

# RANDOLPH POOL LEAGUE RULES

Effective March 7, 2024

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1. **OFFICIAL RULES:** The following 8-ball game rules govern all matches played in the Randolph Pool League (RPL), using bar pool tables (nominal 7ft). These rules are listed on the RPL website:

<http://rplsa.atwebpages.com>

2. **THE RACK:** The only requirement for balls in the rack is that the 8-ball must be in the center position of the third row of balls. If the balls are not aligned properly on the table or are loosely racked, the breaking player can ask for a re-rack as many times as it takes to have a proper rack. Racking aids other than a triangle rack are not permitted.

3. **THE FOUL LINE** (head string): The cue ball must be placed behind the foul line when breaking or shooting ball-in-hand (BIH) in the kitchen. If an object ball touches the foul line, it is considered to be behind the line. If the cue ball or object ball is touching the foul line, the opponent must inform the shooting player of that fact before the shot is taken because a foul cannot be proven after the shot.

4. **THE BREAK** (the start of a game):

A. **The breaking player is indicated** on the scoresheet by the highlighted letter “**B**” combined with the shooting position number. The breaker’s opponent racks the balls. Breakers can offer opponents the opportunity to break and opponents can accept or decline. Should a 17th game be required, the home player flips a coin, the visitor makes the call and the winner decides who will break.

B. **To be a legal break**, at least two object balls, the same or a combination, must hit a rail. Once the cue ball is struck, it cannot be interfered with using the cue or hand. If the break is illegal, the balls are re-racked and the opponent breaks. If necessary, alternating breaks continue until there is a legal break.

C. **If a player fouls on the break** or no balls are made, the table is open and the opponent has a choice of which balls to shoot at. Object ball groups (stripes or solids) cannot be established if a foul occurs on the same shot and any made balls remain pocketed. **The player cannot establish a group with a called safety shot.** If there is no foul on the break and at least one ball is made, the following rules apply:

1. If all balls made on the break are the same, those balls are the player's object balls.

2. If both stripes and solids are made on the break, the table is open and the breaker must try to establish object balls. This is done by sinking either a single ball or two or more balls that are the same. If the breaker misses before establishing object balls, the opponent then attempts to establish object balls. Alternating attempts continue until object balls are assigned.

## 5. FOULS

A. **General information:** A foul can be called by the opposing player and either the captain or co-captain in his absence. If neither representative is available, a teammate can be designated and identified to the opponent. The second set of eyes provision is optional; however, if used, the person calling a foul must be able to explain it and this is not coaching. See the RPL website, Guidelines, Calling Fouls, for more information. A foul should be called when it occurs but must be called before the fouling player shoots again. If a player is unsure of a foul rule, call the foul to halt play so it can be discussed. Calling a foul does not mean that it must be imposed even if the foul is valid. If a contentious shot will be attempted, either player can ask team representatives to step up and observe the shot. When two different object balls are hit at the same time, a tie goes to the shooter. If multiple fouls occur on the same shot, the opponent decides which one, if any, is imposed. If agreement on repositioning moved balls cannot be reached, the opponent has the final say. If a valid foul is called by the opposing player or representative and imposed, the following rules apply:

### B. Loss of turn foul, cue ball shot from where it lays:

1. If any ball(s) is moved that is not the result of a shot, a loss of turn foul may be called and, if imposed, the opponent has the option to leave the moved ball(s) where it lays or to reposition the ball(s) to the approximate original position. A cue ball that is shot (moves as the result of contact with a cue tip) is not considered under this rule—see Para 5C (1) and (2), BIH Rules, below.

**Wearing loose clothing and other personal items while leaning over the table can cover the balls and hide ball movement so secure such items to avoid a moved ball foul call.**

2. It is a foul to lightly hit the cue ball and then quickly hit it again during the same shot.

3. A push shot is when the cue ball is frozen to an object ball and the cue ball is pushed with the cue rather than being struck with the cue. It is a foul if the cue tip remains in contact with the cue ball longer than a fraction of a second.

4. A game is in progress and during that player's turn, any form of coaching occurs. A coaching foul may be called and the player's turn is forfeited. Coaching during the opponent's turn is permitted but must immediately cease when the opponent's turn ends (all ball movement stops). During a player's turn, captains may answer rule questions but cannot provide more information than is asked for or suggest that another rule may apply (otherwise such could be a coaching foul). Advising, if asked, which object balls are assigned is not a coaching violation. **Reminding the shooter to mark the 8-ball pocket is not a coaching violation.** A self-imposed coaching foul may be called to prevent a player from taking an ill-advised shot.

