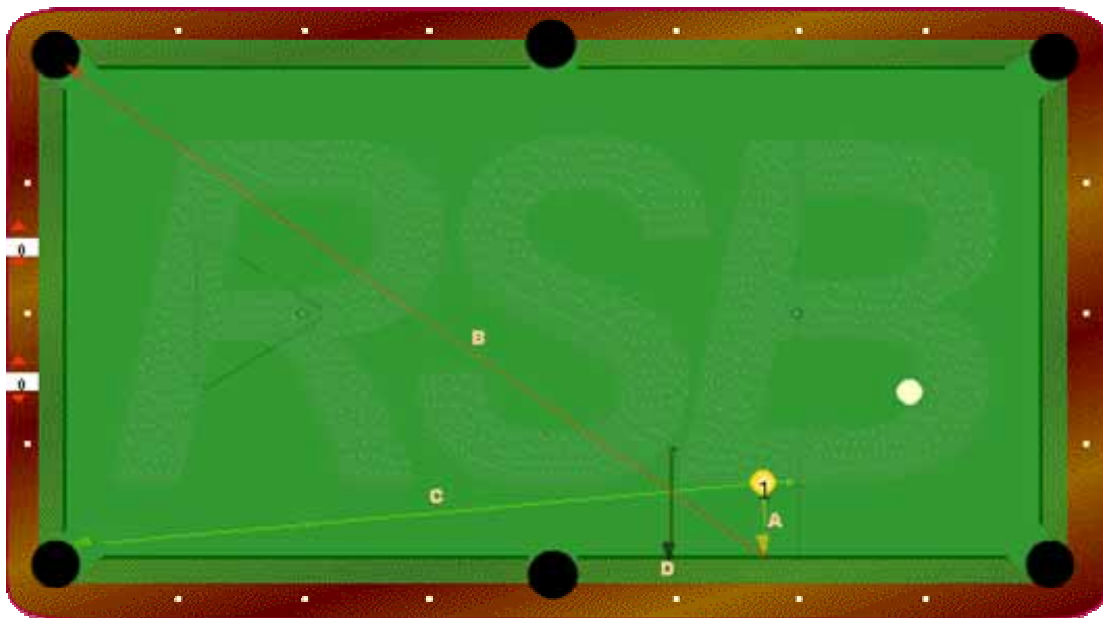


Diagram 5

The next diagram (6) will show much the same process but with a long cross table corner shot. (To make this consistent the steps below are exactly like those above.) Just follow the steps but substitute different pocket designations. Note: in this shot, if you move the CB to several different points near it's marked position (because of the narrow angle of shot on the OB), the shot is the same on the OB contact point, only the CB to OB aim is different. On different positions of the CB, be aware of possible secondary collisions between OB and CB... On this shot, the point D is where you want the OB to contact the cushion. On some shots like this the OB has a tendency to "slide" on the cushion a bit so on some tables you might want to hit just before point D.

Normally you would just shoot the OB into the top left corner pocket, but if you "had to" bank it because other balls were in the way, here is how.

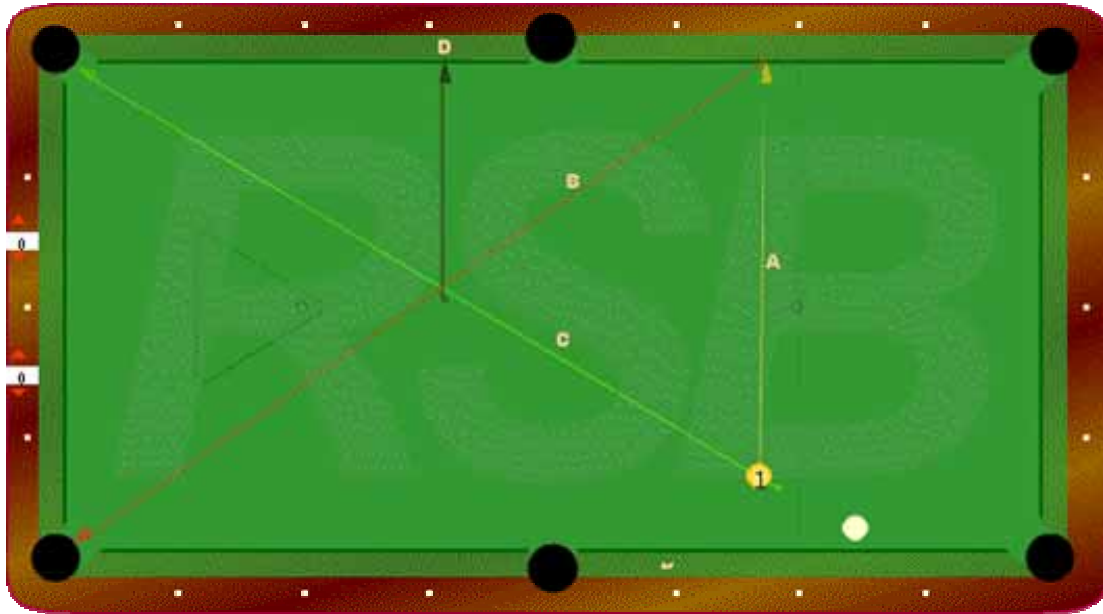


Diagram 6

Below are more examples.....now that you know the steps and line patterns, I will forgo the explanations.....

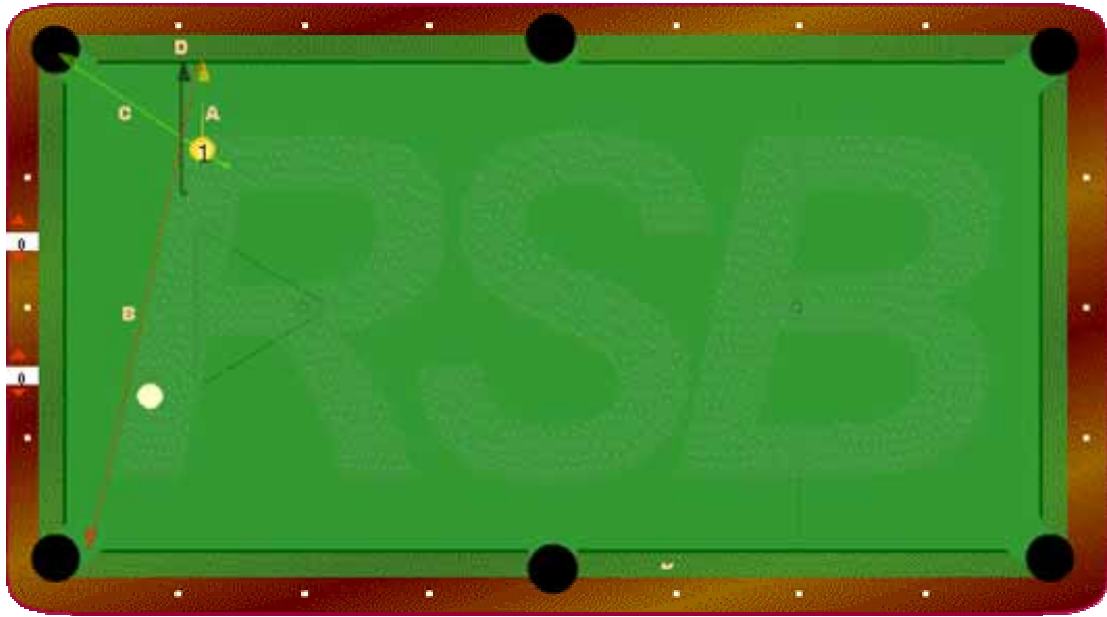


Diagram 7

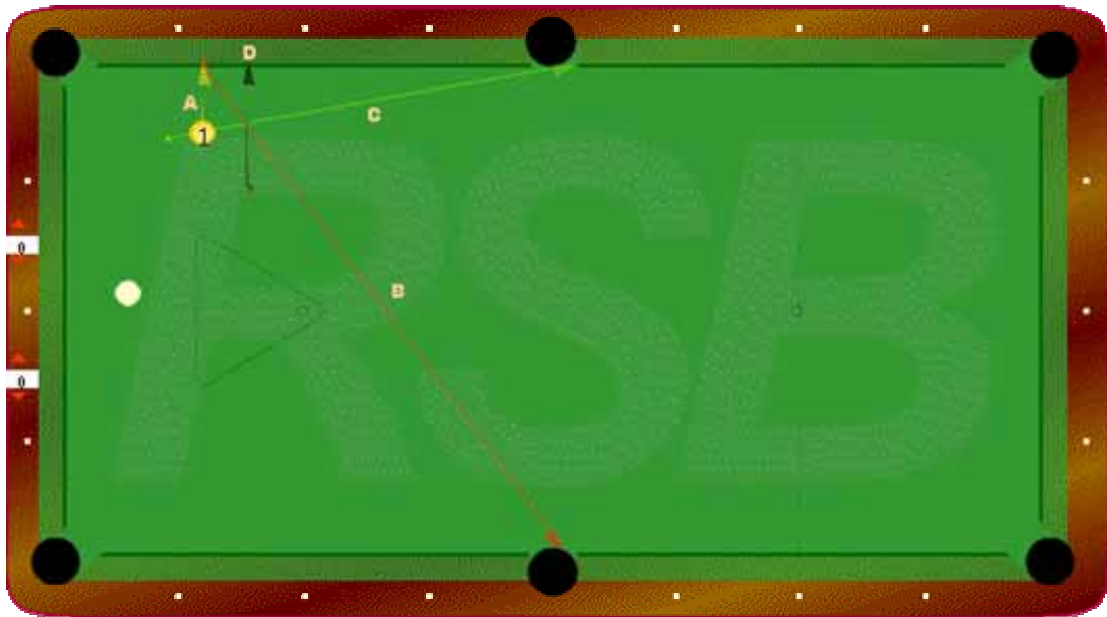


Diagram 8

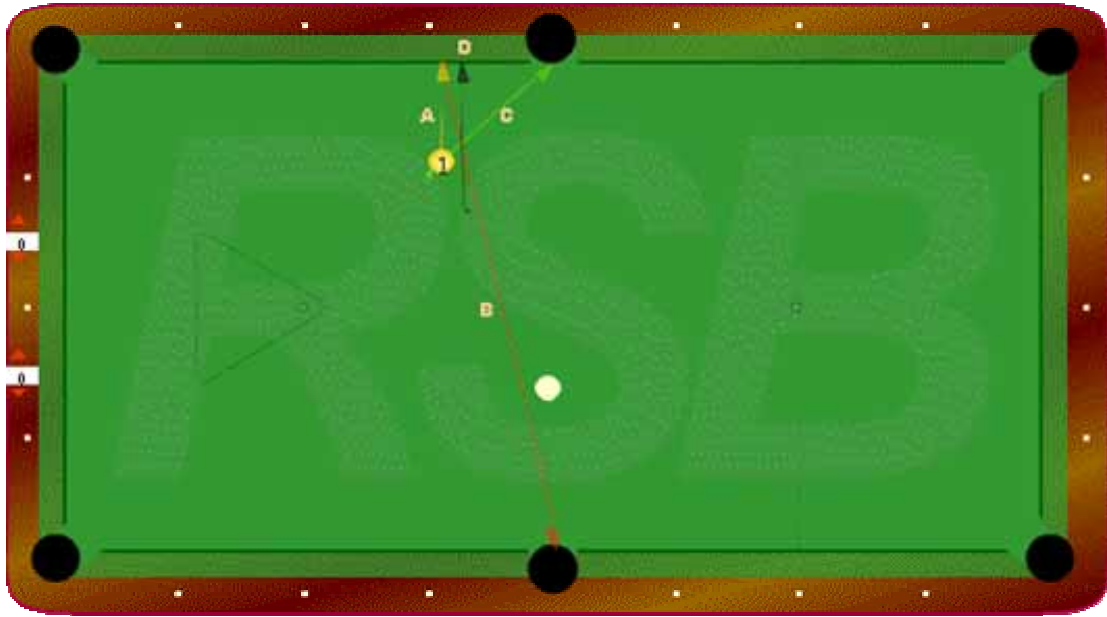


Diagram 9

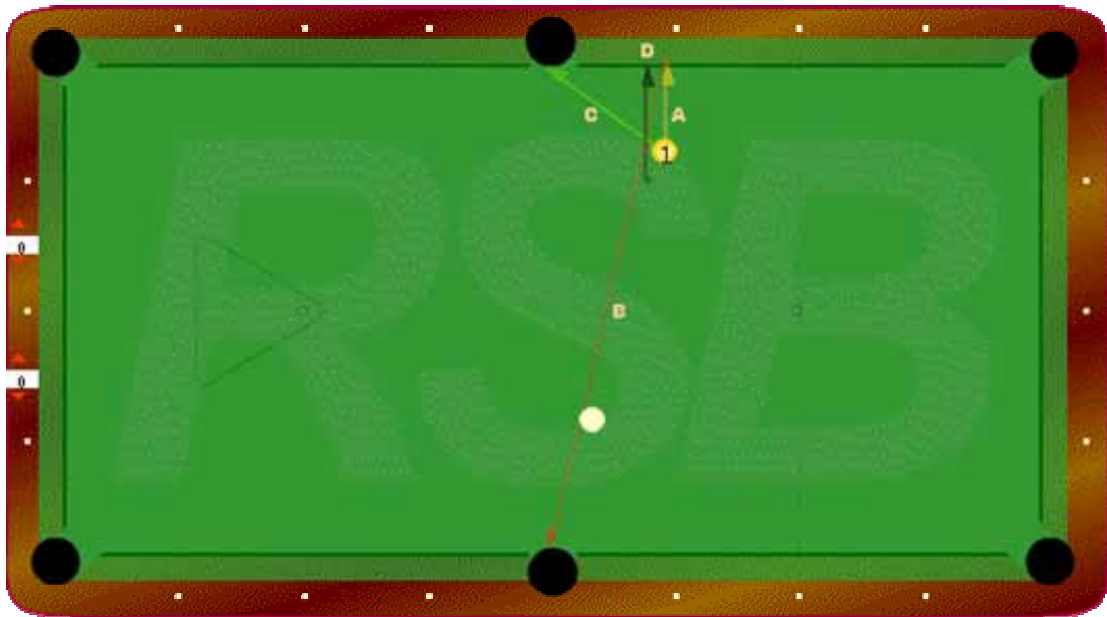


Diagram 10

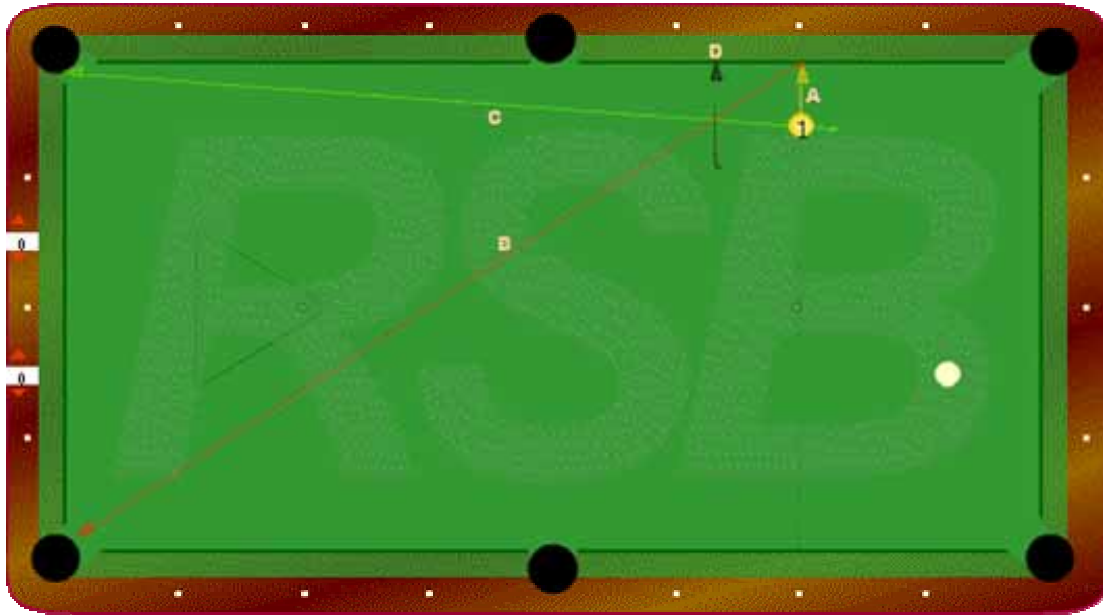


Diagram 11

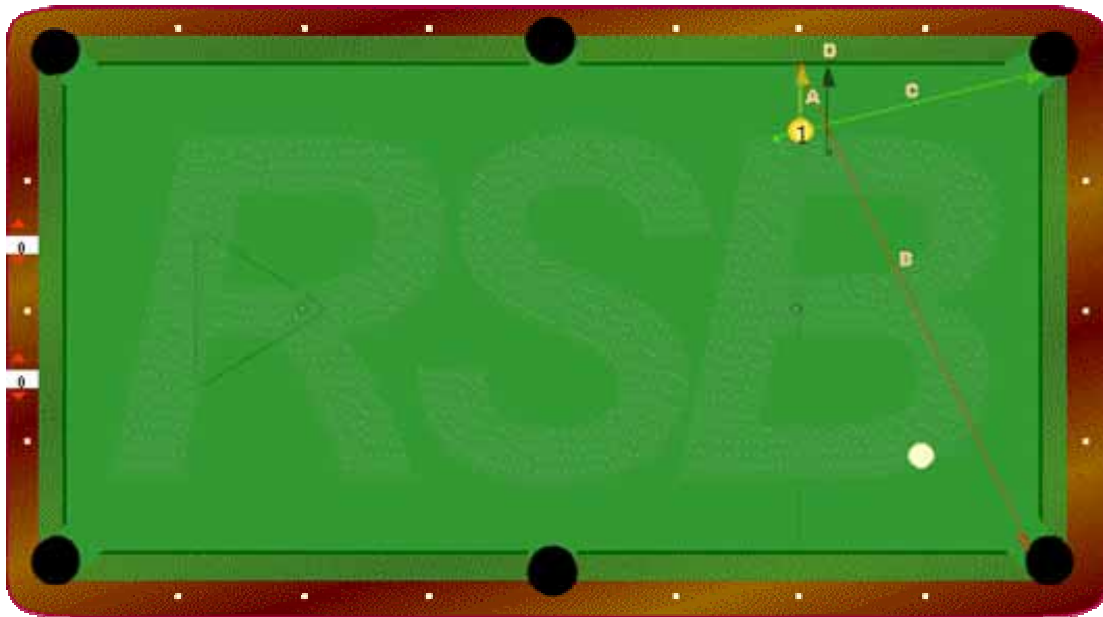


Diagram 12

Well that's about it. If you take these basic shots and work on variations and practice this technique, your bank shots should get much more accurate. After several hours of using this technique in your practice sessions you will start to "see" these angles in your mind and know just where to bank. Then you can start working on the variations with english and speed I mentioned before.

Remember, it's the practice that makes you better...in the important game, nothing feels as good as a well executed and made shot...well almost nothing. :LOL.

Mick Turner

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mick.turner@sbcglobal.net

Of Parallelograms, Tangents, and Oil

By Martin Misa

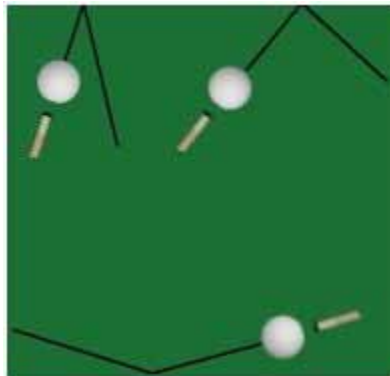
Date: Tue, Apr 15 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

Many players get away with just getting that dead shot going in their games, but when they are having a bad night, they really have a bad night all the way through. It is somewhat like a boxer going to the ring with only one punch capable of knocking out the other guy with. A good boxer sets up his combinations with jabs. If the opponent is respectable enough, he has to divert his concentration to blocking and dodging punches. Billiards is just like boxing. Some horse around just taking fun pokes at each other. The ring boxers, though, have to have the heart, training, and imagination to set them up for a kill mode.

In pool, you have to set up your next two shots, at the very least, and go all the way until you get your winning ball. If you have no more options to launch your next offensive, you have to get your defensive shots going too. All of these cases require a good application of cue ball english together with your Executioner (shooting arm), and the most fun part of it all, your Mastermind (imagination). But let's talk about the most basic use of english for now.

Applying english on the ball is like applying oil on the table. Most shots that require english alone, without needed help from the Executioner nor the Mastermind, are shots whose cue balls ricochet off the object ball at an angle where the two balls naturally travel in opposite directions after the shot (as opposed to a straight or semi straight shot). When english is applied at the side where the cue ball will naturally ricochet to, the cue ball will travel far enough even with just a little effort from the Executioner. Oiling the table is easiest especially on wide angles.

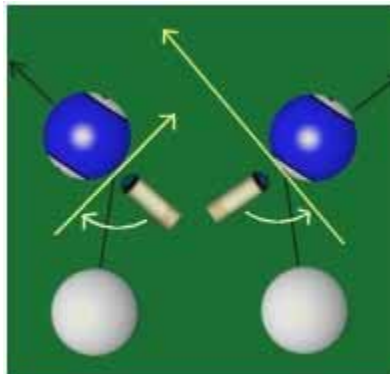


At this point, I have to mention two important tools regarding angles on the table. The first tool is bank knowledge. Whatever angle given to the rail with reference to the cue ball (without english) is the same angle that the rail will give in the opposite direction. Some players draw an imaginary bisector as their reference point. You can go on and on through the different rails giving and getting the same angles as long as the cue ball keeps on rolling. If you plot the ongoing lines, you will find out that they will be parallel, if not aligned with the lines that run through the dots on the table. This is what they call the diamond system. All the angles in a diamond are the same. Without the side pockets, as in carom tables, one can make a perfect

diamond. With the side pockets on the billiard table, you can never get a perfect diamond.



You have to work your way around it with parallelograms. With parallelograms, you will find using two or three cushions can be done with accuracy. Move back between the two areas you want to travel to and stretch out your arms to draw that imaginary parallelogram on the table. This is very applicable especially in 9-ball where you have to avoid the three consecutive fouls that will cost you your game. The farther you move away from the table, the more you will see the parallelogram. A trained eye can draw limitless parallelograms around the table.



The second important tool is the knowledge of the tangent. The direction of the Cue Ball can be predicted with precision if you know what the tangent is. To get the tangent, first look at the spot where the object ball has to be hit in order to pocket it. Point your cue stick towards the pocket at the spot on the object ball you aimed at. With the cue tip pivoting on the table, move your cue stick towards the direction of the cue ball until you reach the straight yellow arrow in the diagram. That is where your cue ball will travel without english after a normal shot (without drawing or punching the ball).

Understanding your table is your first step to a mature pool game where you combine imagination with precision.

Credits: Martin Misa is the President of the Billiard Buddies Association of the Philippines (BBAP). Being exposed to the wizardry of Filipino pool masters, he has picked up concepts in the game that he is sharing with us. He can be reached thru e-mail at mbmisa@mydestiny.net

A little trick for your banks in a pool hall for beginners

By Christopher Smoot

Date: Thu, Aug 14 @ 02:59:39 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

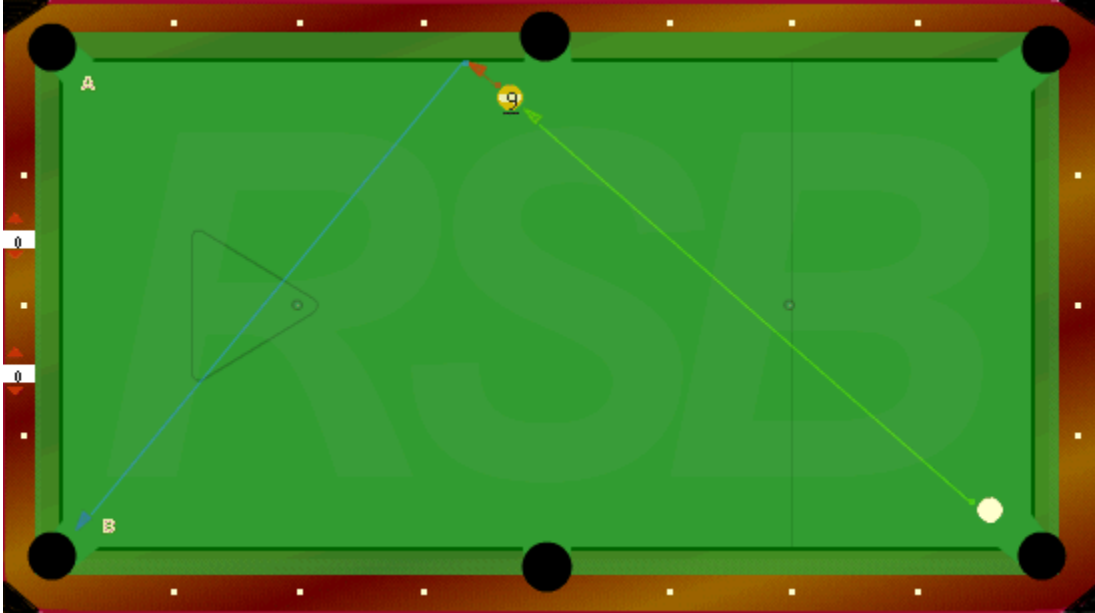
This is no way a replacement for the diamond system or learning your angles but here is something that helped me with my banks in tournaments when I first started. The layout of most pool halls are pretty much the same rows of tables about one table width apart from each other. If while on the bank you look at the table next to yours and aim for the pocket on that table you want to hit It should come close. If it misses adjust your focal point on the other table until it hits the pocket you want and use that point. I hope this helps someone if not I am sorry.

Gutsy last Ball Bank

By naga65

Date: Sun, Apr 18 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques



I'm pretty sure most of you have encountered this situation, wherein the CB is near the corner pocket, and the OB is in such a position that it would be too thin a cut to the side pocket. Trying to pocket it to corner pocket A would definitely result in a scratch. Would you play safe or what?

If you're feeling gutsy, the way to shoot this shot is to bank it into corner pocket B, hitting the CB full, using just a hair of low left english, medium to hard stroke. Practice this shot and if you can make it 50% of the time, next time you're faced with this situation, GO FOR IT!

One Rail Kick Shots

By admin

Date: Sun, Jun 8 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

Kick shots are in most cases, similar to the bank shot. The difference lies in the fact that when doing kick shots, the cue ball will need to contact the cushion before the intended object ball. This lesson will explain the basic one-rail kick shot and its proper execution.

As we have learned from the lesson on bank shots, the rule of "angle in" equals "angle out" applies to kick shots as well. This rule applies to normal center ball hit on the cue ball with normal speed. Remember that speed and english affects the angle of the ball off the cushion (refer to the lessons on bank shots). Now, let's look at figure 1 below.



Figure 1

In this type of ball positions, you simply need to find the half way point from the cue ball to the object ball then draw an imaginary line going towards the opposite rail and that will be the point where you would aim your cue ball on the cushion to hit the 3 ball. This is just a simple geometric problem using a triangle to find the correct point (point X) on the cushion for your aim point. This calculation holds true even if the cue ball is at any point in line with "side A". The same goes for the object ball if it's at any point along the line of "side B".

When the cue ball and the object ball is on the same line at the base of the triangle (base C), it is easy enough to calculate point "X" on the cushion by getting the middle point of both balls and running a line across towards the opposite rail.

Refer to figure 1 below. Notice that the cue ball is now positioned differently. However, the aim point on the cushion (designated by point "X") is still the same because the cue ball is still on the same line "side A". But how do you calculate the point "X" in this position?

When using our triangle method, we can see that we are missing two points (point Y and point X). In this case, guesswork would be prudent.



Figure 1

Using the triangle as your basis, make an educated guess of where you think point "X" is suppose to be. After doing that, simply draw a line from point "X" towards and beyond your cue ball towards the other end of the table at point "Y". Now, you have point "Y" figured out. From there, use point "Y" and the position of your object ball (the 3 ball in the illustration) and determine the halfway point or mid point. Once that is done, draw a line from the mid point towards the opposite rail towards point "X". The mid point and point "X" should be on the same line parallel to the short rail. If not, go back to the beginning and pick another spot on the cushion where you think point "X" will be and start re-calculating.

A simpler solution is offered by the illustration below.

Given the position of the cue ball and the object ball, you will need to get the midway point of both balls. In the illustration, it is designated as point "M". The next thing to do is draw a line from the object ball across the opposite cushion parallel to the short rail, in the illustration, this is designated as line "F". At the end of that line would be your point "Z" in the illustration.



Figure 1

Next, from point "M", draw an imaginary line towards point "Z". This line (designated as line "N") will be your guiding line to determine point "X" on the cushion. All that is left to do is draw an imaginary line from the cue ball to the cushion that is parallel to the imaginary line "N". In the illustration above, this is designated by the blue line "P".

Two Rail Kick Shots

By admin

Date: Sun, Jul 6 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

There are situations where a one-rail kick shot is not available as an option. In this case you either have to go two, three or even more rails to make a good hit on the intended object ball. This lesson will explain the basic two-rail kick shot and its proper execution.

The last part of the basic kick shot lesson shows the parallel technique for executing a one-rail kick. This same technique can also be used to execute a two rail kick. For people who are still unfamiliar with the term "Kick Shot", this refers to a shot where the cue ball will need to hit the cushion or rail before hitting the intended object ball.

To illustrate the proper execution of a two-rail kick, let's look at figure 1 below:



Figure 1

In this type of ball positions, you simply need to find the half way point from the cue ball to the object ball. Then draw an imaginary line from the mid point going towards the corner pocket (indicated by the dashed line). The next step is to use this imaginary line as a basis to find the point on the cushion to aim the cue ball (indicated by point A). Point A is determined by using a line that is parallel to the imaginary line from the mid point to the corner of the pocket.

In the previous illustration (Figure 1) shows you a simple geometric calculation for executing a two-rail kick, however, minor adjustments are needed to execute this shot and hit the 1 ball. Because english or spin is naturally applied on the cue ball as it bounces off the first and the second rail, you would actually make adjustments to aim closer to the corner pocket to allow for the effect of english on the cue ball. In the illustration below (Figure 2), this is indicated by the black line.



Figure 2

Practice two-rail kicks to familiarize yourself with it so that you'll have a "feel" of where the correct point on the rail to aim.

There is a video demonstration of this lesson courtesy of Dr. Dave and The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards <www.engr.colostate.edu/pool/>.

Go to <http://www.easypooltutor.com/article140-pg-1.html> to view the video.

Diamond System Simplified

By BadAndy

Date: Fri, Apr 4 @ 05:00:00 CST

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

Part I

The diamond system is usually calculated by assigning numerical values to diamonds but once you understand the parallel lines between the diamonds the math is not required. Just see the lines like we are all used to doing in aiming.

First, a quick explanation on the math. Determine the numerical value for the Cue Ball position diamond and a value for the target diamond of the first cushion to hit with the ball. The value of 2 is always subtracted from the cue ball diamond to determine the target diamond, that's it. The problem is the balls are never at the exact location the books use as illustrations and they fail to properly detail how to determine the location for cue ball diamond when it is not in the exact location. Part 2 will discuss that part and the use of parallel lines instead of math.

I could not figure out in the diagram how to get numbers next to the diamonds so I placed the corresponding ball on the 'cue ball diamonds' (place 4 ball on diamond 4 etc.). I left the $\frac{1}{2}$ diamonds blank so the diamond that is unnumbered between the 3 diamond and the 4 diamond is 3.5. I ran out of balls so there are no numbers for the target diamonds, but it is easy. For the target diamonds corner pocket on the opposite side (top left) is target diamond 0, the next diamond is 1, then 2, 3, 4 (4 is the center pocket), 5, 6 with the last corner pocket being target diamond 7. There are no halves for the target diamond. Remember, all that is really needed is to memorize parallel lines. In the table chart the diamond for the cue ball is at cue ball diamond 5. Subtract 2 from 5 and the target target diamond is 3. That's all there is to it, hit diamond #3.

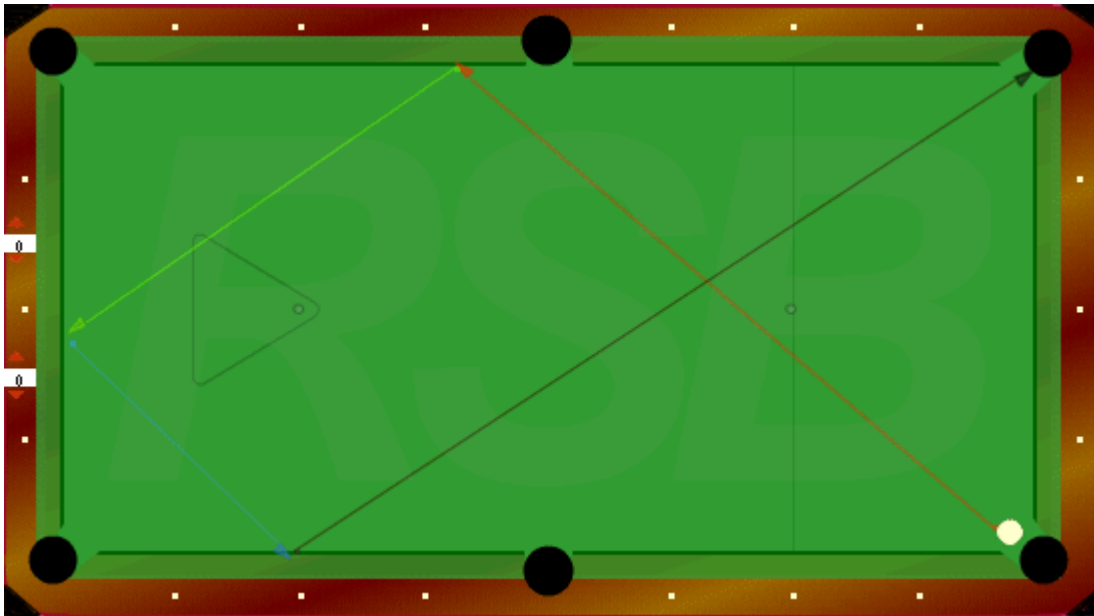
NOTES:

- Each table is different and will not be the exact same as my diagram. The numbers shown are for my table, the book had the numbers a little different. In the book the cue ball diamonds were $\frac{1}{2}$ apart (5, 4.5, 4, 3.5, etc) but with my table the first number is one whole number apart (5, 4, 4.5, 4, 3.5). This was determined by hitting the cue ball around the world several times at each location to determine its real point. The books tell you to do the same thing.

- When aiming at the diamond, you aim at the diamond and not the spot on the cushion edge as if the diamond were tattooed on cloth directly in front of the diamond. You aim directly at the diamond spot on the table. This probably accounts for some of the variance between tables. Also, standard table size specs allows for a variance so even though the table may be standard they will not be the exact same size, just as pockets sizes do change from table to table.

- All of this assumes no English. If you stroke off center or are inconsistent you will get different results. English can be used to change the angle to bypass balls or pockets etc but that is left to you to adjust. Part two will describe how to determine

the cue ball diamond when it is not in the exact spot and to also to forget about the calculations.

