

8-BALL BCA Rules

The Game

8-Ball is a call shot game played with a cue ball and fifteen object balls numbered 1 through 15. Each player or team has a group of seven balls: the solid-colored balls numbered 1 through 7, or the striped balls numbered 9 through 15. The 8-ball is the game winning ball. The object of the game is to pocket your entire group of balls and then legally pocket the 8-ball. The game is played by two players or two teams.

8-Ball Rack

The balls are racked as follows.

- a. in a triangle with the apex ball on the foot spot
- b. the rows behind the apex are parallel to the foot string.
- c. the 8-ball is in the middle of the row of three balls.
- d. the remaining balls are placed at random, except that the ball at each rear corner of the rack must be of a different group from the other rear corner.

(The left/right orientation those two balls does not matter)

Break Requirements

1. You begin the break with ball in hand behind the head string. The break is not a called shot, and you may not call a ball or a safety on the break. There is no requirement for the cue ball to contact any ball first. You must legally pocket a ball or cause at least four object balls to contact one or more cushions or it is an illegal break. If you legally pocket a ball; you continue to shoot. If you do not legally pocket a ball or you commit a foul, your inning ends.

APPLIED RULINGS

2-3 Break Requirements

1. Situation: Player A, preparing to break and having placed the cue ball, accidentally or intentionally contacts the cue ball with a legal stroke motion. Regardless of the reason (accidental contact, miscue or any other reason) and regardless of how far the cue ball moves, four object balls are not driven to a rail and no ball is pocketed.
 2. Ruling: Illegal break under Rule 2-3-1. Player B may elect any option under Rule 2-3-3. (See Below) If there is also a foul on the break, the illegal break takes precedence and is enforced instead of the foul.
2. If you intend to break softly, you must notify your opponent and allow them the opportunity to call a referee to watch your break. If you fail to notify your opponent, you will receive a mandatory warning on the first offense. Second and subsequent offenses

are fouls.

3. If your break is illegal, with or without a foul, your inning ends. Your opponent may:

- a. re-rack the balls and break.
- b. requires you to re-rack the balls and break again.

The game cannot continue until there is a legal break. If your opponent's break is illegal and there is also a foul, the illegal break takes precedence, and you must choose either option (a) or (b) above.

4. If you foul on a legal break and do not pocket the 8-ball, your inning ends and any other pocketed object balls remain pocketed. Your opponent receives ball in hand anywhere on the table.

5. In all cases on the break, jumped object balls other than the 8-ball are not returned to the table except in the case of a re-rack. If the 8-ball is jumped it is spotted.

8-Ball Pocketed on the Break

1. If you pocket the 8-ball on the break and do not foul, you may:

- a. have the 8-ball spotted and accept the table in position.
- b. re-rack the balls and break again.

2. If you pocket the 8-ball on the break and foul, your inning ends. Your opponent may:

- a. have the 8-ball spotted and take ball in hand anywhere on the table.
- b. re-rack the balls and break.

3. If the 8-ball is pocketed on the break, and it is not noticed until after another shot has been taken, the game will be replayed with the player who broke the game breaking again.

Table Open After the Break

The table is always open on the shot after the break and remains open until groups are established. When the table is open, all object balls except the 8-ball are legal object balls. For combination shots, a ball of one group may be contacted first to pocket a ball of the other group. The 8-ball may be part of such a combination if it is not the first ball contacted by the cue ball.

Establishing Groups

1. Groups are established when the first object ball is legally pocketed on a shot after the break. The player legally pocketing the first ball is assigned that group, and the opponent

is assigned the other group. You cannot establish a group on a safety.

2. If all balls of either group are pocketed on the break or illegally pocketed before groups are established, either player may legally shoot the 8-ball during their inning.

You win the game if you legally pocket the 8-ball on such a shot.

3. Once they are established, groups can never change for the remainder of that game. If a player shoots the wrong group, and no foul is called before the next shot and the player continues to shoot at that group, or if at any time during the game it is discovered by either player or a referee that the players are shooting the wrong groups, the game will be replayed with the player who broke the game breaking again. If a game has ended and then the players realize they shot the wrong groups, the game is not replayed and the result stands.

Continuing Play

1. Once groups are established, play continues with each player having their group as legal object balls. Balls in your opponents' group and the 8-ball are illegal object balls.

When it is your inning, you continue to shoot if you legally pocket a ball on each shot. Object balls pocketed in addition to the called ball remain pocketed. Your inning ends if you do not legally pocket a ball.

2. Jumped object balls and illegally pocketed balls are not returned to the table but do count in favor of the player with that group.

Safety Play

Prior to any shot except the break, you may declare a safety. On a safety, your inning ends after the shot regardless of whether you pocket any ball. If you do not declare a safety and you pocket a ball on an obvious shot, your inning continues, and you must shoot again. A safety must meet the requirements of Rule 1.19, Legal Shot, or it is a foul.