5. It is a foul if a player does not have at least one foot on the floor when a shot is attempted.

6. It is a foul if a shot is attempted while a ball is still moving from a previous shot.

7. It is a foul to hit a cue ball with any part of the cue stick except the tip. When adjusting a cue ball's position on the table is allowed, adjusting the cue ball with the cue is not a shot or a foul.

8. Players should take no more than one minute between shots. There are exceptions and this rule is not intended for isolated instances of taking extra time. It is to be used to prevent marathon games caused by players trying to analyze every possible scenario, shot after shot. A player must first receive a warning to speed up play. If a second or subsequent warning is required during the match, the opponent or other authorized person can call a loss of turn foul.

### C. Ball-in-hand (BIH) fouls

1. A foul can be declared if players fail to legally hit their object ball, or they hit the illegal 8-ball or an opponent's ball first. For a shot to be legal, the first ball contacted by the cue ball must be the shooter's object ball. After that contact:

a) any object ball must contact a pocket or be pocketed, OR

b) any object ball or the cue ball must contact a cushion.

If the required cushion/pocket contact does not occur, the cue ball may be shot from where it lays or taken BIH in the kitchen. You should confirm with the opponent that you have BIH before you touch the cue ball. If the fouling player picks up the cue ball and deprives the opposing player from shooting where the ball laid, it becomes a BIH anywhere foul.

If no ball is contacted after the cue ball is struck, it is a BIH anywhere foul.

If the cue ball makes first contact with the opponent's object ball or the illegal 8-ball, it is a BIH anywhere foul.

2. The opponent gets a BIH in the kitchen shot if the cue ball is pocketed (scratch). It is a BIH anywhere foul if the cue ball is directly shot into a pocket.

3. When shooting BIH behind the foul line, the cue ball must be shot past the foul line. Other BIH rules may apply depending on what the cue ball strikes and the resulting action of the balls. When shooting BIH behind the foul line, shooting directly towards anything in the kitchen is a BIH anywhere foul. If all of a player's object balls are in the kitchen and the opponent scratches, but not blatantly, the player can optionally take the object ball closest to the foul line and place it on the foot spot. If there are balls in the way, the ball is placed as close as possible to the rear of the balls in the way. See the RPL website, Guidelines, Spotting a Ball, for more information.

4. If a player attempts to shoot a BIH kitchen shot from the wrong end of the table, anyone seeing it should stop the game and get the player at the right end of the table. The same is true if a player mistakenly tries to shoot a BIH from anywhere on the table but it was a BIH kitchen foul. If a shot is permitted, a foul cannot be called since it would fall under the provisions of paragraph 3, Foul Line, above. See the RPL website, Guidelines, BIH Location, for more information.

5. A jump shot occurs when the cue ball leaves the playing surface and elevates over another ball. The penalty for a jump shot is a BIH Anywhere foul. Unless a ball is jumped, there is no foul involved with the cue ball briefly leaving the playing surface.

**D. A ball leaves the table other than being pocketed.** It is not a foul if a ball leaves the playing surface and returns to the playing surface unaided.

The following rules apply depending on which ball leaves the table:

1. Cue ball: The player's turn ends and the opposing player gets BIH in the kitchen unless an opponent's ball is also sunk and paragraph 5C (2), Fouls, above, applies.

2. Object ball: The turn of the player ends and the object ball is placed on the foot spot. If another ball interferes with that placement, the ball is placed as close as possible to the rear of the ball or balls in the way. The cue ball is shot from where it lays.

3. 8-ball: The player loses the game.

6. **COMBINATION SHOT:** On an open table, any combination shot is legal except the 8-ball cannot be the first ball hit. On a table not open, a combination shot is legal if a player's object ball is the first one hit.

7. **SAFE SHOT:** For tactical reasons, a player can call a safe shot which is a declaration that the next shot will be taken but the following turn relinquished even if an object ball is pocketed. Provided the cue ball remains on the playing surface, the opposing player shoots from wherever the cue ball lies unless a BIH foul applies.

