

Pilaar Duncan Family  
Pool Rules

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# 8-Ball Pool 8

## 1 Object of the Game

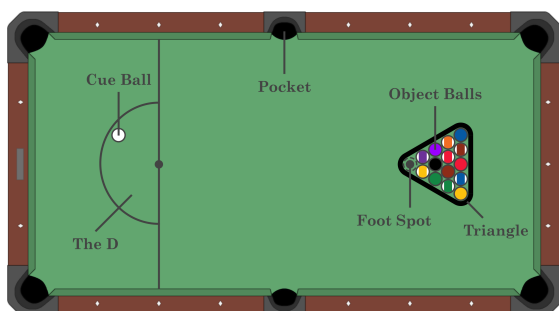
- 1.1 8-Ball Pool is played between two players with a cue ball and fifteen object balls. Each player is assigned a set of seven balls. Balls 1-7 are “unders” and 9-15 are “overs”. Players take turns trying to sink their balls or disadvantage their opponent. Once a player sinks all their balls, they may attempt to sink the 8-ball and win.

## 2 Format of Games

- 2.1 Games are generally played in a best-of-one, best-of-three, or best-of-seven format.
- 2.1.1 Best-of-one matches are common when the players feel like a game but not too much of a commitment. This format sees whoever wins the game win overall.
- 2.1.2 Best-of-three matches are the most common. The first player to win two games wins overall.
- 2.1.3 Best-of-seven matches are usually the format for multi-day or holiday-long tournament-style competitions. In this, the first player to win four games wins overall. This format is more common in the Doubles variation of play (see Section 11).

## 3 Racking

- 3.1 Racking up the balls involves setting all fifteen object balls up in the standard triangle formation for the opponent to break. The opponent is encouraged to make sure the rack is tight.
- 3.2 Determining who racks: The general rule is “challenger racks”, that is, the person who challenged their opponent racks the balls. For example, if a player says, “Do you want a game?” they are the challenger and therefore rack the balls. This rule also extends to after each match. If a rematch is desired, the loser of the previous game is the challenger and racks the balls.
- 3.3 Table Diagram and Position of Rack:



3.3.1 The fifteen numbered balls are racked in a triangle with the black/8-ball in the centre (i.e., middle of the third row). Other than the black/8-ball, there is no required pattern for the order of the balls.

3.3.2 The player racking needs to ensure that all the balls are tightly packed with no gaps.

3.3.3 The triangle points towards the front of the table (where the opponent breaks from), with the front-most ball centred on top of the foot spot.

3.3.4 If a triangle racking tool is used, this is removed once the balls are in place. If the balls move when the triangle is removed, it should be placed back on, squishing the balls back together.

3.3.5 The opponent breaking may inspect the rack for gaps and the position of the black/8-ball, but may not complain about the pattern of the coloured balls.

## 4 Breaking & Establishment of Set

- 4.1 The player breaking places the cue ball in the D.
- 4.2 The player breaking has the right to “call-the-break” (see Section 8.1). This is optional. Remembering to do this is the player’s responsibility.
- 4.3 The player breaking may hit the cue ball into any part of the rack, although hitting the front-most ball is typically recommended.
- 4.4 If the player completely misses the rack on the break but the cue ball remains on the table, they may place it back in the D and have one more attempt (including another chance to call-the-break; see Section 8.1) provided no other ball has moved. If the cue ball sinks or bounces off the table, this is a foul and the break is handed to the opponent. A second failed attempt will also see the break handed to the opponent. In either instance, the opponent may not call-the-break.
- 4.5 If the cue ball hits a rail before hitting the rack, this is a foul.
- 4.6 If the cue ball hits the rack and ends up sinking, this is a foul.
- 4.7 If any balls are knocked off the table during the break, this is a foul. If it the black/8-ball, the player loses. See Section 6.3.11 for returning the balls to the table.
- 4.8 If the black/8-ball sinks or bounces off the table off the break, this is an instant loss for the player.

**4.9** If a coloured ball (or multiple coloured balls of the same set) sinks off the break, that set is the player's balls (i.e., overs or unders). The player can then take their next shot.

**4.10** If multiple coloured balls from different sets sink off the break, the player chooses which set to play. The player can then take their next shot.

