

LEAGUE PLAYER RULEBOOK

**ACME 2026
ACS Nationals**

8 Ball & 9 Ball



American CueSports Alliance

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craig62100@yahoo.com



League Player Handbook

The rules contained in this handbook are the official rules used at all ACS and CCS Championship events. Rules used in local leagues may vary from the rules presented herein

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American CueSports Alliance
2860 S. State Hwy. 161 - Suite 160-372
Grand Prairie, TX 75052
Tel: 469-999-0390, Fax: 469-999-0038
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The ACS follows the world-standardized rules established by the International Olympic Committee-affiliated world-governing body for pool: the World Pool-Billiard Association (WPA). The contents within this Player Handbook reflect the most recent minor changes the WPA made in the rules in March 2016. The WPA rules are followed by all official continental and national federations worldwide, and a 5-year moratorium on any further rule changes is typically followed.

SPORTSMANSHIP IN LEAGUE PLAY

Sportsmanship is simply treating your teammates and opponents with courtesy and respect. While everyone wants to win, the purpose of league play is to have fun playing the great sport of billiards in the company of friends.

By following a few simple guidelines, you can help ensure everyone gets the most out of their ACS League experience:

1. **Know the rules:** Most disputes can be avoided if both players are knowledgeable about the rules of the game.
2. **Play to your potential:** Being a good sport doesn't mean taking it easy on your opponent; quite the opposite. You'll be respected far more if you give it your best each turn at the table. If you're in a handicapped league, don't "sandbag" by keeping your wins as modest as possible. Handicaps are meant to be a genuine measure of your skill. It's poor sportsmanship to give anything but your best effort.

3. No “Sharking”: “Sharking” is any act designed to upset your opponent or disrupt their concentration at any time during the game. Examples are using profanity, making sarcastic comments, refusing to acknowledge an obvious foul, standing close to your opponent’s line of vision or creating sudden noise. These rules apply not only to you, but also to any person who is in your “cheering squad”.
4. Resolve disputes the right way: Disputes will occasionally occur, and most will arise over a judgement call. Learn the procedures for settling disputes in your league and follow them religiously. This way, disputes can be resolved equitably and calmly.
5. Respect your host and their equipment: Billiard rooms help sponsor your league and provide use of their facilities and equipment. Whether at home or away, you represent your host club or bar.

Sportsmanship is all about courtesy and respect. Be sure to shake the hand of your opponent before and after each game, acknowledge your opponent’s good shots, and make sure that the trademark of you and your teammates is good sportsmanship. Win or lose, that’s what league play is all about.

POOL CUE SPECIFICATIONS

Width of Tip:	No minimum/ 14 mm maximum
Weight:	No minimum / 25 oz. maximum
Length:	40 inches minimum / no maximum

The cue tip may not be of a material that can scratch or damage the addressed ball. The cue tip on any stick must be composed of a piece of specially processed leather or other fibrous or pliable material that extends the natural line of the shaft end of the cue and contacts the cue ball when the shot is executed.

The ferrule of the cue stick, if of a metal material, may not be more than 1 inch in length.

1. GENERAL RULES

[Editorial comments on the U.S. English version: The masculine gender has been used for simplicity of wording and is not intended to specify the gender of the players or officials. The word “game” is used to refer to a discipline such as nine ball rather than a rack or a match.]

The following General Rules apply to all the games covered by these rules except when contradicted by specific game rules. In addition, the Regulations of Pool Billiards cover aspects of the game not directly related to the game rules, such as equipment specifications and organization of events.

The games of Pool Billiards are played on a flat table covered with cloth and bounded by rubber cushions. The player uses a stick (pool cue) to strike a cue ball which in turn strikes object balls. The goal is to drive object balls into six pockets located at the cushion boundary. The games vary according to which balls are legal targets and the requirements to win a match.

1.1 Player's Responsibility

It is the player's responsibility to be aware of all rules, regulations and schedules applying to competition. While tournament officials will make every reasonable effort to have such information readily available to all players as appropriate, the ultimate responsibility rests with the player.

1.2 Lagging to Determine Order of Play

The lag is the first shot of the match and determines order of play. The player who wins the lag chooses who will shoot first.

The referee will place a ball on each side of the table behind the head string and near the head string. The players will shoot at about the same time to make each ball contact the foot cushion with the goal of returning the ball closer to the head cushion than the opponent.

A lag shot is bad and cannot win if the shooter's ball:

- (a) crosses the long string;
- (b) contacts the foot cushion other than once;
- (c) is pocketed or driven off the table;
- (d) touches the side cushion; or
- (e) the ball rests within the corner pocket and past the nose of the head cushion.

In addition, a lag will be bad if any non-object-ball foul occurs other than **6.9 Balls Still Moving**.

The players will lag again if:

- (a) a player's ball is struck after the other ball has touched the foot cushion;
- (b) the referee cannot determine which ball has stopped closer to the head cushion; or
- (c) both lags are bad.

1.3 Player's Use of Equipment

The equipment must meet existing WPA equipment specifications. In general, players are not permitted to introduce novel equipment into the game. The following uses, among others, are considered normal. If the player is

uncertain about a particular use of equipment, he should discuss it with the tournament management prior to the start of play. The equipment must be used only for the purpose or in the manner that the equipment was intended.

(See 6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct)

- (a) Cue Stick – The player is permitted to switch between cue sticks during the match, such as break, jump and normal cues. He may use either a built-in extender or an add-on extender to increase the length of the stick.
- (b) Chalk – The player may apply chalk to his tip to prevent miscues, and may use his own chalk, provided its color is compatible with the cloth.
- (c) Mechanical Bridges – The player may use up to two mechanical bridges to support the cue stick during the shot. The configuration of the bridges is up to the player. He may use his own bridge if it is similar to standard bridges.
- (d) Gloves – The player may use gloves to improve the grip and/or bridge hand function.
- (e) Powder – A player is allowed to use powder in a reasonable amount as determined by the referee.

1.4 Spotting Balls

Balls are spotted (returned to play on the table) by placing them on the long string (long axis of the table) as close as possible to the foot spot and between the foot spot and the foot rail, without moving any interfering ball. If the spotted

ball cannot be placed on the foot spot, it should be placed in contact (if possible) with the corresponding interfering ball. However, when the cue ball is next to the spotted ball, the spotted ball should not be placed in contact with the cue ball; a small separation must be maintained. If all of the long string below the foot spot is blocked by other balls, the ball is spotted above the foot spot, and as close as possible to the foot spot.

