

# 8 BALL POOL RULES - SIMPLE EXPLANATION

## 1. How To Set Up 8 Ball Pool

8 ball pool rules are easy to learn. Here's a breakdown of how to play.

### NUMBER OF PLAYERS: TWO

### OBJECT OF 8 BALL POOL:

The object of 8 ball pool is to be the first player to "legally" sink the 8-ball. However, you need to first pocket all of your corresponding numbered balls before you can attempt to sink the 8-ball.

You play 8 ball pool with 15 numbered balls (including the black 8-ball) and one white cue ball. The coloured balls numbered from 1 to 7 are solid in colour and are therefore called "solids." The balls numbered 9 to 15 have a stripe around the middle and are called "stripes." One player will be trying to sink the "solids" and the other player will be trying to sink the "stripes."

### CUE BALL PLACEMENT:

Place your cue ball on the **head spot** on your **table**. Place your pool rack with the 15 balls arranged inside at the opposite end of your table, laterally centered along the foot string in the **foot spot**.

### HOW TO ARRANGE THE BALLS IN THE RACK:

Place the number 1 ball at the top of your triangle rack. The 8-ball needs to be in the center of the rack (i.e. in the third row after the 1-ball and in the center).

Place a solid coloured ball in one of the bottom corners of the rack and a striped ball in the other bottom corner. Remove the rack. The above image has the correct set-up except that one of the bottom corner balls needs to be a stripe instead of a solid.

## 2. 8 Ball Pool Rules

### THE BREAK:

The first player lines up their cue in the area behind the head string to make the first shot. You need to make a legal break shot. This means that you have to either pocket a ball or drive at least four of the object balls to the rail. If you don't make a **legal break**, then it is a foul.

### WHEN THERE IS A FOUL ON THE BREAK:

The incoming player can either leave the table as it is and take their shot or set up the table again and redo the opening break.

### WHEN A PLAYER SCRATCHES ON A LEGAL BREAK:

If the cue ball goes in on a legal break then **3 things happen**:

1. All of the pocketed balls stay pocketed.
2. The shot is considered a foul, so it is the other player's turn.
3. The table is open. This means that the first player to sink a ball gets to choose whether they will be going for the "stripes" or the "solids".

While the table is open, you can hit any solid or strip, or the 8-ball first in the process of pocketing your called stripe or solid. However, if you do hit the 8-ball first then not stripe or solid is scored in your favour. You lose your turn and any balls pocketed remain pocketed. The next player is still playing on an open table.

### **WHEN THE 8-BALL IS POCKETED ON THE BREAK:**

If this occurs, then the player breaking can ask for a re-rack or they can have the 8-ball spotted and then they continue shooting.

### **WHEN THE PLAYER SCRATCHES WHILE POCKETING THE 8-BALL:**

If this occurs, then the player breaking can ask for a re-rack or they can have the 8-ball spotted and then continue shooting. If you pocket the 8-ball any time after the break, you automatically lose the game.

### **WHEN A PLAYER JUMPS AN OBJECT BALL OFF THE TABLE ON THE BREAK SHOT:**

If this occurs the other player can either:

1. Accept the **table** position and take the next shot to continue the game or
2. Place the cue ball behind the head string and either shoot or break again.

### **CHOICE OF STRIPES OR SOLIDS:**

The table always stays open right after a break shot. The choice of stripes or solids only happens when a player is able to legally pocket a called object ball after the break shot takes place.

If a player has legally pocketed one or more of the **object balls** on the break, they may continue to make another shot. Any balls pocketed on a foul stay pocketed regardless of whose ball they are.

### **LEGAL SHOTS:**

Once the groups are chosen, then you must always hit a ball from your chosen group first. For example, if you are stripes, then you must always hit a stripe first. In addition, you have to either pocket one of your numbered balls or you have to make the cue ball or any numbered ball come in contact with the rail. If you fail to do either of these, then it is considered a foul.

### **FOUL PENALTY:**

When a **foul** occurs, your opponent gets to place the cue ball anywhere on the table. It only has to be behind the headstring if the foul happens on a break.

## **3. Glossary Of 8 Ball Pool Terms**

Here is a list of the most common 8 ball pool terms.

### **HEAD SPOT:**

This is the small dot or triangle located in the lateral center of your table. It is about 1/4 of the way down the length of the table.

### **HEAD STRING:**

The line that runs through the head spot on your table. It can be drawn on the felt or imaginary.

### **FOOT SPOT:**

The spot on the **pool table** where the apex ball of your rack is centered above. It is usually marked with a paper spot or a sticker. It is two diamonds out from the foot rail and is perfectly centered. This is where you rack you balls.

## **RAIL:**

The side bank of the pool tabletop. The area that the balls bounce off of.

## **SCRATCH:**

A scratch happens when you accidentally knock the cue ball into one of the pockets. If this happens then you must remove one of the balls that you have already sunk and place it back on the table in the center. The other player can then take a shot from wherever they want on the table.

## **SPOTTING BALLS:**

This means to **return a ball to the table** by putting it on the long string as close as possible to the foot spot and between the foot spot and the foot rail. You need to do this without moving or interfering with another ball on the table.

## **OBJECT BALLS:**

All of the striped or solid balls that are numbered from 1 to 15. These include all of the balls on the table except the cue balls. You are trying to knock the object balls into the pockets.

## **CALLED SHOT:**

This means to indicate which ball and pocket you are shooting for. You don't need to call obvious shots. If your opponent is not sure about which shot you are calling, they have the right to ask before you make your shot.

## **POCKET:**

Get one or more of the objects balls into on of the six baskets along the rim of the pool table.

## **CUE BALL:**

The white ball that you hit with your cue. This ball in turn is knocked into the object balls to make your shot.



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