

## 1. THE GAME

The game shall be known as 8-Ball Pool and referred to in these rules as "the game". It is intended that Players and teams should play 8-ball pool in the true spirit of the game and in a sportsmanlike manner. It Should be clearly understood that the referee is the sole judge of what is fair and unfair play. The referee will take whatever action is necessary to ensure that these rules are observed. The referee may. As appropriate Issue warnings, call on a captain/senior referee, abandon the game, or in extreme circumstances award frame or game away.

In order to carry out these duties the referee will be in such a position that a clear view has the table and player is available. The referee is therefore expected to move around the table as the players move. And if necessary the referee may have to approach the table in order to obtain a clear view. However this must be done without obstruction, or distraction to the player, also bearing spectators in mind. If a player disputes a referee's decision, the player may question the decision or ask their captains opinion. The referee may change or uphold the decision. Ultimately the referee's decision is final on the night. Should a player refuse to accept the referees decision the player should instruct their captain of the disagreement and the referee should abandon the frame. The two captains may then decide to replay the frame if all parties are in agreement. The committee wish to make clear it is in the best interest of both teams to sort, disputes out on the night of the match. If this is not possible then the facts should be reported to the general Secretary of the M.P.L. within 48 hours as a protest. As outlined in the Constitution. Should a player accept the referee's decision during the frame then the decision is final, and will not be overturned by the committee.

## 2. REQUIREMENTS OF THE GAME

The game is played on a rectangular 6-pocket table with 15 balls plus a cue ball. Balls comprising of two Numbered groups, 1-7 which are solid coloured balls, 9-15 are striped coloured balls. The 8 ball is a solid colour black. Alternatively, the numerical groups 1-7 and 9-15 may be represented by two different sets of 7 Coloured balls. Usually red replace stripe (9-15), yellow replace solid (1-7). Balls in the two grounds are known as object balls.

## 3. OBJECT OF THE GAME

The player or team pocketing all their group of object balls in any order, and then legally pocketing the 8 ball (Black), wins the game.

## 4. COMMENCEMENT OF THE GAME (OR RESTART)

(a) The balls are racked as illustrated (right) with the 8-ball (black) on the spot which is at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets.

(b) Order of play is determined by the flip of a coin. The winner of the flip has the option of breaking, or requesting the opponent to do so. Where a game is played over more than one frame, after the initial flip of the coin, players break alternately until there is a final and deciding frame when a flip of a coin decides.

(c) The opening player plays at the triangle of object balls by striking the cue ball from any position on or behind the baulk line. An object ball must be pocketed, or-at least two object balls hit any cushion. Failure to do so is a foul break and will result in the balls being racked as in 4(a). The opposing player then starts the game with two visits. Cue ball 'in off' does not count as a ball pocketed if a foul break has occurred the balls must be re-racked.

(d) If the 8-ball (black) is pocketed from the break shot, the balls will be re-racked and the game will be re-started by the same player. No penalty will be incurred. This applies even if other balls, including the cue ball are pocketed, or leave the playing surface ("off the table"). On any re-started game if a player pots the black with the break shot, the game is again re-started by the same player, with two visits if appropriate, (i.e. following a foul break the balls are re-racked the player comes to the table with two visits, should the player break and pot the black the game is again re-started by the same player, who still has two visits).

(e) On the first occasion a player legally pockets an object ball, including following a foul, then that ball denotes their group, unless one or more of both groups are pocketed, the player must then verbally nominate choice of group before playing the next shot, the referee will normally ask a player to nominate a group, but it is the players responsibility to conform to the rules.

(f) If no object ball is pocketed from a legal break then the players continue alternatively playing at either group until such a time as legal pot is made which decides the player's group.

(g) If a foul is committed, (other than as rule 4(d)), and one or more object balls are pocketed before playing groups are decided, then those balls are-ignored in determining the groups to be played. The oncoming player may play at any ball on the table, including 8 ball (black) for the first shot, the first legal pot to determine the group as rule 4(e).

(h) If a ball, or balls, are legally pocketed, this entitles the player to one additional shot and this continues until the player either (1) Fails to pocket one of their set of allocated balls, or (2) Commits a foul at any time.

