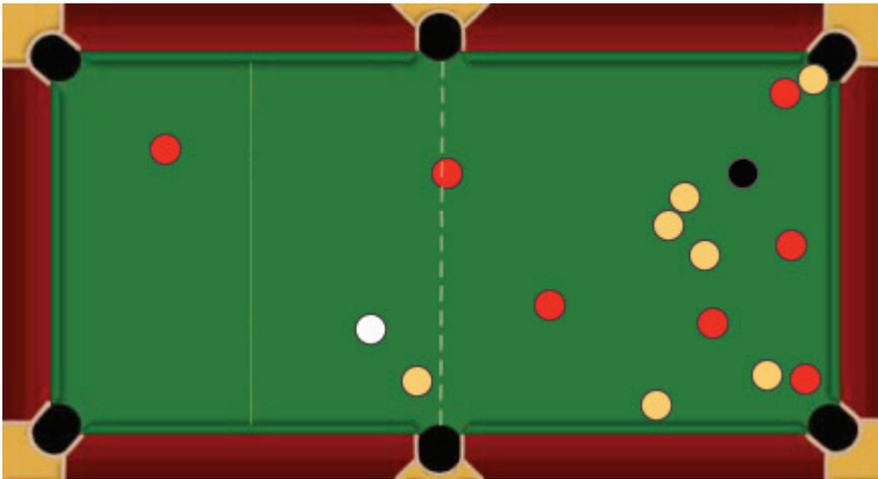


1. Setting up the balls and breaking off

The balls are racked as shown, with the black ball positioned at the intersect of two imaginary diagonal lines. The winner of the lag decides who is to break. Thereafter opposing players break alternately in successive frames.

Position the cue ball anywhere within baulk. It is acceptable if the centre of the cue ball is placed directly above the baulk line.



2. A legal break defined

To achieve a legal break at least two object balls (reds, yellows or black) must completely cross an imaginary line joining the middle pockets. Alternatively, at least one ball must be potted.

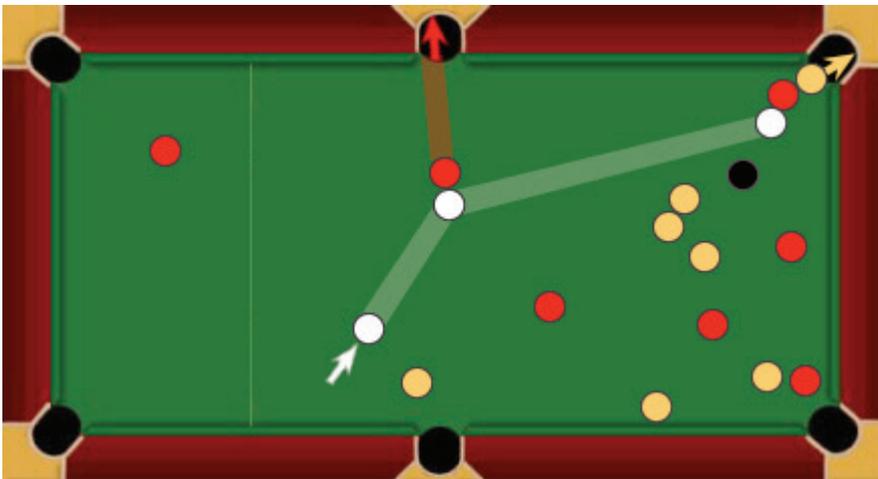
If no balls are potted and two object balls do not pass over this line, then the oncoming player is awarded 'one free shot and one visit'. The cue ball may be played from where it lies OR from baulk.... alternatively the oncoming player may decide to re-rack.

It is also a foul if the cue ball is potted on the break.

The retrieved white must be played from baulk.

If the black is potted the table is set up again and the same player breaks.

On a break shot, no matter the outcome, the table remains 'open'. Groups are never decided on the break. There is no 'nomination' of groups in blackball rules.