Shooting the 8-Ball

1. The 8-ball becomes your legal object ball on your first shot after there are no balls of your group on the table. The player who legally pockets the 8-ball wins the game

2. Except for the provisions of Rule 2.10, it is not loss of game if you foul when shooting the 8-ball but do not pocket the 8-ball. Your opponent receives ball in hand.

2-10 Loss of Game

You lose the game if:

- a. you illegally pocket the 8-ball.
- b. you jump the 8-ball off the table on any shot other than the break.
- c. you pocket the 8-ball on the same shot as the last ball of your group.
- d. you violate any General Rule that requires loss of game as a penalty.
- e. you pocket the 8-ball on a shot defined as not obvious that you do not call
- f. you commit a foul under Rule 1-33-4 or 1-33-7 and the 8-ball falls into a pocket.

Stalemate

If a referee judges that the table is in a position such that any attempt to pocket or move a ball will result in loss of game on that shot, or that the game is not progressing because the position of the table has not significantly changed through three consecutive innings by each player, the referee will declare a stalemate and the game will be replayed with the player who broke the game breaking again.

Calling Ball and Pocket

1. You must designate the called ball and the called pocket before each shot. You may make the designation verbally or by a clear, unambiguous gesture. You are not required to call obvious shots. You are not required to indicate incidental kisses and caroms, or incidental cushion contacts that do not constitute bank shots or kick shots. Not all kisses, caroms and cushion contacts are incidental. If a dispute arises as to whether a shot was obvious based on such contact, the referee is the sole judge.
2. You may only call one ball on a shot. If you call more than one ball, or if you use any conditional phrase such as “just in case” concerning possibly pocketing more than one ball, your inning ends after the shot regardless of whether you pocket any ball. Any ball pocketed on such a shot is an illegally pocketed ball. Your opponent accepts the table in position.
3. If you are not certain what shot your opponent is attempting, it is your responsibility to ask. You must ask before your opponent is down on the shot. Except for shots defined as not obvious, if you do not ask and a dispute arises as to whether the shot was obvious, the referee is the sole judge.
4. You must always call shots that are defined as not obvious. This rule applies regardless of whether your opponent asks about the shot, and regardless of how

simple or obvious the shot may appear.

5. When calling shots defined as not obvious, you are only required to designate the called ball and called pocket. If shooting a combination shot, you do not have to say the word “combination”, or state which ball will be struck first or the sequence of balls. When shooting a bank shot or kick shot you do not have to say the word “bank” or “kick” nor specify which cushions will be involved in the shot.

6. When the game winning ball is your legal object ball, if you pocket the ball on a shot defined as not obvious but fail to call the shot: your inning ends, the ball is spotted, and the incoming player must accept the table in position. Exception: Rule 1-16-6 does not apply to 8-Ball.

7. If you do not call a shot defined as not obvious and you pocket any ball on such a shot, your inning ends. The incoming player accepts the table in position.

8. A shot that was obvious prior to the shot will count for the shooter if the shot inadvertently:

a. becomes a bank shot because the called ball did not go directly into the called pocket but instead contacted two or more cushions prior to being pocketed in the called pocket, or.

b. becomes a kick shot because the cue ball initially missed the called ball, contacted one or more cushions, and then pocketed the called ball in the called pocket.

Calling a Safety

This rule applies to 8-Ball.

1. If playing a safety, you must communicate with your opponent in a clear and unambiguous manner. Safeties must be called verbally – gestures are not sufficient, no matter how clear they may appear.

2. The non-shooting player has responsibilities when a safety is called, and should acknowledge a called safety in a clear and unambiguous manner. If a dispute arises as to whether a safety was called, the referee is the sole judge.

Legal Stroke

You must use a legal stroke. Any lifting, sideways, or other brushing motion of the cue, such that the force that propels the cue ball does not primarily result from a forward motion of the cue as defined under “Legal Stroke”, is a foul.

Legal Shot

1. For a shot to be legal, the first ball contacted by the cue ball must be a legal object ball, or a simultaneous hit with a legal and illegal object ball may occur. After that contact:

- a. any object ball must be pocketed, or.
- b. any object ball or the cue ball must contact a cushion.

It is a foul if one of those requirements is not met.

2. If the ball used to meet the cushion contact requirement of Rule 1-19-1-b is declared frozen to a cushion at the beginning of the shot, then that ball must leave the cushion it is frozen to and then:

- a. contacts a cushion other than the one to which it was frozen, or.
- b. contacts another object ball before it contacts the cushion to which it was frozen.

4. An object ball is not considered frozen to a cushion unless it is declared frozen immediately prior to the shot and before the shooter is down on the shot.