**4.11** If no balls sink off the break:

**4.11.1** At this stage, neither player has a set that belongs to them. The players will alternate turns to hit any coloured ball (not the black/8-ball) until a ball sinks and sets are assigned.

**4.11.2** If the black/8-ball is hit first, this is a foul.

**4.11.3** If multiple balls from different sets are sunk off the same shot, whichever went in first is the set assigned to the player. If neither player saw which ball sunk first, the player chooses their set. No foul is awarded and the player can continue their turn.

**4.12** If the black/8-ball sinks off the break, this is an instant loss.

## 5 General Play

**5.1** A player's turn consists of them striking the cue ball into their coloured balls, typically with the goal of sinking them.

**5.2** The player should strike the cue ball with at least one foot touching the floor. "Tippy toes" are permissible.

**5.3** If the opponent fouled on their turn, then the player gets an additional shot (see Section 6 for more on fouls).

**5.4** If a player sinks all of their coloured balls, they can now hit the black/8-ball with the cue ball directly.

**5.5** If a player ever finds themselves in a snooker position, see Section 7.

**5.6** The players alternate turns until the game is ended. See Section 9 for the ending of the game.

## 6 Fouling

**6.1** If a foul occurs, then the player's turn ends, and the opponent is granted an extra shot in their turn.

**6.2** Fouls do not stack. For example, if a player misses all balls and sinks the white, the opponent still only gets one extra shot.

**6.3** Circumstances that give rise to fouls are as follows:

**6.3.1** The cue ball is hit into a ball that is not the player's own first. This does not include coloured balls being hit during the break (Section 4.3) or during subsequent shots until a ball sinks (Section 4.11). Hitting the black/8-ball first remains a foul in these instances. This rule is excepted in some cases of a snooker (Section 7).

**6.3.2** The cue ball does not hit any ball.

**6.3.3** The player sinks the cue ball.

**6.3.4** The player sinks an opponent's ball.

**6.3.5** During the break the cue ball hits a rail before hitting the rack.

**6.3.6** The player strikes the cue ball while any ball on the table is still moving.

**6.3.7** The player fails a nomination while attempting to escape some forms of a snooker (see Section 7).

**6.3.8** The cue ball is meant to be in the D, but the player strikes it while it is outside the D (reasonable allowances are made if it's only outside by a few millimetres).

**6.3.9** The player performs a push shot. This is when the cue ball is touching another ball, and striking the cue ball also moves the touching ball.

**6.3.10** The player touches any ball with any object other than the cue ball with the cue tip.

**6.3.11** Any ball ends up off the table during the player's turn.

- If it is the cue ball, the opponent takes their shot from the D.
- If it is a coloured ball, the players attempt to place it as close to the foot spot as possible (see Section 3.3 for the position of the foot spot). This also applies if multiple coloured balls are knocked off the table.
- If it is the black/8-ball, the player loses.

**6.3.12** The player performs an intentional jump shot.

**6.3.13** The player bumps the table, causing significant movement of the balls. The players' best judgment is used to determine if any movement of the balls is "significant".

**6.3.14** Some cases of poor behaviour (see Section 12).

**6.4** If a player is awarded a foul shot but then fouls on their first shot, then their turn ends and regular foul rules apply.

**6.5** An intentional foul is when the player fouls intentionally. E.g., purposefully hitting an incorrect ball whose placement may have been advantageous to the opponent. If a foul is deemed intentional, it is an instant loss for the offending player.

## 7 Snooker

**7.1** A snooker (or “total snooker”) is defined as when the player is unable to see either side of any of their balls (if the only one of their balls the player can see is touching the cue ball and would require a push shot, this is also a snooker). The situation by which the snooker came to be may give rise to a nomination rule being enacted.

**7.2** A legal snooker is when the opponent has snookered the player legally.

**7.2.1** If the player is on their coloured balls, a snooker is a pain in the ass. The most common way of getting out of this is by using the cushions to rebound the cue ball.

**7.2.2** If the player is on the black/8-ball, they have the option of enacting *Nomination Rule 1* (see Section 7.6.1). This does not apply in the case of a self-snooker.