1.5 Cue Ball in Hand

When the cue ball is in hand, the shooter may place the cue ball anywhere on the playing surface (See **8.1 Parts of the Table**) and may continue to move the cue ball until he executes a shot. (See definition **8.2 Shot**). Players may use any part of the cue stick to move the cue ball, including the tip, but not with a forward stroke motion. In some games and for most break shots, placement of the cue ball may be restricted to the area behind the head string depending on the rules of the game, and then **6.10 Bad Cue Ball Placement** and **6.11 Bad Play from Behind the Head String** may apply. When the shooter has the cue ball in hand behind the head string and all the legal object balls are behind the head string, he may request the legal object ball nearest the head string to be spotted. If two or more balls are equal distance from the head string, the shooter may designate which of the equidistant balls is to be spotted. An object ball that rests exactly on the head string is playable.

1.6 Standard Call Shot

In games in which the shooter is required to call shots, the intended ball and pocket must be indicated for each shot if they are not obvious. Details of the shot, such as cushions struck or other balls contacted or pocketed are irrelevant.

Only one ball may be called on each shot.

For a called shot to count, the referee must be satisfied that the intended shot was made, so if there is any chance of confusion, e.g. with bank, combination and similar shots, the shooter should indicate the ball and pocket. If the referee or opponent is unsure of the shot to be played, he may ask for a call. In call shot games, the shooter may choose to call “safety” instead of a ball and pocket, and then play passes to the opponent at the end of the shot. Whether balls are being spotted after safeties depends on the rules of the particular game.

1.7 Balls Settling

A ball may settle slightly after it appears to have stopped, possibly due to slight imperfections in the ball or the table. Unless this causes a ball to fall into a pocket, it is considered a normal hazard of play, and the ball will not be moved back. If a ball falls into a pocket as the result of such settling, it is restored as closely as possible to its original position. If a settling ball falls into a pocket during or just prior to a shot, and this has an effect on the shot, the referee will restore the position and the shot will be replayed. The shooter is not penalized for shooting while a ball is settling. See also **8.3 Ball Pocketed**.

1.8 Restoring a Position

When necessary for balls to be restored or cleaned, the referee will restore disturbed balls to their original positions to the best of his ability. The players must accept the referee’s judgment as to placement.

1.9 Outside Interference

When outside interference occurs during a shot that has an effect on the outcome of that shot, the referee will restore the balls to the positions they had before the shot, and the shot will be replayed. If the interference had no effect on the shot, the referee will restore the disturbed balls and play will continue. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, the situation is handled like a stalemate.

1.10 Prompting Calls and Protesting Rulings

If a player feels that the referee has made an error in judgment, he may ask the referee to reconsider his call or lack of call, but the referee's decision on judgment calls is final. However, if the player feels that the referee is not applying the rules correctly, he may ask for ruling by the designated appeals authority. The referee will suspend play while this appeal is in process. (See also part (d) of **6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct**). Fouls must be called promptly. (See **6. Fouls**)

1.11 Concession

If a player concedes, he loses the match. For example, if a player unscrews his jointed playing cue stick while the opponent is at the table and during the opponent's decisive rack of a match, it will be considered a concession of the match.

1.12 Stalemate

If the referee observes that no progress is being made towards a conclusion, he will announce his decision, and each player will have three more turns at the table. Then, if the referee determines that there is still no progress, he will

declare a stalemate. If both players agree, they may accept the stalemate without taking their three additional turns. The procedure for a stalemate is specified under the rules for each game.

2. NINE BALL

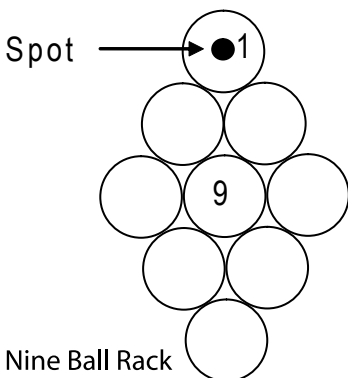
Nine ball is played with nine object balls numbered one through nine and the cue ball. The balls are played in ascending numerical order. The player legally pocketing the nine ball wins the rack.

2.1 Determining the Break

The player who wins the lag chooses who will break the first rack. (See **1.2 Lagging to Determine Order of Play**). The standard format is to alternate the break, but see Regulation 15, Subsequent Break Shots.

2.2 Nine Ball Rack

The object balls are racked as tightly as possible in a diamond shape, with the one ball at the apex of the diamond and on the foot spot and the nine ball in the middle of the diamond. The other balls will be placed in the diamond without purposeful or intentional pattern.



2.3 Legal Break Shot

The following rules apply to the break shot:

- (a) the cue ball begins in hand behind the head string; and
- (b) if no ball is pocketed, at least four object balls must be driven to one or more rails, or the shot is a foul. (See **Regulation 17 - Open Break Requirements**).
- (c) additionally, and only when Three Point Break Rule is used, if no ball is pocketed, three balls must cross the head string, or the break is considered 'dry break'. (See Regulation 18, Three Point Break Rule.)

2.4 Second Shot of the Rack – Push Out

If no foul is committed on the break shot, the shooter may choose to play a “push out” as his shot. He must make his intention known to the referee, and then rules **6.2 Wrong Ball First** and **6.3 No Rail after Contact** are suspended

for the shot. If no foul is committed on a push out, the other player chooses who will shoot next.

2.5 Continuing Play

If the shooter legally pockets any ball on a shot (except a push out, see **2.4 Second Shot of the Rack – Push Out**), he continues at the table for the next shot. If he legally pockets the nine ball on any shot (except a push out), he wins the rack. If the shooter fails to pocket a ball or fouls, play passes to the other player, and if no foul was committed, the incoming player must play the cue ball from the position left by the other player.

2.6 Spotting Balls

If the nine ball is pocketed on a foul or push out, or driven off the table, it is spotted. (See **1.4 Spotting Balls**). No other object ball is ever spotted.

2.7 Standard Fouls

If the shooter commits a standard foul, play passes to his opponent. The cue ball is in hand, and the incoming player may place it anywhere on the playing surface (See **1.5 Cue Ball in Hand**).