## 8. SUBSTITUTIONS

A. **General Information:** When a match begins, players on the scoresheet must play at least one game before being substituted out. A player who was substituted out may be substituted back in but only for a player who started the match. A player may not be substituted out and back in effective in the same round. A player substituted in cannot be replaced. If a match requires a tie breaker game, the captains can choose the teammate they want to play the final game without regard to other substitution rules.

B. **Paper Scoresheet:** To do a substitution, before the start of the game in which the substitution will occur, enter a substitute player's name on the indented line of **both copies** of the scoresheet. The round in which the substitution will occur is listed on the small line next to the indented line.

C. **Digital Scoresheet:** To do a substitution, before the start of the game in which the substitution will occur, enter a substitute player's name using the drop-down menu in the 'sub' box which will, if applicable, populate the rest of the scoresheet. If that person is not listed in the drop-down menu, use a "no player" entry from the drop-down menu and list the substitute's name in the remarks section.

9. **DISAGREEMENTS:** Disagreements are resolved by mutual agreement or a re-rack with the same player breaking. If players cannot settle a dispute, the team captains are to settle it. If a team captain does not agree with the proposed solution, put the game on hold and work it out with the opposing captain. If they cannot agree, contact the League Operator who will generally direct that the game be replayed unless there is compelling information that leads to a different decision. If an agreement is made, regardless of its merits, and the game continues, the Board will not overturn that agreement. Disputes must be settled during the match and further protests are not permitted.

10. **WRONG PLAYER:** During a match, the wrong player is discovered to be playing or has played a game. The game will be replayed with the correct players providing they are still present. A match cannot be reconvened so if the error cannot be corrected during the match, the results will have to stand as played.

11. **STALLED GAME:** A stalled game exists when all that remains is a group of object balls that neither player is attempting to break up, turns are being taken, and the game is not progressing. A team captain or player can declare it stalled after each player has taken at least two turns without changing the ball positions enough so the game can progress. The players can then agree to a re-rack or each can have one more shot to try to move the balls so the game can progress. A re-rack is mandatory if progression is not made and the person who broke breaks again.

12. **TABLE RUN:** A table run is accomplished when ALL of the following occur: It is either the breaker's or opponent's first turn of the game, there are 15 object balls on the table, the 7 object balls and the 8-ball are pocketed consecutively and no fouls occur.

13. **AID IN MAKING A SHOT:** A player may not place a mark or any object on the table to aid in making a shot. An opposing player observing this informs the player that it is not allowed and that the mark or object must be removed. If the shooter disagrees with the opponent's observation,

the issue must be resolved in accordance with paragraph 9, Disagreements, above. This rule does not apply to marking a pocket for the 8-ball shot.

14. **SPONTANEOUS BALL MOVEMENT:** If a ball shifts, settles, turns, or otherwise moves by itself, the ball will remain in the position it assumed and play continues. After all ball movement has ceased, if a hanging ball falls into a pocket by itself after being motionless at least five seconds, it is replaced. If a hanging ball falls within five seconds after all movement has ceased, it is considered a made shot providing it is a result of the player's shot. If no balls set into motion by the player's shot touched the hanging ball, it is replaced.

#### 15. **WINNING THE GAME**

A. **The 8-ball is made on the break** and no foul occurs.

B. **The 8-ball is made in the called pocket** after all the player's object balls are pocketed and no foul occurs. The player must mark the pocket being called with any object other than a piece of chalk. **Reminding the player to mark the 8-ball pocket is not a coaching foul.** The 8-ball may be shot straight in, banked, kicked or be a carom shot; however, the player is not required to identify how the ball reaches the called pocket.

16. **LOSING THE GAME** - The game is lost if:

A. **A foul listed in paragraph 5, Fouls, above, occurs** and the 8-ball is made.

B. **The cue ball is pocketed or leaves the table** and the 8-ball is the object ball.

C. **The 8-ball leaves the table.**

D. **The 8-ball is made before all the object balls** are pocketed. If the last object ball and the 8-ball are made during the same shot, the player loses.

E. **The 8-ball is made but not in the marked pocket.**

F. **Failing to mark a pocket** on the 8-ball shot and pocketing the 8-ball.

G. **The League Operator approves forfeiture** of game for unsportsmanlike conduct (examples: shooter refuses his/her turn to shoot; shooter disregards a foul call and continues shooting; any intentional act that causes balls on the table to be inappropriately moved).