5. Contacting a ball frozen to a cushion does not constitute contacting that cushion.

1-20 Cue Ball Frozen to Object Ball or Cushion

1. The cue ball is not considered frozen to an object ball or cushion unless it is declared frozen immediately prior to the shot.

2. If the cue ball is frozen to a legal object ball, it is legal to shoot toward the object ball provided you use a legal stroke.

3. If the cue ball is frozen to a cushion, it is legal to shoot the cue ball into the cushion provided you use a legal stroke.

4. Despite the legality of the stroke with respect to the cue ball and frozen ball or cushion, the presence of one or more other object balls or a cushion nearby a frozen cue ball or object ball may create the possibility of a violation of Rule 1-30 involving the cue ball and the nearby ball or cushion.

5. Shooting the cue ball away from an object ball that is frozen to the cue ball does not constitute contacting that object ball.

Penalties for Fouls

1. If you commit a foul, or otherwise violate the rules, you are penalized according to the General Rules and the specific rules of the game being played.

2. Unless otherwise stated in the General Rules or specific game rules, if you commit a foul or otherwise violate the rules: your inning ends, and your opponent receives ball in hand.

3. Some fouls specify a warning for the first offense during a match. However, if you continually commit such fouls from match to match, it may be considered Unsportsmanlike.

4.1-40 Deliberate Foul (also see AR 1-45, Unsportsmanlike Conduct) Rule 1-40-b: This rule does not apply to handing or moving the cue ball to the opponent after a foul has already been committed. It is common for a player to want to end their inning without disturbing the lay of the table. However, the only way to end your inning without violating Rule 1-40-b is to attempt a legal stroke. Any other action, including refusing to shoot, is a violation of Rule 1-40-b.

Head Referee Answer to Picking up cue ball:

That is Unsportsmanlike Conduct and can be penalized from a warning to expulsion from event.

Mostly the first time it is done is a warning and then after that a loss of game.

Most do not progress further.

The only thing about that is if a player is constantly getting a warning for doing that then it would jump to loss of game immediately.

Question asked of the Head Referee:

Is it legal to intentionally sink your opponent's ball, and not try to hit your own ball?

Answer:

Yes, and it is a ball in hand foul and a strategy in 8-ball where controlling the table is sometimes more important to winning a game than just making the balls.

Some feel that giving up ball in hand is worth it if they can still maintain, in their thoughts, control of the table.

A common example is a player, in an 8-Ball game, intentionally shooting at the opponent's group to pocket the opponent's ball or move it into an unfavorable position. Even though the shooter gives up ball in hand, they hope that the resulting position of the table works in their favor. During this type of shot, the foul is contacting an illegal object ball first, but otherwise the shot is executed legally, using the cue ball and using a legal stroke.

However, if the shot were executed by contacting the object ball directly with the cue, the foul would be penalized under Rule 1.40, with a mandatory warning given (assuming only one ball was moved), and a loss of game being awarded on the second offense

Situation: Player A, wanting to end their inning but not wanting to disturb the lay of the table, taps the cue ball with a legal stroke, moving it only slightly and not attempting to complete a legal shot.

Ruling: (a) foul on Player A. It is not Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

Discussion: The intentional commission of a foul, which frequently occurs when a player executes a foul shot that gives up ball in hand but still puts their opponent at a disadvantage, is an accepted practice. This is not a deliberate foul as addressed by Rules 1-40 and 1-45-4.

Unsportsmanlike conduct as described in rule book

1-45 Unsportsmanlike Conduct; also 1-1, Player Responsibility and 1-42, Non-Shooting Player Responsibility

General Discussion: Unless specifically stated otherwise, no act, failure to act, statement, or omission of information that would normally be legal under the rules is exempt from being penalized under Rule 1-45 if it is the judgment of a referee or other event official that it was committed in an unsportsmanlike manner.

The situation from the above discussion of Rule 1-44, Concession of Match, will serve to demonstrate the principle. Despite the specific wording of Rule 1-44 and the Applied Ruling that goes with it, if a referee judged that the timing, body language, relative positions of the players, or any other pertinent information relative to the unscrewing of the break cue gave the clear overall effect of an unsportsmanlike act, the player would still be subject to penalties under Rule 1-45.

Sensitivity will be applied to issues involving communication between players. Attempts to manipulate the rules concerning communicating and acknowledging called shots, safeties, or other required information will receive special scrutiny. For instance, acknowledging a called shot or safety with a barely perceptible nod and then trying to claim later that you did not acknowledge the call will be considered unsportsmanlike conduct. **It is always incumbent on both players to ensure that clear communication takes place.**

Team Penalties In team play, unsportsmanlike conduct violations committed by team members who are not involved in a game will be penalized as team fouls.

Penalties, if applicable to play, will be applied to all tables. Penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct violations committed by team members that are involved in a game may be applied to the player or the team, at the discretion of the referee.

