

8 Ball Rules Summary

1. We adhere to [CSI BCAPL 8 ball rules](#) with 2 minor modifications. These are highly regarded USA and International tournament/league rules that are the de facto standard of competitive play.
2. When in doubt, the detailed CSI rules are authoritative.
3. To win, sink all of your balls, and then the 8, before your opponent does.
4. Shots must be called, verbally or by unambiguous gesture, unless they are considered obvious.
5. In general, banks/kicks/caroms/combos/etc are never considered obvious.
6. With that said, the method by which the ball reaches the pocket is irrelevant to the call. Merely indicate *which ball* will go in *which pocket*. There's no need to specify how it will get there.
7. If you are unsure what shot your opponent is attempting, it is your responsibility to ask them before they are down on the shot.
8. Failure to call a non-obvious shot results in loss of turn, even if a ball is pocketed.
9. If you call a safety, your turn ends even after successfully pocketing an obvious ball.
10. There is no shot clock, however a referee may implement a shot clock mid-game if one or both players are repeatedly taking an unusually long time to shoot (>1 min).
11. Players shall flip a coin to determine who breaks (modification #1).
12. Races >1 will alternate breaks.
13. The breaking player must rack their own balls.
14. The foremost ball of the racked triangle must be on the spot.
15. The only other rack requirements are the 8 must be in the center, the 2 other corner balls must be 1 solid and 1 stripe (in any order), the rows of balls must be parallel with the short rails, and the rack must be as tight as reasonably possible.
16. When breaking, the cue ball must start "in the kitchen," or in other words behind the headstring or 2nd diamonds.
17. A legal break requires either any numbered ball to be pocketed or 4 different numbered balls to hit rails.
18. An illegal break results in the non-breaking player choosing whether they will take the break or whether the breaker breaks again.
19. On an otherwise legal break, did you do something weird, like:
 - a. scratch or send the cue ball off the table? The incoming player has ball-in-hand in the kitchen. They must shoot at a ball outside the kitchen or at a portion of a rail outside the kitchen before making contact with a ball inside the kitchen.
 - b. knock a numbered ball off the table? The ball gets spotted. The breaker's turn ends. The incoming player can choose to play the cue ball as it lies or take ball-in-hand in the kitchen per above details.
 - c. sink the 8 ball? You may choose to re-rack and break again, or choose to spot the 8 ball and let play continue.
 - d. foul while sinking that 8 ball? Now your opponent has a choice of re-racking and themselves breaking, or spotting the 8 ball and taking ball-in-hand anywhere on the table.
20. By definition, the break is not a called shot. However, legally making one or more balls on the break still results in your turn continuing.
21. The table remains open after the break until the first called or obvious ball is successfully pocketed, at which point each player is assigned their target ball group (stripes or solids) based on that ball.

22. While the table is open, any ball can be struck first, including the 8. However, if you pocket a ball after striking the 8 first, your turn ends and the table remains open.
23. Following the break, any of the below fouls result in immediate ball-in-hand, anywhere on the table, for the opposing player:
 - a. Scratching, i.e. pocketing the cue ball.
 - b. Failing to contact any of your own balls with the cue ball, or failing to contact *any* numbered ball at all if the table is still open.
 - c. Contacting with the cue ball your opponent's assigned balls, or the 8 ball, prior to contacting your own.
 - d. Failing to cause *any* ball to contact a rail or fall into a pocket after making otherwise legal contact between cue ball and another ball.
 - e. Knocking any ball entirely off the table.
 - f. Contacting the cue ball with anything other than the tip of your cue moving in a forward motion (unless you have ball in hand and are not yet stroking your shot).
 - g. [Double hitting the cue ball](#). Your cue tip may only strike the cue ball once during your stroke. Beware of double hits when the cue ball is very close to another ball, or when both balls are close to a rail.
 - h. Failing to maintain at least one foot on the floor during your shot.
 - i. Intentionally jumping the cue ball (modification #2).
 - j. Disturbing 1 or more balls during your stroke in a way that affects the outcome of the shot.
 - k. Shooting before placing balls you disturbed prior to your stroke back in their original location.
24. Note that accidentally disturbing (bumping/nudging/etc) numbered balls is not by itself a foul.
25. In anticipation of you possibly fouling, your opponent has the right to pause your turn and ask for your shot to be watched by a referee (for example, when it will be a close call). Failing to pause for a referee request is a foul resulting in ball-in-hand for your opponent.
26. There is no guarantee of a referee actively presiding over your entire game. In disputes over fouls, benefit of the doubt will be given to the shooter when no referee witnesses the shot.
27. Your turn at the table continues as long as you continue to make balls in their called or obvious pockets without fouling or calling a safety.
28. Once all your assigned balls are pocketed, the 8 becomes legal to contact first and pocket.
29. You lose the game if:
 - a. You foul when pocketing the 8 ball (except on the break).
 - b. You pocket the 8 ball early, when it's not yet your legal ball (except on the break).
 - c. You pocket the 8 ball on the same stroke as the last ball of your assigned group of balls.
 - d. You knock the 8 ball entirely off the table at any time.
 - e. You pocket the 8 ball in any pocket other than the one you called.
 - f. You pocket the 8 ball by a non-obvious shot without calling it.
30. You win the game if you legally pocket the 8 ball before your opponent does.