The following are standard fouls at nine ball:

- 6.1 **Cue Ball Scratch** or off the Table
- 6.2 **Wrong Ball First** The first object ball contacted by the cue ball on each shot must be the lowest-numbered ball remaining on the table.
- 6.3 **No Rail** after **Contact**
- 6.4 **No Foot on Floor**
- 6.5 **Ball Driven off the Table** The only jumped object ball that is spotted is the nine.

- 6.6 Touched Ball
- 6.7 Double Hit / Frozen Balls
- 6.8 Push Shot
- 6.9 Balls Still Moving
- 6.10 Bad Cue Ball Placement
- 6.12 Cue Stick on the Table
- 6.13 Playing out of Turn
- 6.15 Slow Play
- 6.16 Ball Rack Template Foul

2.8 Serious Fouls

For 6.14 Three Consecutive Fouls, the penalty is loss of the current rack. For 6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct, the referee will choose a penalty appropriate given the nature of the offense.

2.9 Stalemate

If a stalemate occurs the original breaker of the rack will break again. (See 1.12 Stalemate).

3. EIGHT BALL

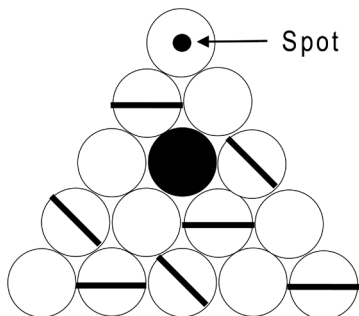
Eight ball is played with fifteen numbered object balls and the cue ball. The shooter's group of seven balls (one through seven or nine through fifteen) must all be off the table before he attempts to pocket the eight ball to win. Shots are called.

3.1 Determining First Break

The player winning the lag has the option to determine who has to execute the first break shot. (See 1.2 Lagging to Determine Order of Play). The standard format is alternate break (See Regulation 15 - Subsequent Break Shots).

3.2 Eight Ball Rack

The fifteen object balls are racked as tightly as possible in a triangle, with the apex ball on the foot spot and the eight ball as the first ball that is directly below the apex ball. One from each group of seven will be on the two lower corners of the triangle. The other balls are placed in the triangle without purposeful or intentional pattern.



Eight Ball Rack

3.3 Break Shot

The following rules apply to the break shot:

- The cue ball begins in hand behind the head string.
- No ball is called, and the cue ball is not required to hit any particular object ball first.
- If the breaker pockets a ball and does not foul, he continues at the table, and the table remains open. (See [3.4 Open Table / Choosing Groups](#))
- If no object ball is pocketed, at least four object balls must be driven to one or more rails, or the shot results

in an illegal break, and the incoming player has the option of

- (1) accepting the table in position, or
 - (2) re-racking and breaking, or
 - (3) re-racking and allowing the offending player to break again.
- (e) Pocketing the eight ball on a legal break shot is not a foul. If the eight ball is pocketed, the breaker has the option of
- (1) re-spotting the eight ball and accepting the balls in position, or
 - (2) re-breaking.
- (f) If the breaker pockets the eight ball and scratches (See Definition **8.6 Scratch**), the opponent has the option of
- (1) re-spotting the eight ball and shooting with cue ball in hand behind the head string; or
 - (2) re-breaking.
- (g) If any object ball is driven off the table on a break shot, it is a foul; such balls remain out of play (except the eight ball which is re-spotted); and the incoming player has the option of
- (1) accepting the table in position, or
 - (2) taking cue ball in hand behind the head string.
- (h) If the breaker fouls in any manner not listed above, the following player has the option of
- (1) accepting the balls in position, or
 - (2) taking cue ball in hand behind the head string.

3.4 Open Table / Choosing Groups

Before groups are determined, the table is said to be “open,” and before each shot, the shooter must call his intended ball. If the shooter legally pockets his called ball,

the corresponding group becomes his, and his opponent is assigned the other group. If he fails to legally pocket his called ball, the table remains open and play passes to the other player. When the table is “open”, any object ball may be struck first except the eight ball.

3.5 Continuing Play

The shooter remains at the table as long as he continues to legally pocket called balls, or he wins the rack by pocketing the eight ball.

3.6 Shots Required to Be Called

On each shot except the break, shots must be called as explained in **1.6 Standard Call Shot**. The eight ball may be called only after the shot on which the shooter’s group has been cleared from the table. The shooter may call “safety” in which case play passes to the opponent at the end of the shot and any object ball pocketed on the safety remains pocketed. (See **8.17 Safety Shot**).

3.7 Spotting Balls

If the eight ball is pocketed or driven off the table on the break, it will be spotted or the balls will be re-racked. (See **3.3 Break Shot and 1.4 Spotting Balls**). No other object ball is ever spotted.

3.8 Losing the Rack

The shooter loses if he

- (a) pockets the eight ball and fouls;
 - (b) pockets the eight ball before his group is cleared;
 - (c) pockets the eight ball in an uncalled pocket;
- or

(d) drives the eight ball off the table.
These do not apply to the break shot. (See **3.3 Break Shot**).

3.9 Standard Fouls

If the shooter commits a foul, play passes to his opponent. The cue ball is in hand, and the incoming player may place it anywhere on the playing surface. (See **1.5 Cue Ball in Hand**).

The following are standard fouls at eight ball:

- 6.1 Cue Ball Scratch or off the Table
- 6.2 Wrong Ball First The first ball contacted by the cue ball on each shot must belong to the shooter's group, except when the table is open. (See **3.4 Open Table / Choosing Groups**).
- 6.3 No Rail after **Contact**
- 6.4 No Foot on Floor
- 6.5 Ball Driven off the Table (See **3.7 Spotting Balls**).
- 6.6 Touched Ball
- 6.7 Double Hit / Frozen Balls
- 6.8 Push Shot
- 6.9 Balls Still Moving
- 6.10 Bad Cue Ball Placement
- 6.11 Bad Play from Behind the Head String
- 6.12 Cue Stick on the Table
- 6.13 Playing out of Turn
- 6.15 Slow Play
- 6.16 Ball Rack Template Foul

3.10 Serious Fouls

The fouls listed under **3.8 Losing the Rack** are penalized by the loss of the current rack. For **6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct**, the referee will choose a penalty appropriate given the nature of the offense.