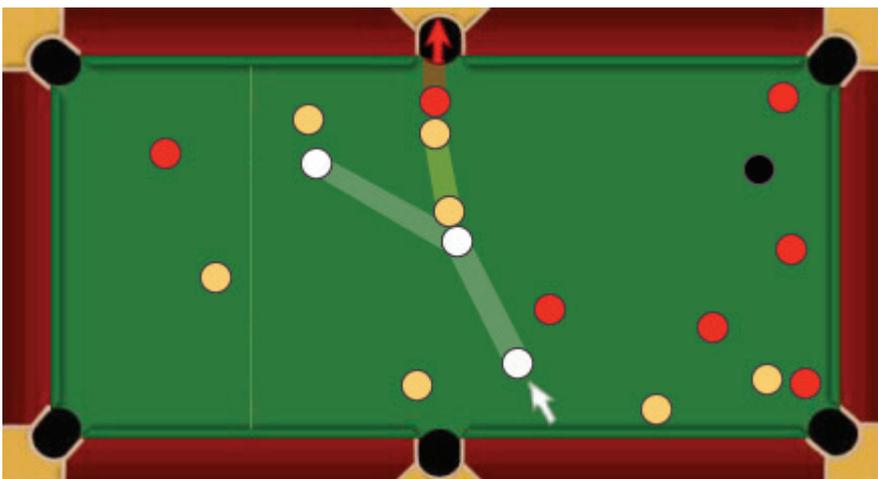


3. An 'open table' and determining groups

In an 'open table' situation groups (reds or yellows) are NOT determined in the following situations..... on the break shot, when a foul is played on a shot, when taking a free shot after a foul or where a combination shot is played in which balls from both groups are potted.

Given these conditions, if a player pots a ball or balls from a single group the player is then 'on' that group for the duration of the frame.

Above, potting only the red in the middle pocket would determine 'reds' as the player's group. But pot both red and yellow in a combination shot and the table remains open.

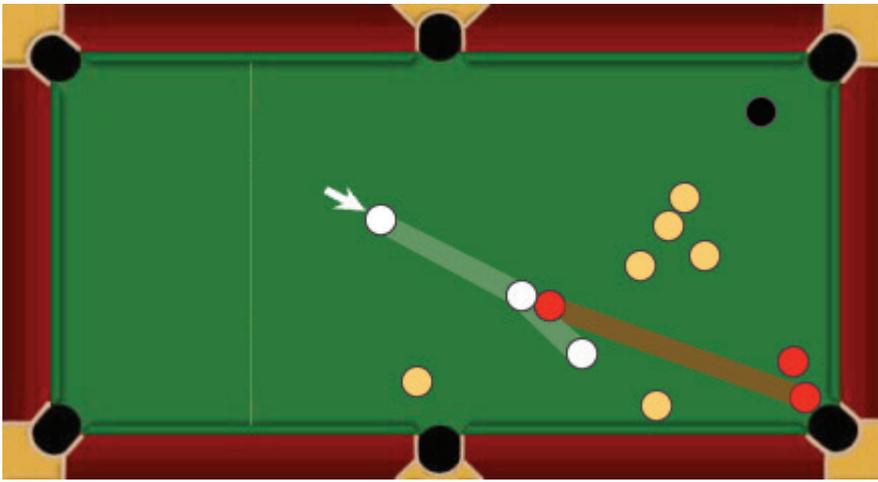


4. With an 'open table' play any group ball

If an 'open table' (groups have not been decided) you may play the cue ball to strike any group ball. In the above diagram a yellow has been played onto a red which dropped into the pocket. The player's group is then reds.

If the red had fallen short of the pocket and no balls struck a cushion the shot would not be 'legal' and a foul would be called (see definition of a legal shot, below.)

The black cannot be used as an 'on' ball to pot an object ball unless a foul has been committed and it is a free shot.