**7.3** A foul snooker is when the opponent fouled while snookering the player.

**7.3.1** The player has the option of enacting *Nomination Rule 2* (see Section 7.6.2).

**7.3.2** In the case of a foul table snooker (a table snooker being when the player is snookered because the cue ball is partially in a pocket), the player may move the cue ball to the D. If still snookered in the D, they may enact *Nomination Rule 2* (Section 7.6.2).

**7.4** In no case of self snooker is the player allowed to enact a nomination rule.

**7.5** A partial snooker is when a player can only see one side of any of their balls. The player may not enact a nomination rule.

**7.6** Nomination Rules:

**7.6.1** Nomination Rule 1: This rule occurs during a legal snooker on the black/8-ball. The player may nominate a ball that is not their own to hit first with the cue ball. This nominated ball must then hit the black/8-ball. The player must state the nominated ball verbally. If the cue ball hits any other ball before the nominated ball, it is a foul. If the nominated ball hits any other ball before it hits the black/8-ball, it is a foul. If the nominated ball misses the black/8-ball, it is a foul. If any ball sinks, it is a foul. This uses up one of the player’s shots.

**7.6.2** Nomination Rule 2: This rule occurs during a foul snooker. The player may nominate any ball on the table for the cue ball to hit instead; the nominated ball is not required to hit the player’s ball. The nomination must be stated verbally. If the cue ball hits any other ball before the nominated ball, it is a foul. The nominated ball may hit any or no ball. If any ball sinks, it is a foul. This uses up one of the player’s shots.

**7.7** If the player finds themselves in a snooker position, they must make a genuine attempt to escape the snooker. Failure to make a genuine attempt may be considered an intentional foul (see Section 6.5).

## 8 Special Rules

**8.1** Calling-the-break. Before the break, the player breaking may call a specific ball they intend to sink off the break into a specific pocket. The player must verbally state the intended ball and pocket to the opponent. If the called ball goes into the called pocket, it is an instant win for the player. Otherwise, play continues as normal.

Any ball except the cue ball and the black/8-ball may be called.

If the called ball goes into the called pocket, but the cue ball also sinks, the player still wins.

If the called ball goes into the called pocket, but the black/8-ball also sinks or is knocked off the table, the player loses.

**8.2** Down Trou. If a player wins by sinking all their balls and the black/8-ball while the opponent has all seven of their balls still on the table, the opponent should drop their trousers and walk around the table in their undies with their pants around their ankles.

This may not always be appropriate, depending on the game’s location and the people involved, it may be best to veto. Everyone involved must be comfortable for the down trou to take place.

If the opponent hasn’t sunk any balls, but the player accidentally sinks one of theirs during the game, the opponent will have six (or fewer) balls remaining on the table. Therefore, this situation does not warrant a down-trou.



If the opponent has not sunk a single ball, but the game ends prematurely (i.e., the player wins through a method other than sinking all seven coloured balls and the black/8-ball), then this does not warrant a down trou.

## 9 Ending The Game

**9.1** If a player legally pockets the black/8-ball after sinking all seven of their coloured balls, the game ends, and the player wins.

**9.2** If a player fouls while on the black/8-ball, the game ends, and that player loses. See Section 6 for fouls. This applies even after the 8-ball sinks (e.g., the black/8-ball sinks, but the cue ball keeps rolling and ends up sinking too).

**9.3** If a player prematurely (i.e., before all seven of their coloured balls are sunk) pockets the 8-ball, the game ends and that player loses.

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- 9.4** If the player breaking successfully “calls the break” (see Section 8.1 for “calling the break”) it is an instant win for the player.
- 9.5** If, at any point, a player knocks the black/8-ball off the table, the game ends, and that player loses.
- 9.6** An intentional foul, as detailed in Section 6.5, results in an instant loss for the offending player.
- 9.7** Misleading the opponent, as detailed in Section 12.1, leads to an instant loss for the offending player.
- 9.8** Some other instances of poor behavior may lead to the ending of the game. (see Section 12).

## **10 Things that feel like cheating... but aren't**

- 10.1** Only playing for the snooker. When well behind, a player may no longer aim to sink their balls and instead resort to playing for a snooker. This may cause their opponent to foul while on the black and lose. This is not only allowed but encouraged!
- 10.2** Jammy shots. These incredible feats of luck are probably some trickster god's will or something and we wouldn't want to defy that, so these are allowed.