3.11 Stalemate

If a stalemate occurs (See **1.12 Stalemate**), the original breaker of the rack will break again.

3.12 8-Ball Addendum [same as Regulation 10]

If the groups have been determined and the player mistakenly shoots at and pockets a ball of the opponent's group, the foul must be called before he takes his next shot. Upon recognition by either player or the referee that the groups have been reversed, the rack will be halted and will be replayed with the original player executing the break shot.

4. 14.1 CONTINUOUS POOL

See 14.1 Continuous world-standardized rules at www.wpapool.com.

5. BLACK BALL

See Black Ball world-standardized rules at www.wpapool.com

6. FOULS

The following actions are fouls at pool when included in the specific rules of the game being played. If several fouls occur on one shot, only the most serious one is enforced. If a foul is not called before the next shot begins, the foul is assumed not to have happened.

6.1 Cue Ball Scratch or off the Table

If the cue ball is pocketed or driven off the table, the shot is a foul. (See 8.3 Ball Pocketed and 8.5 Driven off the Table).

6.2 Wrong Ball First

In those games which require the first object ball struck to be a particular ball or one of a group of balls, it is a foul for the cue ball to first contact any other ball.

6.3 No Rail after Contact

If no ball is pocketed on a shot, the cue ball must contact an object ball, and after that contact at least one ball (cue ball or any object ball) must be driven to a rail, or the shot is a foul. (See 8.4 Driven to a Rail).

6.4 No Foot on Floor

If the shooter does not have at least one foot touching the floor at the instant the tip contacts the cue ball, the shot is a foul.

6.5 Ball Driven off the Table

It is a foul to drive an object ball off the table. Whether that ball is spotted depends on the rules of the game. (See 8.5 Driven off the Table).

6.6 Touched Ball

It is a foul to touch, move or change the path of any object ball except by the normal ball-to-ball contacts during shots. It is a foul to touch, move or change the path of the cue ball except when it is in hand or by the normal tip-to-ball forward stroke contact of a shot. The shooter is responsible for the equipment he controls at the table, such as chalk, bridges, clothing, his hair, parts of his body, and the cue ball when it is in hand, that may be involved in such fouls. If such a foul is accidental, it is a standard foul, but if it is intentional, it is **6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct**. [ACS amateur tournament and league play follows “Cue Ball Foul Only” Guidelines – See **Regulation 21**].

6.7 Double Hit / Frozen Balls

If the cue stick contacts the cue ball more than once on a shot, the shot is a foul. If the cue ball is close to but not touching an object ball and the cue tip is still on the cue ball when the cue ball contacts that object ball, the shot is a foul. If the cue ball is very close to an object ball, and the shooter barely grazes that object ball on the shot, the shot is assumed not to violate the first paragraph of this rule, even though the tip is arguably still on the cue ball when ball-ball contact is made. However, if the cue ball is touching an object ball at the start of the shot, it is legal to shoot towards or partly into that ball (provided it is a legal target within the rules of the game) and if the object ball is moved by such a shot, it is considered to have been contacted by the cue ball. (Even though it may be legal to shoot towards such a touching or “frozen” ball, care must be taken not to violate the rules in the first paragraph if there are additional balls close by.)

The cue ball is assumed not to be touching any ball unless it is declared touching by the referee or opponent. It is the shooter's responsibility to get the declaration before the shot. Playing away from a frozen ball does not constitute having hit that ball unless specified in the rules of the game.

6.8 Push Shot

It is a foul to prolong tip-to-cue-ball contact beyond that seen in normal shots.

6.9 Balls Still Moving

It is a foul to begin a shot while any ball in play is moving or spinning.

6.10 Bad Cue Ball Placement

When the cue ball is in hand and restricted to the area behind the head string, it is a foul to play the cue ball from on or below the head string. If the shooter is uncertain whether the cue ball has been placed behind the head string, he may ask the referee for a determination.

6.11 Bad Play from Behind the Head String

When the cue ball is in hand behind the head string, and the first ball the cue ball contacts is also behind the head string, the shot is a foul unless the cue ball crosses the head string before that contact. If such a shot is intentional, it is unsportsmanlike conduct.

The cue ball must either cross the head string or contact a ball in front of or on the head string or the shot is a foul, and the cue ball is in hand for the following player according to the rules of the specific game. If such shot is intentional, it is also unsportsmanlike conduct.

6.12 Cue Stick on the Table

If the shooter uses his cue stick in order to align a shot by placing it on the table without having a hand on the stick, it is a foul.

6.13 Playing out of Turn

It is a standard foul to unintentionally play out of turn.

Normally, the balls will be played from the position left by the mistaken play. If a player intentionally plays out of turn, it should be treated like **6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct**.

6.14 Three Consecutive Fouls

If a player fouls three times without making an intervening legal shot, it is a serious foul. In games scored by the rack, such as nine ball, the fouls must be in a single rack. Some games such as eight ball do not include this rule.

The referee must warn a shooter who is on two fouls when he comes to the table that he is on two fouls. Otherwise a possible third foul will be considered to be only the second.

6.15 Slow Play

If the referee feels that a player is playing too slowly, he may advise that player to speed up his play. If the player does not speed up, the referee may impose a shot clock on that match that applies to both players. If the shooter exceeds the time limit specified for the tournament, a standard foul will be called and the incoming player is rewarded according to the rules applicable to the game being played. (**Rule 6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct may also apply**).

6.16 Ball Rack Template Foul

It is a foul when a Ball Rack Template, removed from the playing surface, interferes with the game i.e. if the template is lying on the rail and a ball (cue or object ball) touches the template that is lying on the rail.

6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The normal penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct is the same as for a serious foul, but the referee may impose a penalty depending on his judgment of the conduct. Among other penalties possible are a warning; a standard-foul penalty, which will count as part of a three-foul sequence if applicable; a serious-foul penalty; loss of a rack, set or match; ejection from the competition possibly with forfeiture of all prizes, trophies and standings points. Unsportsmanlike conduct is any intentional behavior that brings disrepute to the sport or which disrupts or changes the game to the extent that it cannot be played fairly. It includes

- (a) distracting the opponent;
- (b) changing the position of the balls in play other than by a shot;
- (c) playing a shot by intentionally miscuing;
- (d) continuing to play after a foul has been called or play has been suspended;
- (e) practicing during a match;
- (f) marking the table;
- (g) delay of the game; and
- (h) using equipment inappropriately.

