



# **Stonewall Sports National Tournament Official Rulebook: BILLIARDS**

*(Last Updated: March 25, 2025)*

v 1.0 (03/25)

# Stonewall Sports is For All

Stonewall Sports is dedicated to creating a community of diverse participants via organized sports and activities that take place in inclusive spaces. We are founded on the pillars of respect, holistic wellness, open-mindedness and the appreciation of diverse backgrounds.

Our shared responsibility is to bring our community together, empower individuals, and provide a safe, welcoming, and supportive environment to learn and grow, thus uplifting those who are part of the Stonewall community and beyond.

We believe in uplifting and celebrating all individuals within the LGBTQIA+ community — including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, non-binary, Two-Spirit and queer people, among others — and we welcome friends and allies into these spaces with open arms.

In pursuit of these values, we encourage each of our participating teams to embrace these principles with representation from members of the LGBTQIA+ community. Our Sports Operations team is empowered and encouraged to open a dialogue with teams when they see an opportunity to promote diversity and inclusivity within our spaces.

Please review and abide to the following throughout the tournament:

- [Stonewall Sports Player Code of Conduct](#)
- [Stonewall Sports National Tournament Uniform Policy](#)

# Tournament Rules

This document is meant to provide overarching guidelines and big picture concepts to the sport. If a situation occurs that is not covered below, the rule as written in the [Official APA/CPA Rulebook](#) will be played.

## Determining Who Breaks

The person who breaks may be decided at the discretion of the players (lag, coin flip, rock paper scissors, etc.) However, lagging is encouraged. If lagging, the following rules apply: Players lag at approximately the same time. The ball that stops closest to the head rail wins. If the lagged balls make contact with each other, both players fail to strike the foot rail during the lag, or a ball stops in the jaw of a pocket, players must re-lag. Failure to strike the foot rail, or striking a side rail, or any pocket, results in loss of la.

## Racking

All balls should be frozen (touching) as tightly as possible. Balls are racked by the non-breaking player with the head (front) ball on the foot spot.

All 15 balls are racked in a triangle with the 8-ball in the center. The remaining balls can be placed in any order.

## Breaking

For a break to be legal, the following must occur:

- A. A player must break from behind the head string.
- B. At least four object balls must be driven to the rails or a ball must be pocketed.
- C. The cue may not be shot into a rail before hitting the rack.
- D. The head ball or the second row of balls must be struck first.

If the rack is struck, but the break does not qualify as legal, the balls are re-racked by the non-breaking player and rebroken by the same breaking player. If the breaking player's second break attempt is illegal, the balls are re-racked and the opposite player breaks.

The rack must be struck before a foul can occur.

**Scratching on the Break** – If a player scratches or the cue leaves the table on the break, the opposing player shall have ball in hand behind the head string of the table.

## After the Break

After the break, the following scenarios may exist:

- A. A foul on a legal break results in ball-in-hand **behind** the head string for the opponent. The opponent must shoot a ball outside the head string.
- B. If no balls are pocketed, it is the opponent's turn.
- C. The 8-ball is pocketed on the break **results in an automatic win** unless the player scratches or the cue leaves the table, in which case it is a loss.
- D. If at least one ball is pocketed, it is still the breaker's turn:
  - a. If one or more balls of a single category (stripes or solids) is pocketed, the player assumes that category of balls.
  - b. If at least one ball of each category is pocketed, it is considered an open table. The breaker has a choice of the following:
    - i. They may shoot any ball except the 8-ball (which would be a foul); if they do not foul, any ball pocketed counts.
    - ii. If they were to make at least 1 ball of each category on their 2nd shot, they would still have an open table.
    - iii. If the breaker were to miss or foul on the second shot, their opponent would have an open table.
    - iv. If the opponent then shoots and makes a ball, but also fouls on the shot, it is still an open table.
- E. When the table is open, a player may shoot a stripe into a solid, or vice versa, in which case whichever ball goes in is then that player's category.

## Shooting an Incorrect Category

Occasionally, a player will mistakenly shoot the wrong category of balls. Although it is sportsmanlike for the sitting player to remind the shooting player that they are about to foul by shooting the wrong category of balls, it is not a requirement for them to do so. The shooter also may avoid a penalty by asking the sitting player which category of balls they have. The sitting player must tell them the truth. Once the shooter has hit the wrong category of balls, a foul has occurred whether the ball is pocketed or not. If the foul is not called before the shooter makes a subsequent shot and makes legal contact with a ball of their category, it is too late to call the foul.

## Combination Shots

Combination shots are allowed, but striking the correct ball category first is required except in the open table situation. The 8-ball is **not** neutral but can be used in a combination shot providing it is not struck first. A player is credited with all balls they legally pocket. When a player does not pocket one of their balls but pockets an opponent's ball, they lose their turn. No pocketed ball is ever spotted.

## Pocketed Balls

Balls must remain in a pocket to be legal. If any ball, including the cue ball, goes in a pocket, but bounces back onto the playing surface, it is not considered pocketed and must be played from where it lies. The shooter does not need to designate their intended ball or pocket during the shot, except when they are legally shooting the 8-ball.

If a ball hanging in a pocket for more than 5 seconds suddenly drops, it is placed back on the table where it was sitting before the drop occurred.

