

Christopher Newport University
Office of Recreational Services
Intramural Sports
Billiards
-Rules of the Game-

The rules below are specific for the sport indicated above and do not include intramural program policies which all participants must abide by. For a complete description of intramural policies, participants should view the Intramural Program Manual.

National Intramural Recreational Sport Association (NIRSA) rules govern any rule not mentioned in this document.

OBJECT OF THE GAME

Eight-Ball is a call shot game played with a cue ball and 15 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 through 15 (stripes). The player pocketing either group first, and then legally pocketing the 8-ball wins the game.

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 so long as any object ball is legally pocketed on the break.

RACKING THE BALLS

The balls are racked in a triangle at the foot of the table with the 8-ball in the center of the triangle, the first ball of the rack on the foot spot, a stripe ball in one corner of the rack and a solid ball in the other corner.

ORDER OF BREAK

Winner of the lag has the option to break. Players will alternate break.

LEGAL BREAK SHOT

(Defined) To execute a legal break, the breaker (with the cue ball behind the head string) must either (1) pocket a ball, or (2) drive at least four numbered balls to the rail. When the breaker fails to make a legal break, it is a foul, and the incoming player has the option of (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or (2) having the balls re-racked and having the option of shooting the opening break or allowing the offending player to re-break.

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 "8-Ball Pocketed on the Break"), (2) it is a foul, (3) the table is open. Please Note: The incoming player has cue ball in hand behind the head string and may not shoot an object ball that is behind the head string, unless he first shoots the cue ball past the head string and causes the cue ball to come back behind the head string and hit the object ball.

OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF TABLE ON THE BREAK

If a player jumps an object ball off the table on the break shot, it is a foul and the incoming player has the option of (1) accepting the table in position and shooting, or (2) taking cue ball in hand behind the head string and shooting.

8-BALL POCKETED ON THE BREAK

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

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 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, it is a foul and no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter. The shooter loses his turn; the incoming player is awarded cue ball in hand; any balls pocketed remain pocketed; and the incoming player addresses the balls with the table still open. On an open table, all illegally pocketed balls remain pocketed.

CHOICE OF GROUP

The choice of stripes or solids is not determined on the break even if balls are made from only one or both groups, because the table is always open immediately after the break shot. The choice of group is determined only when a player legally pockets a called object ball after the break shot.

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. Please Note: It is permissible for the shooter to bank the cue ball off a rail before contacting the object ball. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.

SCORING

A player is entitled to continue shooting until failing 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. The player who successfully wins by pocketing the 8-ball receive 8 points plus 1 point each remaining opponent’s ball. Example: Player A successfully pockets all her balls and the eight ball, with 4 of Player B’s balls still on the table. Player A would receive 12 points for that game. If a player pockets the 8-ball before pocketing all other balls, the opposing player would receive 8 points for winning the game, plus the number of balls remaining on the table for the opponent. The player who pocketed the 8-ball would receive 1 point for the number of balls the opposing player still has on the table. Example: Player A accidentally pockets the 8-ball with 4 of her balls still on the table and 3 of Player B’s balls still on the table. Player B would receive 8 points for winning plus 4 points for the number of Player A’s balls still on the table. Player A would receive 3 points for the number of balls Player A still has on the table. Score for that game Player B (12) – Player A (3). Three games will be played each night, with points being scored in all three contests.

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 an opponent at a disadvantage. With “cue ball in hand,” the player may use a hand or any part of a cue (including the tip) to position the cue ball.

COMBINATION SHOTS

Combination shots are allowed; however, the 8-ball can’t be used as a first ball in the combination unless it is the shooter’s only remaining legal object ball on the table. Otherwise, should such contact occur on the 8-ball, it is a foul.

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. Illegally pocketed balls remain pocketed and are scored in favor of the shooter controlling that specific group of balls, solids or stripes.

OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE

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

PLAYING THE 8-BALL

When the 8-ball is the legal object 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, except when the 8-ball is the first ball contacted in the shot sequence.

LOSS OF GAME

A player loses the game by committing any of the following infractions:

1. Fouls when pocketing the 8-ball (exception: see “8-Ball Pocketed On The Break”).
2. Pockets the 8-ball on the same stroke as the last of his group of balls.
3. Jumps the 8-ball off the table at any time.
4. Pockets the 8-ball in a pocket other than the one designated.
5. 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.