7. RULES/REGULATIONS FOR WHEELCHAIR COMPETITION

7.1 Player's Eligibility

The criteria for a player to be eligible for Wheelchair competition is that he/she must be wheelchair mobility dependent for a minimum of 80% of the time. In some cases, a doctor's letter may be required to determine eligibility.

7.2 Violations Resulting in Fouls

- (a) The shooter must remain seated while playing a shot (at least one cheek on the seat or seat pad). If a seat pad is used, it must remain flat and cover the seat of the wheelchair evenly. The seat pad cannot be bunched up on the seat straddled by the shooter with the shooter's legs or stumps. The shooter may not sit on the wheel or armrest. The point where the shooter's buttocks rest on the seat or seat pad must not be higher than 27 in from the surface on which the wheelchair rolls in its normal operating position.
- (b) Players must not have their foot/feet on the floor while playing a shot. Players must not use their legs or stumps as a leverage against any part of the table or the wheelchair while playing a shot.

- (c) Players are permitted to use any help aids such as cue extensions, special bridges, etc. Players may not be assisted when actually shooting (however, another person may hold the bridge, but must not help with the stroke of the cue). If a player requires assistance to roll around the table, another person may help them, but must not be touching the wheelchair during the actual shot.

Violations of the above are considered to violate **6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct** and will typically be penalized as follows: 1st offense, cue ball in hand for the opponent anywhere on the table; 2nd offense, loss of the current game; 3rd offense, loss of the match. The referee may choose a different penalty depending on the nature of the offense.

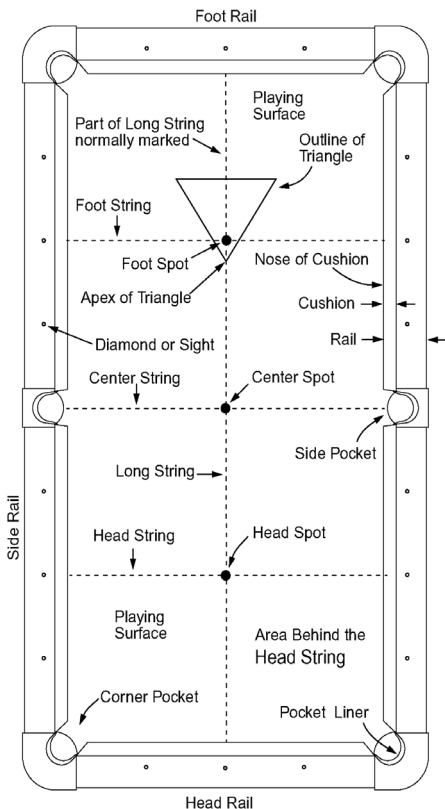
7.3 Wheelchair Requirements

No standing wheelchairs may be used in the standing position. A player's wheelchair should be clean and in good working order.

8. DEFINITIONS USED IN THE RULES

The following definitions apply throughout these Rules.

8.1 Parts of the Table



The following definitions of parts of the table refer to the accompanying diagram. Some details of exact size and placement are in the world governing body's (WPA) Equipment Specifications. See the WPA website at www.wpapool.com for current information.

The table is comprised of **rails, cushions, a playing surface** and **pockets**. The **foot end** of the table is where the object balls usually begin, while the **head end** is where the cue ball usually begins.

Behind the head string is the area between the **head rail** and the **head string**, not including the **head string**.

The **cushions, tops of the rails, pockets** and **pocket liners** are parts of the rails.

There are four "strings" on the playing surface as shown in the diagram:

- the **long string** down the center of the table;
- the **head string** bounding the quarter of the table closest to the head rail;
- the **foot string** bounding the quarter of the table closest to the foot rail; and
- the **center string** between the two side pockets.

These lines are only marked as mentioned below.

The rails may have inlays referred to as **diamonds** or sights which mark 1/4th of the width and 1/8th of the length of the table measured from nose to nose on the cushions.

On the **playing surface**, which is the flat, cloth-covered part of the table, the following will be marked if they are used in the game being played:

- the **foot spot**, where the foot string and the long string meet;

- the **head spot**, where the head string and the long string meet;
- the **center spot**, where the center string and the long string meet;
- the **head string**;
- the **long string** between the foot spot and the foot rail; and
- the **triangle**, either in outline or by alignment marks depending on the game.

8.2 Shot

A shot begins when the tip contacts the cue ball due to a forward stroke motion of the cue stick. A shot ends when all balls in play have stopped moving and spinning. A shot is said to be legal if the shooter did not foul during the shot.

8.3 Ball Pocketed

A ball is pocketed if it comes to rest in a pocket below the playing surface or enters the ball return system. A ball near the brink of a pocket partly supported by another ball is considered pocketed if removal of the supporting ball would cause the ball to fall into the pocket.

If a ball stops near the edge of a pocket, and remains apparently motionless for five seconds, it is not considered pocketed if it later falls into the pocket by itself. See [1.7 Balls Settling](#) for other details. During that five second period, the referee should ensure that no other shot is taken. An object ball that rebounds from a pocket back onto the playing surface is not a pocketed ball. If the cue ball contacts an already pocketed ball, the cue ball will be considered pocketed whether it rebounds from the pocket or not. The referee will remove pocketed object

balls from full or nearly full pockets, but it is the shooter's responsibility to see that this duty is performed.

8.4 Driven to a Rail

A ball is said to be driven to a rail if it is not touching that rail and then touches that rail. A ball touching a rail at the start of a shot (said to be "frozen" to the rail) is not considered driven to that rail unless it leaves the rail and returns. A ball that is pocketed or driven off the table is also considered to have been driven to a rail. A ball is assumed not to be frozen to any rail unless it is declared frozen by the referee, the shooter, or the opponent. See also **Regulation 28, Calling Frozen Balls.**

8.5 Driven off the Table

A ball is considered driven off the table if it comes to rest other than on the playing surface but is not pocketed. A ball is also considered driven off the table if it would have been driven off the table except for striking an object such as a light fixture, piece of chalk or a player which causes it to return to the table.