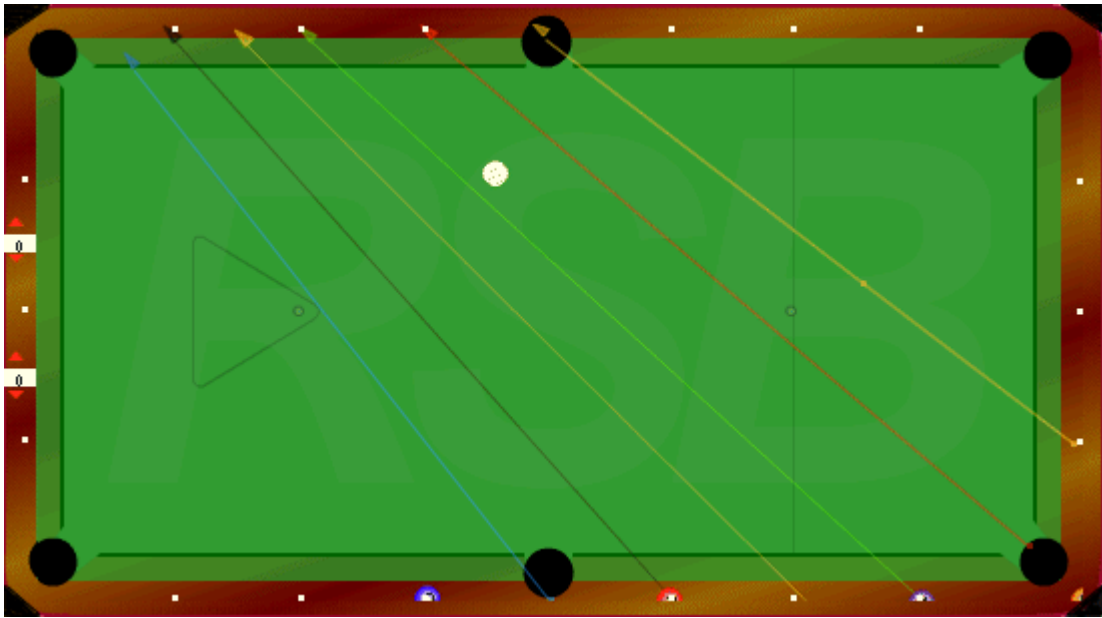


PART 2

The easiest way to determine the cue ball diamond is to forget about the numbers and just see the parallel lines, which cue ball diamond goes to which target diamond as in the attached diagram. Then you see where your cue ball is on the parallel grid and adjust accordingly. In the diagram the cue ball is $\frac{1}{4}$ the way past number 4 parallel line so you aim $\frac{1}{4}$ past the target diamond (2) along the same parallel line. The ball should end up at target diamond 7 or the corner pocket. Basically you shoot the ball in parallel with the existing parallel lines. Just remember which cue ball diamond connects to which target diamond and see the lines and shoot in parallel with the lines. I ran out of lines to draw but got most of them there.

If the desired end result is not the corner pocket, you adjust the target diamond by the amount your end target is away from the corner pocket. When both are off by a significant distance it changes the lines but most of the time you are shooting for close to the corner pocket so the target adjustment is minor.

This is an attempt to condense the subject of an entire book into about two pages. Hope it is understandable, the books are not. Happy trails.



How to Make a Kick Shot

By Mick Turner

Date: Sun, Jun 27 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Banking and Kicking Techniques

When shooting kick shots, many factors come into play. English & speed, will all play a part in the path of the CB, and may affect the ultimate OB path as well.

To understand the issues that can affect your success, I will first explain the principals of speed and english.

To see the different CB reactions in the speed of a shot, look at Diagram 1. If you center hit a left angle kick shot with no english, medium speed, it will come out at (A), then try to do the exact shot again, only with a harder stroke, the angle of rebound on the CB will come up narrow (B), again with slow speed and the CB will go wide (C). Why? The speed of the ball hitting and compressing the cushion causes different secondary effects. Speed of the kick shot is very important and can be used to advantage.

In this discussion, "english" is defined as only side spin on the CB, it does not include draw or top-spin.

To see the different CB reactions using english (CB side-spin) on a kick shot, look at Diagram 1 again. If you center hit a left angle kick shot with no english (Diagram 1), medium speed, the CB will come out at (A), then try to do the exact shot again, only with a 1 tip of left english on the CB, the angle of rebound on the CB will come up wide (C); hit it again with 1 tip of right english on the CB and it will go narrow (B). Why? Because the english on the CB causes it to come off the cushion at more or less of an angle, depending on direction of CB english.

There are also effects of rebound that occur depending on whether the CB is "back-spinning" or "stunned" (not spinning) off the cushion, but those are more advanced topics not covered here. The assumption is that the CB will begin rolling forward somewhat on all the shots I cover in this exercise.

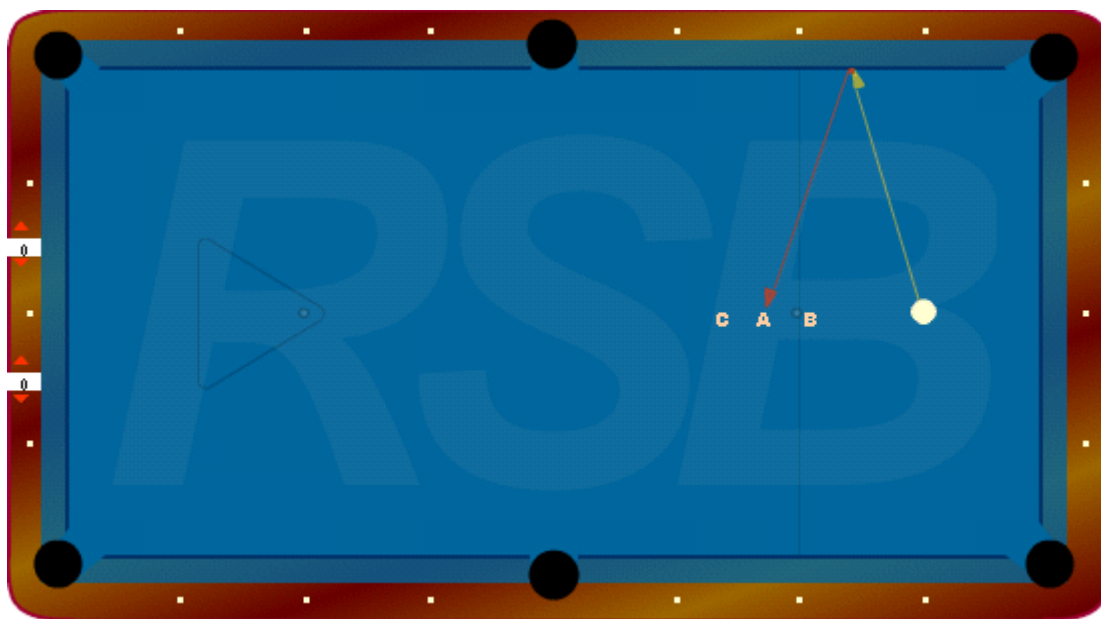


Diagram 1

START(%Pm8O4%Qe001%Rg3O1%Sc0O1%Uj5D4%Vm7O1%Wf4N3%Xj1C3)END

(I show the table diagram code below each diagram so you can copy it for future reference.)

Now that the technical aspects of how hard it may be are behind us, what I want to talk about here is how to "Make a Kick Shot". How do you measure the angles of a shot into and off the cushion? How do you know where to hit? How do you know if more/less speed, or english is necessary?

You may have heard of "angle-in vs. angle-out" on a bank or kick shot. It works assuming other factors are taken into account, such as speed and english, as noted above. What about those times where those angles are not obvious, or where the position of the balls makes it almost impossible to observe angle-in/angle-out? The most important question, is how do you do kick shots consistently? The angle in vs. angle out concept is applied here but this technique teaches you how to "find" the CB contact point on a kick shot, or the apex of your shot so the trajectory of the CB following the angles in/out are correct.

I have not seen this process for calculating CB contact points for kick shots anywhere else, so I might be the first to come up with it, even though I suspect many pro's have this in their heads. I modeled this kick shot process after a similar bank shot method I wrote about in another article that was taken from some tried and proven techniques from various instructions from various pro's that I condensed into understandable steps. I thought about this for quite awhile until I figured it out...I made so much money on the bank shot tutorial, I thought it only natural to come up with a kick shot tutorial...now I'll be twice as rich... ;) LOL...2 times 0 is still 0...

Anyway, I digress and dream of finer days when grass was green and times were good and right after the baseball game there were milk and cookies on the table.....Oh I'm off subject again, back to the kick shot!

Looking at Diagram 2 below for reference, if you follow the steps you will understand the process.

Set up your practice table for the kick shot with the CB and OB at the approximate positions shown in the diagram, then;

Step1: Draw a straight line from the center of the CB to the cushion you intend to bank from. (Line A) *(Where the CB is does not matter, as long as it is in position to make the kick shot bank and the path to the OB and OB to pocket is open. You can use any of the below diagrams and move the CB and adjust your measurements accordingly. That way you can practice a allot of variations of these shots.)*

Step 2: Draw a line between the object pocket through the OB and place a "ghost ball" directly **on that line just behind the OB** -- I used the 1 ball in the below examples. Here I use a Yellow Line. (not to be confused with the A line) (Make sure you put the pocket end of this ghost ball line at the best point of pocket entry to assure the best odds of making the shot. In this example, I have it going into the pocket **to clear** any cushion tip.)

Step 3: Now draw a line from the center of the ghost ball to the line A cushion point; here I use an "Orange" line (B).

Step 4: Now draw a line from the center of the ghost ball parallel to line A to the same banking cushion as the A line is pointing to; here I use a "Blue" line (D).

Step 5: Now draw a line from the center of the CB to the point where the blue line D meets the cushion. This line is shown as a "Green" line, C.

Step 6: Where Line B and C intersect, (the X) draw a line parallel to line A and D to the same cushion; here shown as the Black line.

Note: The CB diagram in the upper left corner of the table shows hit and speed, it is the same for all shots in this tutorial.

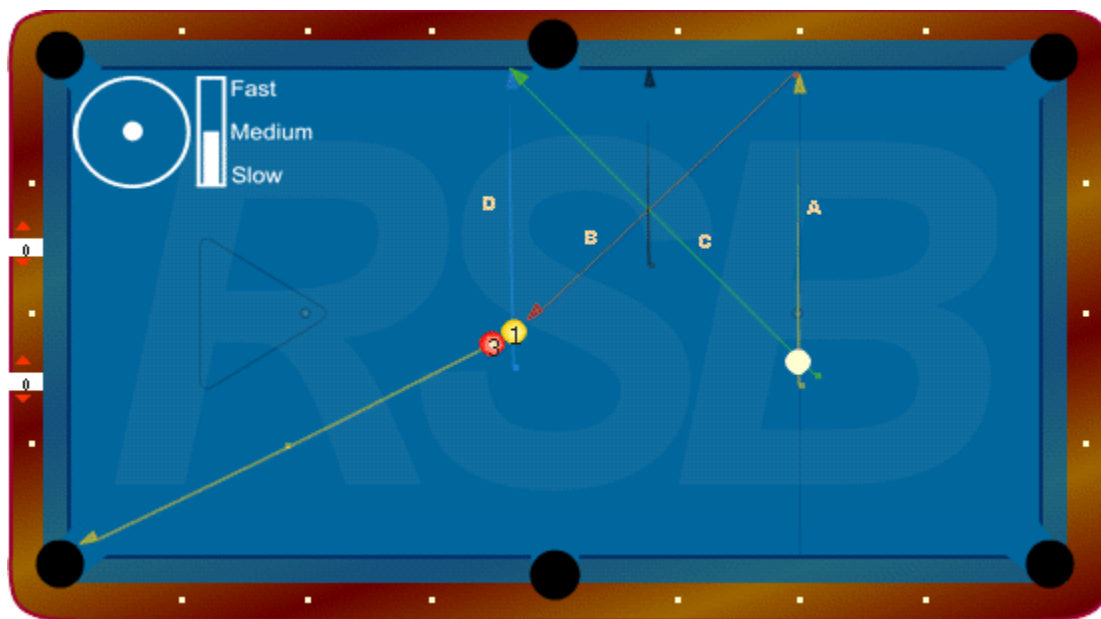


Diagram 2

```
START(%AY3P4%CX2Q0%Pg5Q9%Qg5I5%R3K0%Sb1K2%TW2I3%Ug5D6%Vg6S0
%WZ8O3%Xg3C5%YY8D1%Zh4R5%[Y1D4%Y3R1%]`OD3%^`1M0%_D6Z7%`M9V
0%aXOP9)END
```

Your CB contact point on the cushion is at the arrow point on the Black Line. Hit your CB at the cushion with center hit, no english, top or bottom, and hit at medium speed. The CB will contact the cushion, and bank into the OB on the rebound, pocketing it (if you hit it right). Just as in shooting cut shots, depending on angle of approach, you will have to compensate your aim more or less to make the CB actually hit the contact point. On longer shots, the CB will roll forward more and tend to rebound wider... so you will need to compensate the aim slightly outside the angle of aim. On a kick going left, aim slightly right and visa-versa on right kick. How much depends on distance, cushion and CB speed. Practice this to find out how it works on your table.

Of course in this example we ignore the fact that the CB will likely scratch in the side pocket. I tried this shot several times and made it but also scratched. The reason for this example is to show that bad things can happen...so you might want to try the next shot instead.

Other considerations: If you come up short (not enough angle), you hit too soft...long (too much angle) you hit too hard, assuming you put no side english on the CB. In that case you will cause the CB to go off path either way depending on english. That is why I suggest, until your skill is more advanced, shooting these shots with NO english or top/bottom so the effects of ball speed, cushion compression/rebound, and english are minimized.

Notice also, how the A, B, C & D lines form two triangles. If the CB and OB are aligned the same on the table, the triangles will be almost identical. In all cases one triangle will be the upside down mirror image of the other, but a different size depending on positions of the CB and OB....just an observation I noticed I thought I would share (geometry at work!).

Once you master this technique you can move on to hard/soft and english variations. Sometimes those shots come in handy if other balls are in the CB path. After you do this many times in practice you will learn to closely approximate the position of the kick point, thus making all this measuring unnecessary. The more you do it, the better you get at it!

To show the above diagram with the trajectory of the CB, note the below diagram with heavy black lines on the CB path for the kick shot, and also notice the angle in vs. angle out perspective between the black lines and the table using the measuring system presented here. You can take any of the below diagrams and draw the same angle in vs. angle out lines. (Hint: Copy image into PowerPoint and draw lines.)

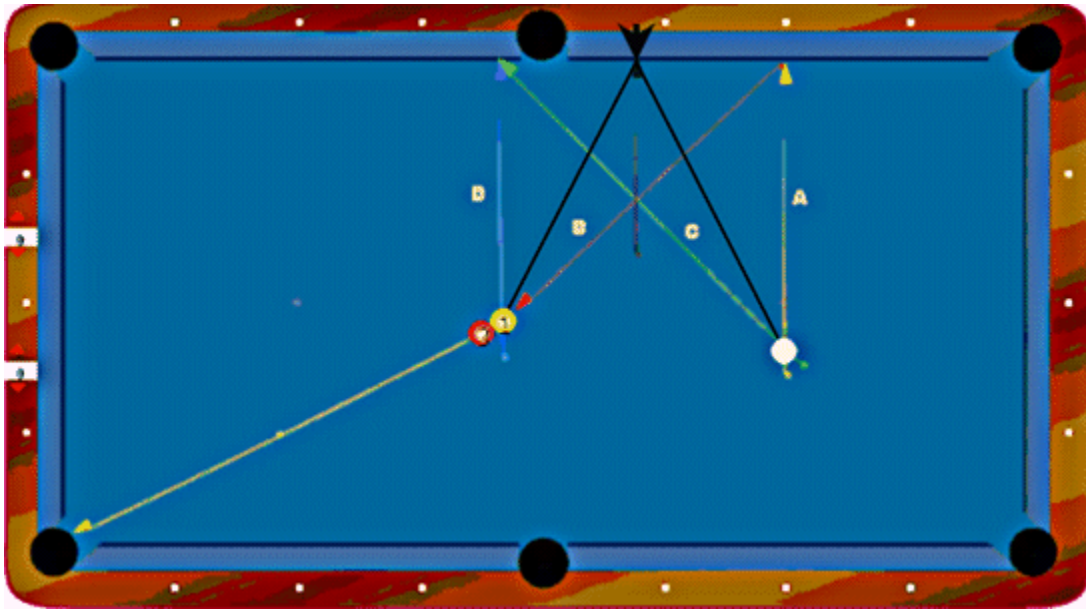


Diagram 2 with CB angle in vs. out lines, showing kick shot

Below are more examples but the lines and descriptions above are all used over and over for consistency. I provided many kick shot examples so practically every situation is covered. Those I didn't cover would be easy to create using the same techniques. I suggest you copy the table code and paste it back into the table diagram on your computer so you can recreate the shot I provided, then modify it to create your own variation of the shot. I would also save them so you have a library of possible kick shots for future reference.

This next shot is just like Diagram 2 but with the center pocket as the target. Notice how when adjusting the Orange, Blue and Green lines, to the new position of the 1 (ghost) ball, the black line point of contact has moved slightly to the left so the CB will hit the 3 ball on it's top left versus the Diagram 2 shot where the CB hits on the right side of the 3 ball. This alignment technique is very precise, as you can see.

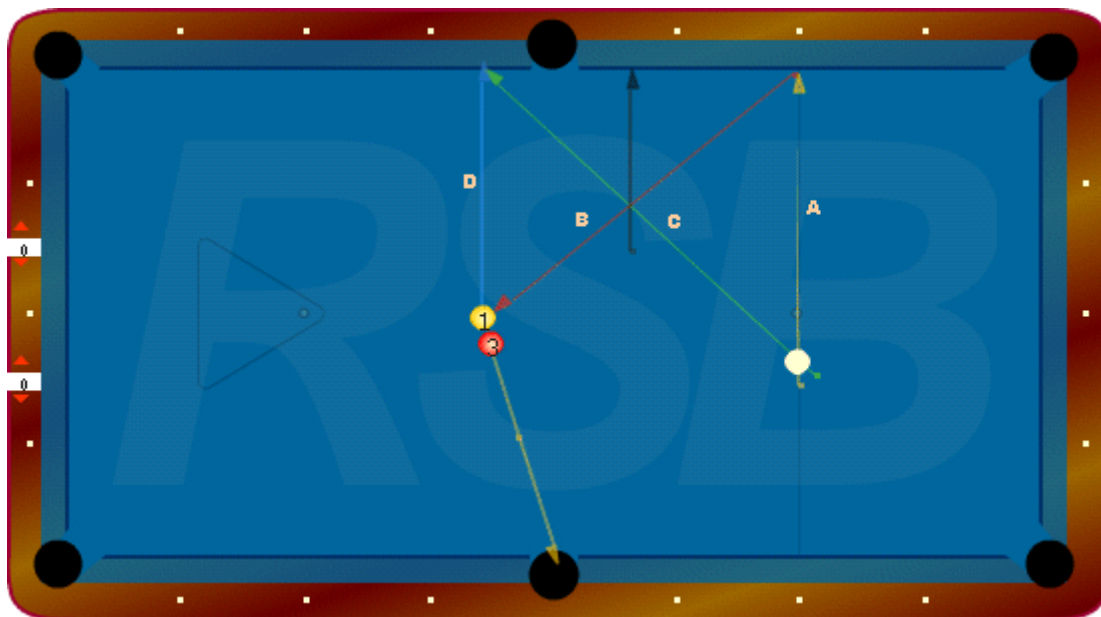


Diagram 3

START(%AW8O7%CX2Q0%Pg5Q9%Qg5I5%R[9J1%S`6J2%TV3H2%Ug5D6%Vg6SO
%WY3N9%Xg3C5%YX6D1%Zh4R5%[W8D0%W8O4%]_2D4%^_2L3%_[4[0%`Y5U
6%aXOP9)END

Now on to other diagrams; I will forgo the 6 step explanation since it is repeated each time on the colored lines, only the ball positions change as do the shots. Some of them are easy some are very difficult.

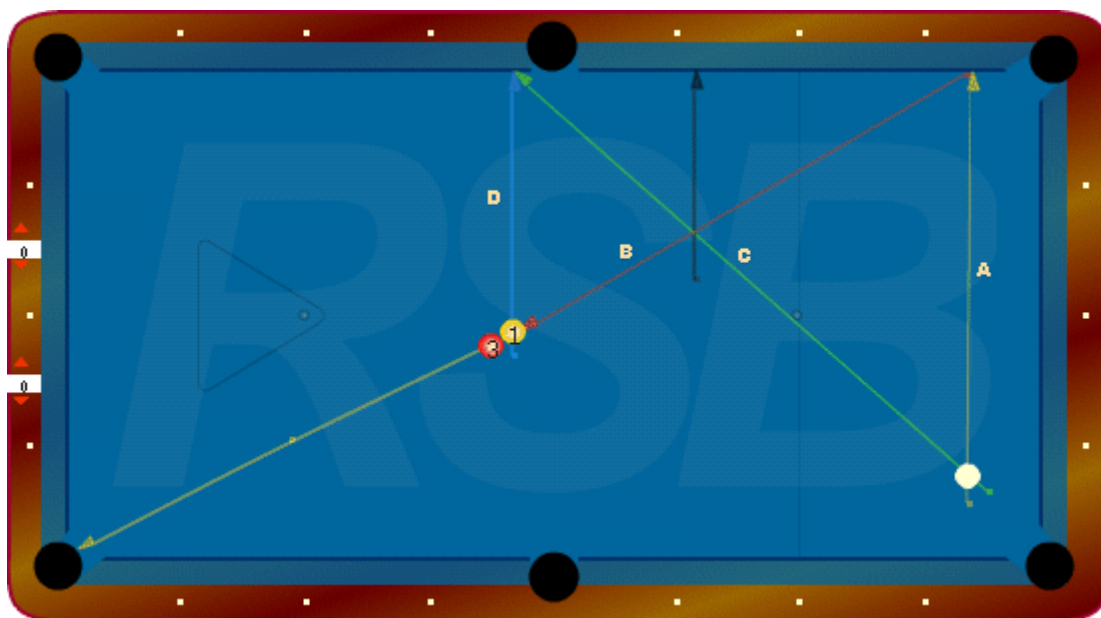


Diagram 4

START(%AY3P3%CX2Q0%PpOW5%QpOL5%R^1K6%Sd1K8%TW5H9%Up2D4%VpOX
8%WZ6O9
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)END

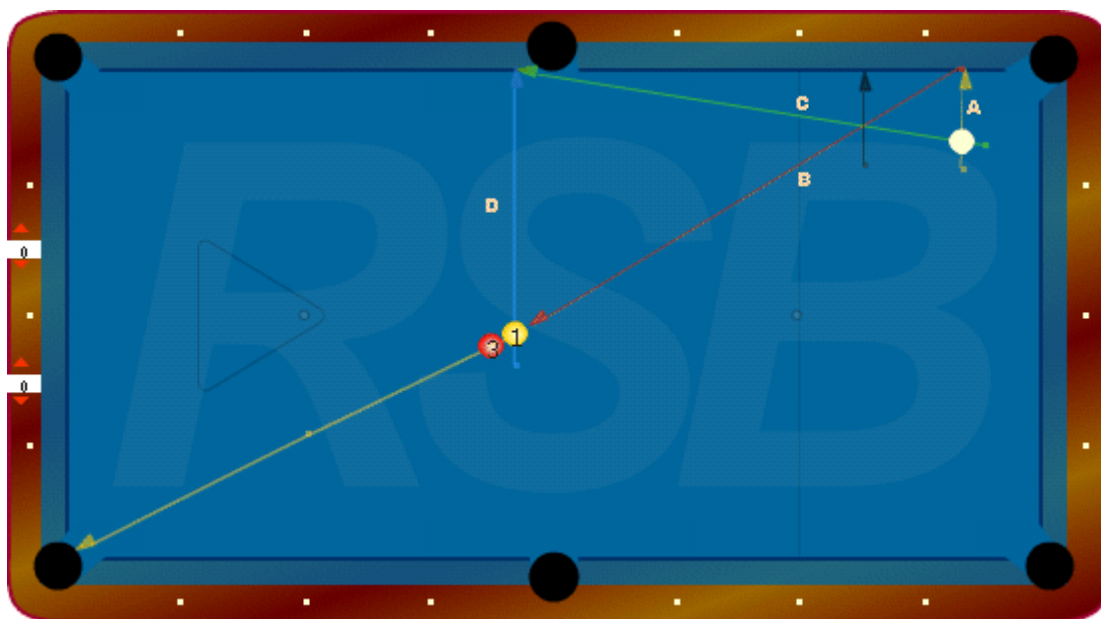


Diagram 5

```
START(%AY4P4%CX2Q0%Po7F8%Qo5D4%Rg0H0%Sg0D2%TW4I3%Uo8D3%Vo7H
1%W[1O6
%Xo6C1%YZ6C5%Zp8F9%[Y4D2%Y4Q9%]j8D4%^j8G9%_D5Z8%`O0U3%aY3P3)
END
```

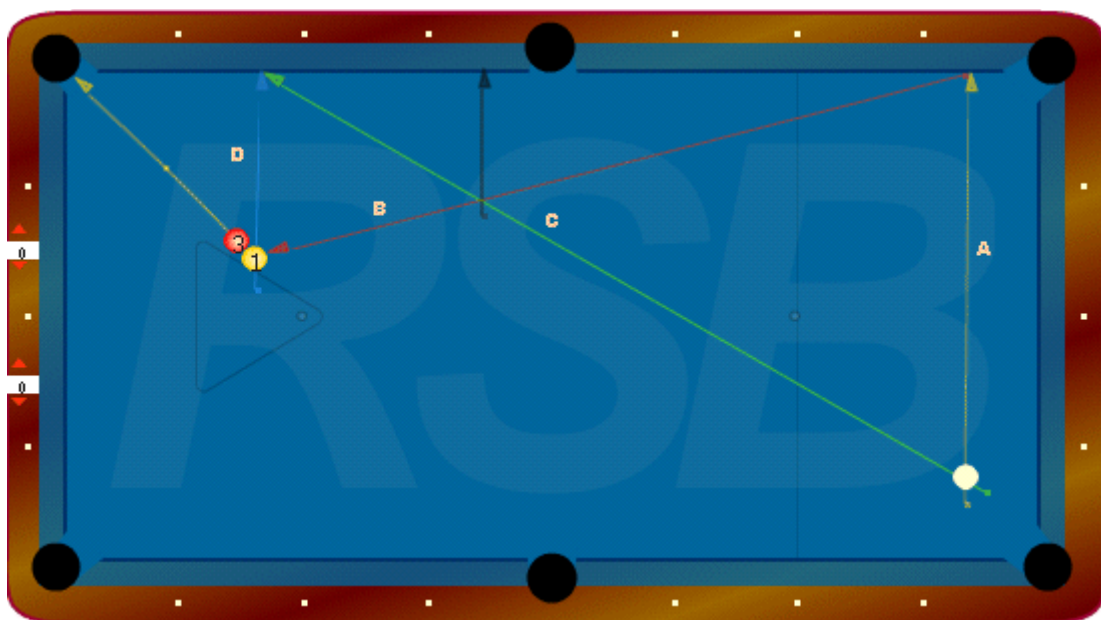


Diagram 6

```
START(%AL5L6%CK6K7%Pp0W5%Qp1K4%RQ9I4%SZ6J0%TJ8F7%Up2D4%Vp0X8
%WN3L2
%Xo9C4%YM9D0%Zq0X2%[L8D3%L6N1%]W9D2%^W9J4%_D3D4%`H0H0%aL4L
5)END
```

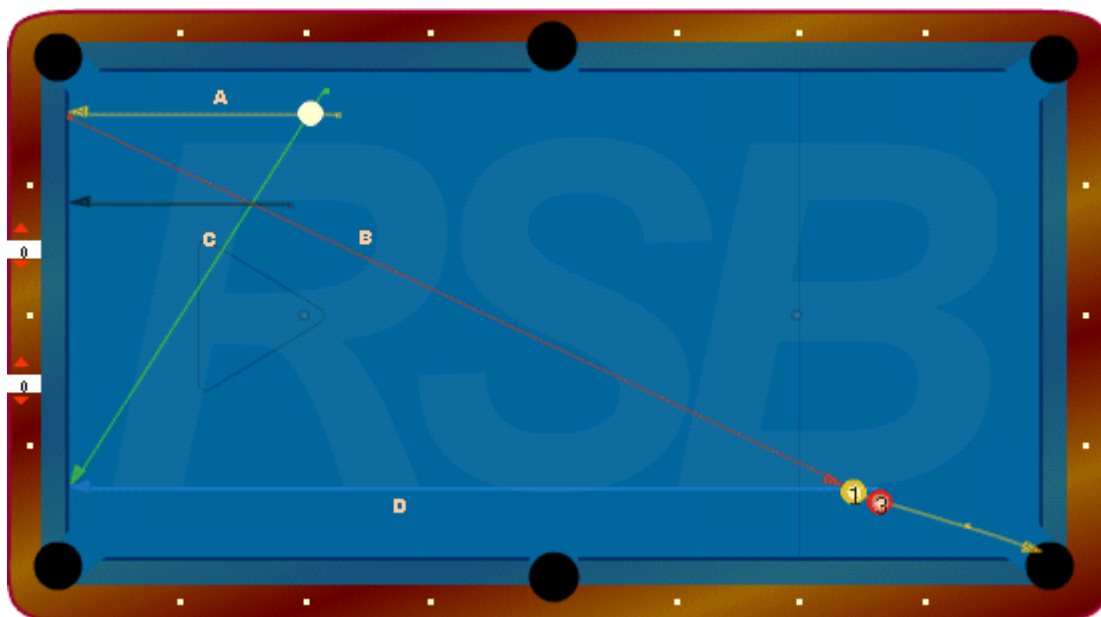


Diagram 7

```
START(%Aj3X3%CK6X8%PO2E4%QI9C9%RQ1J9%SI4K0%TR8X3%UD2E5%VP5E4
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%XC1E5%YC9W2%ZO9D2%[D3X2%k3X1%]D3J0%^N1I9%eB5a3%_r8Z9%`o9Y9
%aj5X3)END
```

Note in Diagram 8, the further down the CB is the more to the left the kick contact point, conversely the further up the CB the more to the right the contact point will be. This information is useful for future reference so you remember basic shot position dynamics.

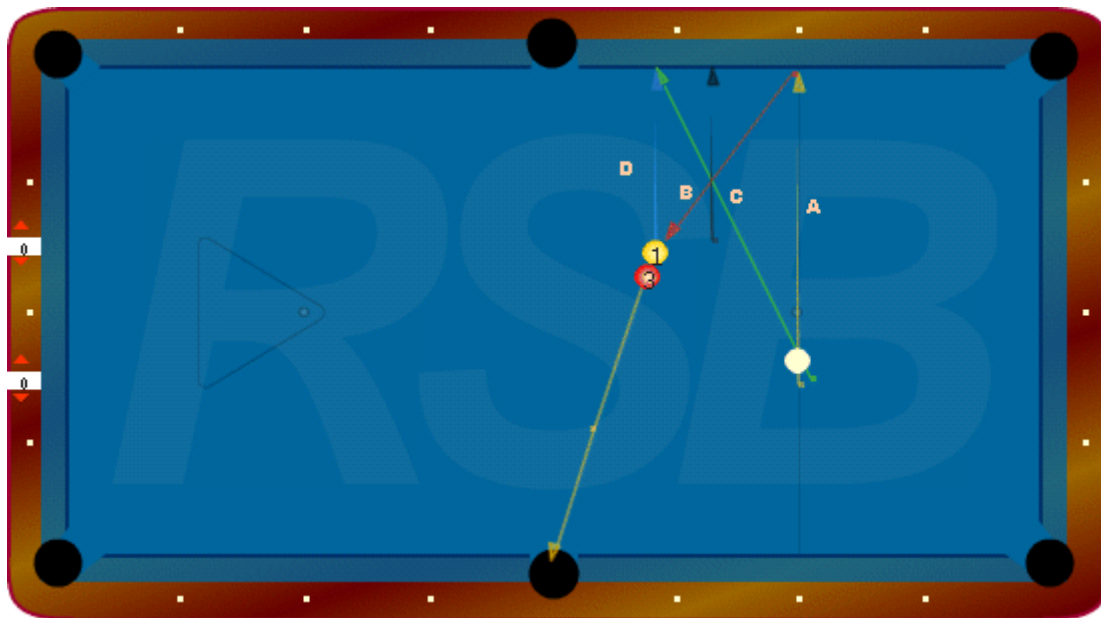


Diagram 8

```
START(%A`4L5%C`0M7%Pg5Q9%Qg5I5%Ra1H8%Sc7I0%T^1G6%Ug5D6%Vg6S0
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a_8M4)END
```

In a more practical example, the 3 ball in this case, is an easy side shot, but what if other balls are in the way and it is your only shot? Note also in this case, the 1, (ghost) ball, is aligned slightly off line so you won't scratch with a straight in kick shot -- something to keep in mind.

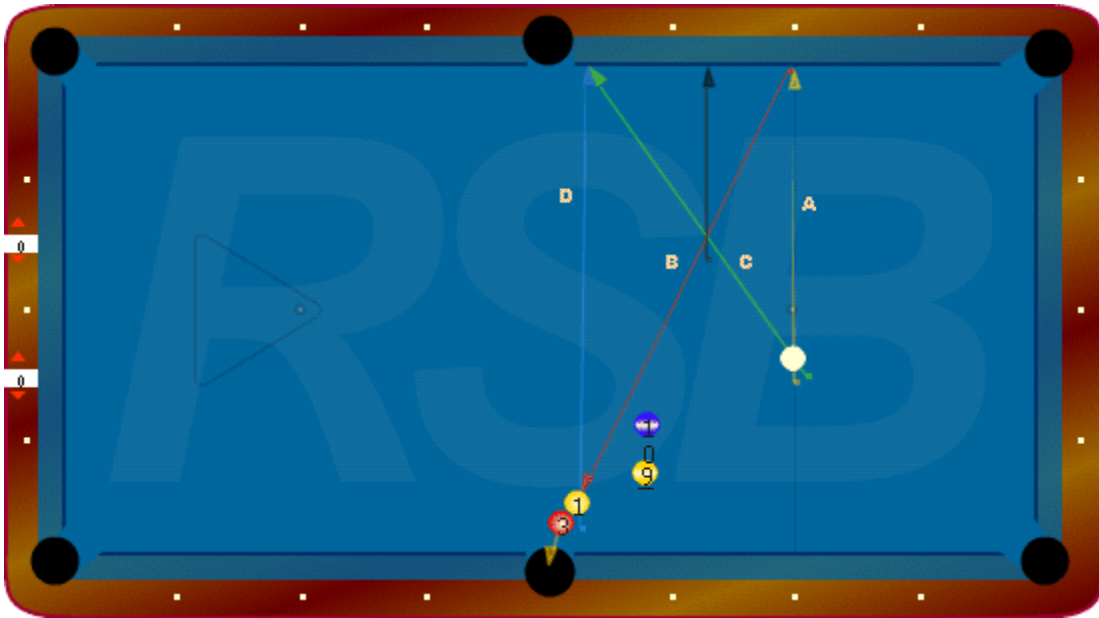


Diagram 9

START(%A7Y1%C[9Z1%I`1W6%J`2U2%Pg5Q9%Qg5I5%R`6L4%Sd4L4%T[3I1%U
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`[6Z4%a

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XV - MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

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10 Bad Habits That Keep You From Running The Rack

By David Sapolis

Date: Mon, Mar 31 @ 16:32:37 CST

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Many players believe that they get bad rolls, or that certain situations develop on the playing surface of the table that keep them from running out. I believe that the reasons we fail to run the rack is mainly due to bad habits that we have developed over time. I believe that there are 10 bad habits that we have all had at one time or another, and that we utilize these habits subconsciously, either out of desperation or by necessity. Bad habits are the result of poor decisions. They are also the result of laziness. We find the easier, softer way, and avoid progress at all costs. These habits root themselves into the deepest and most difficult to reach parts of your game, making it seem nearly impossible to ever alleviate the symptoms and deal with the problems head on. No situation is impossible. No situation is helpless. When faced with problems such as this, we shouldn't stay in helplessness, Instead of saying, "I can't because," train your mind to say "Well, how CAN I?" Along with identifying these bad habits, I will pass along to you 10 good habits that can and will enable you to run out the rack! Remember, we don't have bad habits, they have us! BUT.... we can replace the negative habits with positive ones, and become trapped into doing the right thing, all of the time!

