

9 Ball Pool Rules

Object Of The Game

Pot the 9 Ball! It's that simple.

Racking The Balls

9 balls are used - each has a different colour, and they are numbered 1 to 9.

The balls are set up in a diamond formation - the number 1 Ball sits at the front of the rack,

The 9 ball goes in the middle of the diamond on the Black Ball spot- the rest of the balls can be placed anywhere in the rack.

The Break

The game starts with the break-off shot. The cue ball is placed anywhere behind the headstring ('the line' if you're used to snooker or pub pool!), and the player who is breaking shoots the cue ball into the rack of balls.

The breaking player must ensure they hit the 1 ball first, and that at least 2 balls hit a cushion, or a ball is potted.

The Push-Out

On the first shot after a legal break, regardless of whether any balls were potted off the break or who is at the table, a player can opt to play a push-out shot, which means for that one shot only he does not need to hit another ball or cushion, but he does not get to play another shot in that turn even if a ball goes in.

His opponent then has the choice of playing from where the cue ball has landed, or putting the other player back in to take the shot.

The game then continues as normal.

The push-out shot is extremely useful if you are snookered after the break.

Continuing Play

When it is a player's turn, he must always hit the lowest numbered ball that is still on the table. Any other ball can be legally potted, so long as the lowest numbered ball is the first one the cue ball makes contact with.

A player must always attempt to hit the lowest numbered ball on the table and must not deliberately hit any other ball first so as to gain an advantage.

In addition, if a ball is not potted during a shot, then at least one ball (any object ball or the cue ball) must make contact with a cushion for the shot to be legal. This must happen *after* the cue ball has made contact with the object ball.

A player continues until he fails to pot a ball, or until he legally pots the 9 Ball and wins the frame.

In these rules no jump shots are allowed, ie jumping the cue ball over another ball.

Fouls

A foul is committed if:

- The first ball the cue ball makes contact with is not the lowest numbered ball on the table

- The cue ball is potted or leaves the table

- A ball fails to hit a cushion *after* the cue ball has made contact with the object ball (doesn't apply if a ball is potted during the shot)

When a player commits a foul, his opponent then has 'ball in hand', meaning he may place the cue ball anywhere on the table and continue playing.

If a player commits three consecutive fouls, he loses the frame, but only if his opponent reminds him after the second foul. If his opponent is not alert enough to mention it, this rule doesn't apply.

If the 9 Ball is potted during a foul shot it is then re-spotted.

End Of Game

The game is over when a legal shot results in the 9 ball being potted, or if a player loses by conceding 3 consecutive fouls.