(i) Combination shots are allowed, providing that the player hits one of their own group first, or any ball with the first shot following any foul (Rule 6(c)),

## 5. FOULS

(a) In off (cue ball pocketed).

(b) Hitting opponents ball(s) with the cue ball on first impact of cue ball, except with the first shot following any foul, or when playing away from a touching ball of own group.

(c) Failing to hit any ball with the cue ball. Once a shot has been played, that is after the cue ball has been contacted by the cue tip, the cue ball must hit an object ball, (or black), except when playing away from a touching ball of own group.

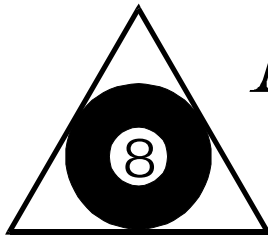
(d) Jump shot, defined as when the cue ball jumps over any part of any ball before making contact with any ball.

(e) Hitting the 8 ball (black) with the cue ball on the first impact of the cue ball before all their own group are pocketed, except with the first shot following any foul, or when playing away from a touching ball of own group.

(f) Potting any opponent's ball, except with the first shot following any foul.

(g) Ball off the table:

(1) Any object ball or the 8-ball (black), shall be returned to the 8-ball spot, (see 4(a)), or as near as possible to that spot without touching any other ball, in a direct line between that spot and the centre of the baulk line, (to the baulk line side of the 8-ball spot). If the black ball and one or more object balls, then black ball to go on spot followed by object ball(s) in line between black spot and the centre of the baulk line. If more than one object balls, first one on spot, others in line with the centre of the baulk line, oncoming player to decide which ball on the spot.



# Macclesfield Pool League

## Official 8-Ball Pool Rules

(2) If the cue ball, cue ball played from in hand (8(b) general). A ball shall be deemed "off the table" if it comes to rest other than on the bed of the table.

(h) If a player's body or clothing should touch any ball. Except the cue ball after the referee calls "foul", when the player is entitled to the cue ball in hand (see 6(b)).

(i) Player not having at least one foot on the floor, at the time the cue tip contacts the cue ball.

(j) Playing or touching with the cue, any ball other than the cue ball.

(k) Striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip.

(l) Playing out of turn, (this also applies when playing pairs).

(m) Playing before all balls have come to rest.

(n) Playing before any ball(s) requiring re-spotting have been re-spotted.

(o) Striking the cue ball with the cue more than once. Players should be especially careful when playing an object ball close to the cue ball.

(p) Push shot – defined as when (a) a player must play away from a touching ball (see 8a) (b) the tip of the cue remains in contact with the cue ball when the cue ball makes contact with the object all, or (c) the tip remains in contact with the cue ball once the cue ball has commenced its forward motion.

(q) Failing to nominate when balls of both groups are pocketed with the first legal pot.

(r) Foul Break. Failing to pot an object ball, or drive at least two object balls to any cushion(s).

(s) **Not playing a shot within the time allowed (Time Foul).**

## 6. PENALTY FOLLOWING ANY FOUL

(a) **Following any foul, other than going "In Off" on the break shot (see 6d) the offending player loses their next visit to the table, giving their opponent two consecutive visits to the table.**

(b) If the cue ball has come to rest on the Playing surface, then the player having two visits may proceed to play from where the cue ball lies, or the cue ball may be played from any position on or behind the baulk line. Moving the cue ball in this manner is not a foul nor does it count as a shot, or visit. (Players are advised to ask the referee to hand them the cue ball, the referee should then hand the cue ball to the Player, and not place it on the table.)

(c) On the first shot of the first visit, the incoming player may, without nomination, play the cue ball onto any ball without penalty, (including any opponent's ball(s), or 8-ball (black)). If any object ball(s) is pocketed directly, or by any combination, then the Player is deemed to have pocketed a legal ball(s) and continues with the first visit. However, the player must not pot the 8-ball (black), which would mean loss of game, except if the Player was on 8-ball (black), then the game would be won.

When the player fails to pot a ball on the first or subsequent shot of the first visit, play then continues with the second visit. The second visit is deemed to have started when the cue ball is struck on the first shot of the second visit and not when the referee makes the call.