Bad Habit #1: A display of power on the break.

This is the downfall of many a player. Throughout this book you will here me say time and time again, "Never sacrifice ACCURACY for POWER." All of us want to make a few balls on the break, but the reality is that as long as you make "a" ball, you get to keep shooting. There's no rule out there that says you need to make two or three balls on the break, just one will suffice. The other reality is, that to accomplish this, you don't have to blast the rack to smithereens. Why?

Bad things happen when you break the balls too hard. More times than not, the cue ball either flies off of the table, or the cue ball flies into a pocket. This does nothing to help you, as your opponent will more than likely have a wide open table and ball in hand. Not a good thing from where you're sitting.

Most guys have this "macho thing" about blasting the balls real hard. Of course it's real intimidating to watch three and four balls rocket into the pockets off of the break, but if you have no control over the cue ball and the one ball, your chances of running the rack are slim. Why? Not only do you need to break and make a ball, you also have to get a shot on the lowest numbered ball. Remember? We're trying to play this game at a higher level now, which means that we need to abandon the idea of pot luck position. In "Breaking To Win" I cover all of the bases of why I use the break that I use. I play the one in the side (or bank the one to the corner which I'm breaking from) and I stop the cue ball in the center of the table. I stroke the cue ball at medium speed for maximum results.

Many of us get caught up with the excitement of having just won a game, and now we're breaking. We want to smash the hell out of the balls before the other guy lifts up the rack. We're already down in our breaking stance while the guys racking the balls. STOP DOING THIS!!!

This will only heighten your excitement and cause you to rush the break shot. Wait for the balls to get racked, examine the rack, and then set up your break shot. A good way to remain calm before breaking is to hold the cue ball in your bridge hand until the rack is lifted. Staying down in your stance only helps to tense up your muscles and your brain. Remember, before we can control what is happening on the table, we need to first control what is going on in our head. If we have no control over what's occurring inside the coconut, bad things can and will occur outside the coconut. Now to dispel a rumor: Power is not all that important on the break. Accuracy is! Over a period of time, you will see that being more accurate (as opposed to being more powerful) a ball is more likely to drop on the break. Why is this? I'm not a physics major or anything, nor do I really preach the physics of pool (I leave that to others) but I believe that the less that's flying around the table, the better chances I have of a ball dropping into the pockets. The Big Bang Theory of nine ball has always puzzled me. I would rather know exactly where my cue ball is going, and where the one ball is going. That way I know I will have a shot when something drops. How many times have you made a ball on the break only to get stuck rolling out or to be left with no shot at all? I bet that has happened plenty of times. This bad habit can be eliminated from your game. I have argued this next point over endlessly with countless people, but I still stand firm to my belief that the when the balls are blasted on the break, they tend to spread out to the rails at first, giving the illusion of a "nice break". After a about a second and a half, the balls tend to zing around the table at various speeds, eventually "mushrooming" back to or near the center of table. Why is this? What happens when a ball travels to a rail at a high velocity? It contacts the cushion and then goes to another cushion. These balls repeat the process until the ball eventually stops. Usually, it stops back where it originally started, or it clusters with two or three other balls. To put this in perspective, let's say that you are running out a rack, and you are now shooting the four ball. As you attempt to make the four and get position on the next ball, how many of the balls need to be moving? Preferably just the cue ball (for position) and the four going into the desired pocket. What would be your chances if you spread the remainder of the balls around the table in that situation? The shot on the four is no more and no less important than the break shot. If you have power, fine. Control it. If you cannot control your power, take it down a notch or two. You'd be surprised.

Bad Habit #2: Failure to properly read the rack.

Many skills are necessary in nine ball, but none is more important than possessing the skill to properly and effectively read the rack. When it is our turn at the table, we need to know exactly what needs to be accomplished. Just aimlessly shooting from ball to ball won't work here. You might get lucky every now and then, but you won't be successful consistently.

Planning is essential in any endeavor, but here it pays dividends on your confidence and hopefully your cash flow. What is "reading the rack"? It is the art and skill of seeing a pattern (shot for shot) that will eventually lead you to a game winning shot on the nine ball. Every shot that you make is designed not only to get position on the next ball, but it must aid you in your efforts to run the rack. This can be practiced by watching others play, or it can be practiced while you are playing.

What causes us to improperly read the rack? Lots of things. Jitters, nervousness, anxiousness, or in some cases our own stupidity (me included). Some of us just don't pay attention to what we are doing. We take an easy layout for granted and

eventually stand over the table scratching our heads while mumbling, "oh, sh*t!" Our mind must work like a rack-running computer, analyzing each shot of the layout, while recognizing the patterns and routes required to get you out of the rack. Carelessness gets us nowhere but sitting back in the chair. We need to concentrate on every shot, calculating each and every move with precision. Later I will give you some ideas to consider when reading the rack.

Bad Habit #3: The inability to effectively deal with clusters and problem balls.

This is the Achilles heel of many players. Many of the younger players of today are at a disadvantage compared to players of twenty or thirty years ago. I have always maintained that the game of straight pool (14.1) is and always will be the game's best teacher. Many of today's players have never played straight pool or one pocket, and that is a shame. The game of straight pool forces you to learn how to break up clusters and eliminate problem spots within the rack. So how does this relate to nine ball? Simple. Many times clusters develop and make our path to the nine ball seem impossible. A seasoned player knows that these clusters serve a dual purpose:

- a) They can stop our opponent dead in his tracks as he attempts to run the rack.
- b) We can use these clusters to our advantage by using them as target areas if and when we have to play safe.

But, what if we are the shooting player and we are forced to either duck, or break up the cluster? As with anything else, this can be learned through practice. Remember how I spoke earlier about some of us just aimlessly toss nine balls out on the table and start shooting away as opposed to practicing a specific part of our game that needs work? This is what I was talking about. All of us could use work in this area. Set up a few clusters and see how you can effectively break them up after shooting in the lowest numbered ball. Leaving it up to chance, or hoping that our opponent will do the dirty work for us is not very smart. We want to be in control of the table, and we want to keep shooting. That is how we win games. Problem balls can be classified in two categories.

- a) They can be the "key shot" in the rack.
- b) They can be that ball that has the least pocket availability options.

Either way, these balls must be dealt with accordingly. Perhaps you can start by setting up for the key shot from the get go. This bad habit goes hand in hand with effective rack reading, and problems can be avoided by utilizing proper planning. If we are weak in this area of our game, it will be exploited by a more experienced player.

Bad Habit #4: Flashy position routes.

This is probably the most common among novice and intermediate players. Some players enjoy having the cue ball travel from rail to rail with more english than is required. Please understand that there is a such thing as doing too much with the cue ball. The rule is "do whatever is the simplest". If you can get position by using one rail, use one rail, not two or three. We're at the table to win games, not to impress the railbirds. If you want to impress the railbirds, learn some trick shots. Nine ball is a game that is played best when it is played in it's simplest form.

Bad Habit #5: Indecisiveness.

This is a killer. This is a mental flaw that is brought upon by not having the balls roll your way. We become timid and duck instead of going for a shot. We lose confidence in our ability to make sound decisions, and the wires become crossed during mid-match. Pool is a game that is based on the players making sound decisions and utilizing good judgment. Take away the player's decision making abilities and his good judgment and he'll look like a deer in the headlights.

Have you ever heard the expression, "He's playing over his head" or "He's playing out of his head"? There is a such thing as "playing out of your head. Shooting the object ball into the pocket is a task external from your mind. By that, I mean that the task is external, and the thoughts that complete the action are internal. The internal thoughts are the motor functions that are necessary to complete the task, such as looking at the cue ball, looking at the object ball, lining up the shot, getting down in your stance, placing the shaft of your cue in your bridge hand, gripping the butt of the cue, performing your practice strokes, having your tip contact the cue ball, your follow through, watching the cue ball make contact with the object ball, watching the object ball reach its destination, and standing up straight to prepare for the next shot. I don't think any of us need to meticulously prepare to execute any of those tasks, as by now they should be second nature to you. Many of us do concentrate on these tasks while we are choking. Let me explain.

Many of us become indecisive by "second guessing" our decisions. What we should strive for is having all of our decisions made before we get into our shooting stance. All of our planning should be done before we bend over the shot. If we are planning our position routes or our shot options while down in our shooting stance, we are a big underdog. Plan, then execute. Get out of your mind. On the same token, learn to recognize your opponent's indecisiveness. The deer in the headlights look goes both ways. Nothing shakes a pool player's confidence more than the sinking feeling of despair and bewilderment. Recognize this and go for the jugular.

Bad Habit #6: Rushing through the rack.

Though shooting quickly is quite intimidating, it opens the door for many things to go wrong. The first thing to go is our ability to SEE the table. We are so busy shooting the balls in at light speed that we forget to read the rack properly, or we completely eliminate or condense our pre-shot routine. The most common habit is not staying down on the shot. We open the door to carelessness and eventually make a tiny error on a simple shot that we should have made.

There is no advantage to rushing through the rack. This habit brings forth carelessness. If you need this explained any further, all I can say is, "a rushed job is certainly not the best job that could have been done".

Bad Habit #7: Limited shotmaking ability.

Shotmaking is essential. I don't care how good of a position expert you are, sooner or later you will be faced with a tester and have to come through with your best shotmaking. We would all like to be straight in on every shot, but that is not always the case, therefore we must prepare ourselves by knowing how to make the tough rail biters and bank shots. This could either be your Waterloo or your ace in the hole.

Bad Habit #8: Losing control of the cue ball.

A mental as well as physical error which is mainly the fault of having your brain concentrating on one task (making the object ball) as opposed to concentrating on both shotmaking and cue ball position. Cue ball control is essential. Contrary to popular belief, the cue ball will not do anything that you don't tell it to do. Cue ball mastery is much easier to achieve than mental mastery. This is a prime example of how the brain likes to do it's own thing when placed in pressure situations. Our mind and body must work in unison if we are to perform our best under pressure. More about this under Bad Habit #10.

Bad Habit #9: Overconfidence.

This bad habit comes from a basic lack of respect for the complexity of the game of pool. We all know that the balls roll funny for everybody. The main problem with being "overconfident" is that we tend to trash talk while being in that state of mind. Nothing disgusts me more than an arrogant player who has no respect for the complexity of the game. Being overconfident can cause its share of problems. We tend to rely more on our arrogance than on our abilities. We begin to make flashy shots and position routes. We lose our mental focus and believe we are in "Dead Stroke" when all we are doing is being a pompous ass. Carelessness is the substance of overconfidence. Remember that, above anything else.

Bad Habit #10: Choking.

Choking occurs when the mind is so flustered that it can no longer effectively communicate with the body, therefore altering our normal motor functions. Our brain becomes overloaded due to increased excitement or pressure, and we do exactly what we don't want to do, we choke. Shooting the nine ball into the corner pocket is a task external of the mind. When we are in "dead Stroke" our focus is almost completely external. That is why it hard for us to remember what was going on when we were running rack after rack. That is why we say that a player is playing "out of his head". When we choke, we are playing inside our head. The wires become overloaded and too much information is being passed from our brain to shooting arm. The wires start smoking and we choke.

Credits: Blackjack David Sapolis is a former professional player, is the author of Stroke of Genius, The Growling Point, Building the Perfect Game, Lessons in 9 Ball, and Chasing the Dream. Blackjack is available for private instruction and seminars and can be contacted at: blackjackds@elp.rr.com blkjackds12@yahoo.com Ph. 915-757-3547

The Way of a Hu\$ler

By !!mat\$ter!! tha Supreme

Date: Mon, Apr 7 @ 03:58:28 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

In today's world of pool there are two types of pool players, the Pros and the Hustlers.

But which is superior? Which of the two make the most money? Who would you rather play?

People (when I say people I mean normal people going into a pool hall for a good time) would rather much play a casual looking fisherman or 7/11 worker than a flash dressed pro with a 1000-dollar cue. That's probably the most flaw in people when it comes to gambling. When they compare the 2 together they'd much rather play "an average Joe" and wouldn't touch the pro with a ten-foot pole. This is a hustlers' number one rule, appearance.

The only way to play someone for money is to look like the victim, to act like a beginner play a couple of cheap games then raise the stakes. This builds up the victim's confidence, (I say victim cause this is the best way of describing them) if people can see the hustlers real game or skills, nobody would play him (human instinct: no one wants to lose). So the hustler hangs low and camouflages his abilities and searches the room for the perfect victim until he finds his prey and moves in for the kill.

The hustler makes friends with the person and plays a few friendly games before he mentions money. Then he makes the first few bets cheap (if the hustler bets big time up front the person will suspect that he's good and leave the table), and usually loses them to build up the victim's confidence so he keeps playing. Then the hustler jacks up the bet and starts to win. When the hustler wins he will only win by a ball or two and claims it was luck (he does this to camouflage his real ability so he can get more money out of the victim's pockets). And once the victim loses a bit of money he will leave. That's it, the hustler gets what he wants and moves on to his next victim.

But why does the person not see him as a hustler and keep betting? Most of this is because of the hustlers' ability to hide the truth, to win by a certain margin and blame it on luck. Another part of this is psychology, the hustler makes the opponent feel he is better than the hustler so it builds up the victim's confidence. Another part is social, nobody wants to play you if your nasty and despicable.

This ends my theory on hustlers as I am a bit of a hustler myself.

Looking good at the table

By themonk

Date: Wed, Apr 23 @ 02:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Sometimes I hear students confess that they want to become a professional player. I admire that kind of ambition. It's great to have lofty goals in this game. You will find that through out my entire course, I am directing you to become a professional player. Keep in mind, there is a difference between a professional player, and one who travels on the tour. You can become a professional without joining the tour. Being a professional is simply going about this game in a professional manner. When my student steps to the table, they are a professional in every sense of the world.

Monk Billiard Academy students go through the same professional routine on every single shot. A good stance comes from a good rhythm. Break up the rhythm, and you break up the stance. Break up the stance, and your game breaks down. You are no longer a professional if you are constantly out of rhythm. Here are the following steps taken by a Monk Billiard Academy student.

- Stand up and observe the shot
- Decide on the stroke you are going to use on this shot
- Chalk up your tip
- Visualize your shot
- Step forward and get into your stance
- Rock back and fourth
- Visualize the shot again
- Come to a stop on your final practice stroke
- Visualize the shot with this stroke
- Draw back, pause, and hit the cue ball
- Stay down until all the balls have stopped rolling

When the shot has been delivered, get a feeling about the shot. Try to feel if it was done the way you planned to do it. Take a moment to feel the hit of the cue ball. Feel it for a moment. Then let it go. Proceed to the next shot and repeat the same routine. Do not ever attempt another shot while the previous one is still in your mind. If you shoot a spectacular shot, let the excitement die down before shooting the next one. If you get out of line, clear the shot from your head and begin all over again. Often times in my visualization, I see the position I desire for my next shot, and when things do not work out the way I expected them to, I have a hard time shooting the next shot because I still have the vision of the way things were suppose to be. I must clear the entire previous shot from my mind before moving on. When I get the wrong position, I do not beat myself up. I stop and ask myself if this would be a good shot if my opponent had left it for me. And often times, the shot is fine. It just wasn't what I expected. If I am a professional, I will deal with the shot as it presents itself. I will go through my professional routine and deliver a confident clear stroke. Most of the time, the results are favorable. May All The Rolls Go Your Way.

Credits: [*The Monk Billiard Academy*](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (*The Monk*) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

The Rhythm Method

By The Monk

Date: Sat, Apr 26 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

What does it take to get you into a shot? How do you get ready? Every good pool player has a personal routine. Some shoot slow, some shoot fast, some shoot in between. This rhythm is right for them. It suits their personality. Their rhythm fits well with their ability to concentrate. We all have a limit on our ability to concentrate. Concentration, is the ability to focus on a field of attention for a time determined by the will. So our personal rhythm is vitally important. Once we are out of rhythm, we are out of stroke.

After a spectacular shot, we are usually not ready to perform the next shot. Our hearts are still beating with excitement, emotion is racing through our minds. How many times have you made a great shot, only to miss the next one. And there is always the wise guy who says, "The same guy shot that one". You were not prepared to shoot the shot. Now is the time to chalk up, stand upright, observe the shot, and allow the emotions to subside. You are taking the time you need to prepare for the next shot. Remember, every time you step to the table, this is the shot you could miss. And you don't want to miss it because you were not in your rhythm.

When you step into your stance, you need to be totally free to perform. Don't shoot a shot while you are excited. Don't shoot a shot while you are angry, and don't shoot a shot while you are fearful. Shoot only when you are free.

Remember, "concentration is the focus on the field of attention for a time determined by the will." If I stay down in my stance beyond my ability to focus on the field of attention for a time determined by my will skills, I will miss the shot. In my minds eye, I must see the cue tip going through the cue ball, the cue ball colliding with the object ball, and the object ball going into the pocket. If I am not prepared to see all of this, if I am distracted by fear, anger or excitement, I will miss the shot. And I can only see the shot for a time determined by my will. So if I go beyond that time, I am out of rhythm. I lose my concentration. Once I go beyond my concentration point, my stroke is not crisp, committed, and pure. There is no quality to my hit. With a tentative stroke, I am going to come up with negative results.

You are not on a journey towards pocket billiard excellence. You are the journey itself. You are the path itself. May All The Rolls Go Your Way.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Respect the Game

By JR Calvert

Date: Sat, Apr 26 @ 23:04:40 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Players in every sport struggle to have balance between their personality and their ability. As many sports have found, their "greatest" athletes tend to be a bit lacking the area of personal relations, especially with opponents and fans. This is the by product of a "winning mentality" if it goes uncluttered.

How it happens is that leading players in any sport execute several drills to achieve extreme levels of performance. They repeat these until they become habit. First, they "dehumanize" their opponent and the game so that both may appear less threatening. This allows the player to focus more on the task at hand, which is to perform their best.

Once a player has focused only on their goal, and nothing else, they usually move on to greater performances. This not only increases their confidence, but also more importantly, plants the seed for a superior self-image. Many players use "self talk" to elevate their game. These "talks" include sentences that aid with their performance, but can devastate how an opponent, fan or other individual perceives this player as a person.

During these speeches that a player give himself/herself, they might say, "You're the best player" or " You can crush this guy" or "This guy isn't even in your league. You are better than he is". Suddenly, the self-talk is turned from a simple pep rally into an evaluation of personal matter and worth. The player has everything he needs to elevate himself as a better person. He plays, he wins, he gets paid, and everyone says he is better than his opponent, including himself. What conclusion can he come to?

Several things are clearer to someone looking in on the situation from the outside.

- This is just a game
- Your worth as a person has nothing to do with your ability to win matches, whether you win or lose.
- Chances are, you're not going to be the best professional in the world. Even if you were the best, the real money in a sport is in the endorsements, and they do not give large amounts of money to champions who do not have a near perfect balance and harmony within themselves.

To create this balance, your self-talk should include more positive phrases such as I'm a better player than this person, or "I'm going to win this match, because I'm playing well". Also you might add, "My personal worth is independent of my ability to play pool", and "I want to win, but I will respect my opponent in the process." These phrases may sound funny, but they can help balance an individual as a good player as well as a good person.

As the sport continues to grow, many players will pass through. Some will leave their "mark" on the game and the people who play and watch. To be one of

those few, you'll have to stand out from the crowd. It's easy to be rude and ignorant, and disrespect everyone around you, but I firmly believe that it's not the path to greatness.

Choose the less traveled, respect the game and everyone around you, and you will reap the rewards. Remember, you only get out of it what you put into it.

Credits: JR Calvert is the publisher of InsidePOOL Magazine. If you like this article, visit InsidePOOL Magazine Website and subscribe today!

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That Room For Improvement

By Martin Misa

Date: Tue, May 27 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Although practice helps a lot in one's improvement in this wonderful game, understanding the different strokes, the reaction of the balls hitting each other, and the diamond system will fully arm a pool warrior.

As one passes through a level of understanding and applies the newfound intelligence to matches and practice, an improvement in the game will be dramatic. The player will definitely enjoy the new level of the game until another discovery is revealed (e.g. diamond system). This period of time varies according to the willingness of the player to understand that there is definitely a need and some more room for improvement.

I have known an engineer pool player for almost twenty years now. He used to teach Physics in college and is now an executive in a big company. Since I met him, his game has not improved somehow because of a very proud attitude in accepting new knowledge from uneducated pool ringers. So until now, he still would not know where his white ball goes after a shot. Maybe he knows that there is a need and some room for improvement, but he is in an almost pitiful denial about it. Players of two years experience will serve him a good challenge.

My advice to you is first, know the Follow, Draw, and Stop shots by heart. The Follow shot hits the cue ball over the middle with the follow through of the cue stick ending up, and not on the table. A follow through that ends on the table is probably an elevated shot (backhand higher than the bridge hand). Try to keep the cue stick parallel to the table. This will also force you to bend down and have a rifle aim at the object ball. The Draw shot hits the cue ball under the center. But just because it is aimed under would not guarantee a draw. The release should be a determined stroke. The stop shot is like the draw, but the aim is dead center on the white ball.

When that has been mastered, it would be time to understand what happens to the balls upon impact. Please refer to my article on Tangents. Understanding the directions of the object ball(s) and the white ball is essential. This will tell you if you are taking a high scratch-risk shot or if you can billiard a juicy bystander ball into a pocket. It will also improve setting up your next shot.

Since, by now, the knowledge of where the balls go would be clearer, it would be a good time to understand the diamond system. The key here is keeping in mind that the angle given to a bank will be the same angle off the bank. The diamond system works in parallel lines. Off a single bank, you will have the same angle. When the ball reaches its third bank, you will discover that the path into the first bank would be parallel to the path off the third bank. If there are no pockets, and instead of cloth, you will have oil, the shot would go on and on. Understanding the diamond system will definitely bring confidence in wiping out four balls easily.

Injecting knowledge in English will be timely at this point. One will discover that English can make the post-impact path of the balls vary. English can also increase

the distance of the cue ball on the diamond path and even change the angles into and off the banks.

This understanding describes a B player. Now comes the hard part. There are different ways to release a stroke as one would skin a cat (pardon my cruel language). Some strokes start high from a back swing and end low at the release. Some make the cue ball jump (obviously or not). My suggestion now is to get a Pro to teach you the different strokes. If you cannot find a Pro, be observant in the way advanced players release the cue stick and then, imitate them. After watching, do not be ashamed to ask the advanced player to teach you the release. These ways of releasing the cue stick will get you through abnormal situations in pocketing and in setting up the white ball for the next shot.

At this point, muscle memory is essential. Practice! You will notice that three days away from the table or a sleepless night will make you execute some shots miserably because of the wrong release - because your muscles forgot how to execute them or because of fatigue. Also at this point, your game will be limited only by your implementation of the plan and the creative shot. Nervous players will be more relaxed because of the advanced understanding of the game.

This level is definitely Class A. Moving on to a higher class completely depends on your feeling if there is a need and some more room for improvement. Even Efren observes beginners and studies their incredible lucky shots until now. Unbelievable?

Credits: Martin Misa is the President of the Billiard Buddies Association of the Philippines (BBAP). Being exposed to the wizardry of Filipino pool masters, he has picked up concepts in the game that he is sharing with us. He can be reached thru e-mail at mbmisa@mydestiny.net

Billiard Room Etiquette

By Allan Alpasan

Date: Sat, Aug 30 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Whether you are in your friend's basement, the local bar, pool hall, or an upscale billiard room, there's a code of behavior that you can follow that will make you a welcome and respected guest or customer.

1. Respect the equipment

Pool tables, billiard balls, and cues are not inexpensive toys. It is costly, specialized equipment that calls for professional handling and care.

- Don't lay the cue across your shoulders and wrap your arms around it. Did you ever wonder how all those warped cues got that way? When you're not shooting, hold the cue vertically.
- Don't turn the chalk upside down on the rails. It makes a mess and can even stain wood rails.
- If you smoke, don't bring your cigarette to the table. Cigarettes sitting on rails leave burn marks. Cigarettes in your mouth drop ashes onto the table. Not only does that make a mess, but a lit ash will burn the cloth.
- Don't bring drinks or food to the table. Food crumbs make a mess and spilled drinks can damage wood and cloth. Drinks on rails leave stains and could easily be knocked over onto the table bed.
- When racking, don't slide the rack all over the table. This puts extra wear on the cloth. You can lift the rack slightly off the table and still move the balls into position over the foot spot.
- Don't sit on the edge of the table to make a shot. A balanced table enhances the game, so why chance screwing it up? Use the mechanical bridge if you can't reach a shot from a standing position. Also, rivets from jean pockets can scratch a table's finish.

2. Respect the room

It's nice to find things where you expect them to be in a pool room. It's also nice not to be greeted by trash and cigarettes littering the floors.

- When finished playing, return all equipment to where you got it. This includes cues, mechanical bridge, racks, balls, and chalk.
- If you smoke, use the ashtrays. Don't flick your ashes onto the floor or worse, throw your cigarette butt on the floor to step on it. Remember not to bring your cigarette to the table when it's your turn to shoot.

3. Respect other players

Pool is a competition, but it is also a social activity. The other players want the same opportunity you do to plan and execute shots without rude interruptions.

- Remain seated and wait for your turn.
- Don't shark. If what you are doing would distract you while shooting, it probably distracts other players, too. Here are some common sharks. Avoid them!
- Doing anything vocal while your opponent shoots (talking, coughing, clearing your throat, humming, whistling, etc.)
- Making noise while your opponent shoots (dropping stuff, chewing loudly, cracking gum, tinkling ice cubes, tapping fingers, etc.)
- Moving deliberately within the shooter's field of view (lighting a cigarette, chalking your cue, walking near the table, making sweeping hand or arm movements, etc.)

- Standing at the table, especially behind the target pocket.
- Don't coach other players unless they ask for advice. Unsolicited coaching is also a shark.
- Don't criticize someone's game and don't make excuses for your own misses.
- Don't hustle.

Credits: I got this rules from Cloudbow Billiards. Nice site.

Beyond the basics, Throw, curve and squirt

By Bob Moss

Date: Tue, Sep 23 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

I'm not what you would consider an instructor but am advanced enough to get annoyed when looking for info on using advanced techniques for position play and shot making. It seems that most instructions and books are so directed to basic shot making.

The most valuable shots I have in my arsenal at this point beyond the basic shot making are being able to consistently judge and make throw shots, squirt and curve shots. They have gotten me out of more snookers than I care to count. Practice your throw and curves and you will leave your opponent wondering how you made that shot when he knew he had you snookered. It is something that is not commonly taught and many players unless very advanced ever even know. Learn these shots and you will add a whole new dimension to your game and skill level from getting out of tight spots to position play and leaves. I'll leave it to the instructors to tell how but Robert Byrne's goes into some detail in his book [Advanced Techniques in Pool and Billiards](#).

Tournament preparation; the first step to winning

By Tim Miller

Date: Sun, Dec 21 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Tournament preparation means being focused and ready to play and you will advance to the next level in tournament play. Winners are not accidents. They have a plan and stick to it with good results. Tournament preparation is just as important as tournament practice.

You must be ready to play when the director calls your name. Here are ten steps to moving to the next level.

Step 1. Visualize the break. See yourself smashing the rack with a strong accurate powerful break. The balls explode. You can hear the ball that drops in the pocket. You are left with a wide open table. When you visualize the break, you are building aggressive qualities that will win more games for you. . You cannot win a tournament if you are tentative. A powerful break will get you in the attack mode. Do this many times before a tournament and you will establish the style of play that will help you win.

Step 2. Expect good rolls. Almost all tournament winners come through the brackets with a good roll. It is part of the game. Say to yourself "I get good rolls" over and over. Burn this affirmation in your mind. Let it become "you". Step 3. Take advantage of your good rolls. Getting good rolls is one thing. You must be able to take advantage of them. Burn this affirmation in your mind. Let it become "you".

Step 4. Take charge of each match. By following step one you set up this affirmation in your mind. Remember, "what the mind can conceive, it can achieve". You will not win tournaments without this "take charge attitude". Take charge. Step 5. Play one match at a time. You are not here to win the tournament. Get those thoughts out of your mind. You can only play one match at a time. You need the freedom to perform. Thinking about winning can clutter your mind. If you focus on one match, you will find yourself in the final four more often. Do not project beyond this one match at a time plan.

Step 6. Spend time in the room before the tournament. You need to be comfortable where you perform. Walk around. Listen to the sounds. Absorb the movement around you. The director will be calling names, making announcements and interrupting play. It is all part of the tournament experience. Be comfortable with this noise. Don't resist it.

Step 7. Avoid small talk. At every tournament there are a group of players who like to talk the politics of this game. We all have an opinion on how things should be. Don't get caught up in this concern. You are here to play. You don't care who is in your bracket, or who the hot player is, or who should be the director and what kind of payout is proper. You are only concerned with the table for your game only. Some tables will not let you slow roll a ball. If that is the case, move to a two or three rail game. You are here to play a match, and your mind needs to be free to follow these ten steps to success.

Step 8. Practice for the tournament you are about to play. Use The Lesson to design your practice sessions. If you are playing a nine ball tournament, do the stroke work, and then the mid- term exam. If it is an eight ball tournament, The Monks famous thirteen, and fourteen ball exercise will help you. When you practice, imagine you are already in the finals.

Step 9. Stun two racks before the tournament. Make up your mind you will follow this step. The stun exercise will groove your stroke and set up all the other shots you will face.

Step 10. The tournament begins the day before your match is called. Once you arrive at the site, you are officially in the tournament. You have entered the arena. Let all thoughts be on this task. Playing one match at a time begins the day before the event.

Remember, you have a choice. You can worry about the results of the match, or you can shoot balls. When you are concerned with how things will go, you interfere with your ability to perform. There is no profit in this type of thinking. You need to be free. Being angry about missed position does not change the shot you have. Let go of your preoccupation with results. A great golfer would say, "we shoot the ball where it lies.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Eight-ball tips; it's choice not chance that wins

By themonk

Date: Sun, Feb 1 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

In the game of eight ball you will be exposed to many pitfalls. This is not an easy game. It is tough. You are required to make decisions while in the heat of battle. Unlike nine ball, where you go from one ball to the next, in the game of eight ball you have choices. To be successful, you must develop the ability to make your choice, and feel one hundred per cent certain. Here is the problem for most league players. They decide to play the twelve ball, and think about the fifteen ball. They make their decision, but still have reservations. This is not the way to stroke a shot. Remember, The stroke, minus the interference, equals the shot. Be sure you are fully committed to what you intend to do.

You'll face uncertainty

You will be faced with shots where you are not sure what is going to happen to the cue ball. The cue ball is going for a ride and you cannot control it. In this situation, you are "playing for a roll". Make that commitment. I will pocket this ball. "I am playing for a roll". I have "I am playing for a roll" T Shirts.

I have another saying about this type of shot. I am going to pocket this ball and "take my medicine". How many times have you missed a shot because you were attempting difficult position on the next shot? Sometimes you need to put the ball in the pocket, and take the tough shot in front of you. This is "taking your medicine". I have won many game by "taking my medicine". I'm straight in. I can't get down table. I can only stop the cue ball and take a chance on the bank shot. This is all I have. To pretend otherwise, is to fool myself. So I "Take my medicine" and go for the bank. With Dr. Cue's banking system, The Monk 202 series, I am very good at banking balls. As a result of the "taking my medicine" mode, I win more games. Give yourself a chance for a win. Don't take yourself out of the match by missing the shot in front of you. After every game of eight ball, ask yourself if; "I came to win" or "I play for a roll" and "I take my medicine."

No avoiding the long shot

You should be very willing to shoot the long shot down into the far corner pocket. This will help you run more racks. This shot fits our personal concept. You look at the long tough shot and tell yourself, you are shooting this shot because "You came to win". As long as you remain true to who you are, you will gain. When you reinforce a skill, you improve it. Any time you focus on a skill, you strengthen it. When you avoid this skill, you weaken it. "I came to win" is a skill.

The biggest obstacle in eight ball is a cluster. You begin your run, knowing full well, you cannot run out. Or at the very least you are going to try a tough break shot on a cluster. If you notice a clump of balls, and you miss your shot before you get to this clump, make a special note of it. "I did not take my medicine" "I did not play to win" "I did not play for a roll." It is amazing how one obstacle can destroy the very essence of who we are. A cluster is a red flag for me. I cannot even get to the cluster, let alone break it up. They scare me. I hate that when there is a cluster that

needs to be broken up. Now my run out is left to chance. I don't like that. The first thing I do is delete the "Take my medicine" and put on pause the, "I came to win" mode. And this always results in a failed run out. With my "I Came To Win" T-shirt, I hope for a difficult cluster. This will make the victory sweet. If I pull off a dramatic break shot, my opponent will fall into "hopeless" stage. I love to put my opponent in the "hopeless" stage. He sees me with a tough shot. He has hope. When I make it, he has less hope. "He is hopeless". I've reversed banked many an eight ball to give my opponent a "hopeless" feeling. Your match is a test. It is only a test. Can you perform with the "I came to win" attitude. Can you perform with the "Playing for a roll" attitude and can you "take your medicine". In each effort are you strengthening these qualities. If you shy away from them, you are weakening these qualities.

Credits: [The Monk Billiard Academy](#), founded in 1991 by Tim Miller, (The Monk) is dedicated to making you the best pool player you can become. Tim's unique philosophy on the inner game of pool has helped countless players realize the player within.

Video Tape

By Robert W. Ringeisen

Date: Sat, Feb 7 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Have you ever watched a pool match between the pro's with Allison Fisher - The Duchess of Doom, Jeanette Lee - The Black Widow, Ewa Laurance - The Striking Viking, Helena Thornfeldt - The Sledgehammer or Allen Hopkins On ESPN or Even at Valley Forge Super Billiard Expo in PA? We watch their deadly shot making and their perfect position, but did you ever watch what their doing with their bodies as they prepare for and execute each shot? I strongly suggest that you video tape some matches and play them back. Watch how they get their bodies in line for each shot and how they stand. Watch what parts of their body move and what parts don't move. You will learn a lot.

Now, tape three or four games of you playing pool. Are you getting in line with each shot? Are you standing right? What body parts move and don't move as you execute your shot. Do you jump up on hard shots? When you think you have corrected any of these problems you might have had, then video tape yourself again and again until you think you have corrected them all. Do this every few months to keep yourself disciplined. Your mind will develop very good habits every time you shot a game of pool. Just like the pro's do.