## Miscellaneous

**Balls on the Floor.** Object balls that get knocked off the playing surface will be spotted on the foot spot. If the foot spot is taken, the ball will be placed directly behind the foot spot, as close to the foot spot as possible. If two or more balls are knocked on the floor, they are placed in numerical order with the lowest numbered ball closest to the foot spot. Spotted balls are placed frozen to one another. If the 8 ball is knocked to the floor, the shooter loses the game.

If the shooter legally pockets a ball while simultaneously knocking some other ball(s) on the floor, it is still their turn and the ball(s) is/are not spotted until their turn ends. If the ball on the floor is one of the shooter's balls, then it is spotted when the shooter has pocketed all of their other balls.

**Accidentally Moved Balls.** Accidentally moved balls must be replaced, unless any of the accidentally moved balls make contact with the cue ball. If accidentally moved balls make contact with the cue ball, it is a ball-in-hand foul, and no balls get replaced. If an object ball makes contact with the bridge, or cue stick, the ball is not replaced. The accidentally moved balls must be replaced by the opponent before another shot is taken.

**Close Hits.** To avoid disputes over a close shot, it is encouraged to have a third party watch the shot. The third party's call will stand and cannot be disputed. If a third party is not asked to watch the shot, and the shot is close, the call will go to the shooter.

**Foot on the Ground.** Players are required to have at least one foot on the ground when shooting.

**Marking the Felt.** Marking the felt is not allowed. Marking may consist of making a chalk line on the felt, or wetting a finger to dampen the felt. Placing chalk on the rail is permitted as long as it does not touch the felt.

**Frozen Balls.** A ball is frozen when it is in contact with the rail or another ball. To make a legal shot after making contact with the ball frozen to the rail, a ball must be pocketed or a ball must be driven to the rail. If your object ball is frozen to the cue, the shooter must pocket a ball or drive a ball to the rail, OR move the object ball then drive a ball to the rail or pocket a ball. If your ball is frozen to your opponent's ball, you must shoot away from the opponent's ball. If the opponent's ball moves, it is a foul.

## Fouls

If any of the following fouls are committed, the penalty is ball-in-hand for the opposing player. Make certain you have ball-in-hand before you touch the cue ball by confirming it with your opponent. Ball-in-hand is the advantage given to a player when their opponent scratches or otherwise fouls, whereupon the player may place the cue ball anywhere on the playing surface.

The ball-in-hand fouls are as follows:

- A. If the cue ball goes in a pocket, on the floor, or otherwise ends up off the playing surface.
- B. Failure to hit the correct ball first.
- C. Failure to hit a rail or pocket a ball after contact. A rail must be struck by either the cue ball or any other ball after the cue ball contacts the object ball. If the ball bounces back onto the playing surface, it is considered to have struck a rail.

- D. If, after contacting a ball that is frozen to a rail, the shooter fails to:
- a. Drive the cue ball to any rail after the cue ball touches the frozen ball.
  - b. Drive the frozen ball to another rail or into a pocket.
  - c. Drive the frozen ball away from the rail and into another ball which, in turn, causes the frozen ball to hit any rail or go into a pocket, or causes the other ball to hit any rail or go into a pocket. If, after making simultaneous contact between a frozen ball and the rail it is frozen to, the shooter fails to:
    - i. Drive the cue ball to another rail.
    - ii. Drive the frozen ball to another rail or into a pocket.
    - iii. Drive the cue ball off the rail and into another ball which, in turn, causes the cue ball to hit any rail, or causes the other ball to hit any rail or go into a pocket.
    - iv. Drive the frozen ball off the rail and into another ball which, in turn, causes the frozen ball to hit any rail, or causes the other ball to hit any rail or go into a pocket
  - d. Intentionally scooping the cue ball over another ball.
  - e. Touching or causing the cue ball to move, outside of a ball-in-hand situation.
  - f. Altering the course of a moving cue ball, including a double-hit.
  - g. Anytime the cue ball makes contact with an accidentally moved ball.
  - h. The cue ball does not touch any object ball during the course of a shot.
  - i. Touching another ball on the table, while placing or adjusting the position of the cue ball, during a ball-in-hand

## How To Win A Game

There are many ways to win an 8-ball game:

- A. You pocket all the balls of your category and legally pocket the 8-ball in a properly marked pocket.
- B. Your opponent pockets the 8-ball out-of-turn or knocks the 8-ball on the floor.
- C. Your opponent pockets the 8-ball in the wrong pocket.
- D. Your opponent fails to properly mark the pocket where the 8-ball is pocketed, and you call a loss of game.
- E. Your opponent fouls the cue ball and pockets the 8-ball.
- F. Your opponent alters the course of the 8-ball or the cue ball in an attempt to prevent a loss.
- G. Your opponent scratches or knocks the cue ball off the table when playing the 8-ball.

If your opponent is shooting at the 8-ball and misses it altogether, commonly referred to as a table scratch, they have fouled and you receive ball-in-hand. You do not win because of this foul.

You may not play the 8-ball at the same time you play the last ball of your category. The 8-ball must be pocketed through a separate shot.

### Ways to Mark the Pocket

- A. A coaster or some other reasonable marker must be placed next to the shooter's intended pocket.
- B. Marking the pocket with chalk is not recommended.
- C. Both players may use the same marker.
- D. Only one marker should remain on the table at a time.
- E. If the marker is already at the intended pocket from a previous attempt or game, it is not necessary to touch it, pick it up or reposition it.

### Table and Stick Definitions

See image below.