5. Legal shot defined

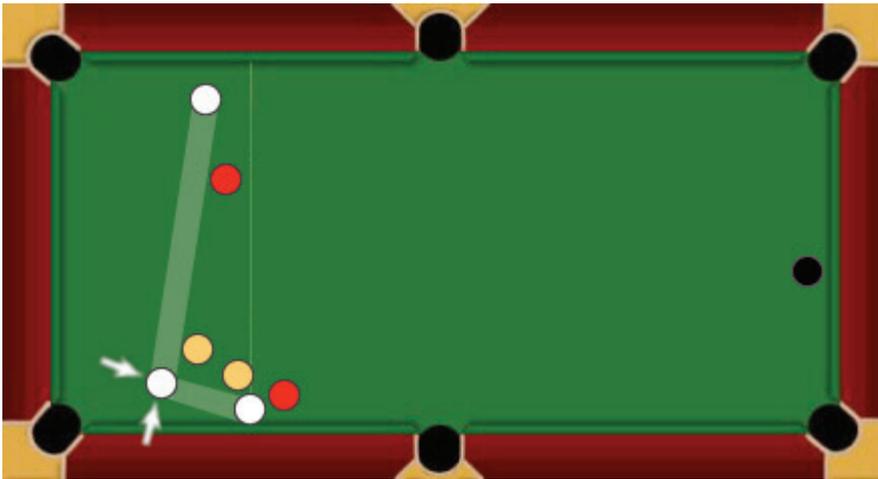
To play a legal shot a player must cause the cue balls 'initial' contact to be with an 'on' ball and THEN.....

(a) Pot any 'on' ball or balls, OR

(b) Cause the cue ball or any other ball to contact a cushion.

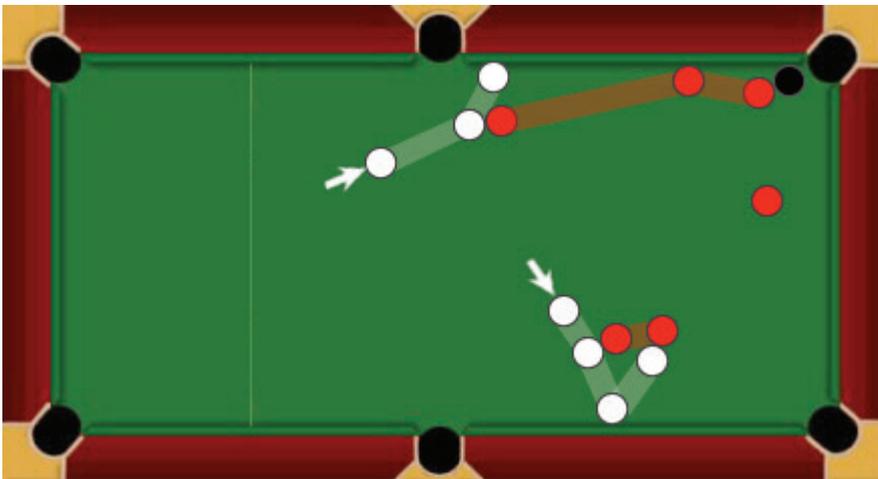
In the situation above, if the red ball falls short of the pocket and no ball struck a cushion after the cue ball hit the red, then the referee calls a foul.

There is one exception to this definition..... escape from a snooker is described below.



6. A snooker defined

A player is 'snookered' when it is deemed impossible to strike any part of an 'on' ball by way of a straight line shot..... which is the case in the above example. Players should seek confirmation of a snooker from an opposing player, a referee or official before playing a shot.

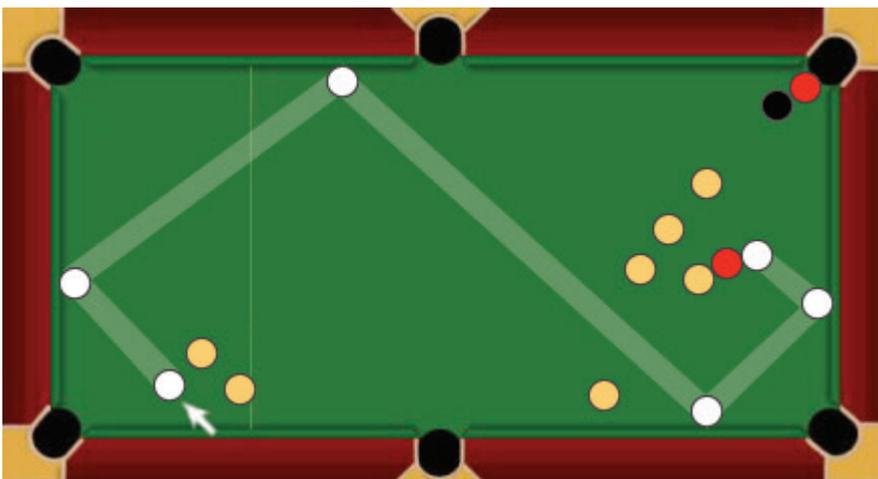


7. Legal shots and laying snookers

A direct consequence of the need for a ball to strike a cushion after contact with an 'on' ball is that it is not possible to simply tap up behind a ball to lay a snooker.