Good Luck

Robert W. Ringeisen

Credits: This article was written by the inventor of the only true visual ghost ball. EZ Shot Ghost Ball

An aid to cue power

By mark163

Date: Mon, May 3 @ 19:51:59 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

For people who may lack a little cue power, e.g. stopping the cue ball from long distance, try bridging 2 inches further back from the cue ball, makes it easier to stop it and work it from distance and less power is needed. There is obviously a limit to how far you can bridge from the cue ball but some people cue very close and have a problem with power , this should help.

Predator Blues

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sun, Jul 4 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

So a few months ago after reading all the hype about radial consistency and 29% less deflection you sold your old favorite cue that you've used for a long time and bought a new Predator. At first everything was great but ever so slowly your game has gone downhill. You've lost that confidence that you once had in your hard earned abilities and sometimes you're frustrated enough that you even think about giving up the game. You still make most of the shots that you used to but not the more difficult shots or the ones that require finesse especially when using english. Worse yet you have to struggle to beat players that used to be no problem.

The good news is that you can get your game back and bring it to new heights if you understand the differences between your old stick and your new Predator.

First let us review some principals on deflection. Anytime the cue ball is struck to the left or right of its vertical center both the cue ball and cue stick veer away from each other away from the original point of aim. That is to say if you strike the cue ball to the right of center the tip end of the cue stick will veer to the right after contact and the cue ball will veer to the left. This of course will cause the cue ball to impact the object ball to the left of the point of aim requiring you to adjust your aim to the right. **The harder you shoot the greater the deflection of both the stick and cue ball requiring you to aim further in the direction of the english that you are using.** If you shoot hard enough you will have to aim well outside the object ball into thin air to make up for the deflection. To make matters worse when shooting soft or very soft the deflection is negligible on both the stick and the cue ball and you will need to compensate heavily for object ball throw. This requires you to compensate in the opposite direction than you would for deflection. If you are using right english and are shooting softly it will throw the object ball to the left and you will need to adjust your aim to the left.

At this point you should begin to see a pattern. When shooting softly with english compensate your point of aim on the object ball in the opposite direction of the applied english. As your speed increases to just above soft don't compensate at all (as deflection and throw cancel each other out) and as your stroke speed increases beyond that adjust your aim in the same direction of applied english.

Now that you understand how deflection works you can begin to make the right adjustments when using your Predator. Since the Predator deflects less you simply compensate less than with you did with your old stick when your cue ball speed is above a soft speed. If you have to compensate 1/2" to right of the object ball contact point with your old stick you would aim something close to 1/4" with the Predator. The Predator puts more spin on the cue ball when using english as the tip stays on the cue ball longer because of less deflection even when the deflection is negligible. Because of this when shooting at a soft or very soft speed you would compensate your aim more in the same direction that you did with your old stick as it will throw the object ball more. One last point is that the stroke speed where the throw and deflection cancel each other out is going to be a little higher with the Predator.

These same principals apply to any changes in your stick selection. There is a wide variety in stick deflection between the various makes and types of cues. You may use a stick that is much closer to the Predator in the amount of deflection that it has. In this case the compensation for the point of aim would be much smaller but would still apply. It should also be obvious that any change you make to your cue whether switching to a new cue, new shaft, vibration damper, new bolt or other changes will affect the amount of deflection that your brain has learned to compensate for. Understanding how these principles work will allow you to adjust to the changes you have made. **My advice is that if you find a cue that you shoot well with don't ever change it.** The longer you shoot with the same cue the more your brain will adjust to it and make changes down the road more difficult to adjust to. In a stressful moment your brain will revert to the muscle memory for the old stick and cause you to blow your shot.

Any comments or questions can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Taking your time

By Protim

Date: Sun, Jun 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Tips

Ok let's say you are a beginner or intermediate player and you are playing against someone who is better than yourself. First of all refer to the previous article which talks about the [pocket holding technique](#).

As before, do a medium paced break so that you can pocket the wing balls. Now here is the big secret... "Take your time". Always make sure that your stance and grip is alright. Then go for 'say' solids as it is in most cases has the upper hand in a medium paced break and devote yourself in making the shot. Always remember, take your time. This actually gives you confidence and also get's on the nerves of your opponent. Always make yourself think that if you miss a shot that there is no "next time" and that your opponent is going to clear the table. Take your time and think where your cueball is going to end up after your shot and if you are going to have a shot at your group ball or not.

Note: Think first and then play your shot. Don't just play your shot without thinking where your cueball is going to end up.

Always try to hit softly so that the ball you are hitting ends up in or around the pocket as mentioned in the previous article. Remember to take time and point out where you want to hit the object ball so that it goes into the pocket (say this point is X) then forget about the pocket and point out to yourself where exactly you want to hit the cueball so that it goes on to hit the object ball at X. Now put all your concentration on hitting the cueball at that exact point with a soft to medium stroke. *Note:* Do not look at the pocket. Just look at the point X and the point on the cueball and shoot. Doing all this will take time and this will obviously get on the nerves of your opponent.

Just think of the look on his face when you go on and pocket all the balls with this technique after taking all that time. This is really gonna break your opponent down. Just combine this with "The Pocket Holding Technique" and even if you miss a shot he is going to have nowhere to shoot. Furthermore, even if he does after all that time you took he is going to lack concentration and you will win the rack easily.

If you have further questions or need help on specific areas of the game, email me at theguy_in_blue@yahoo.com

Credits: This Article was written By Protim Copyright 2005 Thanks To. BBC .
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XVI - PRACTICING FUNDAMENTALS

Practice drills for improving your game fundamentals.

- » [Stroke Drill #1](#)
- » [Stroke Drill #2](#)
- » [Stroke Drill #3](#)
- » [Straighten your stroke](#)
- » [Let the rails straighten your stroke](#)
- » [Developing your stroke](#)

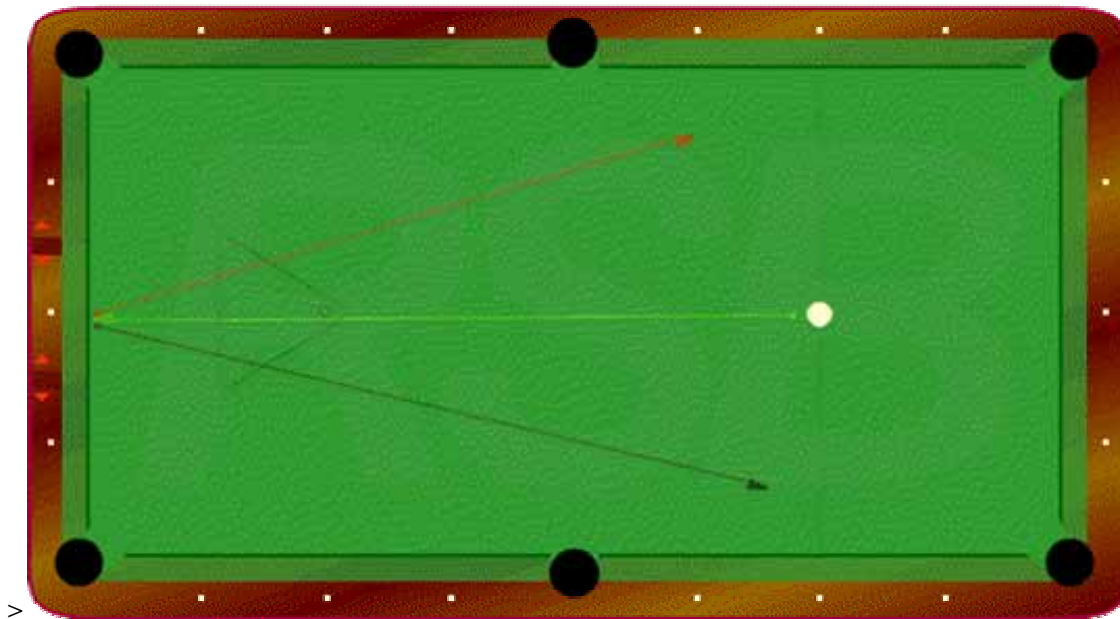
Stroke Drill #1

By admin

Date: Thu, May 8 @ 15:45:48 CDT

Topic: Practicing Fundamentals

Refer to the diagram below. The idea behind this practice drill is to determine if you have a straight stroke. Place the cue ball on the head spot and aim straight at the second diamond on the other end of the table. Make sure that you aim without english or spin on the cue ball and then shoot. The cue ball should hit the rail and go back on the same straight path that it came from and return towards the head spot where the cue ball was originally placed.



Any error in your stroke will show right away after the cue ball hits the rail. If any spin is inadvertently applied on the cue ball, it will not come back in a straight line towards its initial position on the head spot (as indicated by the dark lines in the above diagram).

Shoot this drill about 20-30 times a day until you get to about 90% to 100% accuracy.

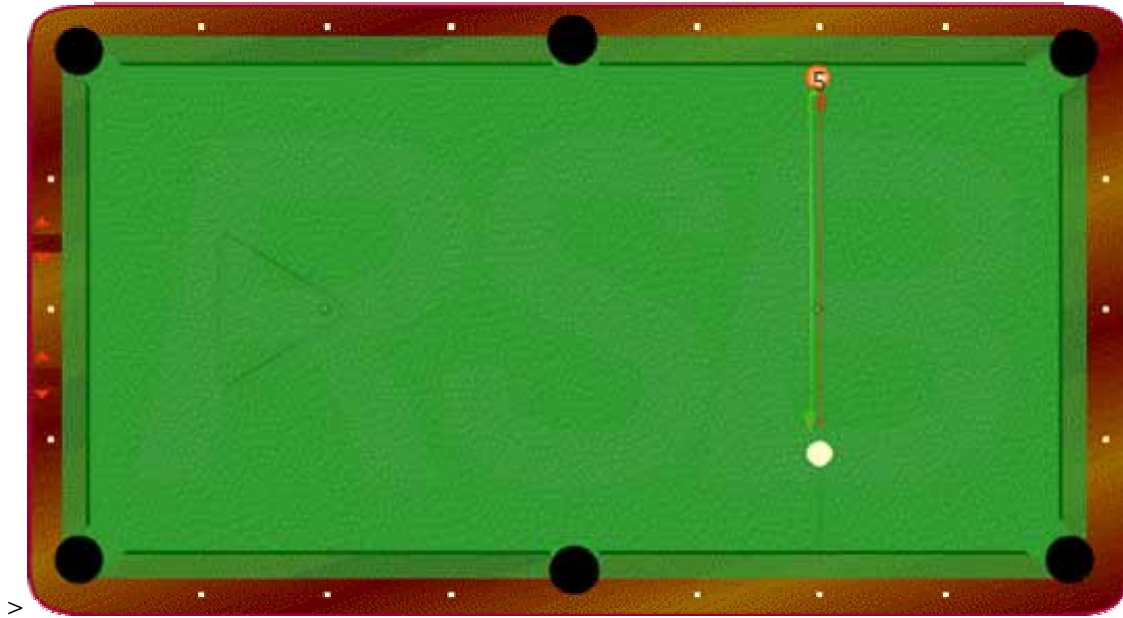
Stroke Drill #2

By admin

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 09:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Fundamentals

This second stroke drill is a little more difficult and is the ultimate test of your stroke.



Refer to the diagram above. Arrange the balls as shown. Place an object ball on the rail on the second diamond from the top right corner pocket, then place the cue ball on the same vertical line from the object ball.

Proceed by shooting at the object ball. You should aim at the cue ball without any english or spin. Aim at the exact center of the object ball. Similar to the [Stroke Drill #1](#), the cue ball should go back in a straight line towards the position it started from.

In this drill, any error that you may have in your stroke that did not show in the first stroke drill would surely show here. Since you are hitting another ball which is round... unless the cue ball hits the object ball dead center, the cue ball will not come back in a straight line. Try it and you'll see what I'm talking about.

Practice this drill until you are able to execute it correctly about 80-100% accuracy.

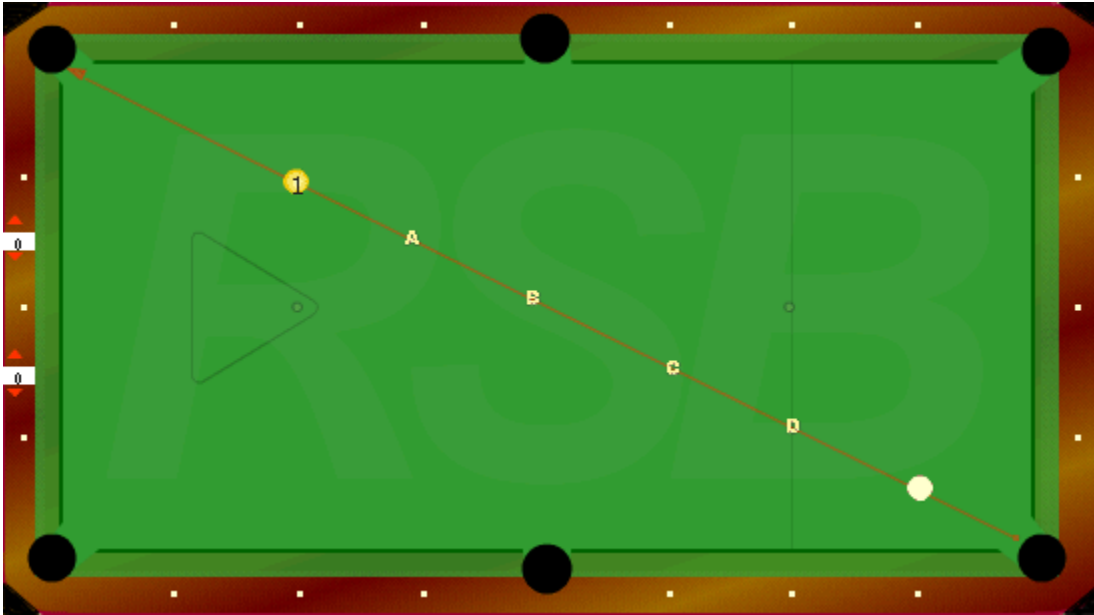
Stroke Drill #3

By admin

Date: Sat, May 10 @ 09:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Fundamentals

In this next stroke drill, try pocketing the object ball by placing your cue ball starting at position A then proceeding to the next position (position B) and so on and so forth (Refer to diagram below). Hit your cue ball exactly at the center. If your stroke is straight, the object ball should go into the pocket with no problems.



You should take note of your misses because this allows you to determine what is wrong with your stroke. If the object ball misses the pocket and goes towards the outer left side of the pocket, then your stroke is off on the right. This means that you are hitting the cue ball on the right of its center spot. If the object ball misses and goes towards the outer right, then you are hitting the cue on the left of its center spot.

Also remember that as the distance between the object ball and the cue ball increases, the difficulty level of the shot also rises. Pocketing the object ball with the cue ball in last position shown in the diagram (after position D) is the ultimate test of your stroke.

Straighten your stroke

Date: Tue, May 13 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Fundamentals

There going to be no picture here just to tell you first. This drill most of you guys and ladies already know, but I'm going to tell the beginners anyway. This drill calls for you to have an empty soda bottle on hand. To make this drill work is to line your cue up to the bottle so that you stroke the cue into the center of the bottle. What you are trying to accomplish is not to touch any part of the soda bottle. If you can stroke your cue so that it doesn't touch any part of the bottle, you know that your stroke is straight and pure.

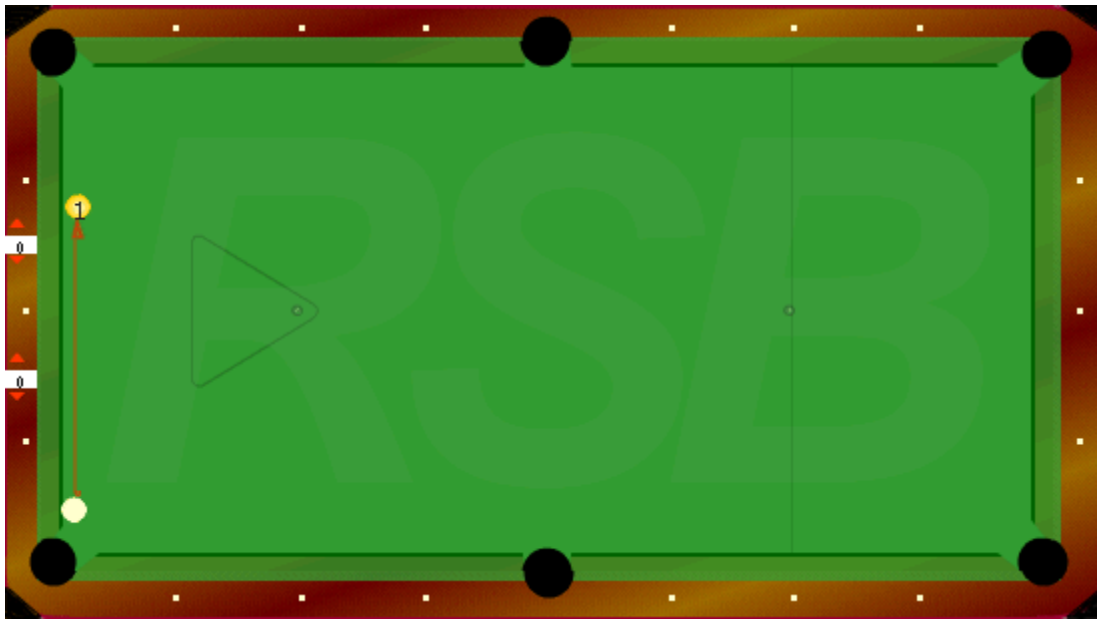
Let the rails straighten your stroke

By wrath

Date: Tue, Apr 1 @ 03:36:18 CST

Topic: Practicing Fundamentals

This is probably the hardest shot in pool, because this is dead straight in. Put the object ball and the cue ball dead on the short rails, with about 3 to 4 feet between them. Now try to make the object ball, with a center ball hit. Once you've mastered this, try it on the long rails, with either object or cue ball crossing the side pockets. Try not to cheat yourself by using outside english to make the cue ball cling to the rail. this should eventually help your stroke, or at least, help you assess what's wrong with it.



Developing your stroke

By karinann

Date: Sun, Feb 29 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practicing Fundamentals

Here's a simple drill to develop your stroke and improve your pocketing ability. Some have referred to this exercise as a "concentration drill".

Here's how to proceed:

- Line up all fifteen object balls across the center of the table (see diagram below).
- Take the cue ball as ball in hand before each stroke.
- With the object balls at center table, place the cue ball for a straight in shot to the corner pocket at about the first diamond behind the string of object balls, starting with object ball number 1.
- To make this more difficult as your ability gets better move the cue ball farther back.
- Shoot at each object ball in turn to pocket 1 through 8 in one corner pocket, then shoot 9 through 15 in the opposite corner pocket, using a straight in shot.
- If you miss pocketing even one ball, you must start over from scratch by replacing all 15 balls at center table.
- The object is to pocket all 15 balls without missing, then replace the object balls and keep going until you can pocket as many as you feel comfortable with.
- This looks very simple but requires concentration to do all 15 without missing.
- It will provide you the necessary "feelings" about playing and making shots under pressure. It also helps tremendously to help in developing a smooth stroke.
- One note, you are allowed ball in hand to place the cue ball after each shot, to make that straight in shot.



XVII - PRACTICING BASIC SHOTS & SHOTMAKING

Practice drills to improve your basic shotmaking skills.

- » [Shot Making Drill](#)
- » [Long Shot Pocketing Drill](#)
- » [Contact Throw Aiming Drill](#)
- » [Straight-in Draw drill](#)
- » [Help with draw/draw drill](#)
- » [Draw and Follow control](#)
- » [Straight Draw Drill](#)
- » [Practice for a frequent and sometimes troublesome shot.](#)
- » [Another shotmaking drill](#)

Shot Making Drill

Date: Mon, Apr 7 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

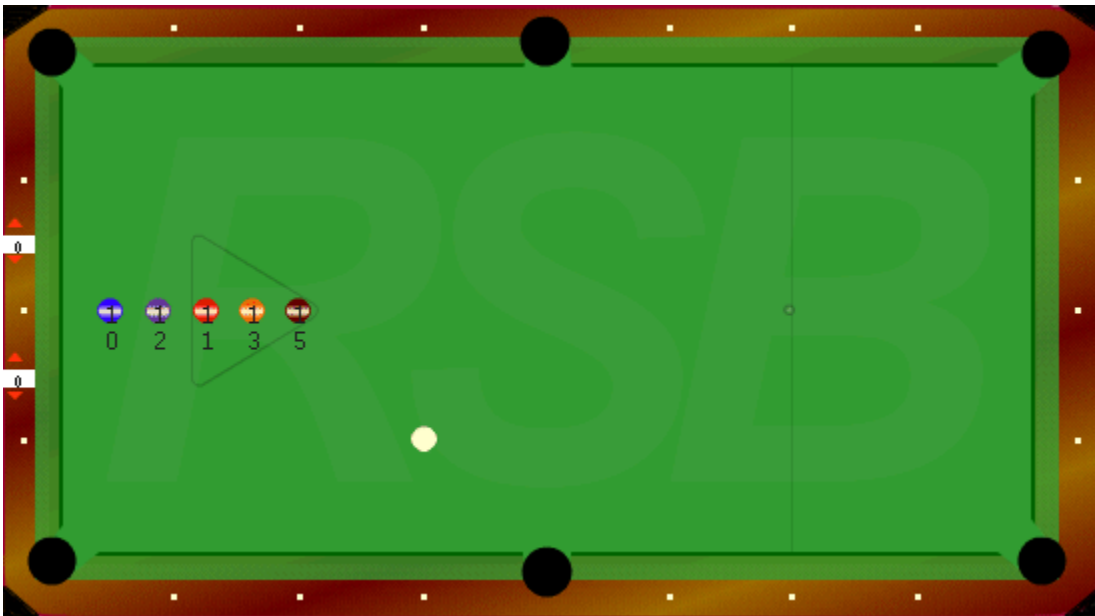
Line 5 balls up starting at the spot, making them one ball width apart. Place cue ball as shown, so the first ball (the one on the spot) is a straight in shot to the opposite corner pocket.

Shoot the five balls in order. When you miss one, place it back where it was and shoot again.

Once you have made all five, line the five balls up and cue ball in the same place on the other side of the table. Shoot the five balls again.

Do this one more time, once a day and you will become the MASTER shot maker!

HINT: I like to mark where the cue ball goes so I am not guessing each time after I shoot. I also mark where the fifth ball is, so when I am shooting it and I miss, it is easy to place it back where it was.



Long Shot Pocketing Drill

By arnold oboza

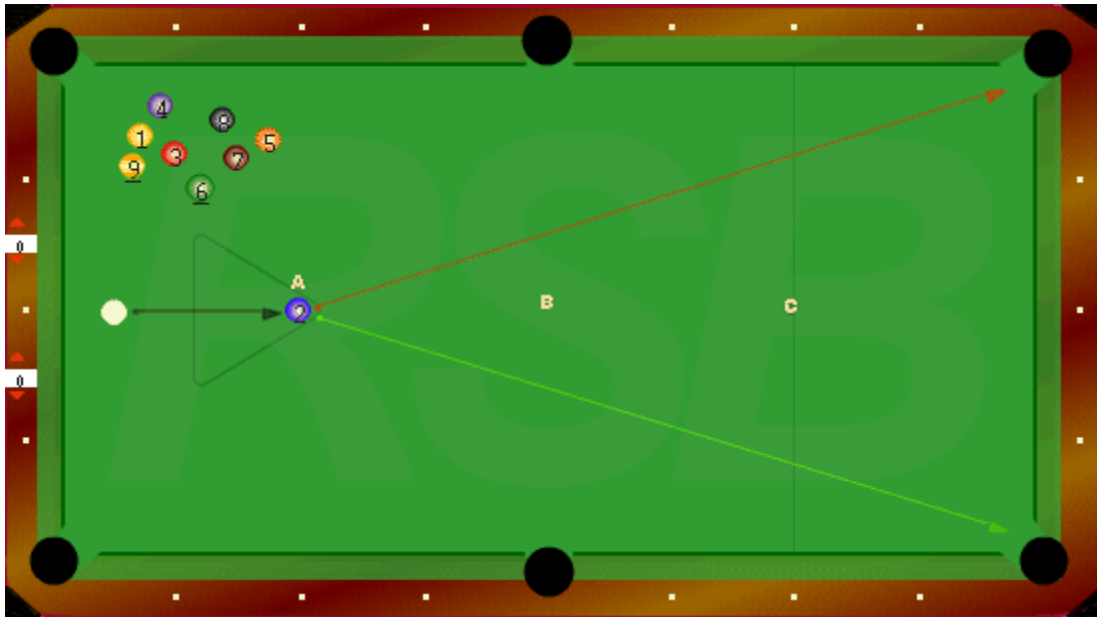
Date: Sun, Aug 17 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

This simple drill will help you get familiarized in pocketing this kind of shot whether the object ball is near the cue ball or farther down the middle of the table. Here, you'll notice that you have to adjust the aiming point (or contact point) on the CB when you switch pocketing the OB from the left corner-pocket to the right corner-pocket (or vice versa). Exercise this shot at varying speeds (soft, medium, hard) but never use any side-spin. This type of drill is only meant to build your confidence & enhance your pocketing skills.

Setup & Steps:

1. Position the CB 2 to 3 inches from the short rail (head rail / foot rail).
2. Place one OB at a time in the middle table about 2 diamonds from the short rail (point A)
3. Shoot the OB to the right-corner-pocket using a low-english (no right/left spin) on the CB
4. Repeat shooting until you were able to pocket the OB at least twice consecutively before switching to the other pocket (left-corner pocket)
5. Until you were able to consistently pocket the OB, place the OB farther at point B and later then at point C.
6. Repeat steps 3 & 4



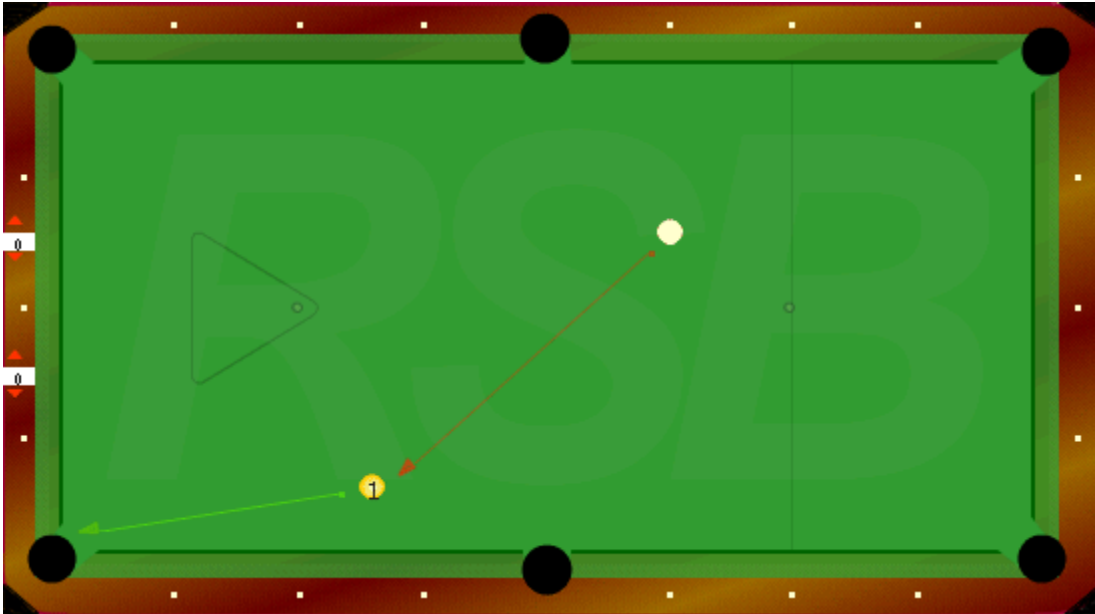
Contact Throw Aiming Drill

By admin

Date: Sun, Jul 20 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

This drill will introduce to what is known as Contact Throw. As stated in the lesson [More about Throw](#), Contact Throw happens when the cue ball collides with the object ball. Note that Contact Throw is different from Spin or English Throw.



Ball placements:

Place the object ball about 2 1/2 diamonds from the bottom left corner pocket and about 1/2 diamond off the bottom long rail (as shown in the diagram). Next, place the cue ball 3 diamonds from the top right corner pocket and 1 1/2 diamonds from the top long rail (as shown in the diagram).

We will be doing this drill at different stroke speeds: soft, medium, and hard. Use only center ball hit on the cue ball (i.e. no english should be applied on the cue ball).

First the soft speed shot; use center ball aim on the cue ball and aim the *inside* edge of the ferrule to the edge of the object ball. This should pocket the object ball.

Next is the medium speed shot; use center ball aim on the cue ball and aim the *center* of the cue tip to the edge of the object ball. This should pocket the object ball.

Next is the hard speed shot; use center ball aim on the cue ball and aim the *outside* of the ferrule to the edge of the object ball. This should pocket the object ball.

You will notice that there are slight adjustments in aiming with varying speeds. This is because of *Contact Throw*.

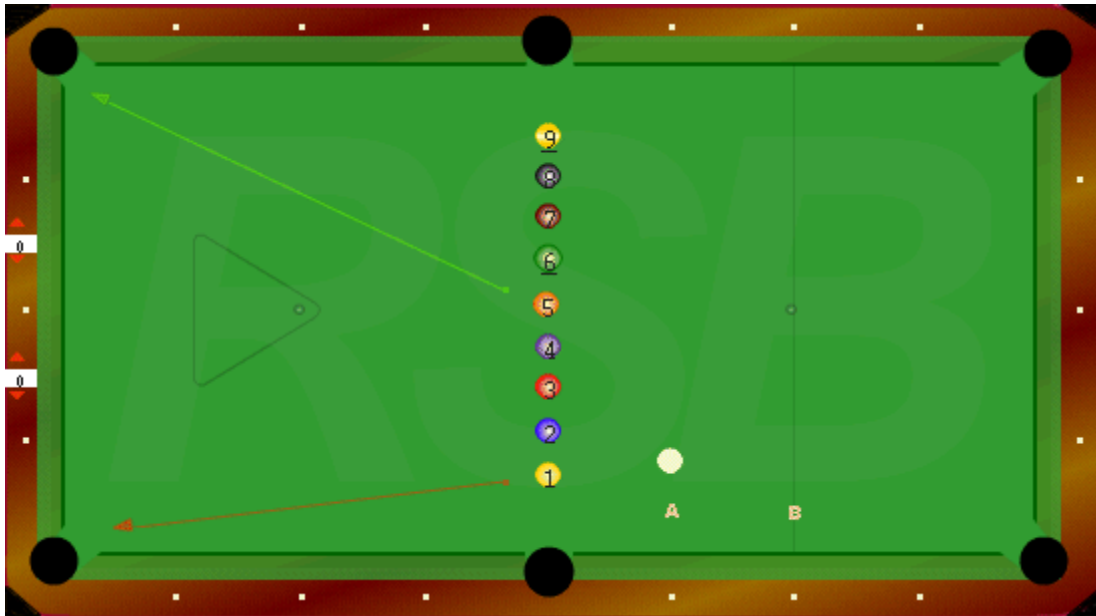
Straight-in Draw drill

By rbold

Date: Sun, Sep 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

In the diagram below, place 9 balls along the side-pockets then place the cue ball in the lower or upper right side of the table at level A or line A for a straight in shot at the first ball.



The objective of this drill is to have consistency on a straight-in shot with a minimal draw applied. Upon pocketing the first ball, try a straight or semi straight-in position on any of the other balls & pocket each in either corner pockets only in the left side of the table. To raise the difficulty, try doing the same routine but positioning the cue ball at level B and try to draw the cue ball along that line. I find this drill setup simple but very challenging since you also practice a control on the cue ball from a draw stroke.

Once you master this drill, you will be so confident to execute a draw from a straight-in shot for a positional play.

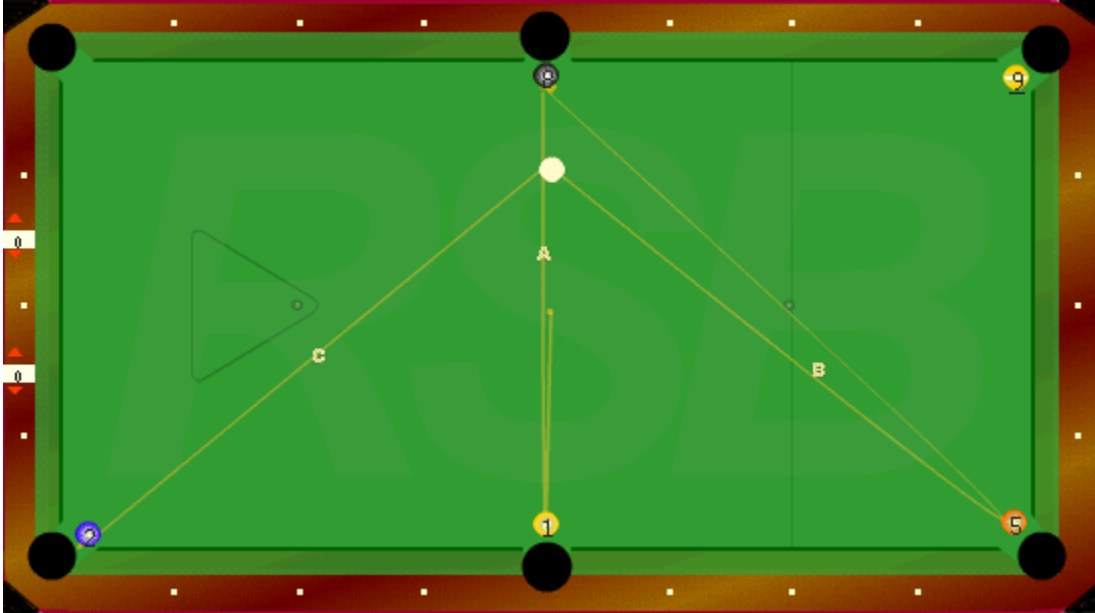
Help with draw/draw drill

By NiceShot2592

Date: Sun, Nov 9 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

Here is a good way to get the draw shot down pat or to get better at it. Just remember to stroke straight through the bottom of the cue ball, and only one tip or so under the center. Always keep the stick straight. OK here's the drill. See if you can do A then B then C.



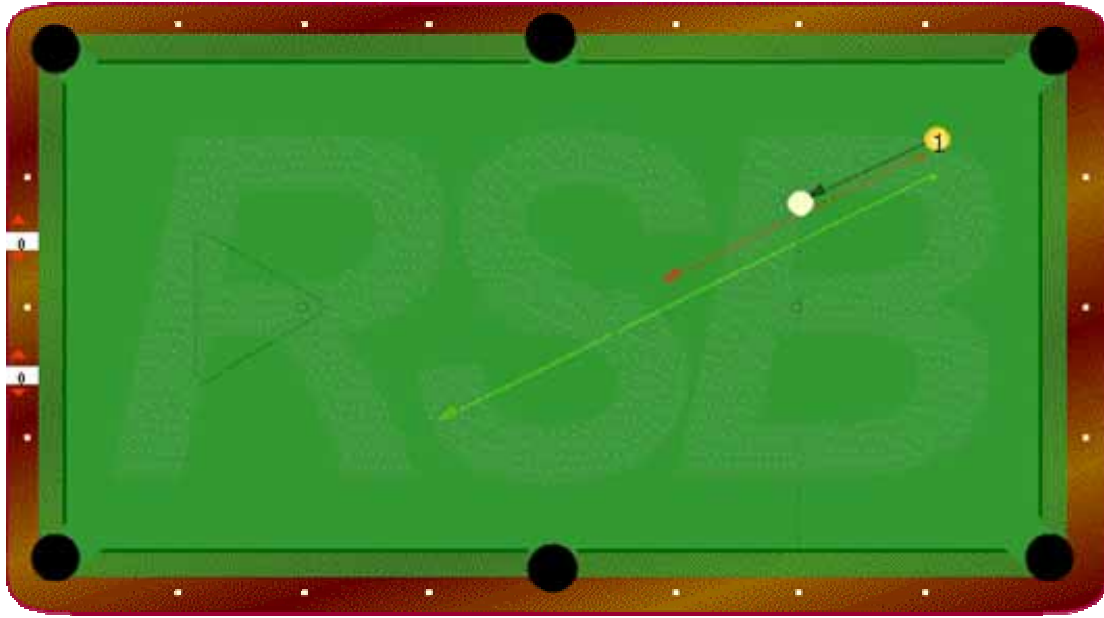
Have fun!!