## **11 Doubles**

- 11.1** Doubles is a game mode that allows for four players. It involves a slight alteration of the general play outlined in Section 5.
- 11.2** The four players split into two teams of two.
- 11.3** Both players on the “Challenger” team rack up the balls, and one player on the “Challenged” team breaks (see Section 3.2 for how to determine which team racks).
- 11.4** After the break, players from each team play alternate turns.
- 11.5** Teammates are not allowed to switch turns during a game. Switching turns between games (e.g., in a best-of-three) is allowed.

## **12 Etiquette & Behaviour**

- 12.1** Misleading the opponent. If the player deliberately misleads their opponent by stating that they are on overs/unders/8-ball when they are not, then this is an instant loss for the player.
- 12.2** Distracting the opponent while they set up their shot. The opponent may ask you to stop; continuing may result in a foul, giving the opponent an

extra shot for this turn.

Examples include but are not limited to: Standing in their eye line, talking, standing behind them, etc.

- 12.3** Distracting the opponent as they strike the cue ball. If this was intentional or the opponent believed that this affected their shot, they can call foul and claim an extra shot for this turn. If the distraction was accidental or of little consequence, play may resume as normal. This call is up to the player taking the shot.
- 12.4** Players should always approach the game with good sportsmanship and humour in mind. If this deteriorates then it is best advised to call the game over.



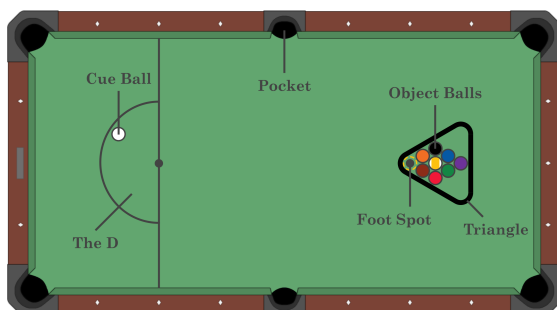
# 9-Ball Pool 9

## 1 Object of the Game

- 1.1 9-Ball Pool is played between two players using a cue ball and nine object balls. At any point in the game, the lowest-numbered ball on the table must be struck first. A player wins by legally sinking the 9-ball. The players take turns attempting to use the lowest-numbered ball to sink the 9-ball, or to disadvantage their opponent.

## 2 Racking

- 2.1 Racking up the balls involves setting all nine object balls up in the standard diamond formation for the opponent to break. The opponent is encouraged to make sure the rack is tight.
- 2.2 Determining who racks: The general rule is “challenger racks”, that is, the person who challenged their opponent racks the balls. For example, if a player says, “Do you want a game?” they are the challenger and therefore rack the balls. This rule also extends to after each match. If a rematch is desired, the loser of the previous game is the challenger and racks the balls.
- 2.3 Table Diagram and Position of Rack:



- 2.3.1 The nine numbered balls are racked in a triangle with the 1-ball placed in the front and the 9-ball in the centre (i.e., middle of the third row). There is no required pattern for balls 2-8.
- 2.3.2 The player racking needs to ensure that all the balls are tightly packed with no gaps.
- 2.3.3 The diamond points towards the front of the table (where the opponent breaks from), with the 1-ball centred on top of the foot spot.
- 2.3.4 If a triangle or diamond racking tool is used, this is removed once the balls are in place. If the balls move when the triangle or diamond is removed, it should be placed back on, squishing the balls back together.
- 2.3.5 The opponent breaking may inspect the rack for gaps and the position of the 1-ball and

9-ball, but may not complain about the pattern of the coloured balls.

