

University of Wyoming  
INTRAMURAL SPORTS

## **8-BALL POOL TOURNAMENT RULES**

(Updated 2/19)

General Rules Adapted for Intramural Play.

1. **Object of the game:** 8 ball is played with a cue ball and 15 object balls. The purpose of the game is for one player or team to pocket the solid balls numbered 1 to 7 or the striped balls numbered 9 to 15, and then marking and pocketing the 8 ball before his/her opponent. Choice of balls to be pocketed is made by the player legally pocketing the first ball of the game.
2. **Lag:** Method used to start a match. Players simultaneously shoot a ball from the “kitchen”, banking it off the foot rail and back to the head of the table. Striking the side rails or any pocket results in loss of the lag. The closest ball to the head rail wins. It is permissible to strike the head rail. If the lagged balls make contact during the lag, the lag should be attempted again.
3. **The Rack:** The balls are racked with a solid and stripe on opposite ends at the bottom of the rack, with the front ball on the foot spot and the 8 ball in the center. All balls should be frozen (touching) as tightly as possible.
4. **Breaking:** To be a legal break, players must break from inside the kitchen, the head ball or second ball must be struck first, and at least four object balls must be driven to the rails or a ball must be pocketed. The cue ball may not be shot into a rail before the break. If the break does NOT qualify as legal, the balls are reracked and broken by the same player. If the break does NOT qualify as legal and results in a scratch, the balls are reracked and broken by the opposite player.
5. **After the Break:** Various circumstances can occur upon completion of the break. They are:
  - No balls are pocketed and it is the other player’s turn.
  - The 8 ball is pocketed. This results in the 8 ball being spotted. If the spot is taken, the ball is placed on a line directly behind the spot as close as possible.
  - One ball is pocketed. It is still the breaker’s turn, but the table remains “open” until a designated ball and pocket is declared and the player is successful. If the player is not successful, the table remains open. The 8-ball is neutral when the table is open and can be used for a combination shot, but it is no longer neutral after a player/team has pocketed an object ball after the break. [See Exceptions]
  - One (or multiple) of each category is pocketed. The breaker has his/her choice of balls. He/She may shoot any ball, except the 8 ball (which would be a foul), and each pocketed ball counts. If he/she misses or fouls on his second shot, his opponent has an “open table” and may choose which category of balls to play.
6. **Combination Shots:** Combination shots are legal, but the player must call the correct ball and pocket and must strike his/her own group ball first. **The 8 ball is not neutral after the table is no longer open.**
7. **Balls on the Floor:** If the 8 ball is knocked on the floor, it is loss of game. An object ball knocked on the floor results in a foul and is spotted.
8. **Safety Shot:** If a “safety” is called before a legal shot, a player may legally pocket the ball and in turn forfeit his next shot.

**9. Pocketed Balls:** Balls must remain in a pocket to be legal. All pocketed balls remain in the pocket for the remainder of the game.

**10. Fouls:**

- a) “Competitive” Level Play: If any of the following fouls are committed, the penalty is ball-in-hand for the incoming player. Ball-in-hand refers to a player placing the cue ball anywhere on the table (with the exception of a scratch on the break which results in ball-in-hand behind the kitchen) and proceeding with his/her turn. After having addressed the cue ball, a player may make further adjustments with the hand, cue stick, or any other piece of equipment.
- Anytime the cue ball goes in a pocket or leaves the playing surface
  - Failure to hit the correct group ball first. [See Exceptions]
  - Jumping the cue ball over another ball by purposely miscuing it up in the air. Jump shots must be made with an elevated cue striking the top half of the cue ball.
  - If, during the course of a shot, the cue ball does not touch anything.
- b) “Recreational” Level Play:
- Anytime the cue ball goes in a pocket or leaves the playing surface, the incoming player will place the ball in the “kitchen” and may play any ball that is outside of the kitchen.
  - Anytime a ball is pocketed in such a manner that it is determined to be “slop” (any pocketed ball that does not go into the obvious pocket as determined by the shooter’s shot selection), the turn will be forfeited and the incoming player will play the cue ball from it’s current location.

**11. There are various ways to lose:**

- Your opponent pockets his/her numerical group and legally pockets the 8 ball
- You pocket the 8 ball out of turn or knock it on the floor
- You pocket the 8 ball in the wrong pocket or fail to properly indicate the pocket
- You foul the cue ball and then pocket the 8 ball
- When playing the 8 ball, you scratch

**12. How to Win:** A player/team has won the game when all the balls of his/her numerical group have been pocketed and he/she has legally pocketed the 8 ball in a properly called pocket without scratching. Matches are best two (2) out of three (3) games.

**13. Exceptions:** In A-Level play, the following exceptions will be enforced:

- Players must call the ball and pocket for each individual shot, including combination shots.
- Players must hit a rail after contact. Any ball including the cue ball must go to a rail after legal contact. A pocketed ball counts as a rail.

**14. Doubles Play:** The format for doubles play is as follows: After a successful Lag, Team A will select a player to break and continue until his/her turn has ended. Team B will select a player to take the next turn and continue until that turn has ended. Team A’s second player will then take a turn, followed by Team B’s second player. The rotation will begin again with Team A’s first player.