Draw and Follow control

Date: Sun, Nov 16 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

This is draw control practice (you can also apply this drill for follow). See diagram below.



Have the cue ball about a diamond away from the object ball. Pocket the object ball and try to bring the cue ball back 1 diamond... then 2... 3... etc. Next, increase the distance between the object ball and cue ball by two diamonds and repeat.

It gets harder and harder as the distance increase. I allow myself about a quarter diamond to half a diamond within the goal to consider it successful.

Straight Draw Drill

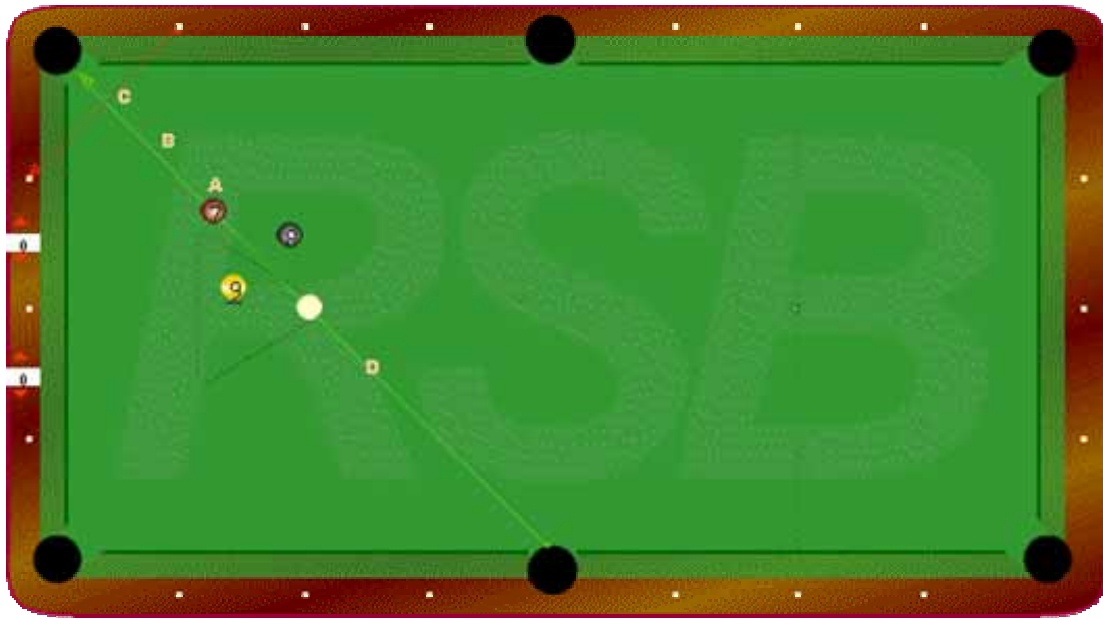
By arnold oboza

Date: Sun, Nov 23 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

We now have probably read a lot of topics or drills about draw and that many of us have acquired the knowledge on how to execute this shot properly (applying factors such as proper stroke, precise low CB hit, loose grip, leveled cue etc...). But how straight is your draw? Have you ever find yourself in a situation where you needed to have a straight draw in order to have a good position for the next ball but ended up having an angled-draw & gone out of shape?

I have that many experiences. So I have come up with my own practice-drill in trying to improve/achieve a straight draw myself.



DRILL SETUP:

As in the diagram, place 3 balls (e.g. 7, 8, & 9-ball) near the head-spot in between the 1st & 2nd diamond of the long-rail. Align 2 balls (8 & 9) perpendicular to the upper-corner pocket, the distance of the these two balls should be 2-ball width. Then place the 3rd ball (7-ball in this example) on point **A** within the straight line towards the corner pocket. Now place the CB on the same line (somewhere in the head spot).

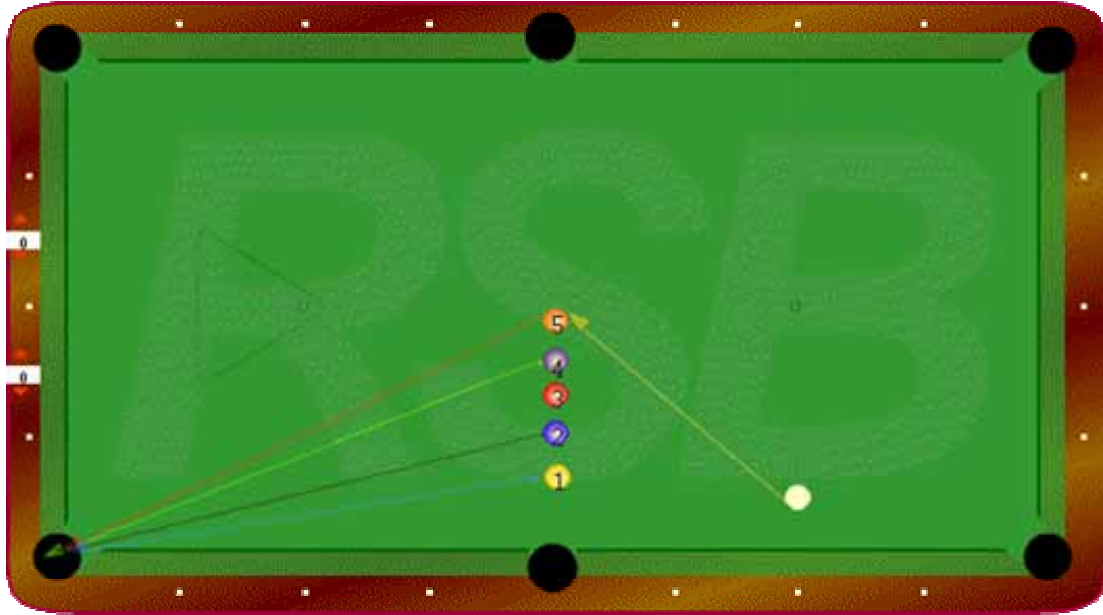
Try to shoot & sink the 7-ball & draw the CB from it towards point **D** without nudging the 8 & 9 balls. Increase difficulty by placing the 7-ball further (points **B** & **C**) & also reducing 8 & 9-ball distance into 1 1/2 ball-width (or lesser as long as the CB can pass through).

Practice for a frequent and sometimes troublesome shot.

By badandy

Date: Sun, Mar 7 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking



sometimes I have no problem sinking the above type of shots but other times I just cant see it. I had the problem the other night so I set the balls as above and shot the outer most ball, put the cue ball back to it place and then shot the next outer most ball and did the same till all were gone. the first time I missed all but one ball. the second time I made three and the third time I made all five. that set me straight for the rest of the night.

Another shotmaking drill

By Greg Harrouff

Date: Sun, Apr 11 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Basic Shots & Shotmaking

Since my biggest issue in pool is shot making consistency, I came up with this drill for me. I figured since there are 15 balls in a rack, it should take no more than 15 shots to clear the table. One shot, one ball in a pocket, sometimes more depending on the shot.

I scatter the balls randomly on the table and roll the cue, letting it come to rest. I start making balls, keeping a count of how many balls I make before I miss one, plus I keep count of how many missed shots there are in making the 15 balls. Once I miss a shot, I restart counting the balls I make until I miss again. After the 15 balls are pocketed, I repeat the drill, resetting both counts to zero. If I scratch, that counts as a missed shot. If I make a ball but not in the pocket I wanted, that counts as a miss and a ball(s) is spotted. If you play a safe and the cue ball or object ball do not do what you wanted, that's a miss.

I don't use cue ball in hand because the roll after a shot can put me in a position that I might not try if I was to use cue ball in hand. I do not alternate between solids or stripes. I just want to make every shot I plan.

So, the overall goal is to make the most shots in a roll and the least amount of misses in a rack. Keeping a record of each gives me real feedback on how my shot making, plus gives me a goal to work towards in my practicing.

XVIII - PRACTICE BASIC POSITION PLAY

Practice drills to improve your basic position play from no rail position to simple 1-rail position.

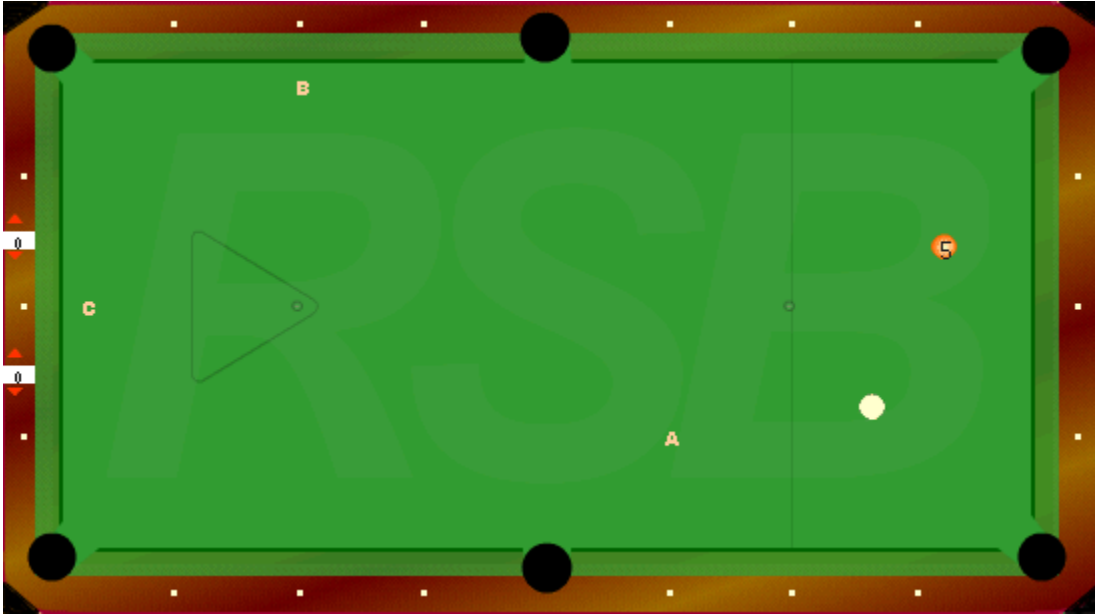
- » [Position Drill - Draw](#)
- » [Position Drill - Follow](#)
- » [The Circle Drill](#)
- » [Power Five Drill](#)

Position Drill - Draw

Date: Sun, Jul 27 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Basic Position Play

Set up a straight in shot to the corner pocket. Practice drawing the cue ball to point A. Once you can do that at will, draw to point B, then once you can do that draw to point C. It might help to place a piece of paper on the table in each spot.

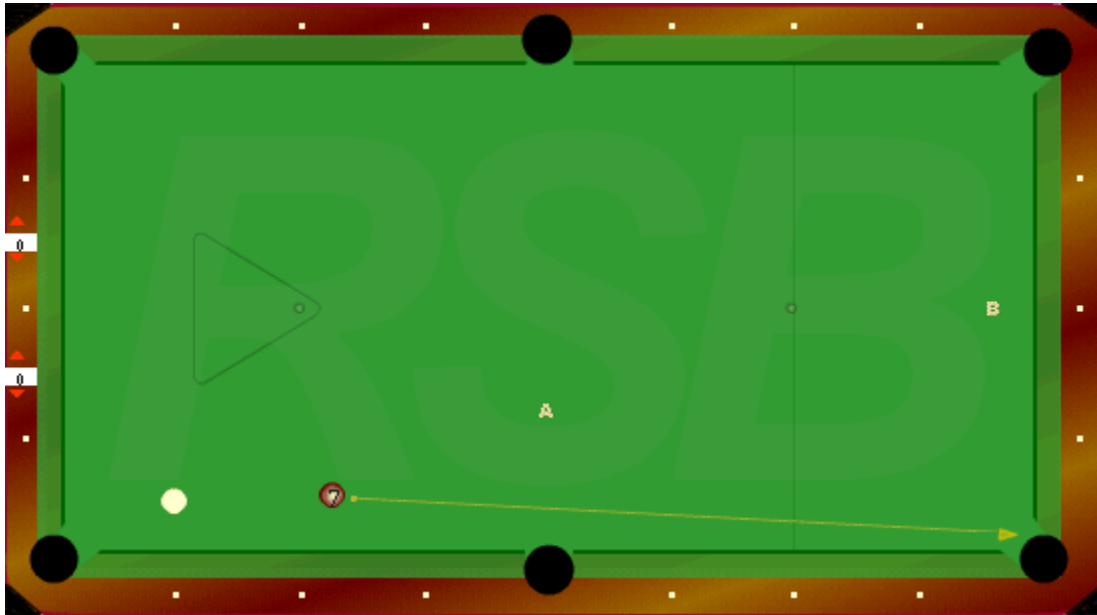


Position Drill - Follow

Date: Sun, Aug 3 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Basic Position Play

Set up the shot as illustrated. Practice leaving the cue ball at point A. When you can do that perfectly, practice leaving the cue ball at point B.



The Circle Drill

Date: Sun, Apr 6 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Basic Position Play

This drill is a good drill for position play. First set up either 9 or all 15 balls in a circle in the middle of the table. For beginners you should start with the 9 balls. Now when all the balls are set up in a circle in the middle of the table, place the cue ball in the center of the circle. Now to get started with the drill. take aim at any of the balls on the table and try to pocket it, but the cue ball may NOT hit any other balls. If the cue ball does make contact with a ball you have to start over. Keep trying this drill until you can pocket either most of the balls or all of them. This drill is made for position play and if you can master it, you are one hell of a position player.



Power Five Drill

By ppa_instructor

Date: Sun, Oct 19 @ 00:00:00 CDT

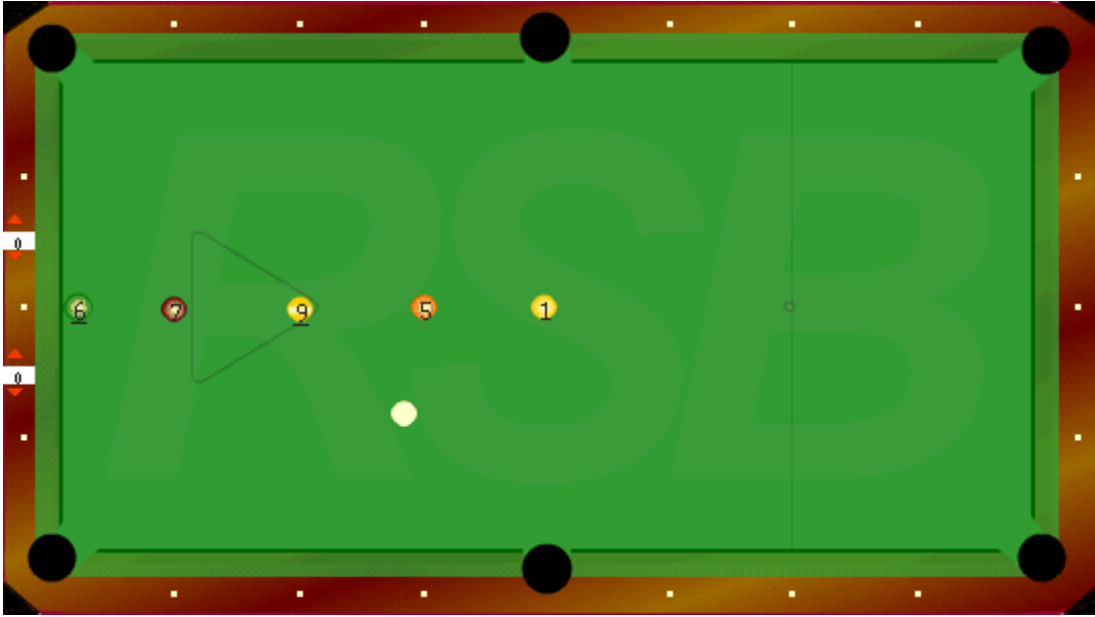
Topic: Practice Basic Position Play

Greetings! I hope that the breaking techniques I gave last time were of some benefit to you. We now move on to some short range pocketing and positioning drills. A few years back, I came across a book entitled "Shoot Pool" which I purchased during some vacation time in Singapore. It was authored by Mr. Ian Pannell, an authority on both pool and snooker in far off England. He clearly emphasized in his book, the importance of "pace control" and its proper application during practice sessions and game play. How true, whichever way it swings, be it playing for a key positional shot in running out or playing a good safety shot. Try shooting the cue ball down the length of the table a few times and see if you can get the feel of how fast the cloth may be and how strong the rails react. Always do this before playing or during practice sessions, it will give you a good warm up for what to expect during game play. I know of some Filipino pros who make it some sort of ritual before engaging in hard fought money games, so should you, if you desire to achieve victory with every encounter. Only LOSERS complain that the table was responsible for their loss. Remember, it will always be your responsibility to check the standard of playability of any pool table you wish to play on.

We now go on to the drill I have for you today. Place five object balls on your table, as shown with the diagram below. Take your first shot with ball in hand. You may shoot any ball into any pocket, there is no specific order. The objective is to clear all five balls without missing, upon doing so, give yourself a "point". Try to score five points with this drill and see how long it takes you to complete it. In the event of a miss, you must replace all the balls back to their starting positions and try again. Sounds easy? I beg to differ. Nothing is easy with playing pool, it only looks easy because all the great players give more than sufficient time for practice and develop so much patience during their earlier days of learning. So should you, if you desire to become stronger.

Each drill given at PPA is designed to target a specific area of your game. This five-in-a-line short range shooting drill was designed to develop the first stages in your mental game. Specifically, the ability to judge clearly and predict the path a cue ball will take after collision with an object ball. We break down this process by dividing it into three parts. First, see if you can predict the path the cue ball will take after collision with an object ball; we'll call this first part the "exit angle". Next, try to determine how the cue ball will bounce off the rail. It will be relatively easier, if for reference, you use your predetermined exit angle. This line that originates from the rail we will call your "rebound angle". This line will of course NOT materialize if you choose not to use a rail in playing position. The final part is what we call the "entry angle". This will be your final position for the next shot. Determine this by judging the amount of pace you need from the very start, in other words think backwards from entry angle to exit angle. It's the only way you can correctly measure the pace required, you see the pros do it all the time on television. I'll expound on the many positional uses based on the lesson I have given today next time, including "creating the angle required".

TAKE YOUR GAME TO THE NEXT LEVEL!



Credits: *Pool Players Academy is an instructional center that uses scientifically based programs developed to produce highly skilled players for the sport of pocket billiards. Its content and teaching range is much more advanced than any textbook can offer.*

XIX - PRACTICE ADVANCED SHOTS & SHOTMAKING

Practice drills to help you improve your pocketing percentage of those long difficult shots.

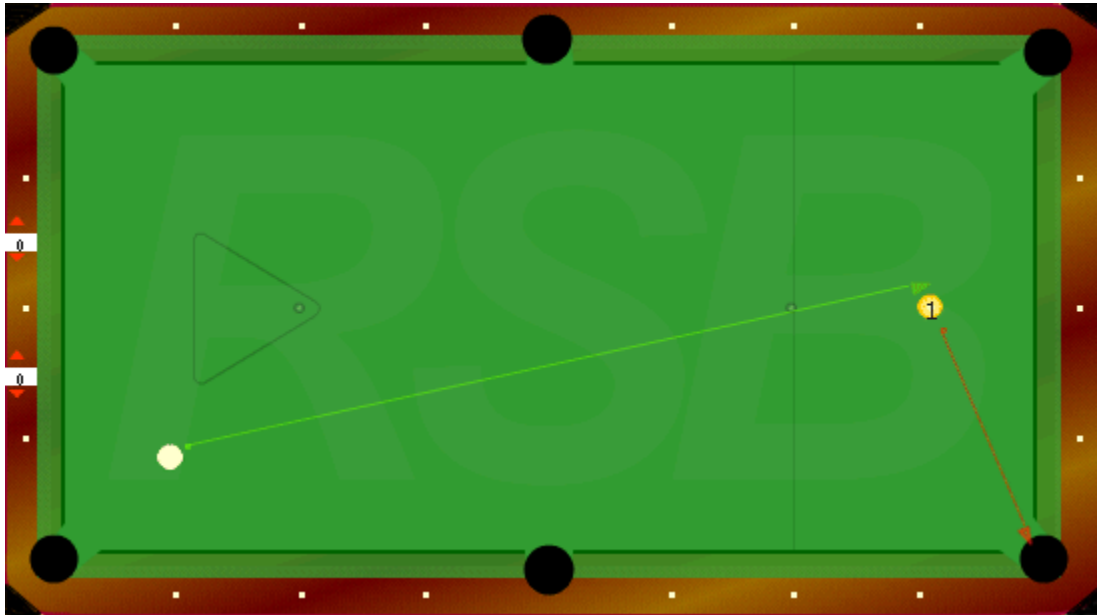
- » [Advanced Cut Shot Drill](#)
- » [Fine tune your english](#)
- » [Two in One Drill](#)
- » [Fun way to learn rail shots](#)
- » [Another long distance rail practice](#)
- » [Frozen drill](#)
- » [How do you hit this?](#)
- » [How do you pocket the 9?](#)
- » [A little game consisting of only four balls can improve your whole bank shot game](#)
- » [Over coming frozen balls and positional shots](#)

Advanced Cut Shot Drill

Date: Sun, Oct 26 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Try this shot over and over and your fear of cut shots will vanish! See diagram below.



Place cue ball on 1-1 diamond, like the diagram above. Place the object ball aligned with the name plate and first diamond. Many amateurs and some medium strength players say its impossible, but it isn't. I want to know how many people out there can make this out of 10 tries. Give it try.

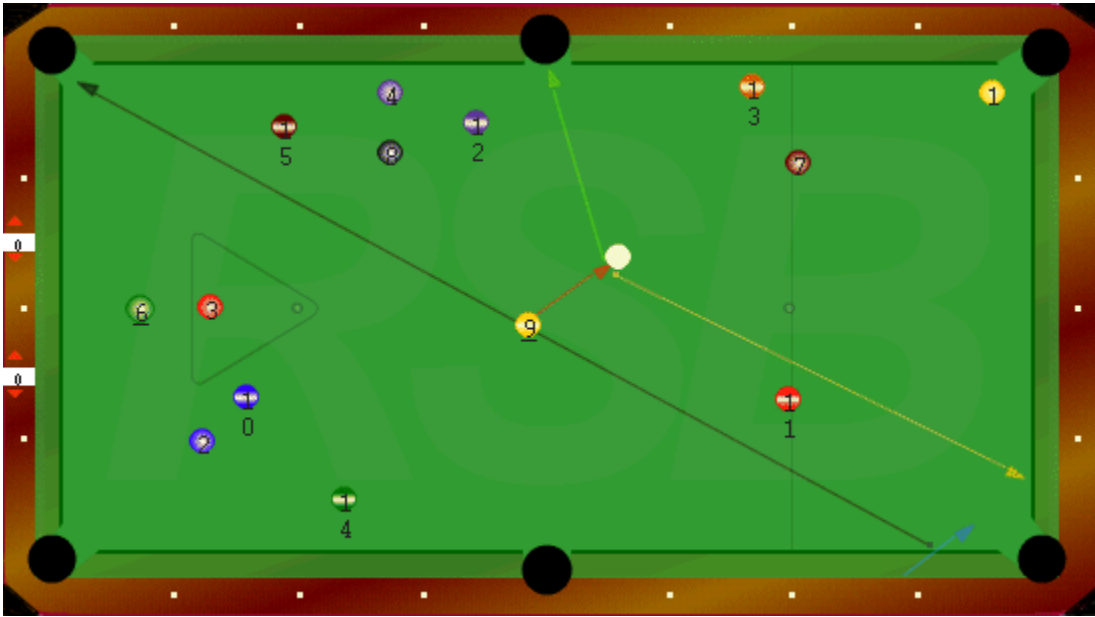
Fine tune your english

By Harold Huggins

Date: Sun, Nov 2 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

After breaking an 8-ball rack, begin making the object balls with carom shots off the cue ball. They can be made straight to the pocket or one or more rails. If the cue ball is scratched just spot it back up and continue on. After a little practice you will know EXACTLY where your cue ball is going to go. Your shapes, breakouts and number of scratches will all improve. A little strategic position play on the cue ball setting up your next shot will also sharpen your mental game. Can be played against an opponent also. Enjoy!



Credits: This game has been around 25 + years and may be one of Minnesota Fats' practice drills.

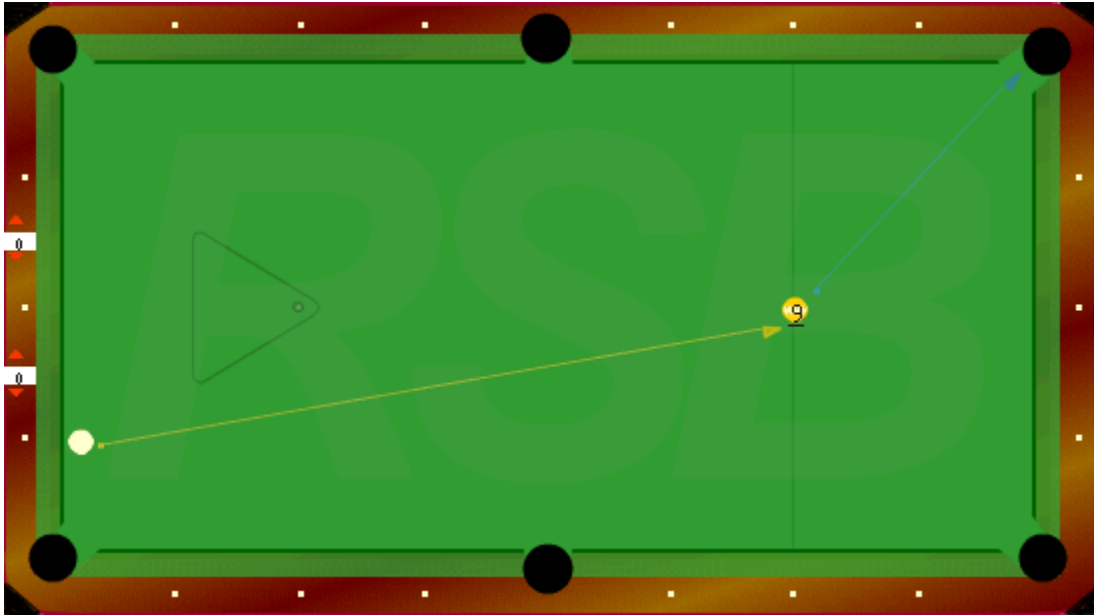
Two in One Drill

By dennis morales

Date: Fri, Aug 29 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Seen this shot from Robert Byrne Power Pool Workout, what this shot teaches you is first, you can see immediately if there is something wrong with the way you're aiming on long shots. Only little room for errors, so you can easily see if you are over cutting or under cutting the balls. Second is to make you more familiar with frozen cue ball shots, a good clean stroke and follow through is required to make this shot. Be sure to chalk up properly on this kind of shot.



Credits: Robert Byrne

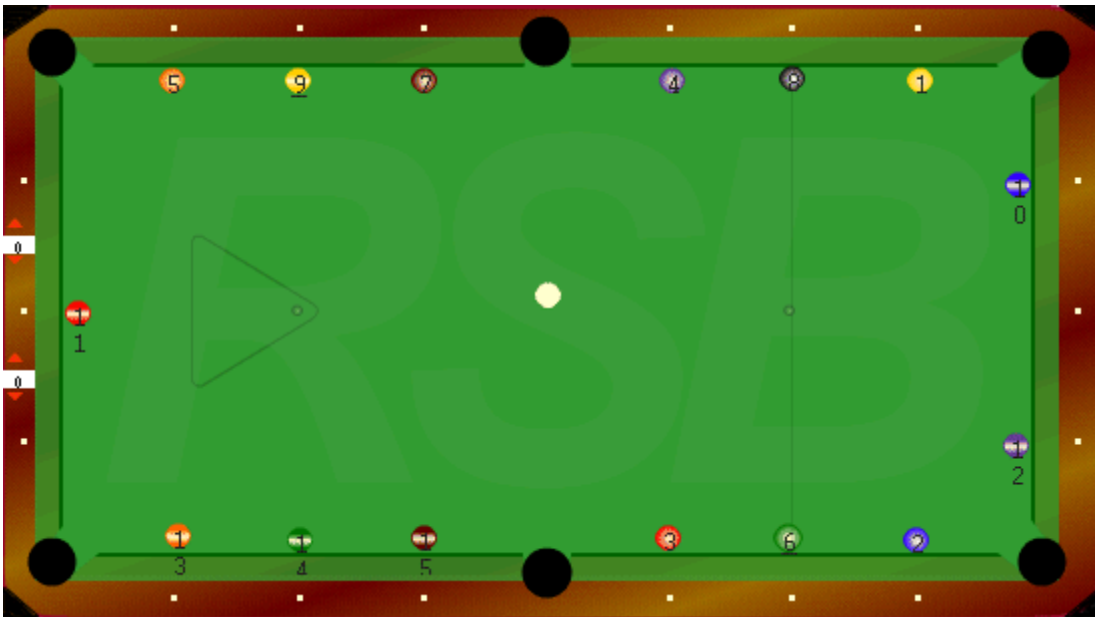
Fun way to learn rail shots

By bad andy

Date: Wed, Apr 23 @ 01:47:04 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Potting balls frozen to the rail can present a challenge and drills get boring real fast. I made up a game to practice rail shots, its called rail ball. There are no BCA rules for it so if you have a what if question, make it up, its your game, your rules. Basically place all the balls as shown and start shooting. Position is fun on this game and almost natural, at least from the first shot, then its up to you. Its also fun to look at peoples expression at the pool hall when you set up the table since it looks like nothing they have ever seen before. I had not played it for a while and just did it recently due to a degradation in my rail shots and when I was done with a couple of games I was close to running the rack, rack of rail ball.



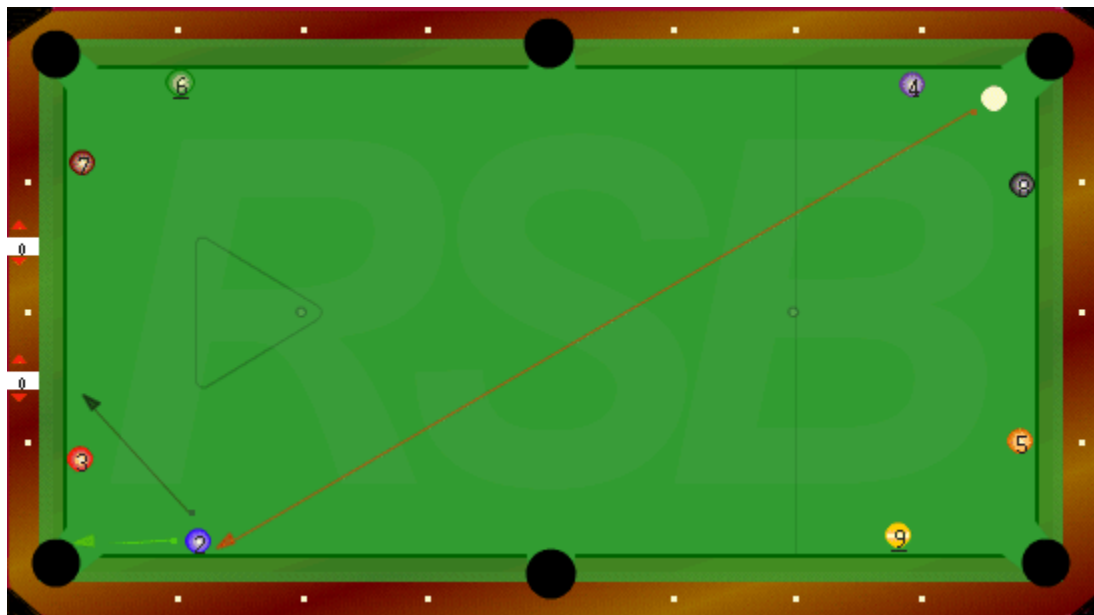
Another long distance rail practice

By Dean Griffith

Date: Sun, Jul 20 @ 07:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Here is a practice drill to help my long distance rail shooting.



Shoot until they are all gone always taking the longest shot.

Griff

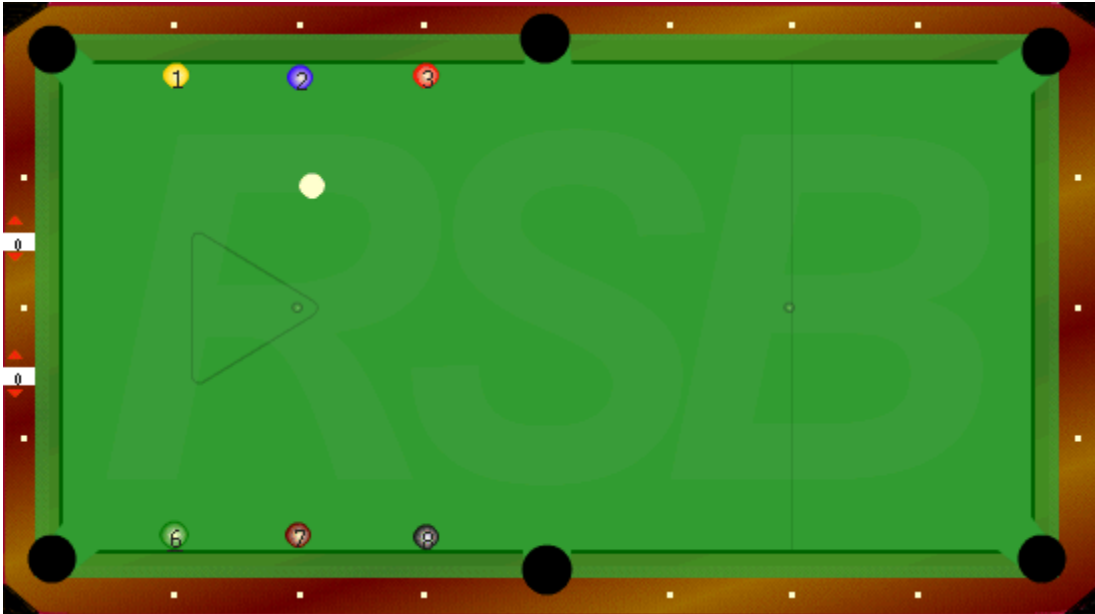
Frozen drill

By noelv

Date: Sun, Aug 10 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Hit the frozen object ball on the rail in any order into any pocket. After a while you will notice that when you encountered this type of situation in the future, you'll have no problem making the shot.