A ball that contacts the top of the rail is not considered to have been driven off the table if it returns to the playing surface or enters a pocket.

8.6 Scratch

A shot on which the cue ball is pocketed is called a scratch.

8.7 Cue Ball

The cue ball is the ball that is struck by the shooter at the beginning of a shot. It is traditionally white, but may be marked by a logo or spots. In pocket billiard games, a single cue ball is used by both players.

8.8 Object Balls

The object balls are struck by the cue ball with the usual intent of driving them into pockets. They are typically numbered from one to the number of balls used in the game. Colors and markings of the object balls are covered under the WPA Equipment Specifications.

8.9 Set

In some matches, the match is divided into parts called sets, with a certain number of sets won required to win the match. In turn, a certain number of points or racks won is required to win each set.

8.10 Rack

The rack is the framing device, typically triangular, used to arrange the object balls for the break shot at the start of the game. It also refers to the group of balls so arranged. To rack the object balls is to group them with the rack. A rack is also a portion of a match played with a single rack of object balls. Some games, such as nine ball, are scored at one point per rack.

8.11 Break

A break shot is the opening shot of a match or rack, depending on the game. It happens when the object balls have been racked and the cue ball is played from behind the head string usually with the intent of breaking the rack apart.

8.12 Inning

An inning is a player's turn at the table. It begins when it is legal for him to take a shot, and ends at the end of a shot when it is no longer legal for him to take a shot. In some

games a player may choose not to come to the table in certain situations when play would normally pass to him, and then the player remaining at the table continues the inning (e.g. a push-out at nine ball). The player whose turn it is to play is called the “shooter.”

8.13 Position of Balls

The position of a ball is determined by the projection of its center vertically downward onto the playing surface. A ball is said to be placed on a line or spot when its center is placed directly over that line or spot.

8.14 Re-spotting Balls

In some games, object balls are required to be placed on the playing surface other than when forming a new rack. They are said to be re-spotted when they are so placed. See **1.4 Spotting Balls**.

8.15 Restoring a Position

If the balls are disturbed, the rules of the game may require them to be replaced where they were. The referee will replace the balls to their original position as accurately as possible.

8.16 Jump Shot

A jump shot is one in which the cue ball is made to go over an intervening obstacle such as an object ball or part of the cushion. Whether such a shot is legal depends on how it is accomplished and the intention of the shooter. Usually a legal jump shot is played by elevating the cue stick and driving the cue ball down into the playing surface from which it rebounds.

8.17 Safety Shot

A shot is said to be a safety shot if the game in play is a call shot game and the shooter declared the shot to the referee or his opponent to be a “safety” before the shot. Play passes to the other player at the end of a safety shot.

8.18 Miscue

A miscue occurs when the cue tip slides off the cue ball possibly due to a contact that is too eccentric or to insufficient chalk on the tip. It is usually accompanied by a sharp sound and evidenced by a discoloration of the tip. Although some miscues involve contact of the side of the cue stick with the cue ball, unless such contact is clearly visible, it is assumed not to have occurred. A scoop shot, in which the cue tip contacts the playing surface and the cue ball at the same time and this causes the cue ball to rise off the cloth, is treated like a miscue. Note that intentional miscues are covered by **6.17 Unsportsmanlike Conduct** (c).

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1. Administrative Discretion

These regulations address dress requirements, protests, scheduling issues, and other items that are not part of the actual Rules of Play but need to be regulated for the individual event. Some aspects of applying the regulations vary from tournament to tournament, such as the number of sets in a match and who breaks after the first rack at nine ball. The management of an event is entitled to enforce regulations for the event. These Regulations do not have the same force as the Rules; the Rules have priority.

2. Exceptions to the Rules

The actual Rules of Play may not be altered unless a specific waiver is issued by the ACS national office for the individual event. A written explanation of any rules change should be made available at the players' meeting.

3. Dress Code

Each player's attire must always meet the level of the competition and be clean, proper and in good condition. If an athlete is unsure about the legality of his attire, the athlete should approach the Tournament Director or Referee before the match and ask whether the attire is legal. The Tournament Director [or Head Referee if one is present] has the final say with regards to the legality of attire. A player may be disqualified for dress code violation. If there is no announcement before the event, the ACS dress code is assumed.

3.1 Singles Competition

- Men and women must wear sleeved shirts of polo/golf-style or button-down style with a conventional fold-over collar. Absolutely no T-shirts allowed. Absolutely no sweats, warm-up suits or jogging suits allowed. Absolutely no headgear allowed with one exception: caps & hats facing forward are permitted. No visors or any other head gear. Ear buds, Bluetooth, cell phones, etc. are not permitted.
- Men must wear long pants, either dress pants or neat, clean, untorn jeans. Women may wear dress pants, Capri-style pants, or neat, clean, untorn jeans. Women may also wear culottes, skirts or sleeved dresses, of conservative length.
- Men and women must wear clean, neat, close-toed shoes at all times. Should a player require a footwear exception for medical reasons, the player must provide a letter on official letterhead from the player's health care provider before the tournament (and keep a copy of the letter in their possession at all times, available for review by a referee, if requested).

3.2 Scotch Doubles

Same requirement as Singles competition. Matching shirts worn by Scotch Doubles teams are preferred, but not mandatory.

3.3 Team Competition

- Same guidelines as Singles competition.
- Team shirts are required for all teams during Team competition.
- Dress code must meet the Singles competition requirements.

- Color and style of team shirts must be matching (except for the players' names) for all team members. This includes front and back of shirts, if they have a logo or monogram.
- Each member of a team must have their own team shirt/blouse. "Borrowing" the shirt of a teammate is not permitted.

4. Tapping of Balls/Racking/Ball Rack Template

In some cases, tapping the balls while racking to insure no spaces between the balls may be necessary. Players must never tap balls; only tournament officials should tap or re-tap (if needed) the racking area. Other than the traditional triangle rack, a Ball Rack Template ("Magic Rack" or similar device) can be used for the disciplines: 8-ball, 9-ball and 10-ball. In 14/1 it's not allowed to use the Ball Rack Template.

4.1 Positioning of the Ball Rack Template

The table must be marked before the tournament has started. A Vertical line must be drawn for the positioning of the Ball Rack Template. This line must be long enough to pass through the top and bottom holes on the Ball Rack Template.