OFFICIAL RULES OF CUESPORTS INTERNATIONAL 101 Multiple Violations General unsportsmanlike conduct warnings and penalties will be noted by event officials and records maintained throughout the event. Penalties specified by the rules as being cumulative during a match carry forward only through the match.

However, repeated willful violations of the rules, or any current or previous pattern of misconduct, may be considered by event officials in determining penalties for unsportsmanlike conduct.

1. Situation: Player A, wanting to end their inning but not wanting to disturb the lay of the table, taps the cue ball with a legal stroke, moving it only slightly and not attempting to complete a legal shot.

Ruling: (a) foul on Player A. It is not Unsportsmanlike Conduct.

Discussion: The intentional commission of a foul, which frequently occurs when a player executes a foul shot that gives up ball in hand but still puts their opponent at a disadvantage, is an accepted practice.

This is not a deliberate foul as addressed by Rules 1-40 and 1-45-4.

A common example is a player, in an 8-Ball game, intentionally shooting at the opponent's group in order to pocket the opponent's ball or move it into an unfavorable position.

Even though the shooter gives up ball in hand, they hope that the resulting position of the table works in their favor. During this type of shot, the foul is contacting an illegal object ball first, but otherwise the shot is executed legally, using the cue ball and using a legal stroke.

However, if the shot were executed by contacting the object ball directly with the cue, the foul would be penalized under Rule 1.40, with a mandatory warning given (assuming only one ball was moved), and a loss of game being awarded on the second offense.

2. Situation: During a match, Player A asks Player B if it is legal to use a certain cue or piece of equipment. Player B, knowing that the cue or equipment is illegal and that it would be a foul to use it:

(a) remains silent or responds "I don't know";

(b) gives a response that specifically or implicitly gives Player A permission to use the cue or leads Player A to believe that the cue is legal.

Player A uses the cue to execute a shot.

Ruling: (a) foul on Player A;

(b) unsportsmanlike conduct by Player B with loss of game for the first violation.

Discussion: Players are not required to assist their opponents in any way.

In (a), Player A proceeds at their own peril, and should consult a referee if they desire further information.

In (b), it is willful unsportsmanlike conduct for Player B to trap Player A into a foul.

OFFICIAL RULES OF CUESPORTS INTERNATIONAL:

During a match, players committing the willful act of providing incorrect or misleading information to their opponents are not protected by Rule 1-1-2 if their opponent commits a foul based on that information. In that instance, their opponents are relieved of their responsibility for knowledge of the correct information under Rule 1-1. The protection

of Rule 1-1-2 is specifically reserved for event officials and referees. If you have a question concerning the rules, you should always consult a referee or event official rather than your opponent.

APPLIED RULINGS: 8-BALL

2-2 8-Ball Rack For the purposes of Rule 2-2-d,

the common practice of alternating solids and stripes around the outside of the rack is permissible, provided the pattern is altered so there is a stripe in one rear corner and a solid in the other and that the position of any particular ball is not consistent between racks.

2-3 Break Requirements

1. Situation: Player A, preparing to break and having placed the cue ball, accidentally or intentionally contacts the cue ball with a legal stroke motion. **Regardless of the reason (accidental contact, miscue or any other reason)** and regardless of how far the cue ball moves, four object balls are not driven to a rail and no ball is pocketed.

Ruling: **Illegal break under Rule 2-3-1.** Player B may elect any option under Rule 2-3-3.

If there is also a foul on the break, the illegal break takes precedence and is enforced instead of the foul.

Establishing Groups General Discussion, 2-6-3:

If a game has ended and then the players realize they shot the wrong groups, the game is not replayed and the result stands.

1. Situation: With the table open, Player A calls a safety and pockets a stripe.

OFFICIAL RULES OF CUESPORTS INTERNATIONAL 104 Ruling: Legal shot. Player A's inning ends. Player B accepts the table in position.

The table is still open. Under Rule 2-6 groups cannot be established by a safety.

2-8 Safety Play 2-10 Loss of Game (also definition of "Safety") If following the advice in the Applied Ruling for "Safety," care should be taken when shooting the 8-ball. In 8-ball, any ball pocketed on a safety, whether intentional or not, is defined as an illegally pocketed ball. If you call a safety while shooting the 8-ball and it is pocketed, it is a loss of game under Rule 2-10-a.

2-9 Shooting the 8-Ball The 8-ball becomes your legal object ball regardless of whether the last object ball of your group is legally pocketed, illegally pocketed, or jumped.

2-11 3-7 4-10 6-21 It is not necessary for the referee to observe the three attempts by each player prior to the balls arriving at their position. If the players agree that the table is in a stalemate position, they may mutually declare a stalemate before each player has completed three innings and without informing a referee.