

# New Mexico Senior Olympics

## Billiards Eight (8) Ball Pool Rules

Revised 1-2024

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### Playing Format

1. **Billiards Eight Ball Pool** will be governed by standard rules recommended by the Billiard Congress of America, except as noted below. For complete rules please contact:  
World Pool-Billiard  
[www.wpapool.com](http://www.wpapool.com)
2. Competition is singles play only. Format of tournament will be double elimination. Competition is best 2 out of 3 or 3 out of 5. Bracket format will be determined by the number of registered participants. The toss of a coin will determine who shoots first.
3. Except for the break, all shots will be called.
4. Lagging shall be used to determine order of play.
5. Smoking will not be allowed by participants in tournament are, while tournament is in progress
6. Any game missed/forfeited during bracket play will be considered a loss.

### Playing Rules

1. **Equipment:** Contestants are allowed to use their own cues. The cue may weigh a minimum of 10 oz. but no more than 25 oz. Players may use personal or borrowed legal cue sticks.
2. Except when clearly contradicted by these additional rules, the general rules of Billiards apply.
3. **Object of the Game:** Billiards Eight Ball is played with a cue ball and 15 object balls, numbered 1 through 15. One player must pocket balls of the group numbered 1 through 7 (solid colors), while the other player pockets 9 through 15 (stripes). The player pocketing either group first and then legally pocketing the 8 ball wins the game.
4. **Racking the Balls:** The balls are racked in a triangle at the foot of the table with the 8 ball in the center of the triangle, the first ball of the rack on the foot spot, a stripe ball in one corner of the rack and a solid ball in the other corner.
5. **Legal Break Shot:** To execute a legal break, the breaker (with the cue ball behind the head string) must either pocket a ball or drive at least four numbered balls to the rail. When the breaker fails to make a legal break, it is not a foul; however, the incoming player has the option of accepting the table in position and shooting, or having the balls re-racked, then has the option of shooting the opening break or allowing the offending player to re-break. It is not necessary to hit the head ball (the ball that is on the foot spot) to initiate a legal break.
6. **Scratch on a Legal Break:** If a player scratches on a legal break shot, all balls pocketed remain pocketed (exception, the 8 ball: see *8 Ball Pocketed on the Break*), it is a foul, and the table is open. *Please Note:* If you foul on a legal break and do not pocket the 8-Ball, your inning ends and any other pocketed objects balls remain pocketed. Your opponent receives ball in hand anywhere on the table.

## Billiards Eight (8) Ball Pool Rules (Cont.)

7. **8 Ball Pocketed on the Break:** If the 8 ball is pocketed on the break, the breaker may ask for a re-rack or have the 8 ball spotted and continue shooting. If the breaker scratches, while pocketing the 8 ball on the break, the incoming player has the option of a re-rack or having the 8-ball spotted; then he or she may begin shooting with ball in hand behind the head string.
8. **Open Table:** The table is *open* when the choice of groups (stripes or solids) has not yet been determined. **When the table is open, all object balls except the 8-Ball are legal object balls.** *Note:* The table is always open immediately after the break shot. The choice of stripes or solids is not determined on the break even if balls are made from one or both groups. The choice of group is only determined when a player legally pockets an object ball after the break shot.
9. **Legal Shot:** On all shots (except on the break and when the table is open), the shooter must hit one of his/her group of balls first and pocket a numbered ball or cause the cue ball or any number ball to contact a rail. *Please Note:* It is permissible for the shooter to bank the cue ball off a rail before contacting the object ball; however, after contact with the object ball, an object ball must be pocketed, or the cue ball or any numbered ball must contact a rail. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.
10. **Scoring:** A player is entitled to continue shooting until failing to legally pocket a ball of his/her group. After a player has legally pocketed his/her entire group of balls, he/she shoots to pocket the 8 ball.
11. **Fouls:** A foul may only be called by a player playing in the game or by a referee that has been properly called to the table. Any foul not called before the next stroke is taken is considered to have not occurred. The failure to call a foul on any previous shot does not restrict the ability to call a similar foul on any future shot.  
The following infractions result in a foul:
  - a. Failure to execute a legal shot.
  - b. A scratch shot (shooting the cue ball into a pocket or off the table).
  - c. A scratch shot on a legal break.
  - d. Shooting without at least one foot touching the floor.
  - e. Moving or touching any ball by means other than legal play.
  - f. Shooting a jump shot over another ball by scooping the cue stick under the cue ball.
  - g. A player receiving advice or coaching from someone else.
12. **Foul Penalty:** Opposing player gets cue ball in hand. This means that the player can place the cue ball anywhere on the table. The cue ball does not have to be behind the head string except on opening break. This rule prevents a player from making intentional fouls which would put an opponent at a disadvantage. With *cue ball in hand* the player may use a hand or any part of a cue (excluding the tip) to position the cue ball.
13. **Illegally Pocketed Balls:** An object ball is considered to be illegally pocketed when that object ball is pocketed on the same shot in which a foul is committed. The shooter's illegally pocketed balls are spotted on the foot spot and opponent's ball(s) remain pocketed.
14. **Object Balls Jumped off the Table:** If any object ball is jumped off the table, it is a miss (not a foul) and loss of turn, unless it is the 8 ball, which is a loss of game. The shooter's object ball(s) is spotted, and any opponent's jumped ball(s) will be pocketed.

## Billiards Eight (8) Ball Pool Rules (Cont.)

15. **Ball Frozen to Cushion:** When playing a shot where the object ball is frozen on a cushion, the cue ball must contact the frozen ball and pocket the frozen ball or any other object ball or drive the frozen object ball to any cushion. Failure to do so is a foul. When there is any doubt whether the object ball is frozen to a cushion, the player should ask the referee for a ruling before shooting.
16. **Combination Shots:** Combination shots are allowed; however, the 8 ball cannot be used as a first ball in the combination except when the table is open.
17. **Playing the 8 Ball:** When playing the 8 ball, the shooting player should clearly designate by verbally calling or physically pointing to the intended pocket, even if it appears to be obvious. If the opposing player or the referee is still not aware of where the shooter intends to pocket the 8 ball, then he or she must ask the shooter which is the intended pocket.
18. **Loss of Game:** A player loses the game by committing any of the following infractions:
  - a. Fouls when pocketing the 8 ball.
  - b. Pockets the 8 ball on the same stroke as the last of his group of balls.
  - c. Jumps the 8 ball off the table at any time.
  - d. Pockets the 8 ball in a pocket other than the one designated.
  - e. Pockets the 8 ball when it is not the legal object ball.

NOTE: When shooting the 8-Ball, a scratch or foul is not loss of game if the 8-Ball is not pocketed or not jumped from the table.
19. **Stalemated Game:** If, after 3 consecutive turns at the table by each player (6 turns total) they purposely foul or scratch, then the game will be considered a stalemate. Both players agree that attempting to pocket or move an object ball will result in immediate loss of game. The balls will then be re-racked, and the breaker of the stalemated game will break again.
20. **Unsportsmanlike Conduct:** No contestant shall make any remarks or utter any sounds while his opponent shoots. Any player repeatedly violating rules or being unsportsmanlike may be barred from further participation in the contest.