4.2 Removing of the Ball Rack Template

After the break, the Ball Rack Template must be removed by the referee from the table as soon as possible without disturbing any of the balls. If a referee is not present and there are balls obstructing the removal of the Ball Rack Template, the opponent must be the one to remove the Ball Rack Template. If there are no obstructions, the player at

the table may remove the Ball Rack Template without the opponent interfering.

With or without a referee present, the Ball Rack Template can only be removed if not more than 2 balls are an obstruction in its removal. Exception to this rule applies if 1 or more balls are frozen and obstructing the removal, in this case the Ball Rack Template stays in place until such time that the frozen balls are no longer an obstacle in the removal of the Ball Rack Template. With the removal of the Ball Rack Template, the referee or opponent may use markers in the form of ball markers or chalk blocks which are at their disposal to mark the obstructing balls. The Ball Rack Template must be placed in its required spot away from the playing area including the rails and the balls placed back into their original position.

4.3 Specifications for Ball Rack Template

Ball Rack template should be made of a plastic material, no thicker than 0.14 mm and shouldn't affect the table in any way. Template may not be glued on the playing surface.

5. Playing with an “Area” Referee

It may be that a tournament is being played with “area” referees who are each responsible for several tables and there is no referee constantly at each table. In this case, the players are still expected to observe all the rules of the game. The recommended method to conduct play in this situation is as follows.

The non-shooting player will perform all of the duties of the referee. If, prior to a particular shot, the shooting player

feels that his opponent will not be able to properly judge the shot, he should ask the area referee to watch the shot. The non-shooting player may also ask for such attention if he feels that he is unable or is unwilling to rule on the shot. Either player has the power to suspend play until he is satisfied with the way the match is being refereed.

If a dispute arises between two players in an un-refereed match, and the area referee is asked to make a decision without having seen the cause of the dispute, he should be careful to understand the situation as completely as possible. This might include asking trusted witnesses, reviewing video tapes, or reenacting the shot. If the area referee is asked to determine whether a foul occurred and there is no evidence of the foul except the claim of one player while the other player claims that there was no foul, then it is assumed that no foul occurred.

6. Penalizing Unsportsmanlike Conduct

The rules and regulations give the referee and other officials considerable latitude in penalizing unsportsmanlike conduct. Several factors should be considered in such decisions, including previous conduct, previous warnings, how serious the offense is, and information that the players may have been given at the Players' Meeting at the start of the tournament. In addition, the level of competition may be considered since players at the top levels can be expected to be fully familiar with the rules and regulations, while relative beginners may be unfamiliar with how the rules are normally applied.

7. Protest Ruling

If a player needs a decision to be taken, the first person

to be contacted is the referee. The referee will form his decision by all means that seem suitable to him. If the player wants to protest against that ruling, he may contact the Head Referee and after that the Tournament Director. In any regular tournament, the Tournament Director's decision is binding and final. In ACS-produced events, there may be a further appeal to the ACS administrative staff. A deposit of \$100 from the protestor is required for such an appeal and it will be forfeited in case of an adverse final decision.

A player is allowed to ask for a reconsideration of a factual decision by the referee only one time. If he asks for reconsideration of the same matter a second time, it will be treated as unsportsmanlike conduct.

8. Instructions for Referees

The referee will determine all matters of fact relating to the rules, maintain fair playing conditions, call fouls, and take other action as required by these rules. The referee will suspend play when conditions do not permit fair play. Play will also be suspended when a call or ruling is being disputed. The referee will announce fouls and other specific situations as required by the rules. He will answer questions as required by the rules on matters such as foul count. He must not give advice on the application of the rules, or other points of play on which he is not required by the rules to speak. He may assist the player by getting and replacing the mechanical bridge. If necessary for the shot, the referee or a deputy may hold the light fixture out of the way.

When a game has a three-foul rule, the referee should note to the players any second foul at the time that it occurs and

also when the player who is on two fouls returns to the table. The first warning is not required by the rules but is meant to prevent later misunderstandings. If there is a scoreboard on which the foul count is visible to the players, it satisfies the warning requirement.

9. Referee's Responsiveness

The referee shall answer players' inquiries regarding objective data, such as whether a ball will be in the rack, whether a ball is behind the head string, what the count is, how many points are needed for a victory, if a player or his opponent is on a foul, what rule would apply if a certain shot is made, etc. When asked for a clarification of a rule, the referee will explain the applicable rule to the best of his ability, but any misstatement by the referee will not protect a player from enforcement of the actual rules. The referee must not offer or provide any subjective opinion that would affect play, such as whether a good hit can be made on a prospective shot, whether a combination can be made, or how the table seems to be playing, etc.

10. 8-Ball Addendum

If the groups have been determined and the player mistakenly shoots at and pockets a ball of the opponent's group, the foul must be called before he takes his next shot. Upon recognition by either player or the referee that the groups have been reversed, the rack will be halted and will be replayed with the original player executing the break shot.

11. Restoring a Position

In any case a position of balls needs to be amended it is solely the referee's duty and responsibility to perform this

task. He may form his opinion by any means he considers appropriate at the time. He may consult one or both players on that, however, the particular player's opinion is not binding and his judgment can be amended. Each involved player has the right to dispute the referee's judgment just once, but after that it is the referee's discretion to restore the ball or balls.

12. Acceptance of Equipment

After the tournament or a particular match has been started, the player has no right to question the quality or legality of any equipment provided by the Tournament Organizer unless supported by the referee or the tournament director; any protests must be made beforehand.

13. Clearing Pockets

For the ball to be considered pocketed, it must meet all the requirements described in Rule 8.3 Ball Pocketed. Although the task of clearing pockets of balls lies within the referee's description of duties, the ultimate responsibility for any occurrence of fouls as a result of such misadministration always rests with the shooter. If the referee is absent, for example in the case of an area referee, the shooter may perform this duty himself, providing he makes his intention clear and obvious to the opponent.

14. Time Out

Unless specified otherwise by the tournament organizer, each player is allowed to take one time out of five minutes during matches. To exercise his right to a time out the player must: (1) inform the referee of his intention and, (2) make sure the referee is aware of the fact and marks it on the score sheet and, (3) make sure the referee marks the

table for suspended play. (The standard procedure will be to place a cue stick on the table.)