## 3 Breaking & Push Out

- 3.1 The player breaking places the cue ball in the D.
- 3.2 The cue ball must first strike the 1-ball. Failure to do this is a foul. For fouls, see Section 5.
- 3.3 If the player completely misses the rack on the break but the cue ball remains on the table, they may place it back in the D and have one more attempt (and may “push out” afterwards; see Section 3.8) provided no other ball has moved. If the cue ball sinks or bounces off the table, this is a foul and the break is handed to the opponent. A second failed attempt will also see the break handed to the opponent. In either instance, the opponent may not push out.
- 3.4 If the cue ball hits a rail before hitting the rack, this is a foul.
- 3.5 If the cue ball hits the rack and ends up sinking, this is a foul.
- 3.6 If any balls are knocked off the table during the break, this is a foul. Balls other than the 9-ball should not be respotted. See Section 5.4.10 for returning the 9-ball to the table.
- 3.7 If the player pockets one or more object balls:
- 3.7.1 If the player also fouls then the player’s turn ends and regular foul rules apply (Section 5).
- 3.7.2 Otherwise the player may continue their turn (provided the 9-ball didn’t sink).
- 3.7.3 If the 9-ball sinks then this is an instant win for the player, provided no foul has occurred.
- 3.7.4 If the 9-ball sinks but the player fouls, the 9-ball should be returned to the table (see Section 5.4.10 for respotting the 9-ball) and regular foul rules apply.
- 3.8 Pushing Out: If the player performs a legal break and sinks no object balls, they have the option of playing a push out.
- 3.8.1 Here the player may attempt to move the cue ball into a preferred position.
- 3.8.2 The player should state their intention to attempt a push out.
- 3.8.3 The cue ball is not required to hit any ball or rail.
- 3.8.4 If the 9-ball sinks it should be returned to the table (see Section 5.4.10).

**3.8.5** If any object ball other than the 9-ball sinks it should not be respotted but the player may not continue their turn.

**3.8.6** If the cue ball does hit an object ball, it must hit the 1-ball first. It is a foul otherwise.

**3.8.7** Any foul results in ball-in-hand for the opponent as normal.

**3.8.8** Once the push out has been played, the opponent may choose to either shoot from where the cue ball rests or to pass the turn back to the player.

## 4 General Play

**4.1** A player's turn consists of them striking the cue ball into the lowest-numbered ball on the table, generally with the aim of:

- Sinking the 9-ball;
- Setting themselves up to sink the 9-ball;
- Snookering the opponent.

**4.2** During each shot, after the cue ball has hit the lowest-numbered ball, at least one ball (object ball or cue ball) must hit the rail and/or an object ball must sink into a pocket. Failure to achieve this is a foul.

**4.3** The player should strike the cue ball with at least one foot touching the floor. "Tippy toes" are permissible.

**4.4** If the player fouls, their turn ends and the opponent is awarded ball-in-hand (see Section 5 for fouls and Section 5.2 for ball-in-hand).

**4.5** If any object ball other than the 9-ball sinks, the player may continue their turn (provided no foul occurred, in which case regular foul rules apply).

**4.6** If the player sinks the 9-ball but also fouls on their shot, the 9-ball should be respotted (see Section 5.4.10) and regular foul rules apply.

**4.7** If the player finds themselves in a snooker position, they must make a genuine attempt to escape the snooker. Failure to make a genuine attempt may be considered an intentional foul (see Section 5.5).

**4.8** The players alternate turns until the game is ended. See Section 6 for the ending of the game.

## 5 Fouling

**5.1** If a foul occurs, the player's turn ends and the opponent is awarded ball-in-hand (Section 5.2).

**5.2** Ball-in-hand:

**5.2.1** Ball-in-hand allows the player to pick up the cue ball and place it anywhere on the table.

**5.2.2** Once the cue ball is placed, the player may continue to adjust it until they are ready to take their shot.

**5.2.3** All balls must be completely at rest before the cue ball may be picked up. Touching the cue ball preemptively is a foul.

**5.2.4** The player must confirm they have been awarded ball-in-hand before picking up the cue ball. Touching the cue ball if the opponent did not foul is obviously a foul.

**5.3** Fouls do not stack. For example, if a player misses all balls and sinks the white, the opponent still only gets one shot with ball-in-hand.

**5.4** Circumstances that give rise to fouls are as follows:

**5.4.1** The player fails to hit the cue ball into lowest-numbered ball first.

**5.4.2** During a push out, the cue ball hits any ball other than the 1-ball first (note that the cue ball may hit no ball).

**5.4.3** After the cue ball has hit the lowest-numbered ball, no ball (object or cue) hits a rail, and no object ball sinks (that is, at least one of these must happen for the shot to be legal). (This rule is excepted during a push out).

- If the cue ball or targeted object ball is touching a rail at the beginning of the shot, it is only counted as hitting a rail if it hits a different rail.