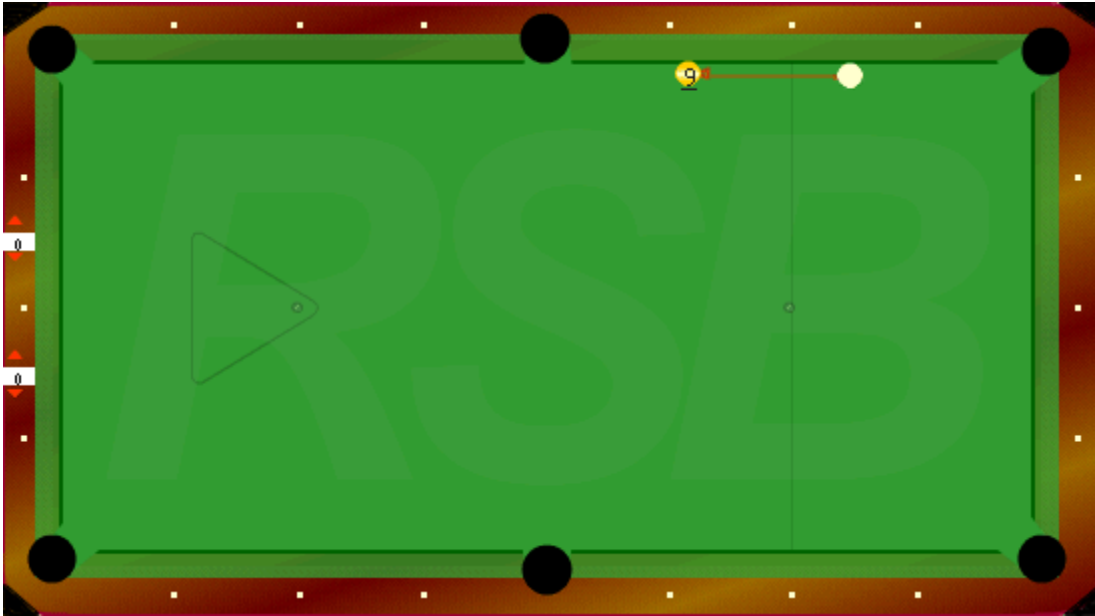
How do you hit this?

By noelv

Date: Sat, Aug 23 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

This looks like a drill, but how do you pocket the 9-ball if both the cue ball and the 9-ball are frozen along the rail? What kind of hit do you apply? Is it soft, medium or hard?



Answer:

This is actually an easy shot to make. Use a medium speed with a little inside english and you can make it 10 out of 10 times!

Try it and you'll see how easy it is.

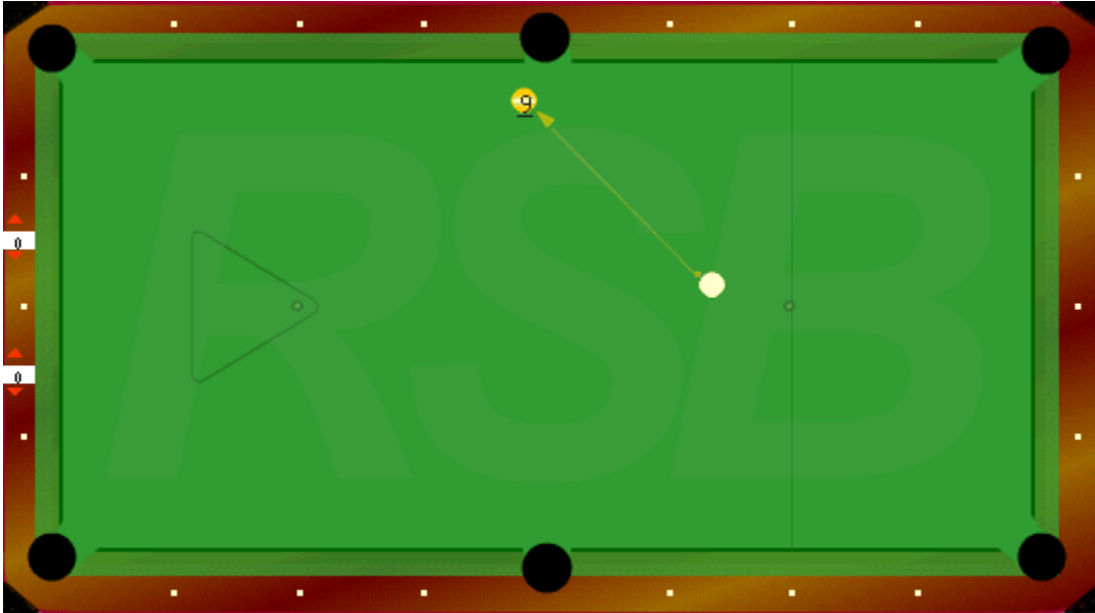
How do you pocket the 9?

By noelv

Date: Sun, Aug 31 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

How would you pocket the 9-ball in this diagram?



Replies:

=>> Simple enough: Bank the cue ball off the bottom (left side, in the picture) of the table to hit the 9 into the side pocket it is near

=>> top english cut, slowly

=>> Hit the 9-ball directly into the side rail using center ball. This should impart natural english on the 9 and pocket it in the lower side pocket.

=>> Since you put up the 9 ball up there, I will have different choices in different kind of situations.

1. If I play for fun with friends, I would go for one of the following choices, depending how 9 ball and Q ball 's exact location on the table:

(a). use top-left English to cut 9 ball into the side-pocket next to the 9 ball.

(b). use center ball to bank 9 to left lower corner.

(c). use center ball and slightly high english to cross bank the 9 ball into the other side of side-pocket.

2. If I am practicing, I would try to use (c) only and try to control the Q Ball position as well; it's because that I will see many situations like this in competition and I want to turn this bad situation around.

3. If I am in action or tournament and I have to make this shot instead of playing safety, I will use (b) only but with lower-right English. This can also leave the Q ball to the other side of the table so that it will be somewhat safe if you miss the 9 ball.

I will NEVER try to cut the 9 ball to the left upper corner pocket; you have at least 2 chances to scratch to the side-pockets.

=>> side near the nine use high left english and hit with medium slow speed the cue should hit the rail before the scratch and end around the point where the lead ball sits in the rack because of the left spin

A little game consisting of only four balls can improve your whole bank shot game

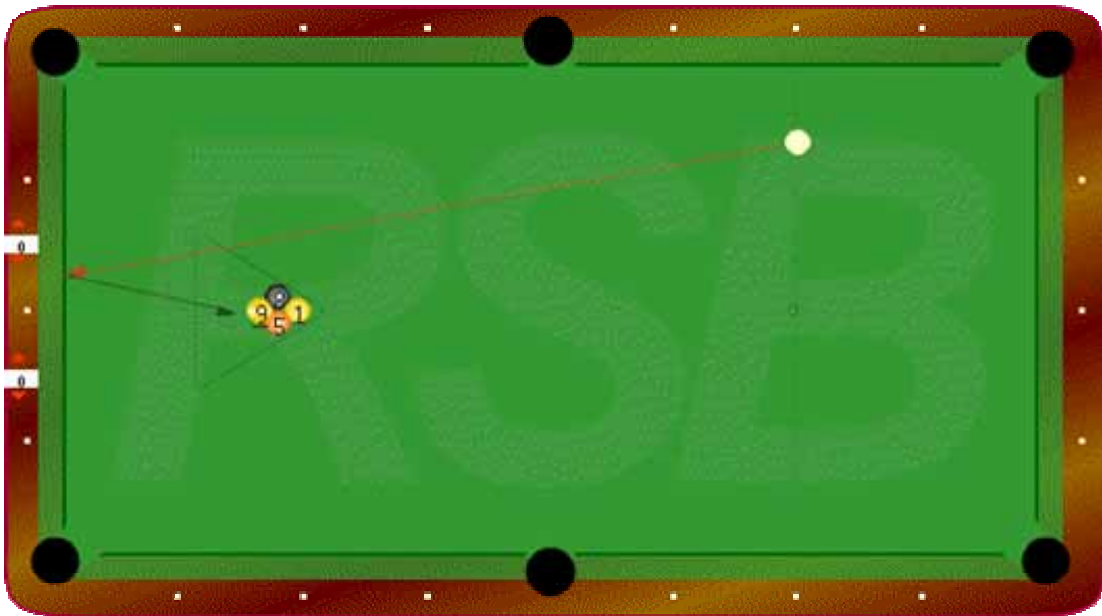
By dikufosta

Date: Sun, Dec 7 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

Hey, I have invented a game that helps out a person who has trouble making the bank shots in a game, or for someone who wants to improve. This game is dubbed '**Four Ball**' because I found that at a basic level, 4 balls is enough for a good game, but you may add as many as you like.

The game starts with a four-ball diamond. Every shot you make must be a bank shot. Even the break!



It may seem a little too simple, and it is. but to throw in the fact that you'll never really be in the perfect place for that shot, whenever you pocket the cue, you place the cue ball on one of the two main dots on the table. You may also make it so that whenever the cue ball is pocketed, the last ball or a previous pocketed ball must be removed(this is **optional**. I do not recommend it for the time factors of the game). It is a fun game when playing with a friend, and it also helps you in your banking and 'where will the ball go if I hit it this way?' skills.

It's a fun game. I encourage all those who want to improve their play while having fun or just want to have a little fun playing pool, to try this game. It's harder than it looks

Credits: my own uncanny ability to make something stupid into something actually useful!

Over coming frozen balls and positional shots

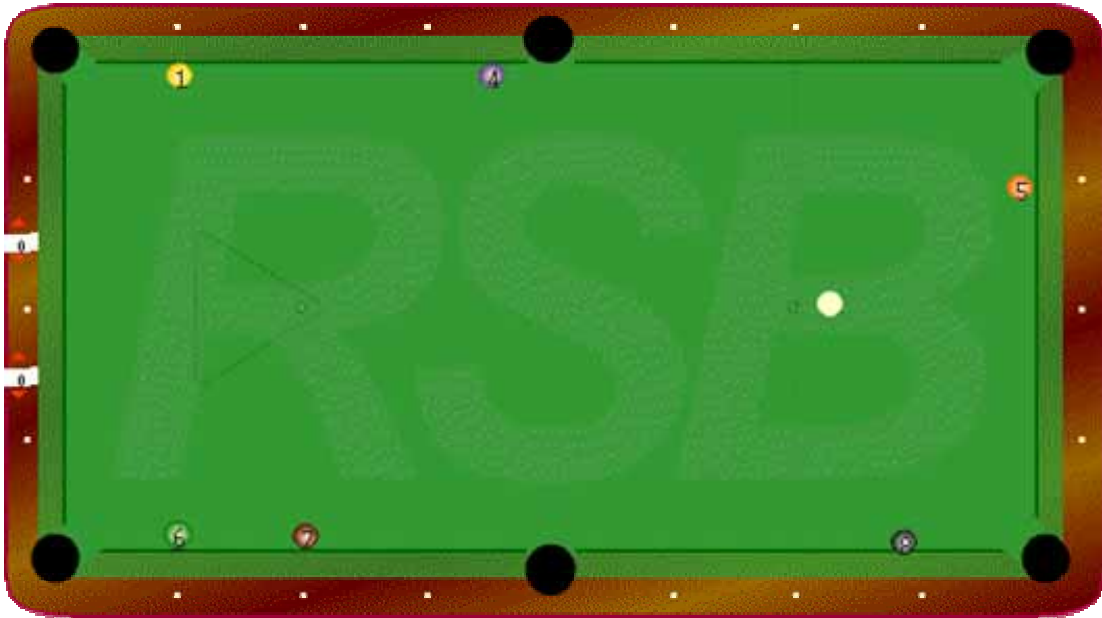
By dorset8ball

Date: Sun, Jan 18 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Advanced Shots & Shotmaking

This is a drill that I used to over come the fear of frozen balls and the use of english.

At first I started out just potting the balls in any order. If I scratched the ball was replaced on the table and I continued until the last one was potted. Leaving the CB where it stops, replace balls and continue on from there. Once this appeared to become a little easier the balls were potted in order. Reset the balls changing their positions slightly then play again.



XX - PRACTICE ADVANCED POSITION PLAY

Practice drills for improving your run out pattern and advanced position play skills.

- » [Positioning drill](#)
- » [Position Play](#)
- » [Center is best](#)
- » [Four-point centripetal position drill](#)
- » [Cue ball control drill #1](#)
- » [Cue ball control drill #2](#)

Positioning drill

By Marcel

Date: Mon, May 12 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Position Play

This is a variation on the circle drill. You start with ball in hand. Your goal is to run all 15 balls. However, you may not move any balls from its original position except the ball you want to pocket. If you miss a shot, or if another ball than the designated one is touched, then you must start over.



Position Play

By Pierre

Date: Tue, May 13 @ 01:31:30 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Position Play

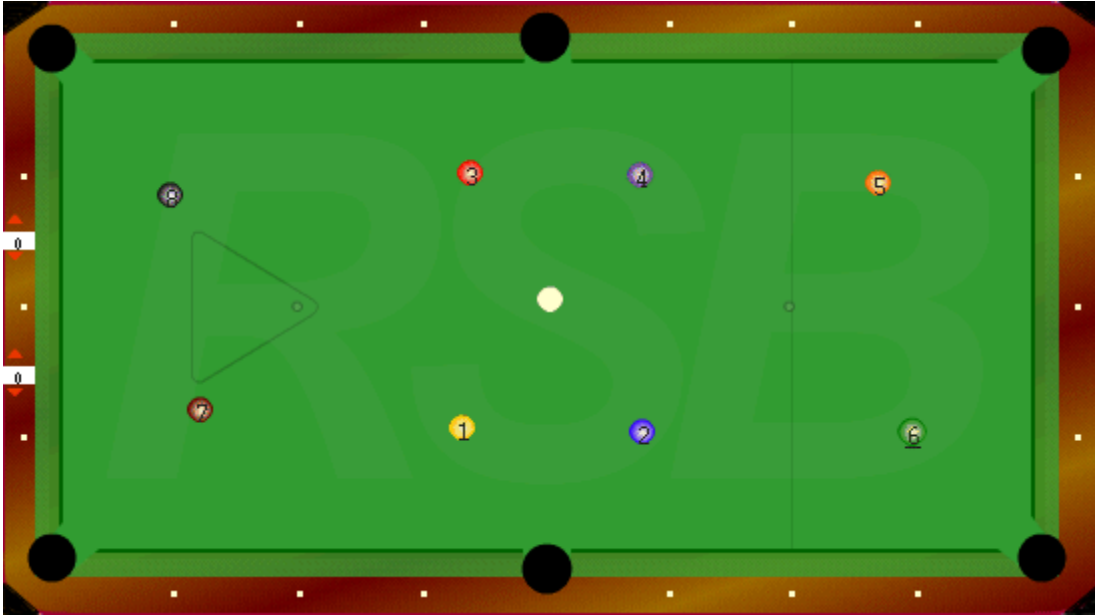
For me personally this is one of the best practices I have tried for many years. First Place a sheet of writing paper anywhere in the table. Next, select the cue ball and another ball of your choice. Put those balls anywhere then shoot the object ball into the pocket (with follow, draw, left or right spin, center, or a combination of these) and try to get the cue ball to get on the sheet of paper. if you can do this about fifteen times with different positions, angles, and english then you can play with position.

Center is best

Date: Sun, Sep 21 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practice Advanced Position Play

Start with the cue ball in the center of the table. Shoot any ball you chose and try to get the cue to the exact center of the table again (I allow myself a tolerance of a 5 in radius from the center). Then play the next ball of your choice in the same manner. This is pretty tough, but it teaches speed control, and it gets you in the habit of returning the cue to the center of the table which is almost always a good place to be.



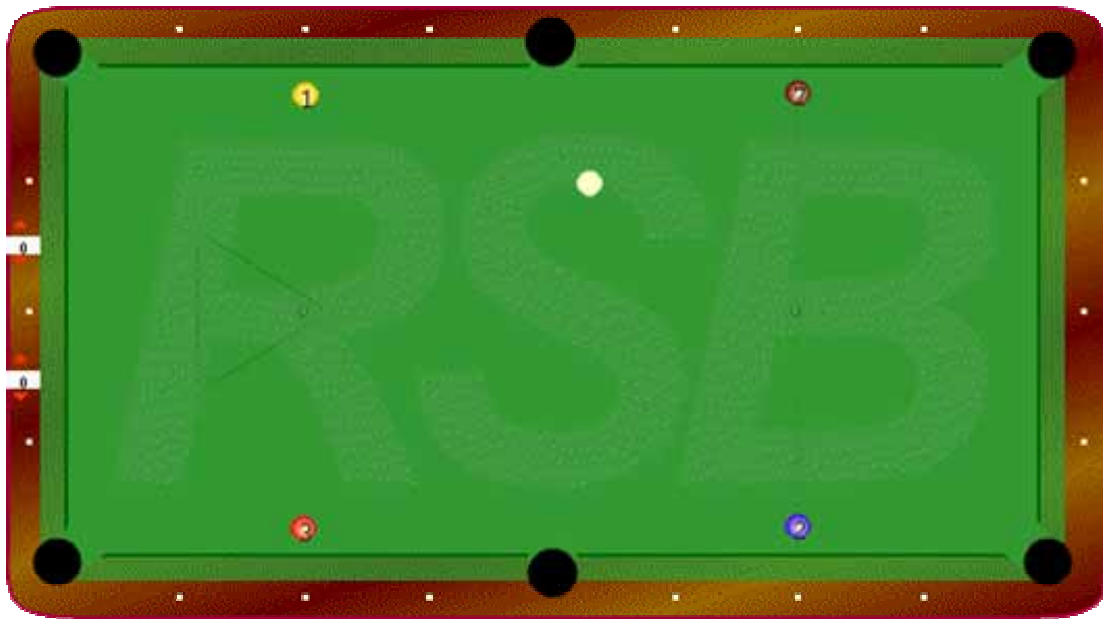
Four-point centripetal position drill

By Lester Raymond Dulawan

Date: Sun, Nov 30 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Advanced Position Play

Greetings, I hope you had appropriate practice time with the five-ball drill last lesson. I now give you the four-point centripetal position drill. Position the balls as shown below at one inch from the side rails and start to pocket your first ball at a sixty-degree angle as shown. Take note that this drill has but one rule; you should stay inside the area of the object balls. In other words, this drill requires you to practice your exit angle recognition with draw shots. My suggestion on starting this drill is for you to try and pocket them via a diagonal roadmap.



A light and fast swing will help you navigate back into a favorable sixty-degree angle for the next shot. This drill will further your education on exit angles and rebound angles. Try if you can make it three out of five tries. If you get it right on your first try then I must say that you possess a natural talent for calculating the stroke speed. The primary directive of this drill is to try and give you a better grasp on calculating "how much draw for what kind of angle". Practice this drill religiously, you'll see these simulated shots in game situations more often than anything.

There are a few points you must look out for with this drill, namely; the speed of your stroke in relation to the angle you are playing, the snap of your wrist with regards to the amount of draw you wish to materialize, and lastly, the sequence by which you choose to run the drill. The last of three things I have mentioned is the most important. I don't want you shooting this drill without any plan whatsoever about it's run-out sequence. It simply won't work for you if you don't have a plan for the drill. If you don't get this drill on your first trials then I advise you to re-examine your misses. Ask yourself, was my stroking too hard? Was my angle selection too straight? Did I grip the cue too firmly to materialize any draw? Asking yourself these questions when you miss is vital to get the ideal thinking process in pool. Remember, a miss is the result of a lack of concentration on one or more factors involved with

shooting pool. I hope you get appropriate practice time with this drill as the last one.
Till next time.

Cue ball control drill #1

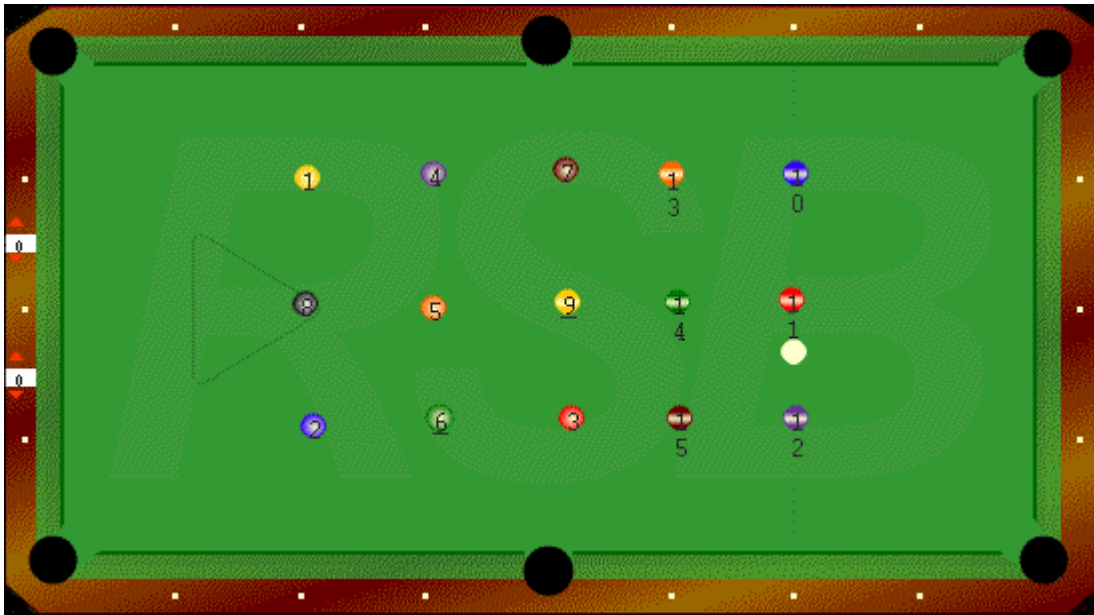
By Erik Lee

Date: Sun, Mar 28 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Advanced Position Play

This is a great drill to fine tune your cue ball control. Set up 15 balls as shown in the diagram below. Take cue ball in hand. You can pocket any balls in any pocket. Try to run them out without missing. Only 2 simple rules:

- 1) You may not hit a rail, and
- 2) You make contact another ball besides your primary object ball.



Incorporate this drill into your daily practice routine and you'll see an improvement in your cue ball control. Have fun!

Credits: Scott Lee - BCA instructor

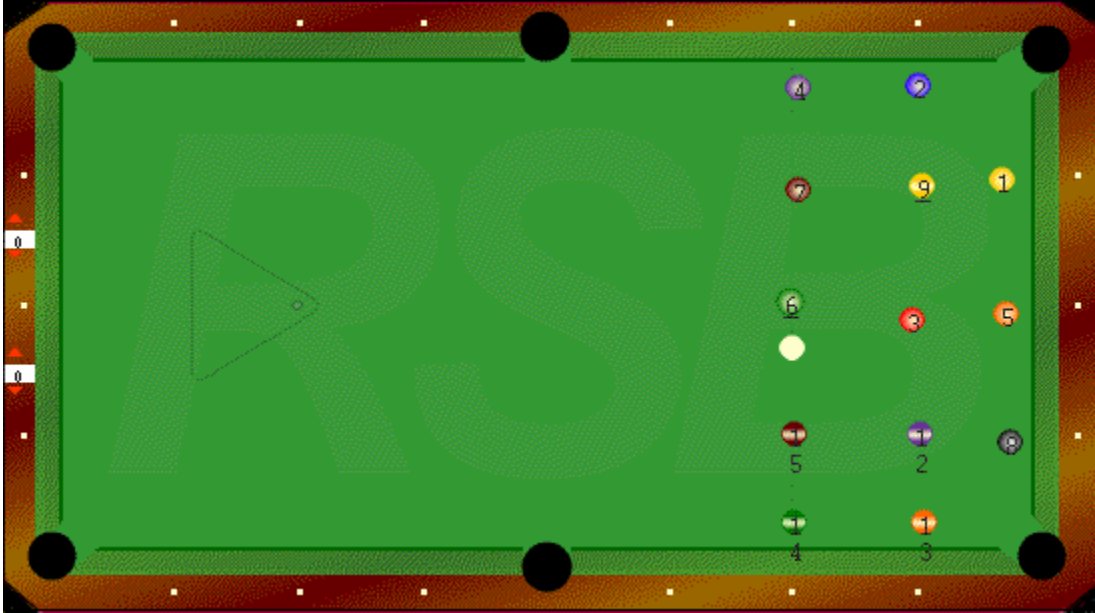
URL: <http://www.erikleecues.com>

Cue ball control drill #2

By Erik Lee

Date: Thu, Apr 28 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Practice Advanced Position Play



This is another great drill to fine tune your cue ball control. Set up 13 balls as shown in the diagram above. Take cue ball in hand on the first shot. You can pocket any balls in any pocket. Try to run them out without missing. **Only 1 simple rule: The cue ball may not hit another ball after contact with your primary object ball.** Incorporate this drill into your daily practice routine and you'll see an improvement in your cue ball control. Have fun!

Credits: Scott Lee - BCA instructor

URL: <http://www.erikleecues.com>

XXI - PRACTICING DEFENSE AND SAFETIES

Practice drills to help you improve your defensive skills at the table.

- » [Safety Drill](#)
- » [Safety Drill II](#)

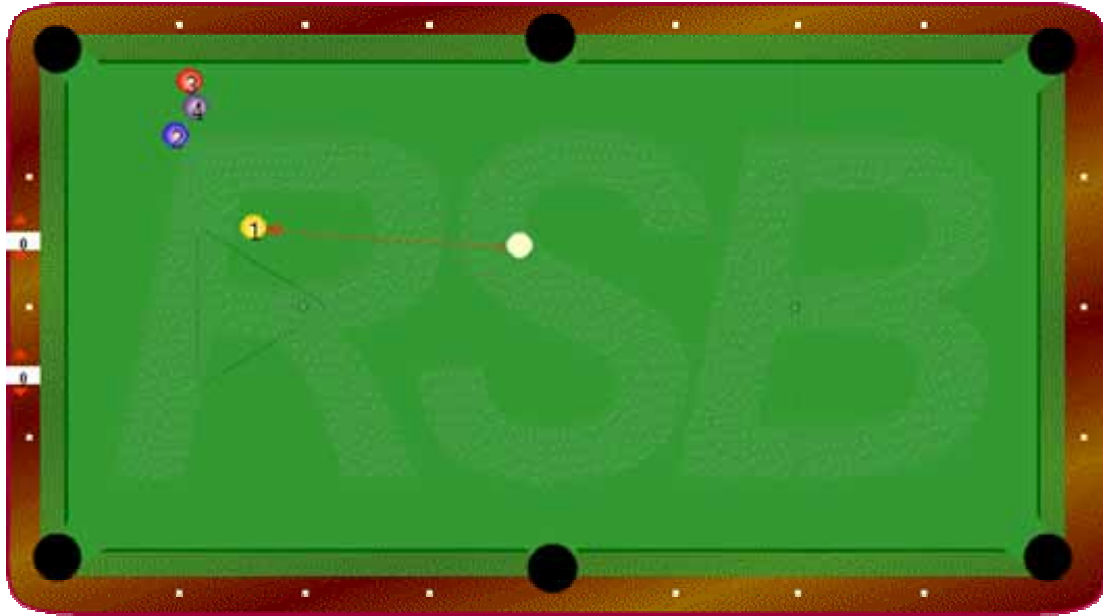
Safety Drill

By noelv

Date: Sun, Aug 17 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Defense and Safeties

Hit the one-ball with the cue ball and try to hide the cue ball behind a bunch of balls near the corner pocket. See diagram below:



Safety Drill II

By Ricky Lipe

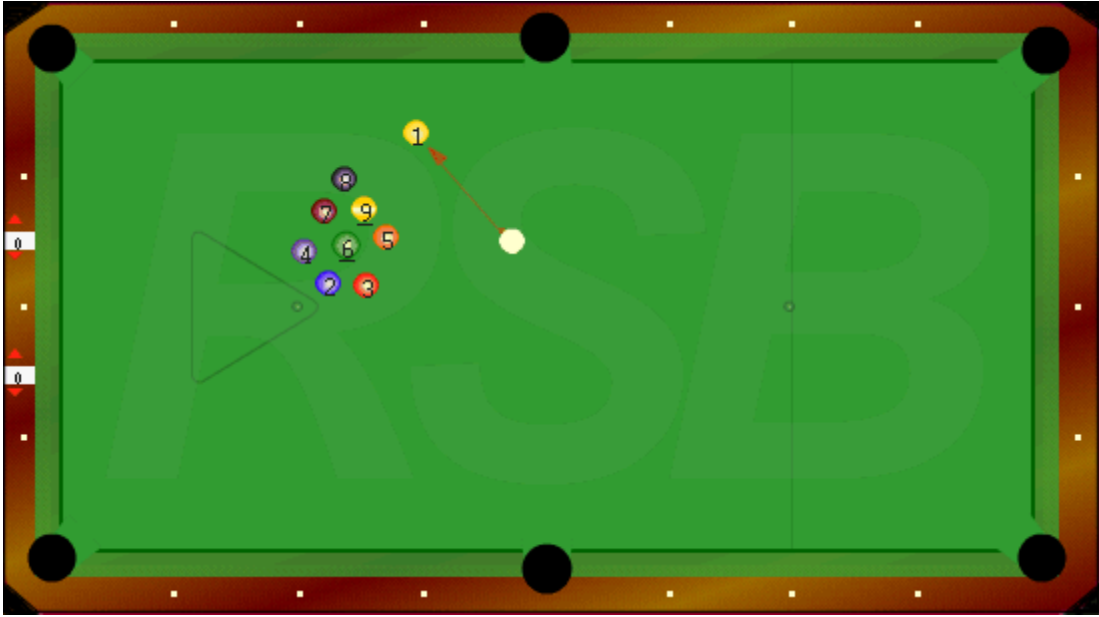
Date: Sun, Nov 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Practicing Defense and Safeties

Here's a safety to practice. It can help in many situations. Hit the 1-ball on the left side, with lower left english (softly). This makes the cue ball travel off the rail at a wide angle (missing all of the other balls) and will hide the 1-ball behind the cluster.



In this situation, hitting the cue ball with very slight low english (just enough to stop the ball in place) will cause the cue to stop (right where it would contact the 1-ball), and the 1-ball to hide down by the corner. Speed plays an important role in safety playing.



Visit author's website at: <http://www.multi-cap.com>

XXII - MISCELLANEOUS PRACTICE

Miscellaneous practice drills that help your overall game.

- » [Mississippi Nine Ball](#)
- » [15 ball tag](#)
- » [Drillless drill](#)
- » [6 Rail Trick shot](#)
- » [Focus 9 Ball](#)

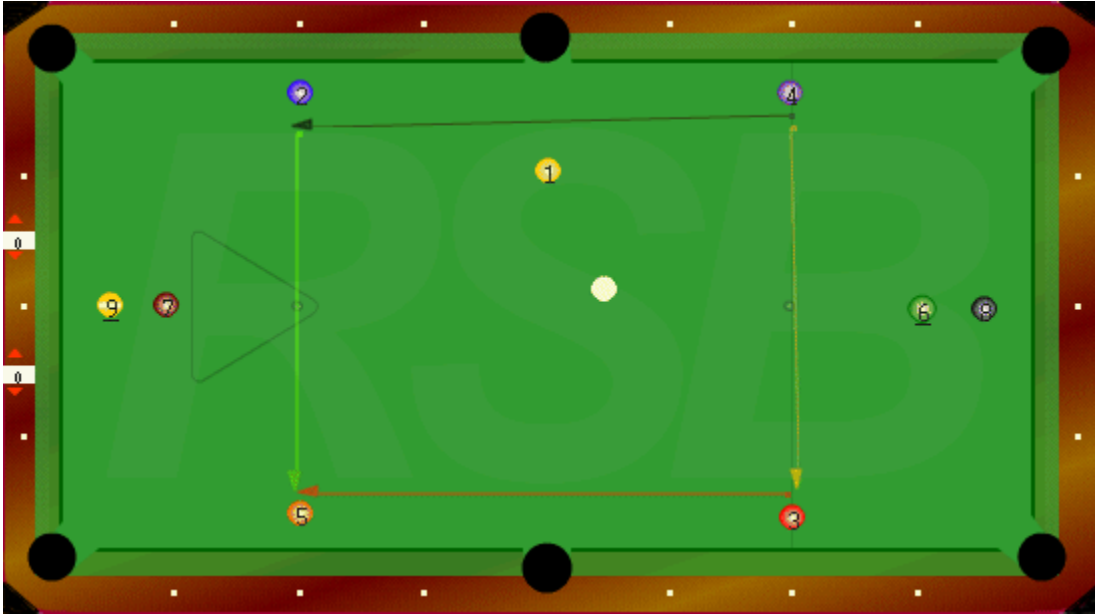
Mississippi Nine Ball

By sessyargc

Date: Sun, Sep 7 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Practice

Here's how to setup a game of Mississippi Nine Ball. The cue balls' starting position should be approximately anywhere within the boxed area.



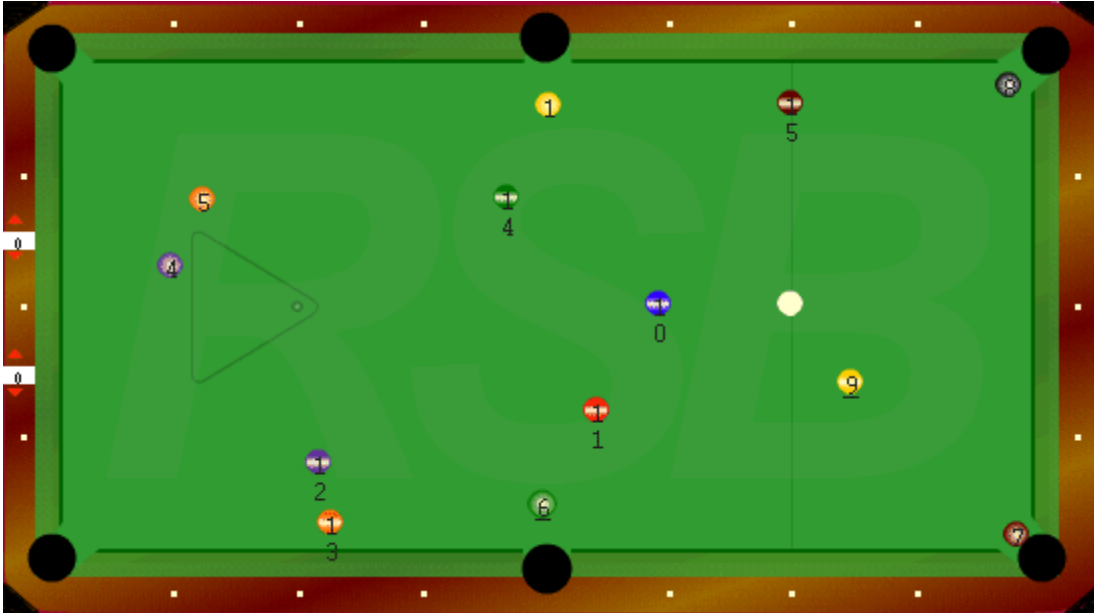
All 9-Ball rules apply. I haven't tried the game myself so I can't give a hint for a run-out. Maybe you can give me a hint :-) Enjoy!

15 ball tag

Date: Sun, Sep 14 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Practice

Rule #1. You must sink the balls in order from 1-15.