The opponent must remain seated as during normal play; should he involve himself in an action other than standard match-playing activities it will be considered exercising his time out and no further time out will be allowed.

- The time out at eight ball and nine ball is taken between racks and play is suspended.
- At 14.1, the time out begins between racks; and the player at the table may continue his inning should the opponent decide to take his time out. If the non-shooter takes a time out, he must make sure there is a referee to supervise the table during his absence; otherwise he has no right to protest against any misplay by the player at the table.

The player taking the time out should remember that his actions must be within the spirit of the game and if he acts otherwise, he is subject to a penalty under the Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

If a player is suffering from a medical condition, the tournament director may choose to adjust the number of time outs.

15. Subsequent Break Shots

For deciding who will break in racks after the first, in games such as nine ball, the tournament management may choose a procedure different from the standard one listed in the Rules. For example, the winner may break or the players may alternate “serves” of three consecutive breaks.

16. Rack at Nine Ball

As stated in **Rule 2.2**, balls other than the one and nine are placed randomly in the rack and should not be set

in any particular order during any rack. If the referee is not racking, and a player believes that his opponent is intentionally placing balls within the rack, he may bring this to the attention of a tournament official. If the tournament official determines that the player is intentionally positioning balls in the rack, the player will be given an official warning to refrain from doing so. Once warned, should the player continue with intentional positioning of balls in the rack, he shall be penalized for unsportsmanlike conduct.

17. Open Break Requirements

The tournament management may set additional requirements on the break shot on games that require an “open” break such as nine ball. For example, it may be required to drive three balls above the head string or pocket them.

18. The Three Point Break Rule

(1) On the break shot, a minimum of three object balls must either be pocketed, or touch the head string line, or a combination of both. For example, if one object ball is pocketed, then at least two object balls must touch the head string line; or if two object balls are pocketed, then at least one object ball must touch the head string line. To touch the head string line means that the edge of the object ball must reach (break) the string line.

(2) If a player fails to meet the requirements in (1), but otherwise makes a legal break, the incoming player has the choice to accept the tables as is, or hand the shot back to his opponent.

(3) In accepting the table as is, the incoming player is not permitted to play a “push-out”, he must play a legal

shot to the ball on.

(4) If the table is handed back to the breaker, the breaker is permitted to play a push-out. If so, his opponent will then have the choice to either play the shot, or hand it back.

(5) If a player fails to meet the requirements of (1), but otherwise makes a legal break and pockets the 9 ball, the 9 ball is reposted before the next shot is played.

The three point break rule may be used in ACS-produced 9-ball events together with tapping or ball rack.

19. Deflecting Cue Ball on Opening Break

It may be that the player miscues on a break shot and tries to prevent the cue ball from following its normal path by deflecting it with his cue stick or by some other means.

This practice and other similar practices are absolutely forbidden under the unsportsmanlike conduct rule, Rule 6.17(b). Players must never intentionally touch any ball in play except with a forward stroke of the cue tip on the cue ball. The penalty for such a foul will be determined by the referee according to the unsportsmanlike conduct guidelines in Rule 6.17.

20. Shot Clock

A shot clock may be requested at any time during a match by a tournament official or either player involved in that match. The Tournament Director or other appointed official decides whether to use a shot clock or not. Should a shot clock be introduced, both players will be “on the clock” and there will be an official timekeeper for the duration of the match. As a recommendation, players will have 35 seconds per shot with a warning when 10 seconds remain. Each

player will be allowed one 25-second extension during each rack. The shot clock will be started when all balls come to rest, including spinning balls. The shot clock will end when the cue tip strikes the cue ball to initiate a stroke or when the player's time expires from the shot clock. If a player runs out of time, it will be a standard foul.

21. Cue Ball Fouls Only

If there is no referee presiding over a match (See **Regulation 5**), it may be played using cue ball fouls only. That is, touching or moving any ball other than the cue ball would not be a foul unless it changes the outcome of the shot by either touching another ball or having any ball, including the cue ball, going through the area originally occupied by the moved ball. If this does not happen, then the opposing player must be given the option of either leaving the ball where it lies or replacing the ball as near as possible to its original position to the agreement of both players. If a player shoots without giving his opponent the option to replace, it will be a foul resulting in cue ball in hand for the opponent.

22. Late Start

Players must be at the table and ready to play their assigned match at the appointed match time. If a player is late for his appointed match time, he will have fifteen minutes to report to his assigned table ready to play or he will lose the match. It is recommended to announce after five minutes a first call for the player, after ten minutes a second call and after fourteen minutes a final "one minute" warning. A stricter requirement may be used for repeat offenders.

23. Outside Interference

See **Rule 1.9 Outside Interference**. The referee should ensure that interference is prevented, for example by a spectator or a player on an adjacent table, and may suspend play as needed. Interference may be physical or verbal.

24. Coaching *

It is permitted for a player to receive advice from a coach during a match. This should not be on a continuous shot-by-shot basis that changes the nature of the game. It is up to the referee and tournament management to set additional limits on this. A time out can be used to get coaching help. The coach should not approach the table. If the referee decides that the coach is interfering with or disrupting the match, he may direct the coach to stay away from the match.

* Unless otherwise stated or specified at the event, no coaching of any kind is permitted during a match at any ACS-produced event.

25. Act of God

It may be that something unforeseen under these rules will occur during a match. In such a case, the referee will decide how to proceed in a fair manner. For example, it may be necessary to move a rack in progress to a different table, in which case a stalemate may be declared if a position cannot be transferred.

26. Remaining in Player's Chair

The non-shooting player should remain in his designated chair while his opponent is at the table. Should a player need to leave the playing area during matches, he must request and receive permission from the referee. Should a player leave the playing area without the permission of the referee, it will be treated like unsportsmanlike conduct.

27. Split Hits

If the cue ball strikes a legal object ball and a non-legal object ball at approximately the same instant, and it cannot be determined which ball was hit first, it will be assumed that the legal target was struck first.

28. Calling Frozen Balls

The referee should be careful to inspect and announce the status of any object ball that might be frozen to a cushion and the cue ball when it might be frozen to a ball. The seated player may remind the referee that such a call is necessary. The shooter must allow time for such a determination to be asked for and made, and may ask for the call himself.



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