(d) **If the cue ball is potted ("In Off") on a legal break the offending player loses their next visit to the table, giving the opponent one visit to the table. The cue ball may be played from any position on or behind the baulk line. If the cue ball is potted ("In Off") on a foul break then rule 4c applies.**

## 7. LOSS OF GAME

(a) If a player pockets the 8 ball (black, before all the balls in their own group, except on the break (rule 4(d)), the player loses the game.

(b) A player going in off the 8-ball (black) when the 8 ball (black,) is pocketed, except on the break (rule 4(1d)), loses the game.

(c) A Player pocketing the 8-ball (black) and any other ball on the same shot will lose the game, except following a foul when only the 8 ball (black) and ball(s) of the opponent's group are on the table, then with the first shot of the first visit, the player may legally pocket the 8 ball (black) as well as ball(s) of the opponents group by and combination and in any order.

(d) A player who clearly fails to make any attempt to Play a ball of their own group, (or black if on black), will lose the game. The only examples of this are:-

(1) Clearly playing at opponents ball, (other than 6b, or touching ball own group).

(2) Playing into space with clearly no intention of hitting any ball of their own group. (Other than touching ball own group).

## 8. GENERAL

Touching ball:-

(a) Touching any ball the player must play away, (playing the cue ball at a tangent to the object ball i.e. 90 degrees is the maximum angle possible whilst still playing away), failure to do so would be a foul (rule 5(p)).

However should a player be clearly playing away from an object ball, and in playing the shot the object ball rolls back into the area previously occupied by the cue ball, the shot would be fair not foul.

(1) Touching any opponent's ball or 8-ball (black), the Player must play a ball of their own group, except on the first shot of the first visit following a foul, (rule 6(c)).

(2) A Player touching a ball of their own group, (or any ball on the first shot of the first visit following a foul), may play away from the touching ball and be deemed to have played that ball. Should the cue ball fail to make contact with any ball, or strike opponents ball or 8-ball (black) then the shot is fair not foul.

(b) Cue ball in hand.

When a player has the cue ball in hand the ball is played from any position on or behind the baulk line in any direction.

(c) Player in control.

A player is said to be in control of the table from the time that their body, cue or clothing touches the table prior to their shot, throughout the visit and up until the opponent does likewise prior to their visit.

Any ball(s) which fall into pockets during this period (including the 8-ball (black)) are said to have been pocketed, the player in control being liable to any penalties or benefits normally awarded for the pocketing of the ball(s). However, once the cue ball has been struck a legal shot must be completed, a ball failing in does not cancel out any foul. Therefore, after contacting the cue ball with the cue tip the cue ball must then contact an object ball. Failure to comply is a foul under rule 5c.

(d) The game is completed when the 8-ball (black) is pocketed in any pocket and all the remaining balls have come to rest, except on the break, rule 4(d).

(e) The referee should not allow a player to take excessive time between shots, or prior to the first shot of their visit. Excessive time wasting is considered unsportsmanlike and the referee should instruct the player to play. If the instruction is ignored further action may be taken under Rule 1.

## 9. STALEMATE

Should any situation arise whereby a legal shot is impossible to play, then the frame shall be restarted by the player who started the frame, whether the situation is arrived at by accident or design. If after two re-racks, a stalemate situation arises again then the frame shall be void. Neither player will be awarded any points from the frame, and the frame will remain a draw.

(a) Should a situation arise whereby the cue ball, or a player's only remaining object ball(s) are covered, resulting in a gap too small to allow the cue ball to make contact with a player's object ball then a stalemate situation has arisen.

(b) Should a situation arise whereby a player is snookered and it is not possible to play the cue ball onto a flat cushion then a stalemate situation has arisen, (i.e. a player is snookered and the cue ball is between an object ball and a cushion, the cue ball is also touching both the object ball and the cushion. Therefore the cue ball could only be played into the jaws of a pocket and not onto a flat cushion).

(c) Should a situation arise whereby a players only remaining object ball(s) are touching an opponents object ball which is hanging over a pocket then it is deemed impossible to play a legal shot as playing the object ball would result in the opponents ball being pocketed therefore a stalemate situation has arisen. (The balls must be touching and be called as such by the referee, hanging over the pocket means the edge of the ball is past the end of the bed of the table).