Rule #2. You cannot touch a higher numbered ball until sinking the ball that is one number before it. **Solution:** try for a 1-2 ball combo using right english, stroke smoothly. If you don't sink the 2 ball the right english should keep you from hitting the 5 or 4 ball and you can then sink the 2 ball. When you sink the 2 ball shoot smoothly using hard right english, with a soft stroke to sink the 2 ball and kill the balls' movement (*Kill English*).

Now shoot the 3 ball with slight top left english with a soft stroke to sink the 3 ball, and you should be placed behind the 4 ball. Now with bottom right english shoot the 4 ball with a medium stroke which should place you behind the 5 ball. Sink the 5 ball into the same pocket you sunk the 4 ball but use a STOP shot on the 5 ball.

Now with right english and medium stroke , shoot the 6 ball going once again for a combo to sink the 7 ball. If you don't sink the 7 ball not to worry the right english should once again save you. Shoot the 7 ball in, and then with slight top left english shoot the 8 ball in, placing you behind the 9 ball .

Shoot the nine ball with a small amount of Draw so that you are lined up for the 10 ball down town. Shoot the 10 ball with a STOP shot . Now shoot the 11 ball with *left* english so that the CB aligns nicely for the 12 ball. Now with a medium stroke shoot the 12 ball with bottom left english.

Now lined for the 13 ball shoot the 13 ball with top left english shooting with a soft stroke. Now shoot the 14 ball with a stop shot . Now aligned with the 15 ball shoot the 15 ball with bottom right English. Now for a fancy ending shoot the Cue ball from Point.

Drillless drill

By Ron Kurtz

Date: Sun, Oct 12 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Practice

I get bored with drills very fast but they do serve a purpose. If you have a dislike of drills as I do but want to get the benefit of a drill, try the drillless drill.

As an example if you want to drill left english, just throw the balls out and use left english of varying degrees on every shot. It could be anything you want to work on, draw, high, curve etc., does not matter. Do not worry about position, just concentrate on your purpose for left english whatever it may be, pocket skill, deflection testing, carom effect or all. If a shot ends in bad position, just move the Cue ball to a better location and continue on. Its practice, not a game with rules, the purpose is to learn left english and not worry about the next shot. If you miss a shot you really wanted to try, set it up again and re-shoot to get it right then move on. If you see a shot you really want to try that does not involve left english go for it then resume with the left english on the next ball.

The drillless drill is more fun and will not seem like a drill but you will gain experience quite quickly. Just a rack or two can make a big difference. Of course if you want to learn an exact shot, then drill away.

6 Rail Trick shot

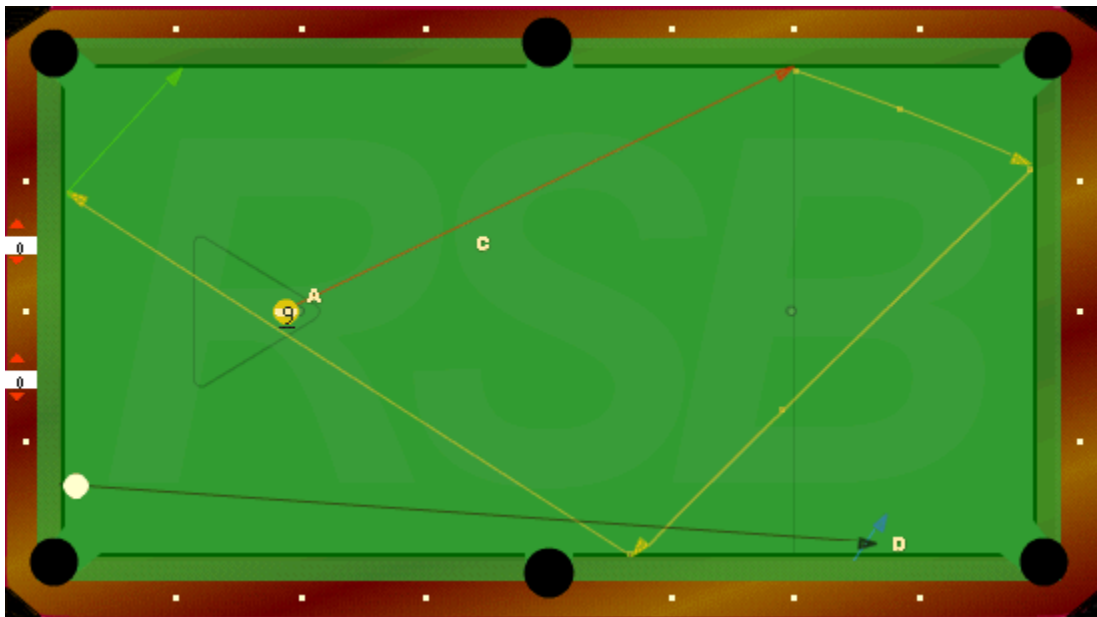
By Mike V

Date: Sun, May 16 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Practice

I have submitted one of my favorite trick shots here. I realize this is not traditional practice for your game, but a good trick shot are great to have. I find that when practicing with drills and whatnot sometimes practicing a good trick shot rejuvenates me to go back to practice. Its a great break from the drills, and most trick shots require great pool skill to complete, so you can hone in on your skills while having some fun.

One of the most stunning shots I've ever seen done by none other then the great trick shot man Mr. Rossman aka "Dr. Cue" He performed this shot during the 2002 finals of the "Trick Shot Magic Tour" against Mr. Peling. This shot begins with sending the 9-ball for a 6 rail ride aiming at #11 diamond. Speed and timing is the key here. After sending the nine ball off on its journey (point 'A') prepare yourself to hit the CB into the rail into point 'B'. Depending on the speed you hit the 9-ball, you should hit the CB when the 9-ball is in the vicinity of point 'C'. This shot is made by shooting the CB into the rail and since the balls would be frozen and pointing along the path shown the shot is the easy part. The timing of the shot is the challenge. If you timed this amazing shot correctly the 9 and 3 balls will meet at point 'D' pocketing the 9 in the corner. Truly an impressive shot!



Focus 9 Ball

By Walter Riley

Date: Fri, Jan 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Practice

Maintaining sharp focus at the pool table is one of the hallmarks of the professional or top amateur. But if you, like me, sometimes find your practice games degenerating to just “banging balls”, then you might try the practice game discussed below to see if your focus improves. At the very least, I can almost guarantee that you’ll find you’re spending more of your practice time in a mentally ‘high-focus’ zone – the place you need to be to see improvement in your game.

While beginning and intermediate players often think solely about win/loss ratio, the advanced player is much more concerned with consistently good play. For your play to improve, you first need to realize that not all of your ‘wins’ are alike. There is a huge difference between a ‘forced win’ resulting from pocketing the 9-ball at the end of a 5 or more ball run-out and a ‘gift win’ where the opponent rattles the 7-ball in the pocket resulting in an easy 3-ball run-out. You must realize that the most characteristic feature of the very best players is their ability to ‘force a win’ and constantly strive to enhance this part of your own game. I believe that Focus 9-Ball can help.

This practice game is intended for advanced players (a more precise definition is given below in the game specifics). It improves focus in three ways. The first is that it places a strong emphasis on positive play such as the careful planning and execution of run-outs and safeties. Secondly, it removes the focus-killing and time-consuming completion of ‘worthless’ games - those where the game has already had multiple missed shots by each player. Thirdly, these mediocre games are no longer hidden by lumping them into the win/loss totals of the players involved, but are instead emphasized by tracking them separately giving an indication of the overall level of play in the match.

Removing the time spent completing mediocre games is key to increasing the percentage of total practice time spent in a high-focus mental mode. Additionally, the players involved remain focused on ‘forcing a win’ as opposed to just hanging around waiting for the opponent to make a mistake bad enough to lose the game.

Focus 9-ball is related to ‘playing the ghost’, which is perhaps the best solo way to practice focus. You probably are already familiar with this game. You rack, break, remove x lowest-numbered balls from the table (x depends on your skill level), take ball in hand and then attempt to run-out. If you fail to run-out, the ‘expert ghost’ gets the victory. If you can beat the ghost consistently removing x balls, decrease the number removed by 1 and try again. If you win races against the ghost by only taking ball in hand after the break, without removing any balls, then you don’t need to waste your time reading the rest of this article.

Solo practice can be somewhat boring. Focus 9-ball attempts to apply the same positives of the solo ‘play the ghost’ game to the normal two-player game of 9-ball. It keeps the concept of the ‘ghost’, but in this case the ghost is mediocre instead of expert.

GAME SPECIFICS

I will describe the game for two above-average 9-ball players. The players should be good enough that they can agree that only a win on their first or second attempt at an intended run-out constitutes a 'decent game'. If both are good players, they can also agree that even a win where their opponent misses on two or more of his run-out opportunities is mediocre at best.

The two players are in a three-way race with a 'mediocre ghost' who gets credit for all the games where neither of the players could produce a run-out.

Each player begins with two run-out opportunities to score a win.

The player will declare one of three options on each turn at the table after the break:

1. "Go for it", which costs one opportunity if the run-out fails.
2. "Run to the x-ball, then play safe", which costs one opportunity only if the players fails to run as far as x
3. "Play safe" which does not cost an opportunity, but always costs the turn even if a ball drops.

The break is a free shot requiring no declaration. If a ball is pocketed on the break without scratching, the breaker then makes one of the above declarations and continues shooting. 9-on-the-break is spotted and does not count as a win, but the breaker does continue shooting after making a declaration. Push-outs are allowed on the shot immediately following the break and do not cost an opportunity.

The player behind in the race has the option of breaking or passing the break to the opponent. Players alternate breaks following ghost victories when their scores are tied.

A player can only collect a win by choosing to 'go for it' and then successfully completing the run-out, provided he has not previously exhausted his run-out opportunities. A player shooting after missing his second "go for it" opportunity is assisting the ghost, does not make a declaration and cannot win.

After one player has failed on his second opportunity, the opposing player is reduced to a single "go for it" opportunity, which must be taken on either the current or the following turn at the table. This potential loss of scoring opportunities encourages players to "go for it".

After both players have exhausted their scoring opportunities, the balls are immediately racked for the next game and the ghost is awarded the victory.

No slop. Call ball and pocket if there can be any doubt about shot selection. If the called ball drops in the pocket intended and additional uncalled balls drop, the player continues shooting. If the 9-ball is one of the additional uncalled balls, the 9-ball is spotted and the shot does not count as a win.

It is important to note that the number of ghost victories in a match serves an effective gauge of the overall level of play involved. A winning score of 5-2-0 in a race against the opponent and the ghost indicates a much higher level of play than a score of 5-2-4. It is best also to consider that a 'mediocre ghost' victory really means that both players were losers regardless of their relative scores!

Of course, the term 'mediocre ghost' is relative to 'good player'. If the 'mediocre ghost' is actually winning a lot of races, then, as in the solo 'play the ghost' game, try removing, for example, the two lowest numbered balls on the table immediately after the break. If the 'ghost' continues to win races, then it is likely that both you and your practice partner need to concentrate more on fundamentals than focus and 'forcing a win'.

Try adding some 'Focus 9-Ball' races into your practice regimen. Of course, 'gift wins' will still occur in this game, but even so you will get more opportunities to 'force a win' in your practice session by playing 'Focus 9-Ball' than by playing regular 9-ball. By concentrating on 'forced wins' achieved through run-outs or 'ball-in-hand' type safeties followed by run-outs, I think many players will quickly notice an improvement in their mental approach to the game. Some intermediate players may even be shocked by the amount of mental effort that should happen automatically in their everyday games. Still others may have their egos deflated when they discover the true percentage of mediocre games that they are playing. All in all, I think you and your practice partner will get a lot of value from the time you spend with this game.

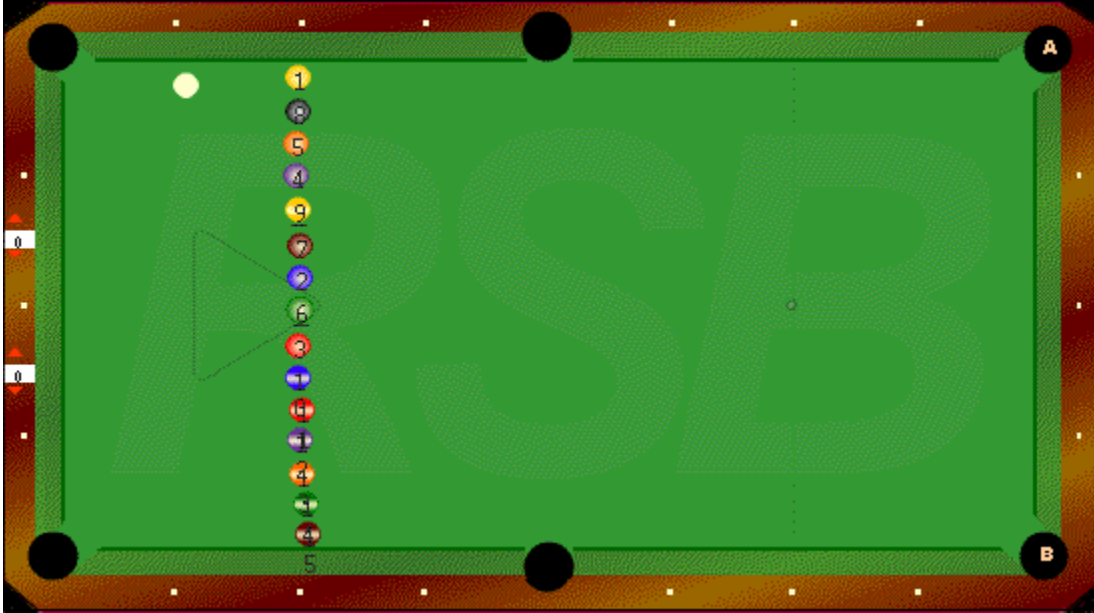
Simple Drill to improve focus and concentration!

By dooziexx

Date: Mon, Feb 28 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Miscellaneous Practice

Set all 15 balls up as shown in the diagram. Take cue ball in hand for every shot. Shoot 7 or 8 balls in to pocket A and the remainder to pocket B. The object is to shoot it with lag speed with center ball hit. After you pocketed all 15 set it up and do it again til you miss.



Sounds easy?? Try it... email me at dooziexx@yahoo.com if you have questions.

XXIII - HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT EQUIPMENT

Articles and tips on how to choose the right type of pool equipment for you to help you improve your game of pool.

- » [Selecting a Cue Stick](#)
- » [Selecting a Break Cue](#)
- » [Selection of your personal pool cue](#)
- » [Cue Case](#)
- » [Suggested Cue Accessories](#)
- » [Pool Table recommended room size](#)

Selecting a Cue Stick

By admin

Date: Sat, Mar 29 @ 04:24:40 CST

Topic: How to Choose the right Equipment

As a beginning billiards player, most of you might only be using cue sticks provided by the billiards place where you play. However, if you want to really improve your game you need to have your own cue so you won't have the problem of having to adjust to the length of the cue or the weight of the cue or the diameter of the cue tip. It is important to take note (while you still don't have a cue stick) the type of cue that you feel most comfortable with. Experiment with different cue sticks. Examine the weight, the length and the diameter of the tip. After you've decided on what is most comfortable to you then you are ready to buy one.

Here are some points to consider if you are wanting to purchase your own cue stick:

First, make sure that the cue stick is straight and not crooked. Although most of the production cues are not crooked, it's always good to check just in case. You can do this by rolling the cue stick on a flat surface, if it is crooked then you will notice it right away. Another way of looking at the stick is to look at the butt end of the cue while pointing the other end downwards then roll it a few times and you should be able to notice if it is crooked or not (Figure 1).



Figure 1

Second, the weight of the cue stick. Typically, a cue stick weighs between 18 to 21 ounces. Find out what weight is comfortable for you and stick with it, no pun intended :)

Third, the length of the cue stick should be dependent the length of your arm. Longer arms, longer stick. The length of production cues typically starts at 57 inches.

Fourth, the most important part of the cue stick is the tip. It varies in diameter from 12 mm to 14 mm. Again, choosing what size tips depends on your personal preference. Simply make sure that the tip is round and not flat (Figure 2). Players who use a lot of english prefer a much rounder tip.



Figure 2

You may also want to purchase a "break" cue used solely for breaking balls. Turn to the next page on tips for selecting a break cue. If you have even more money to spare, purchase a jump cue as well.

If you bought an expensive cue stick for your regular use, it is advisable that you do not use it for breaking as it shortens the longevity of your regular cue stick. With this in mind, you might want to purchase a separate cue stick just for breaking or any other "special" shot (e.g. jumping the cue ball, masse, etc).

Here are some points to consider if you plan to buy a break cue:

- Consider choosing a slightly bigger tip than your regular cue stick. A larger tip means more chances of making contact with the cue ball on your break. Keep in mind that since you are hitting the cue ball very hard and your backhand extension is farther than normal, it is difficult to hit the cue ball exactly at the center... so it makes sense that if you have a larger tip, the likelihood of a miscue is minimized.
- As opposed to your regular cue stick, the tip for your break cue should be a little flatter. Like the first tip above, this also minimizes the chances of a miscue.
- Consider a lighter weight than your regular cue stick. This enables you to drive the stick farther on your follow through thus giving more speed on the cue ball. Although a lot of players will argue that a heavier stick will give you more power, I would recommend a lighter cue stick for the reason that I stated. However, this is a matter of preference. Use whatever is more comfortable for you.
- Consult with the cue stick manufacturer on which materials is best and more durable. Consult more than one manufacturer so you can have a basis for comparison.

Selecting a Break Cue

By Poolplayer

Date: Wed, Apr 2 @ 03:52:12 CST

Topic: How to Choose the right Equipment

Many people who own their own playing cue may also opt to purchase a cue solely for the purpose of breaking. This is getting to be more and more common now as people get into the sport and don't want to ruin their playing cue. They might also want a cue they can take "less than ideal" places to play and/or is expendable. This might be for a bar or a cue just to keep in your car's trunk. This section gives the common reasons to purchase a break cue and what to look for in one.

There are several reasons for owning a dedicated break cue. Two have been outlined in the previous paragraph. The main reason, of course, is reducing the overall wear and tear to the playing cue. Since breaking requires more power in your shot, a lot of stress is concentrated in the joint and shaft. This power will eventually lead to something either breaking or coming loose. Breaking the rack causes the tip to mushroom and flatten out which many players don't want.

Here is where we will look into how to select a dedicated break cue. The common idea is to buy a cue for breaking that costs less than the playing cue. A very plain looking cue or "sneaky pete" type cue is usually a good choice because it is cheaper and is usually easier to replace.

The main thing you should be concerning yourself with in the search for a break cue would be the tip and ferrule. You would want a ferrule that can withstand the heavy pounding associated with breaking. The ferrules we recommend for break cues are Aegis, Melamine, and fiber. These materials are very well made and is almost impossible to destroy. Note that you should stick to whatever ferrule that came with your cue and replace it only when it breaks or produces a problem. Replacing the ferrule requires extra money and making use of the stock ferrule will save you some money. The tip should be a hard tip that is left flat in order to prevent any unnecessary uses of english.

The weight of the dedicated break cue is usually one of debate. The common notion people give is for a lighter cue. The argument suggesting the lighter weight will give you a better break because of more acceleration. Some on the other hand suggest getting a little heavier cue. Experiment to find the right weight for yourself. Regardless of what weight people tell you to get, you should always be looking for two things in order to find YOUR ideal break cue.

- You should be able to get a good break with the cue.
- You should be able to control the cue ball on the break and not have it fly off the table

Selection of your personal pool cue

By Poolplayer

Date: Fri, May 9 @ 19:54:56 CDT

Topic: How to Choose the right Equipment

Now you have come to the point in your pool career where you wish to purchase your own personal playing cue. In this section, we will provide some tips on how to select the right cue to suit your own tastes and style. Please bear in mind that this section isn't about what brand or type of cue is better than the other or what you should buy. That is a totally subjective matter that you, the cue purchaser, looks for.

The first thing you should consider is what the maximum amount of money that you wish to spend on your new cue. You can spend anywhere from several dollars to several thousand U.S. dollars and even beyond that. However, if you're a beginner and this is your very first cue, then then we suggest spending no more than about \$200 U.S. dollars as a start. The choices offered up to that range provide a very good choice of styles and materials which you might like.

Once you have settled on a price range, pick out several cues that you like within that range. It doesn't have to be from the same maker. Most cues come within these following dimensions:

- 58 inches in length
- 17-21 Ounces
- 12-14 mm tip diameter with 13 mm being the common size

When you have done that, it is now time to inspect the cues visually for flaws. The following are things you should look for:

- Sight down the cue like a rifle and slowly turn it to check for straightness.
- Does the cue have any bubbles in or on the clear finish of the cue?
- Are there chips or dents anywhere on the cue?
- Are all areas where there are connections even and transition smoothly without bumps i.e. where the ferrule meets the shaft.
- Is the wrap frayed, discolored, loose, or isn't level with the rest of the cue?
- If you decide on a cue with inlays, are the inlays seated properly? Are they all lined up evenly?
- Do you see glue lines anywhere on the cue especially where the inlays are?
- Is there anything that doesn't look right on the cue?

You should check under the bumper of the cue to see if it has a weight bolt/screw so you can adjust the weight of the cue until you find the one ideal for yourself. The typical weight range is anywhere between 17-21 ounces.

When you are satisfied with the visual inspection of the cues, it is now time check which cue you like via it's playability. You do this by hitting various types of shots with the cue(s) that you have selected and finding which one you like the most. First you take a few balls and hit soft to hard shots with the cues. Don't think about pocketing any balls during this time because cue evaluation doesn't involve ball pocketing. Here is what you should be looking for and asking yourself as you shoot with the cue:

- Do I like the feedback the cue is giving me when I'm shooting? Note: concentrate on this point especially on the harder shots.
- Does the cue feel comfortable in my hands when shooting with it?
- Is there any rattling, especially in the butt area during hard shots. This could indicate a loose weight bolt or flawed construction.

Here are some other things you should be aware of when you go buying your first/new cue. You might encounter people who will advise you to get certain types of tips, joints, ferrules, etc when you go buy a cue arguing one is better than the other, etc,etc. This is something you shouldn't worry over too much simply because it probably won't make you shoot any better and you might not like it. What you should do is play with the cue as is and as your game develops, you can make note of what you like, dislike, and what changes might make you feel more comfortable playing and use that criteria on your next cue purchase. You at least have to have a starting point and this first cue can be one of them.

Cue Case

By Poolplayer

Date: Tue, May 20 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to Choose the right Equipment

Anyone who purchases a cue should always set aside some money for the purchase of a cue case in order to protect their cue investment. Not only does a case provide you a way for you to carry your cue from place to place but it also protects it from any mishaps that may happen during transportation and storage. In this section we will outline the different types of cases and the advantages and disadvantages of each type.

The first type of case and the one commonly seen in movies is the box/luggage type case.(Figure 1) Like it's name implies, this type of case is shaped like a box and has hinges on one side where you can open it up. The insides usually are divided into sections for the butt and the shaft. Some even have a little section for accessories such as tip piks, chalk, etc. The outside can be constructed from any number of materials from aircraft aluminum to wood with leather, plastic, or vinyl being the most common forms. The cost of these cases start at a few U.S. dollars and go up from there depending on the size and materials.



Figure 1

A soft case is just what the name implies.(Figure 2) They are usually made of nylon, vinyl, or leather. These cases offer the least amount of protection because they can be bent thereby damaging the cue. As a result, these forms of cases are used chiefly for cue transportation and scratch prevention. Like the box type cases, the price ranges begin at several U.S. dollars and go up from there.



Figure 2

The first type of case and the ones most common among players are the tube type of case. (Figure 3) Tube cases can be anything from a round cylinder to an oval shaped cylinder. The inside cue section can be separated by cloth or individual tubes.

This form of case represents the best of both worlds because they offer comfortable transportability with a shoulder strap and/or handle and good to excellent protection to the cue. Prices for these cases start at about \$20 U.S. on up.



Figure 3

You must now be wondering which case to get from the choices given. If you value your cue, you should get the best of the hard cases you can afford. The case should be well constructed and protect your cue from a fall or drop. A main point is that the cue be able to keep the temperature and humidity steady within the case and not let moisture in. The better brands of the tube cases usually fit the requirements here.

Tip 1: A common question about Instroke type cases asks what direction the cue should be put in e.g. joint up or down. The answer is that you can put the cue in any direction you choose without harming the cue as shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4

Suggested Cue Accessories

By Poolplayer

Date: Thu, May 22 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: How to Choose the right Equipment

One of the most common questions asked by people after they have bought a pool cue is what else should they get or keep in their cue case with them when they go to play. Usually the items are for cue maintenance. Nowadays, this list gets very confusing with the endless amount of items and accessories offered for sale. This list suggests a minimum of what any pool player should have in their cue case.



Protectors



Tip Pik



Shaper



Soft Rag



Chalk



Tapper

Joint protectors These protect your cue during storage and transport by keeping out moisture in the exposed ends and keeping your joint pin from bending.

Tip Pik. For roughening up the tip to hold chalk.

Shaper. To shape your tip to the desired roundness.

Clean, soft rag. To wipe out dirt on the cue after you are done playing.

Chalk. If you want to use your own brand of chalk when playing at the pool hall.

Tip Tapper. to knock off the excess chalk and roughen up the tip.

Pool Table recommended room size

By admin

Date: Thu, Sep 18 @ 16:25:08 CDT

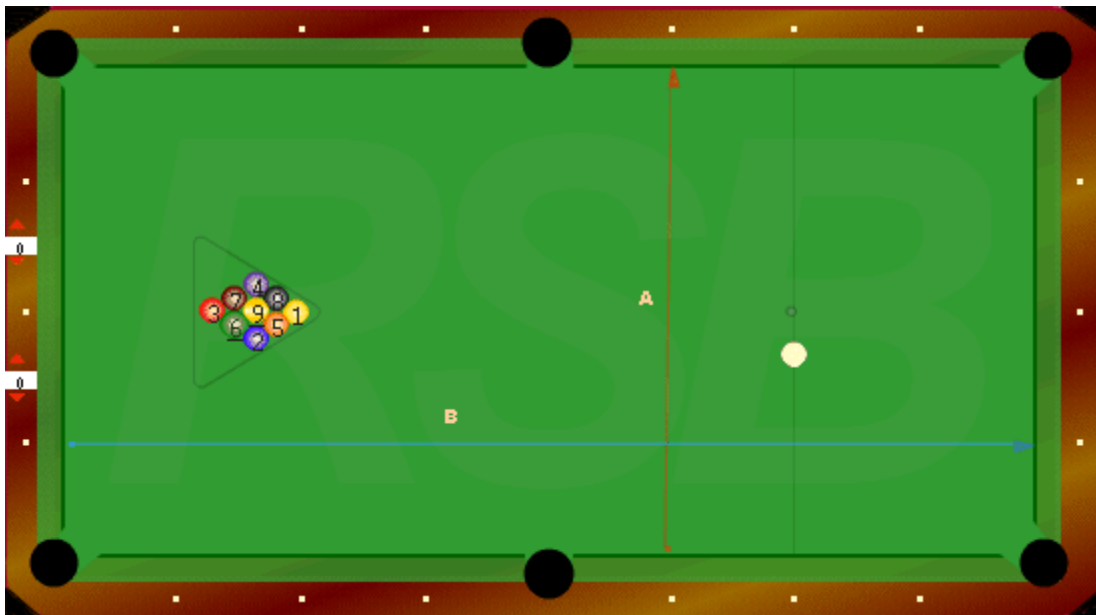
Topic: How to Choose the right Equipment

I have received numerous questions regarding the minimum room size needed for a pool table. Most people who purchase pool tables take into consideration the size of the room where they are planning to place the pool table in. Although I would recommend serious players to buy a 9 foot table, most homes does not have enough space inside to be able to play comfortably with a 9 foot table.

Most of the room size charts tend to underestimate the amount of room you need to play comfortably and effectively. Below is my personal recommendation:

- (1) You must allow for the length of the cue stick AND an extra 6 inches (at least) for a comfortable stroke.
- (2) Add this number to the width and length of your tables' playing area.

The tables' playing area is measured from from the inside edge of the cushion to the opposite inside edge of the cushion. An illustration of what a "playing area" is shown below. The line with the caption "B" is the width and the line with caption "A" is the height of the playing area.



Below is the chart containing my recommendation for room size.

Table Size	Playing Area	48" Cue	52" Cue	57" Cue	60" Cue
6' x 3'	66" x 33"	14'6" x 11'9"	15'2" x 12'5"	16' x 13'3"	16'6" x 13'9"
7' x 3'6"	76" x 38"	15'4" x 12'2"	16' x 12'10"	16'10" x 13'8"	17'4" x 14'2"
8' x 4'	88" x 44"	16'4" x 12'8"	17' x 13'4"	17'10" x 14'2"	18'4" x 14'8"
8' x 4' (Oversized)	92" x 46"	16'8" x 12'10"	17'8" x 13'6"	18'2" x 14'4"	18'8" x 14'10"
9' x 4'6"	100" x 50"	17'4" x 13'2"	18'4" x 13'10"	18'10" x 14'8"	19'4" x 15'2"
10' x 5'	112" x 56"	18'4" x 13'8"	19'4" x 14'4"	19'10" x 15'2"	20'4" x 15'8"
12 x 6'	124" x 62"	19'4" x 14'2"	20'4" x 14'10"	20'10" x 15'8"	21'4" x 16'2"

XXIV - MAINTAINING YOUR POOL EQUIPMENT

Articles and tips about caring and maintenance of your pool equipment.

- » [Tip Replacement](#)
- » [Maintaining your cue](#)
- » [How do you clean your cue?](#)
- » [How to replace a pool cue tip](#)
- » [Fixing Pool Cue Joints](#)
- » [Low cost cue shaft spinner](#)
- » [Hardening a cue tip](#)
- » [Laser Aimer: A Device for Practicing Ghost Ball, Bank & Kick Shots](#)

Tip Replacement

By badandy

Date: Sat, Apr 5 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

Over time I have found a method of installing tips that look every bit as good as a professional install. It works on single and multi layered tips, I am currently using Moori.

I use a bench grinder to do the major diameter shape before the tip is installed which is the hardest part of installing a tip. By doing the diameter shape while not on the stick saves a lot of vibration on the glue weld and less chance to hammer the ferrule. Take the tip on its edge like you are going to roll it, and hold the top and bottom of the tip which is now on the sides with an index finger from each hand and use the thumbs to apply pressure on the back edge of the tip. This pushes the front edge against the spinning grinding wheel. It is like touching the tips of your two index fingers together in front of you with the tip in between your fingers. The wheel will automatically rotate the tip just like it is rolling along. It will slowly shave off the edge as it is also slowly spinning which results in a nice circular shaved tip. Keep checking the tip diameter against the ferrule until you have the desired size. You might want to leave it just a little bigger then the ferrule for final shaping. It takes about 10 minutes on the grinding wheel so don't be worried about grinding off too much at once. If you push too hard it will stop spinning, it takes a light touch and will seem like you are not making any progress.

When done, sand the bottom of the tip to give it a better glue surface. Place one layer of masking tape over the ferrule to keep it clean, then put some Barge glue on the tip and on the ferrule and let sit for about 5 minutes or what ever it said on the tube. Press together and hold on with rubber bands. I use the tip protector partially unscrewed and place the rubber band between the protector and the shaft at one end and put other end over the tip. The last time I just set the shaft tip down on a bench and place a weight on the other end. this allow free sight of the tip and make sure it is centered. I Let it sit over night.

When glued, I use paint mixing sticks with sandpaper attached to use as a file. I tried real files but they do not shave the tip as well as sandpaper. I have one stick with 100 G and one with 220 G. look at the tip and if needed do final sanding of the sides of the tip to get the exact straight up and down side or slight taper. (Keep the tape on the ferrule). By rolling the Q stick on a flat surface back and forth and at the same time using the sander stick on the side of the tip in the opposite direction gives a nice circular shaving effect, no flat spots on the side.

Once the sides are nice and straight, shape the top to a dime. I find the tip shapers that you stick your cue in tip first and spin back and forth are too slow but is great as a final tip shaping touch up. I use a shaping tool that is just a curved plastic stick with sandpaper and cost about \$3, it looks like toilet paper roll cut in half length-wise. This cuts the shape real fast and you keep going round while sanding until it looks good then finish it off with the above mentioned tip shaping tool to get the dime shape even all the way around. Just wet the fingers to wipe the sides of the tip and burnish with a piece of leather.

The whole process takes about ½ to 1 hour minus the gluing time. I usually compare the end result with a professional installed tip to check my results and make any adjustments if necessary. I have been using tweetens glue (not sure of spelling) but my last couple of tips have been popping off. I do not know if the Meucci ferrule, which is stain resistant, is also glue resistant and requires different glue. I changed to Barge glue and love it. It is easy to use, no sloppy dripping mess, plenty of time to adjust the tip to get it centered and once on it stays on.

You may be able to use some of these suggestions for your install. It is satisfying to do it your self and not look like a hack job.

Maintaining your cue

By poolplayer

Date: Sat, Apr 5 @ 06:15:00 CST

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

Now that you have purchased your new cue, you must now take care of it. In this section, we will provide some simple ways to keep your cue looking new and minimizing the wear and tear on it. The main thing you need to do to maintain your cue's appearance is to wash your hands before you play and after several hours of play.

Since one of the most important parts of keeping your cue clean has been said, we will offer more tips on keeping your cue in tip top shape. Another important tip is to keep your cue away from moisture and very humid places. This minimizes the chances of your cue warping over time. Remember, however, that since wood is a natural material, there is no foolproof way to 100% guarantee you cue will not warp at all. They will all warp a little or more over time. Maybe it won't be in your lifetime but it will warp. Hopefully, this tip will keep your cue from warping within your lifetime.

Our next part now is the cue tip. Since the tip is meant to be changed, we will offer ways to give you the maximum amount of time between these changes. The tip on your new cue may be shiny, smooth, and somewhat flat when you first get your cue. What you need to do now is what people call shaping and scuffing of your tip. Shaping the tip requires you to produce a roundness to it suitable to your playing style. The usual roundness is that of a U.S dime or nickel coin. Scuffing will roughen up your tip in order to hold chalk better. Usually, when you do a shaping, it'll automatically roughen up your tip so you don't need to scuff after a shaping but you do when you miscue or during play. Note that how you play and the way you stroke your cue will determine the final shape of your tip and constant shaping will wear your tip down very fast. After about 40 hours of play, your tip will mushroom some and you should only trim that initial mushroom.

The ferrule on a cue should require little to no maintenance. The most common form of maintenance done to the ferrule happens to be the removal of chalk that has accumulated with play. Cleaning of the ferrule can be very easy to next to impossible depending on how much chalk has accumulated on it. If your ferrule happens to be made of ivory then a cloth should remove it with no problem. Synthetic ferrules such as Aegis, Melamine, Ivorine III, etc require a little more work to clean if they can be cleaned at all. The best way to clean those types of ferrules is to use a little bit of toothpaste. Remember not to get any of it on your tip or shaft. Taping off the tip and shaft happens to be a good idea here. Be aware that you may not get all of the chalk stains off of the ferrule if it's stained heavily. You may also hear people suggest using sandpaper on your ferrule but this is not a good idea because that may remove the stains but also roughens up the ferrule thereby letting more chalk be embedded in it.

