

## Nine Ball

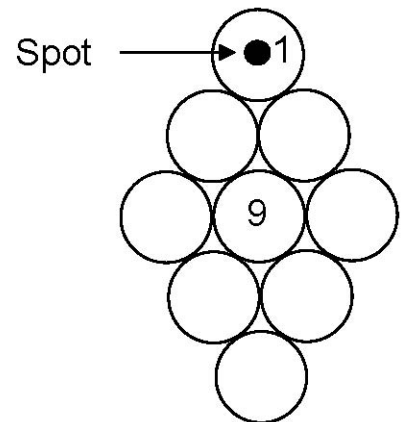
Nine ball is played with nine object balls numbered one through nine and the cue ball. The balls are played in ascending numerical order. The player legally pocketing the nine ball wins the rack.

### Determining the Break

The player who wins the lag chooses who will break the first rack. The standard format is to alternate the break.

### Nine Ball Rack

The object balls are racked as tightly as possible in a diamond shape, with the one ball at the apex of the diamond and on the foot spot and the nine ball in the middle of the diamond. The other balls will be placed in the diamond without purposeful or intentional pattern.



### Legal Break Shot

The following rules apply to the break shot:

- (a) the cue ball begins in hand behind the head string; and
- (b) if no ball is pocketed, at least four object balls must be driven to one or more rails, or the shot is a foul.

### Second Shot of the Rack – Push Out

If no foul is committed on the break shot, the shooter may choose to play a “push out” as his shot. He must make his intention known to the referee. If no foul is committed on a push out, the other player chooses who will shoot next.

### Continuing Play

If the shooter legally pockets any ball on a shot (except a push out), he continues at the table for the next shot. If he legally pockets the nine ball on any shot (except a push out), he wins the rack. If the shooter fails to pocket a ball or fouls, play passes to the other player, and if no foul was committed, the incoming player must play the cue ball from the position left by the other player.

### Spotting Balls

If the nine ball is pocketed on a foul or push out, or driven off the table, it is spotted. No other object ball is ever spotted.

### Standard Fouls

If the shooter commits a standard foul, play passes to his opponent. The cue ball is in hand, and the incoming player may place it anywhere on the playing surface. The following are standard fouls at nine ball:

## **Serious Fouls**

For Three Consecutive Fouls, the penalty is loss of the current rack. For Unsportsmanlike Conduct, the referee will choose a penalty appropriate given the nature of the offense.

## **Three Consecutive Fouls**

If a player fouls three times without making an intervening legal shot, it is a serious foul. The fouls must be in a single rack. The player or referee must warn a shooter who is on two fouls when he comes to the table that he is on two fouls. Otherwise a possible third foul will be considered to be only the second.

## **Unsportsmanlike Conduct**

The normal penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct is the same as for a serious foul, but the referee may impose a penalty depending on his judgment of the conduct. Among other penalties possible are a warning; a standard-foul penalty, which will count as part of a three-foul sequence if applicable; a serious-foul penalty; loss of a rack, set or match; ejection from the competition possibly with forfeiture of all prizes, trophies and standings points. Unsportsmanlike conduct is any intentional behavior that brings disrepute to the sport or which disrupts or changes the game to the extent that it cannot be played fairly. It includes:

- (a) distracting the opponent;
- (b) changing the position of the balls in play other than by a shot;
- (c) playing a shot by intentionally miscuing;
- (d) continuing to play after a foul has been called or play has been suspended;
- (e) practicing during a match;
- (f) marking the table;
- (g) delay of the game; and
- (h) using equipment inappropriately.

## **Concession**

If a player concedes, he loses the match. For example, if a player unscrews his jointed playing cue stick while the opponent is at the table and during the opponent's decisive rack of a match, it will be considered a concession of the match.

## **Stalemate**

If the referee observes that no progress is being made towards a conclusion, he will announce his decision, and each player will have three more turns at the table. Then, if the referee determines that there is still no progress, he will declare a stalemate. If both players agree, they may accept the stalemate without taking their three additional turns. If a stalemate occurs the original breaker of the rack will break again.