(d) If, in the opinion of the referee, during any part of a game progress is not being made the referee should warn players that if, in the referees view progress is not made in the next few shots, then a stalemate will be declared, and a re-start will be ordered.

(e) The referee should not allow numerous visits with neither player making any attempt to play the opening pot which decides the playing groups. (Unless it is felt progress is being made). If the player who started that frame did so by virtue of their opponent making a foul break, that player will break on any re-start, and not the opponent who made the foul break.

## 10. GUIDANCE

(a) The term "shot" means striking the cue ball once.

(b) The term "visit" refers to one turn at the table comprising of one, or a series of shots.

(c) The second visit is deemed to have started when the cue tip contacts the cue ball, following the end of the first visit, and not when the referee makes the call. This will clarify situations where ball(s) fall into pockets to decide whether a player is in control on the first or second visit.

(d) The term "break" refers to the first shot of a game or the first shot of any game being re-started.

(e) The term "Free table" means a player may play at any ball on the table, including black, and pot any ball except black, unless on the black.

(f) Open table means a legal group has not been established for either player(s), the player may play and pot any object ball(s) except the black. It would be a foul to play black, Rule 5e.

(g) Balls moved by outside interference.

Ball(s) moved by any other person than the players, (including the referee), will be replaced in their original position(s) by the referee. No penalty to the player in control. It this is not possible then the game will be re-started. Player who originally broke to take break shot. (Balls moved by the players will not be replaced, but the player will be penalised according to either rule 5h),5j) or 5k).

(h) It is a foul for a player to reposition the cue ball, within the area behind the baulk line, using the end of the cue when the cue ball is in hand. Cue ball in hand must be moved by hand.

(i) Coaching is not allowed in any game, (except doubles). The player in control must play their own game. If any coaching is attempted the referee should instruct the offenders to stop. If the instruction is ignored, then the game may be abandoned, or other action as the referee feels appropriate under Rule 1. If player(s) are not involved in coaching, a penalty should not be imposed. However, if the coaching clearly affects the result (i.e. player about to pot black is reminded ball(s) of own group remain), the referee should give game away even if a non-player gave the advice.

## 11. TIME ALLOWED

(a) **A player has a maximum of sixty seconds to play each shot.**

(b) **The Timer will start timing when all balls have come to rest or the referee has handed the player the cue ball.**

(c) **If the first thirty seconds elapses before a shot is played, the timer will call "Thirty Seconds" as a warning to the player. If after fifty seconds a shot has still not been played a "Ten Seconds" warning will be called. Both warning calls must be made the instant the thirty and fifty seconds has expired. The Timer should not postpone the call because it appears that a player is about to play a shot.**

(d) **If a shot is not played within sixty seconds the timer will call "Time Foul".**

**The offending player loses their next visit to the table, giving their opponent two consecutive visits to the table. The cue ball may be played from any position on or behind the baulk line.**

(e) **The Referee/Timer should, and have the discretion to make allowances when timing ceases. Examples of this are:**

- If a player is obstructed or needs to leave the playing area
- If the referee needs to inspect the balls to see if a touching ball exists or a possible re-rack situation exists
- If a player is searching for a piece of equipment, such as a spider.

**Coaching is permitted in pairs matches, but only under the following guidance:-**

Conferring may take place between the two players of a pairs team for a maximum of 30 seconds (approximately) after their opponent's break has finished. If the referee considers that players are taking longer than the allowed time, he/she should initially issue a warning, but if players continue to abuse this rule, the referee may take further action as detailed in rule (1), including, in extreme circumstances, awarding the frame to their opponents.

(j) If a player clearly and intentionally stops any object ball, or black, going into a pocket they will lose the game. (Under Rule 1).

(k) A referee should not submit to unnecessary requests for balls to be cleaned. Never attempt to lift a ball for cleaning if it is in a crucial position.

(l) Only the players involved in the frame may request the referee to advise on rules during a frame. Spectators and other players, including a team captain, may only request advise between frames, and only then if the referee is available to answer such questions.