**5.4.4** The cue ball does not hit any ball. (This rule is excepted during a push out).

**5.4.5** The player sinks the cue ball.

**5.4.6** The player strikes the cue ball while any ball on the table is still moving.

**5.4.7** The player picks up the cue ball for ball-in-hand before all balls are at rest.

**5.4.8** The player touches any ball with any object other than the cue ball with the cue tip (except the cue ball during ball-in-hand).

**5.4.9** The player performs a push shot. This is when the cue ball is touching another ball, and striking the cue ball also moves the touching ball.

**5.4.10** Any ball ends up off the table during the player's turn.

- If it is the cue ball then it is returned to the table via ball-in-hand.
- If it is an object ball other than the 9-ball, the ball is not returned to the table.
- If it is the 9-ball, the players attempt to place it as close to the foot spot as possible (see Section 2.3 for the position of the foot spot).

**5.4.11** The player performs an intentional jump shot.

**5.4.12** The player bumps the table, causing significant movement of the balls. The players' best judgment is used to determine if any movement of the balls is "significant".

**5.4.13** Some cases of poor behaviour (see Section 7).

- 5.5** An intentional foul is when the player fouls intentionally. E.g., purposefully hitting an incorrect ball whose placement may have been advantageous to the opponent. If a foul is deemed intentional, it is an instant loss for the offending player.

## **6 Ending the Game**

- 6.1** If the player legally (without fouling) sinks the 9-ball, the game ends and the player wins.
- 6.2** An intentional foul, as detailed in Section 5.5, results in an instant loss for the offending player.
- 6.3** Misleading the opponent, as detailed in Section 7.1, leads to an instant loss for the offending player.
- 6.4** Some other instances of poor behavior may lead to the ending of the game. (see Section 7).

## **7 Etiquette & Behaviour**

- 7.1** Misleading the opponent. If the player deliberately misleads their opponent by claiming the incorrect ball to be the lowest-numbered ball on the table, then this is an instant loss for the player.
- 7.2** Distracting the opponent while they set up their shot. The opponent may ask you to stop; continuing may result in a foul, giving the opponent ball-in-hand for this turn.

Examples include but are not limited to: Standing in their eye line, talking, standing behind them, etc.

- 7.3** Distracting the opponent as they strike the cue ball. If this was intentional or the opponent believed that this affected their shot, they can call foul and claim ball-in-hand for this turn. If the distraction was accidental or of little consequence, play may resume as normal. This call is up to the player taking the shot.
- 7.4** Players should always approach the game with good sportsmanship and humour in mind. If this deteriorates then it is best advised to call the game over.



# Appendices ○

## A Credits & Version History

The Pilaar Duncan Family Pool Rules are the house rules for pool developed by and for the Pilaar Duncan family, starting in Christmas 2016.

The rules were developed by (alphabetically) Chris Duncan, Leo Duncan, Lily Duncan, Tom Duncan, Carla Pilaar, & Mark Pilaar.

This document was written by Leo Duncan.

Version 1 (2016) of these rules existed orally and in the minds of the players. Version 2 (2022) was a partially completed Google Doc. This is Version 3 (2024).

Current Version: 3.1.

Last Revision: 18 July 2025.

Changes: <https://github.com/Leowpd/pool-rulebook>

## B Glossary

Term	Definition
Black, The	Alternate term for the 8-ball.
Clank, The	A mishit that causes a truly angelic “clank” sound.
Down Trout	Mispronunciation of “Down Trou”.
If you’re playing pool, you’re playing pool	A phrase said to encourage a distracted player to give the game their full attention.
Jammy	A lucky shot.
Mishit	When the player strikes the cue ball badly. Often gives rise to <i>The Clank</i> . Pronounced “miss hit”, rather than “mi-shit”.
Moses	When the cue ball “parts the sea” of balls near a pocket and is the only ball that sinks.
Rack ’em up!	A phrase said to the challenger to encourage them to rack the balls.
Roll	Not all tables are perfectly flat, some have some deformations that can cause a change in a ball’s path. This creates additional thrills and challenges for the players... and often home table advantage.
Tom Stick, The	The shortest cue available. Named after Tom Duncan who, at the time of coining the term, was the shortest player at the table. Tom would like it known that he is now over 6ft, and very rarely the shortest player. Recently this term has fallen out of use.
White, The	Alternate term for the cue ball.