Now we get to the wooden part of the shaft. The main thing to remember is not to put any undue stresses on the shaft or else it would get ruined. Never do anything such as bending the shaft into the cloth when shooting. To keep the shaft smooth and clean you only need to rub it down after every use or when necessary during long sessions of play. There are many ways to do this and many of them doesn't

have to cost any extra money to do. You can use the brown paper napkins inside of restrooms or plain brown paper bags to smoothen and clean the shaft. You just need to make a few swipes on your shaft and it would be smooth and clean. You can also use the very fine grits of sandpaper if you want something more abrasive and wish to spend money. Remember to use the very fine grits such as 6000 and above. Just be sure to make only a few passes because you will be taking wood off the shaft. Please note that if you use the rougher grits, you are increasing the chances of your shaft reducing in diameter.

The butt of the cue is the final part of our cue care guide. This should be a very easy part of the cue to maintain. All you have to do is use a soft, clean cloth and wipe it down at the end of each playing session. That's all the needs to be done. You will hear people advertising the use of this chemical or that cleaner on the Irish linen wrap. However, since the wrap was designed to be changed in the long run, buying and using these liquids would be a waste of money and might hurt the cue in the long run. The wrap can be cleaned, however, but it is suggested that it be taken to a cue maker/mechanic. He has the proper equipment to clean and dry the wrap without doing harm to the cue.

How do you clean your cue?

By admin

Date: Fri, Apr 11 @ 19:29:15 CDT

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

QUESTION:

fenris wrote: "How do you guys clean and maintain your cue? What tips do you guys have to keep your cues well maintained?"

ANSWERS:

badandy wrote: *"I always keep it in the case and upright. Never bang it around, getting PO'd and slam the cue etc and never lean it against the wall. Don't lend the cue out, few hands have touched my cue, that's the way I like it, no dents.*

As far as cleaning, I use a soft detailing rag or piece of Simonis to wipe it down fairly often to keep the chalk down. Every once in a while I hit it with 2K or 12K sandpaper. About once a month I spread cue silk on the shaft then sand the cue silk into the grain. Some times I use cue cleaner instead of cue silk. Both work very well.

I have a habit of every time I take the cue out I wet the side of the tip then burnish it with a piece of leather. The side of the tip is now permanently black and shiny. A lot of times I put a little Johnsons spray wax on a piece of Simonis and use it to wipe the ferrule clean to keep the blue chalk ring down.

Every once in a great while I wax the butt."

jules wrote: *"Use Karseal Cloth and a Scouring Pad. Someone here once suggested for me to wipe the wrap with alcohol(not damp the towel but wet enough) I strongly advise people not to do this for it will ruin your cue."*

aeg wrote: *"scotch bright high performance cloth used for cleaning lenses really gets those finger prints and powder off the cue butt without scratching the finish I don't really clean the shaft (I like the dark shaft look at least people know I play regularly) occasional wiping with pranella while playing makes it smooth again I don't clean the linen wrap cause I think it has wax on it and it doesn't get dirty. my ferrule doesn't get any chalk on it cause it's made out of an old cue ball."*

mick wrote: *"I have found that 5:1 diluted orange oil removes almost 100% of the dirt/chalk on the cue. Then I burnish it with a white scotch bright (very soft abrasive) then polish with a leather pad."*

kingcarem wrote: *"I agree with using diluted orange oil on the ferrule only.*

For the shaft and butt I have always used only a soft dish soap, very diluted, and wet rage to wipe off all the hand oils or other dirt. Once you have the shaft sanded down well enough, no need to continue sanding it to get that feel back, you just need to clean off the oils."

agent_xxx wrote: *"I clean my cues and cue case once a week with the following items:*

- sandpaper (1000, 1500 and 2000 grit): Used for the shaft of my break/play cue to keep it smooth and shiny. At times, I use a damp sandpaper... slightly wet and I got excellent results.

- wax paper and iron: Used for the linen wrap of my break/play. I slide the wax paper on the linen wrap afterwards, I then iron the wrap.

- pledge furniture cleaner and pranella cloth: Used for the butt of my break/play as well as the shaft and butt of playing cue. Yep, even the shaft indeed coz it is coated. The spray keeps my cue shiny and smooth as well. I also use this to clean my 2x2 custom case.

I usually take 30 minutes to 1 hour of cleaning time on a weekly basis."

Credits: This article was derived from a discussion topic in the [All About Cues & Cuemakers Forum](#).

How to replace a pool cue tip

By poolplayer

Date: Sun, Apr 13 @ 01:23:54 CDT

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

This article describes the process (in detail) of how to replace a cue tip. Here are the items that you need to accomplish this task.

Cue tip

Razor blade

Cyan acrylic glue preferably in a gel form i.e. Duro-gel, Superglue Gel, Loctite 454

60-80 grit sandpaper

Paper towel

400-600 grit sandpaper



Cue Tips



Razor Blade



Glue



60-80 grit sandpaper



Paper Towels



400-600 grit sandpaper

Procedure

1. Remove what's left of the old tip with the razor blade.
2. Sand top of ferrule flat with 60-80 grit sandpaper.
3. Sand bottom of cue tip with the same sandpaper till rough.
4. Apply a light coat of glue to both the ferrule and bottom of tip.
5. Carefully center the top on top of the ferrule as best as you can and hold in place for about 60 seconds.
6. With the tip down, carefully trim the excess overhang to make the tip flush with the ferrule.
7. Gently wet the sides of the tip and burnish with the 400-600 grit sandpaper.

8. Shape the tip to your desired radius.
9. All set to play now.

Things to remember when replacing a cue tip

It's recommended to get a tip that's bigger than your ferrule i.e. a 14mm tip if you have a 13mm ferrule diameter.

To keep your tip from popping off prematurely, it is best to let the glue cure overnight before final trimming and sanding.

Fixing Pool Cue Joints

By Mick Turner

Date: Fri, May 2 @ 00:00:00 CDT

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

(I used to work on furniture...so wood, dowels and metal pins etc are very familiar to me)

There are various types of Epoxy. The best one to fix metal to wood is a product called "JB Weld". You can buy it most anywhere in hardware stores etc. It is in 2 parts, cream colored and black...the cream is the hardener and both mix in equal amounts to form a med. dark grey epoxy. If you use it be sure to put equal parts of each on a slick surface (piece of glass works well) and stir it up very well leaving no trace of either part un-mixed (no streaks of single color...) JB Weld sets up (begins to harden and become unworkable) after 15 minutes...or less time if very hot., so get prepared, and work fast, but accurately).

The reason it is good is that it never gets too hard or brittle as some epoxy's do, it stays hard yet barely pliable so it holds better. It mixes very thick so it doesn't run unless you put on globs (too much).

If the part of the cue where the insert came out is still in good shape, you can use JB Weld to fix it. Hopefully it simply unscrewed from the insert threads and you can put it back in with JB Weld to hold it.

Be very careful not to get JB Weld on the other parts of the cue...if so, wipe it off immediately as it may damage the surface (chemical stain). Put some in the "hole" and make sure it is on every surface...(I would use a blunt toothpick to rub it inside threads etc.) Also coat the outside of the insert. (a small stiff brush works well here too.) Then screw or put them together, being careful to catch/wipe excess off as it oozes out of the insert joint...(it should ooze out as you should have enough to take up all space inside...no air bubbles gives you the best glue joint).

You can do this process with either male or female threaded inserts that have come out...

After it sets to moderate hard -- about 30 min (it is quick setting) you can "gently" screw the other part of the cue on the repaired piece to align the cue and assure it is straight. Don't tighten down as it will pull the insert loose...and DO NOT under any circumstances leave the two parts together ...if any JB Weld squeezes out and gets between, you will have a worse problem than stuck...it will be a permanent 1 piece cue. Only screw them together to align, then take back apart. Suggest some Vaseline or other jell oil substance on the threads to make it easily go on/off...

Let sit for 24 hours after alignment to harden.

On a related subject, some Cues, like my Cuetec have shafts with a hard plastic or melmac insert with the cue butt having a metal threaded shaft.

There are some plastics that JB Weld won't stick to but most used for threaded inserts are hard enough to hold JB Weld...

You can, on these types of cues "rebuild" the female threads if they become loose or damaged.

The process is similar to the above JB Weld fix process, but here you are putting a small amount of JB Weld into the threads of the cue shaft, or female threaded part. Then put some light oil (won't mix with JB Weld) on the male threads and screw them together. This forces the JB Weld into all the threads inside the shaft hole. Let it sit for 20 minutes, then unscrew slowly...it might be somewhat stiff, but carefully unscrew it anyway. Don't leave it longer than 30 min. or even with the oil, you may have a very difficult time getting the two cue parts apart...

What happens is that the JB Weld is forced into the female threads and around the threaded male part sealing up all the areas and tightening up the joint.

The oil keeps them from sticking together, you just want to "form" the threads inside the shaft. Once another hour has passed, (total of 1 hr 20 min) put more oil on male threads, screw together carefully again...make sure not to cross thread or you will mess it up... tighten the two parts together, then unscrew, then clean male threads (metal) if any JB Weld got in grooves, (this is to assure the threads are still in proper alignment)...then let the cue shaft sit for 24 hours to totally setup and harden.

Then before using, put a little Vaseline or other light (non stinky) oil on the threads and screw them together, clean off any excess, and you are ready to go with a "tight" joint.

I rebuilt my cuetec shafts threads this way and it is now very tight yet goes together nicely...

Of course those of you that enjoy a metal insert and pin have the best, but as [Kez](#) found out, sometimes those also come loose.....

Low cost cue shaft spinner

By Mick Turner

Date: Wed, Jun 11 @ 08:00:00 CDT

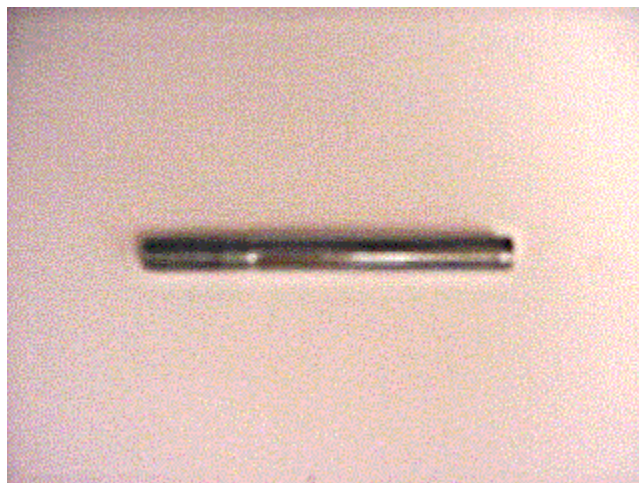
Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

How to build a low cost Cue Shaft Spinner so you can clean, sand, or use sandpaper to shape the side of a cue tip while a rotating cue shaft.

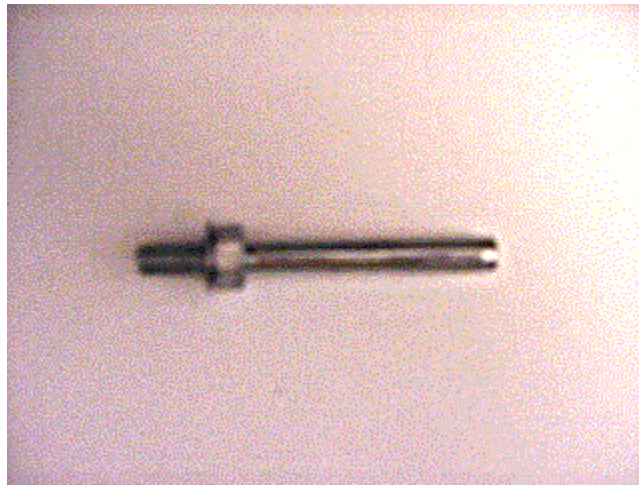
1. Go the local hardware store, take your cue shaft with you, and purchase a bolt about 3 inches long that has about 1 1/4 inch (or more) of threads that will screw into and fits your shaft. (Hopefully your cue shaft has a standard thread of some kind, most of them are...)
2. Also purchase a washer that fits the bolt, and a nut that also fits the screw threads.



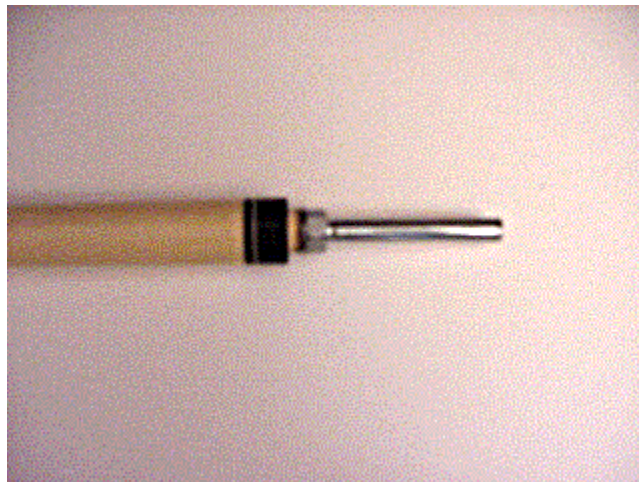
3. Next, take the bolt and cut the hex head off with a hack-saw leaving about 2 inches of unthreaded shaft. You might want to grind off the edge of the cut end a bit so it doesn't have any burrs or sharp edges.



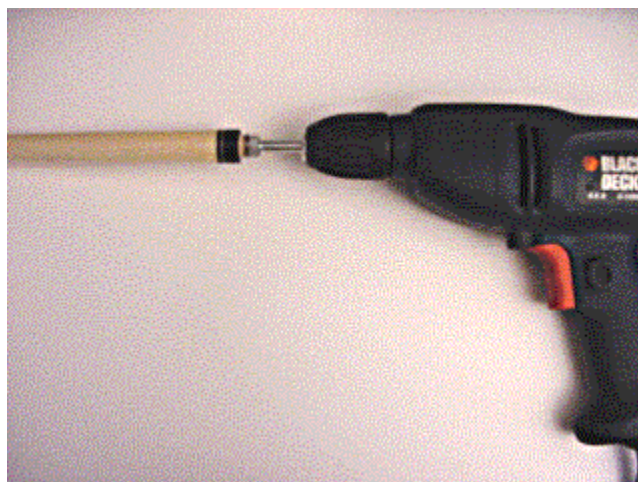
4. Then screw the nut on to the threads of the cut off bolt, then put on the washer after the nut, on the threaded end.



5. Then screw the cut off bolt with nut and washer into the cue shaft, making sure the washer is between the nut and the shaft. Holding the shaft in one hand, gently tighten with a wrench with the same tightness you would use when assembling your cue butt and shaft.



6. You now have a metal post sticking out of the rear of the cue shaft.
7. Now you can attach the post into any standard drill and you are ready to "Spin" your cue shaft and perform your cleaning/sanding/burnishing maintenance. I highly recommend you only run the drill in normal "drill" forward (clockwise from rear of drill) and not in reverse, as running in reverse will unscrew the bolt and possibly damage your cue shaft!



Notes:

- I recommend a variable speed drill so you can control how fast you wish to rotate the cue shaft. I use a slow to medium speed so I can clean better, and control the drill with the attached shaft.
- I recommend at least 1000 grit sandpaper, 1200 if you can get it. I also use a 0000 grit Scotch Brite type pad (White in color) for cleaning instead of sandpaper...it seems to work better and takes almost no wood off the shaft. I then finish off with a burnish using a piece of plain tanned leather (not dyed). The 0000 pad is sold as "synthetic steel wool". The one I have is made by "Norton". I did notice that if I hold the sandpaper too tight around the cue shaft, it grabs on and slips out of your hand...
- I would also recommend NOT squeezing the sandpaper too tight as you might sand grooves into your shaft...a bad thing. You also need to move the sandpaper up and down the shaft at a brisk pace...I would recommend at 4-5 inches per second movement. Also, don't stay in 1 place while holding the sandpaper.
- Move your (sandpaper) hand up/down, and at the same time lessen the pressure as you reach the end of the space you are sanding before going the reverse direction. If you don't you will double sand the ends of your pattern and could cause a depression in the shaft at that point.
- If your cue shaft isn't warped, it will spin true...if warped, you will notice it immediately as it will wobble....
- And, last but not least, if you sand your ferule be careful not to get it hot with too much friction...most of them are made of plastic materials and you might distort or damage it! If you need to clean or smooth the ferule, I would do it a bit at a time, allowing time to cool and work in spurts (on for 10 seconds, off for 30 or more).
- You might have to go to a nut/bolt specialty store if your cue isn't of a standard thread type. (Cuetec comes to mind...)

I use this technique by holding the drill in my right hand, and the sand paper or cleaner / burnisher in my left hand. I can spin shaft and run my left hand up/down the shaft to clean or burnish. That way the work is evenly applied as the shaft rotates. I even use this technique when cleaning the shaft with cleaning solutions and a clean rag.

Hardening a cue tip

By NMS

Date: Sun, Feb 15 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

What I have done in the past when replacing my tip is placing it in a vise and squeeze it. By doing this, it takes out any air bubbles and/or imperfections and compress the leather. When I replaced the tip on my cue, I had to play with it for a while. Letting it mushroom and then fixing, mushroom and fixing etc. By squeezing the tip in the vise, it cut my "working in time" almost immediately. It also hardened it and feels good too.

I now do this to every tip I replace (including layered tips). Even though they say its perfect, there are times it really isn't.

Shaft Dent Removal

By Joe D'Aguanno

Date: Sat, Aug 28 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

Ever get a little dent in your cue shaft that just annoys the crap out of you while you are in a tournament or league play. Here is a quick fix to get you back on track.

1. Once you locate the dent very lightly sand it 3 or 4 passes with something like a nylon shaft cleaner or 2000 grit sandpaper. This removes any wax or other material that would prevent water absorption.
2. Place a small drop of spit on top of the dent. Water doesn't work nearly as well because it runs off the shaft too easily.
3. Take a lighted cigarette (if you don't smoke borrow one) and very slowly move the the chery glow of the cigarett back and forth over the dent about 1/2" on either side until the water is dried up. Hold the cigarette about 1/8" to 1/4" above the shaft. Pay attention to what you are doing because if you keep the cigarette in one place too long you will cause the shaft to turn yellow. The heat from the cigarette will cause the shaft to absorb the moisture from the water and cause the wood around the dent to swell back to its original shape.
4. Depending on how deep the dent is you might have to do this several times.

This method will not work for scratches in the shaft because scratches remove material and damage the structure of the wood. Some people advocate the use of a wet towel and a curling iron to remove the dents. I don't like this method because with a wet towel you can get too much moisture in you shaft which can cause it to warp. You could use the curling iron in place of the cigarette with the drop of spit but it will take longer. It is also unlikely that you will have a curling iron with you at the place where you are playing.

Any questions or comments can be directed to jldnno@yahoo.com

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Laser Aimer: A Device for Practicing Ghost Ball, Bank & Kick Shots

By Mick Turner

Date: Sat, Nov 20 @ 00:00:00 CST

Topic: Maintaining your Pool Equipment

We have all heard of the 'angle-in vs. angle-out' concept for shooting bank and kick shots. I was thinking about this awhile back, while I was really bored and needed something to do, and it occurred to me that light travels in a straight line. (Sometimes I really surprise myself with great insights...) Of course, most of us already know that, but there are some clever uses for this fact, as I will show here. I had heard of laser cues and other devices but they are pretty expensive and I already have some expensive cues. I wanted to somehow use a light beam to help line up bank and kick shots and do it for as little money as possible, so I came up with this idea to build a 'Laser Aimer'. As the idea developed and I used it, what was most fun was discovering new ways to use my new toy.

Have you ever seen the laser beam devices used in construction that use a laser light line to align and measure a whole host of things? Well, as I combined my straight line light fact with the laser device I came up with something that can be used on a pool table and will help with aiming shots.

Curious? Read on...

How to build the Laser Aimer

The first thing I needed was a laser light source. I started looking at those pointer pens and discovered they would be really hard to adapt to my uses and while looking at different laser pointers I was really fortunate when I found a device called a "Strait-LineR Laser Level 60" (see Figure SL-1 below) Laser Line device, and on sale for \$19.99 at Home Depot (unpaid plug). (I really should contact the Strait-LineR folks for royalties, yea right!) See info on the Laser Level 60 at:

http://www.strait-line.com/irwin/consumer/straitline/jhtml/laser_level_60.jhtml

The Strait-Line doesn't 'just' put a laser dot on something, like a pointer would, it does something better! It has a small lens in front of the laser light source that actually makes a red laser line between the Strait-LineR and whatever you are pointing at. It is (normally) used for making a line on a piece of wood or other construction material so you can mark it then cut it. At the end of the line is a 'red dot' so what you end up with is a line of laser light and a 'target dot'. How lucky is that? I found a device that was exactly what I needed! **Note: I contacted the company that builds the Strait-LineR and they strongly suggested I include their disclaimer, so here it is: Don't look into the laser light it may damage your eyes. I, also, WOULD NOT recommend getting clever and pointing it at people, there might be a policeman around and they are trained to beware of 'red targeting guns' with lasers. You might get an ugly surprise and get arrested, or worse, if you put the light on someone! It is possible to shine the light off the table, and the light goes quite a distance. Be Careful how you use this device! You might want to tell everyone what you are doing so they know about the 'red light'.**

Now with that legal stuff out of the way, do you remember the 'angle-in vs. angle-out' I mentioned before? Well how do you think a laser light can be made to show that 'angle-in vs. angle-out' concept? It's really hard to figure out...think about it...go to the library, research it...and you will come up with this fantastic device called a mirror. (Sorry for the dramatics but I just couldn't resist...this was so simple even I figured it out!)

Anyway, back to the subject...In order for this to work I needed the laser light to go over a pool ball so it would show the path of the ball by following the laser line. I tried several methods until I came up with this simple solution. The Strait-LineR sits flat and is about 3/8" too short to project the light over a pool ball, so I cut some 3/8" thick, wood blocks to fit the Strait-Line'sR footing. I used two pieces of wood because I didn't want to block the battery door on the bottom of the Strait-LineR. I used double-sided tape (the 3M type with the 1/16" foam space between sticky sides), and stuck the blocks to the bottom of the Strait-LineR. (see Figure SL-2 below, note battery door -- it uses 2, 'AA' size batteries) The front of the Strait-LineR is shown in Figure SL-3. Note the 'yellow' window in the center, this yellow piece slides up revealing the Laser Light and also turns on the Strait-LineR's Laser when lifted. (There is also a sharp steel pin you can push down with the black indented piece just below the yellow window, but I didn't use that.)



Figure SL-1



Figure SL-2



Figure SL-3

Now I had a device that made a laser light line over and in front of a pool ball. (see Figure Laser-1 below). **The laser is behind the Cueball at the top right of the picture, shining down the table to the mirror at the bottom of the picture, then reflecting back up the table to the 9 ball by the pocket at the top left of the picture.** (Note that the laser line starts just past the Cueball's shadow.) For this picture I changed the mirror angle slightly to put a bigger 'red dot' on the 9 ball so it would show up better. How is this done? See the next section on the Mirror.)



Figure Laser-1 (actual laser light)

The Mirror

Next, to do the 'angle in vs. angle out' 'V' angle, I needed a mirror sitting at 90 degrees to the table surface, and I needed a quick way to assure it would stay in place and be adjustable (flat) for storage. I also needed to raise the mirror up from the table surface so it would closely match the Strait-LineR height to provide a straight reflection path for the laser light. In figuring all this out I discovered that there is another neat invention called a hinge that I used (see Figure M-1). I went to the trouble of getting a long hinge and cutting off a piece, but a **good quality tight 2"** hinge would work just as well. (If the hinge wobbles it won't represent a true vertical vs. horizontal position for the laser light.)

To attach the mirror (I went to a Hobby Lobby store and purchased a 3" X 4" mirror) I again used the two sided 3M tape, and stuck the hinge to the back, bottom edge of the mirror. Then I screwed (screws came with the hinge) the hinge to a block of plain white pine 1/2" thick and 3" X 4" in size (same as mirror) for the mirror footing (of course the wood was sanded and painted with clear urethane to stay clean). If you look close and notice the way I set up the hinge, with the pin to the rear, it stops at the desired 90 degrees when fully forward which allows the back of the mirror to be placed directly against the cushion for true positioning, and, when hinged back, also allows the mirror to be slightly adjusted to show the laser line and red dot better, as I did in Figure Laser-1, above. The hinge also allows the mirror to lay flat (see Figure M-2) for easy storage. I always wrap this mirror with a towel so it has some protection from breakage. Note: Be sure to apply the hinge and mirror straight on the block of wood so your reflection alignment laser lines will be accurate.

A note about the mirror; if you find one, and in your reflection you look like you are in a fun house hall of crazy mirrors, you might want to find a better mirror. Those cheap mirrors just won't give you a straight line. I didn't have any trouble finding a cheap good one, but be careful to get one that isn't distorted. Hold the mirror up and look at various angles and move it side to side slightly to see if reflections are normal or distorted.

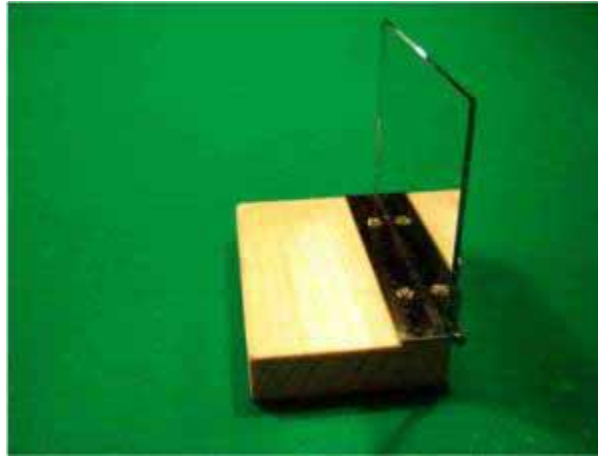


Figure M-1



Figure M-2

How it works, how to use it and how it helps your game

Bank Shots

To use the laser light with the mirror for a Bank Shot:

1. You simply position the Strait-LineR Laser behind the Object Ball, align it so it points to the far cushion approximately at your Bank shot cushion point to make the shot;
2. Then place the mirror in line with the laser light with the **back of the mirror flat against the cushion**, with the mirror straight up at 90 degrees to the table;

3. Then go back and tweak the laser and mirror position until the laser line goes to the mirror and reflects back on your target...and puts the 'dot' on the pocket. So the 'angle-in vs. angle-out' is perfect based on the light path and mirror reflection...the perfect "V" off the far cushion back to the object pocket. (see Figure Bank-1 below).

The point that the laser hits on the back-side of the Object Ball is your **contact point** for the Cueball. This aiming system works no matter where the Cue or Object balls are on the table or what your target pocket is, assuming you can hit the Cueball and contact the Object Ball where the light hits it).

The mirror reflected light shown in Figure Bank-2 shows the laser light reflected to the target pocket at the best entry point to avoid the cushion tip. I only did one picture example for a Bank Shot since it is so straightforward.



Figure Bank-1



Figure Bank-2

Once you determine where to aim and bank, remove the mirror. **The laser will still be pointing to the contact point on the Object Ball and the bank point on the cushion.** You might want to remove the mirror and leave the laser in place and shoot, or put a mark on the cushion with chalk to help remember where the contact

points are, your choice depending on the shot. I prefer to leave the laser in place on bank shots so I can see (red) the contact point on the Object Ball. You can virtually put this system in place anywhere on the table regardless of the angle or distance...the laser will reflect in a 'V' and point to your pocket, then you hit the Cueball to contact the Object Ball at the light point to make the shot. In case you happen to hit the device with a ball, remember, it was designed to be used in construction and is pretty rugged -- but I wouldn't recommend hitting it too hard, you might damage the light source.

Kick Shots

To do Kick Shots, the process is similar but instead of putting the laser behind the Object ball, you put it behind the Cueball, align the mirror the same way but for kick shots you must target the actual contact point for the kicked ball to make the pocket.

For balls that are NOT aligned with the pocket line, you need to use a 'ghost ball' in line with the target pocket through the Object ball, and align the laser light on the center of the 'ghost ball'. That assures your shot will contact the Object Ball in the correct place to make the shot. (More on this after I describe the shots that are lined up already.)

In circumstances where the laser is in line with -- through the Object Ball to the -- pocket anyway, you don't need a 'ghost ball'. This type of shot is shown in Figures Kick-1,2,3,4 & 5 below. If you follow the laser line and hit the Cueball properly to rebound from the 'Contact Point on the Cushion, it will kick off the cushion and contact the Object Ball at the red dot. When you actually shoot, remember to remove the mirror, mark your kick point, remove the laser then shoot. (see below, Figures Kick-1, Kick-2 for a side shot, Object ball front and rear view's; Kick-3, Kick-4 for a full table - off the side cushion; kick shot; and Kick-5 for a full table kick shot). Remember on cushion shots, if you come up short on the angle you hit too hard, if you come up long, you hit too soft. Medium speed hits work best.



Figure Kick-1 (front)



Figure Kick-2 (rear)



Figure Kick-3 (behind mirror)



Figure Kick-4 (rear of OB)



Figure Kick-5
(Actual laser light, neat huh?)

As I said above, for kick shots with balls that are NOT aligned with the pocket line, you need to use a 'ghost ball' in line with the target pocket through the Object ball, and align the laser light on the center of the 'ghost ball'. This gives you the correct aiming point, thus the correct kick point on the cushion, for the shot. Below, the side shot in Figures Kick-6a,b & c and the corner shot in Figures 7a & b show how the laser aligns these shots.



Figure Kick-6a (mirror)



Figure Kick-6b (ghost ball rear)



Figure Kick-6c (aim point rear, close up)



Figure Kick-7a (ghost ball rear)



Figure Kick-7b (aim point rear, close up)

I have done this so much that now I just line up the shot, and mentally remember where the laser was pointing. I don't always make my shots, but this has helped me visualize the shot after the laser is gone and it replicates the same mental process you might use in a game...observe the shot you want to make, think about follow up position etc., pick the bank or kick point by observing angle in vs. angle out, line up the shot and go for it!

The only other bit of information you need to know is that to get the 'angle-in vs. angle-out' laser aiming concept to work, you must hit the balls at a medium speed with no English. Depending on the distance of the shot, slight variations in speed and/or English will affect the shot, so be gentle. On longer shots, you might need more speed, but avoid side-spin (English) until you get comfortable with the effects on the Cue and Object Balls.

If you use a device like this in practice you will get better and better at judging your bank and kick shots. In games, as you visualize shots, you will see the angles you practiced and know more precisely the contact and aim points that work best for particular shots. The only down side I have seen is that it takes anywhere from 30 seconds to a minute or more to set up shots but I feel the knowledge gained is well worth the time.

Using the Laser Aimer with the Ghost Ball Technique

In case you didn't notice, since the 'Ghost Ball' technique works for kick shots, as described above, the technique also works well if you use the 'Ghost Ball' technique and Laser Aimer together for **normal shots**. In the following four pictures, you can easily see how in Figure GB-1, the Cueball, acting as a ghost ball, is directly behind the Object Ball on a line to the corner pocket. If you align the Laser Aimers light line on the center of the ghost ball, then move the Ghost Ball away, and put the CB on the aim line as in Figure GB-2, you can see the actual aim point on the Object Ball and how the laser line is centered on the Cueball...in bright red. (Notice how the aim point is on the right edge of the 9 ball.) ***I have found this technique quite useful as it 'burns' into my memory the actual aim points on various shots.*** This definitely helps my game, especially on tough shots. You get to see where the 'aim points' actually are on a variety of cut shots...now you don't have to guess or think about it too much.

(Don't forget about Throw if you put English on the Cueball, if you don't compensate slightly, most of the time, on longer shots, you will miss. Compensating for Throw is another subject, but in a short synopsis, to correct for Throw you aim slightly opposite your English...i.e., Right English (on Cueball) means you aim slightly left at Object Ball etc. The amount of aim change depends on how much English, how hard you hit and the distance between the Cueball and the Object Ball, and the overall distance of the Object Ball's travel to the pocket. This is a more advanced skill I'm not covering here, but just wanted to mention it so you don't get discouraged if you aim at the Laser Aimer's point of light and keep missing...maybe it's Throw that is causing it. Remember to learn to use these techniques it is best to shoot medium speed with no English until you learn to compensate for other factors, like English, Throw, Deflection etc., as a more advanced skill.)

Figures GB-3 and GB-4 show a side pocket shot using the Ghost Ball / Laser Aimer Technique. (Notice on this shot, the aim point is about 1/4" to the right of the 9 ball.)

Note: On these pictures I had to 'enhance' the red line of the laser because the picture came out with a real faint line, but on the table it was very visible.

Of course, if the Cueball is moved off the line or in a different position, you must realign the shot with the laser, as the aim point will move depending on the angle of the shot.



Figure GB-1



Figure GB-2



Figure GB-3



Figure GB-4

(In Figure GB-4, the Cueball is moved aside to provide better visibility on aim point)

This laser aiming device, of course is only a practice tool, as I'm sure an opponent would have a real screaming, stomping, cursing fit if you laid this baby on the table and started measuring shots during a real game...funny, our league doesn't have any rules against such a device and I intend to use it someday...just to rattle a few

cages and really tick off some of the more anal players...but that is my 'dark side' and we won't go there right now!

Well that's it, I hope some of you can build this 'toy', learn from it and enjoy it as I have. I use it to practice my shots so I have a better idea of just how to make difficult shots during games. It works most anywhere on the table, assuming you have enough room for the Strait-LineR laser device and the mirror if you need it. So far, I can actually say my banking and kicking is getting better...my opponents certainly have noticed my increased skills in that area. When I use it for practice I always get curious players wanting to know what I'm doing...I simply say, Laser Aimer, don't you have one? That just makes them even more curious and it's fun to explain what you can do with it and how easy it is to build.

I also noticed something else while working on this project. If you will note in the left picture, the laser's reflection went straight to the pocket. If you look into the mirror and see the pocket 'behind' the mirror, it is the same as the right diagram. An interesting thing to observe...if you removed the mirror and were to shoot to the 'pocket's reflection' you would go into the pocket.



Picture of Laser-2-Pocket

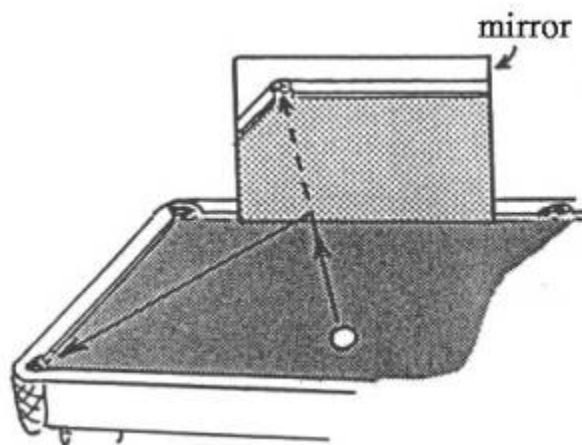


Diagram of Line to Pocket via Mirror

Normally I patent and/or copyright my devices...but this one is so simple I am putting the idea into the public domain (This article and various companies images are Copyrighted though, see below disclaimer). This idea set me back some time and around \$25 to make. The Strait-LineR Aiming device normally sells for \$29, I happened to find it on sale, so look around for a bargain.

Mick Turner

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Credits: Strait-Line, Trademark of Irwin Industrial Tool Company, subsidiary of Newell Rubbermaid, Hobby LobbyR, Home DepotR and most of all, Clicks BilliardsR, at 281 & Bitters Road, San Antonio, Texas for letting this crazy person in to do the pictures (even though I paid for the table and liquid refreshment -- which might explain some of the fuzzy pictures).

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