In this diagram, in the upper shot, to play a snooker on the black, either the cue ball or the red must touch a cushion after the red has been struck.

Similarly, in the second scenario, the white is played off the red and returns from the cushion to achieve a snooker.

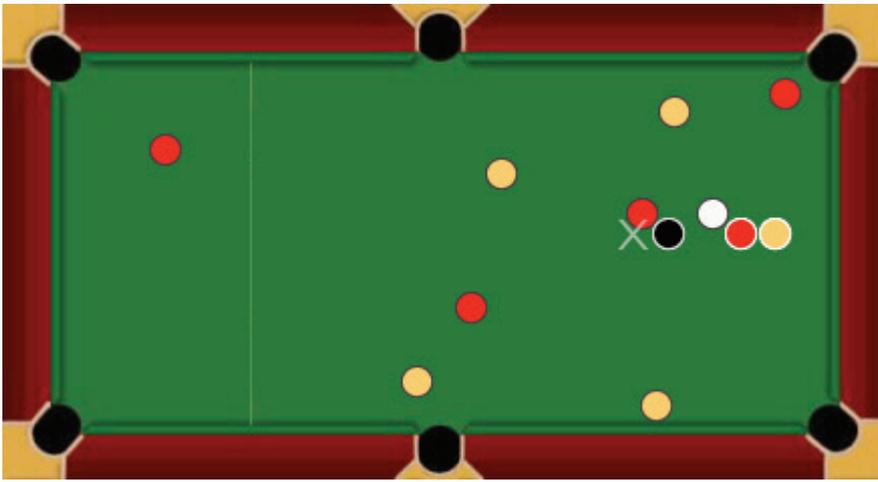


8. Legal shots and escaping snookers

There is one exception to the definition of a legal shot.

After successfully escaping a snooker, in the diagram above, it's not necessary for a ball to touch a cushion.... nor need a ball be potted.

It's sufficient for the cue ball to make initial contact with any 'on' ball.



9. Balls which leave the table are replaced

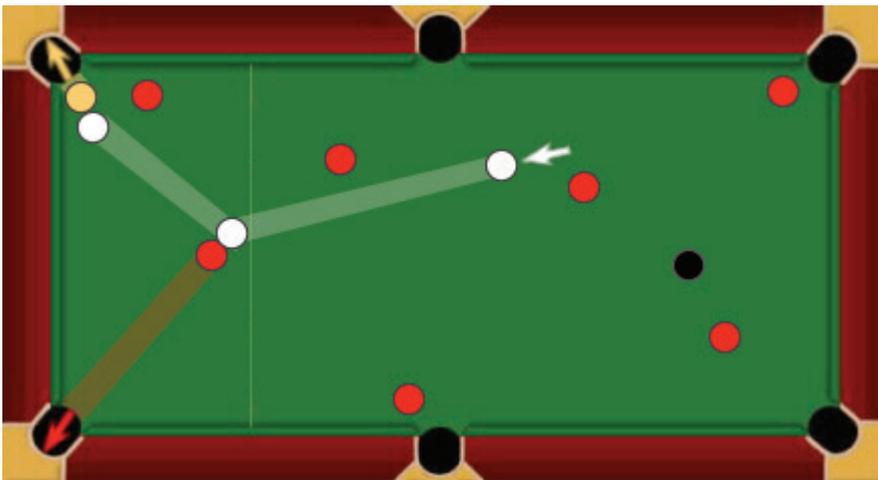
At any stage in the game, balls which leave the table are returned to the playing surface.

If the cue ball, then it's played from baulk.

In the above example three object balls (a red, yellow and black) left the table on the break.

Balls are always 're-spotted' on or as close as possible to the black spot in a direct line between the spot and the end cushion which is closest to the spot.

Object balls are replaced in order of black, red and yellow. Return balls to the playing surface in a straight line, as close as possible, without touching.

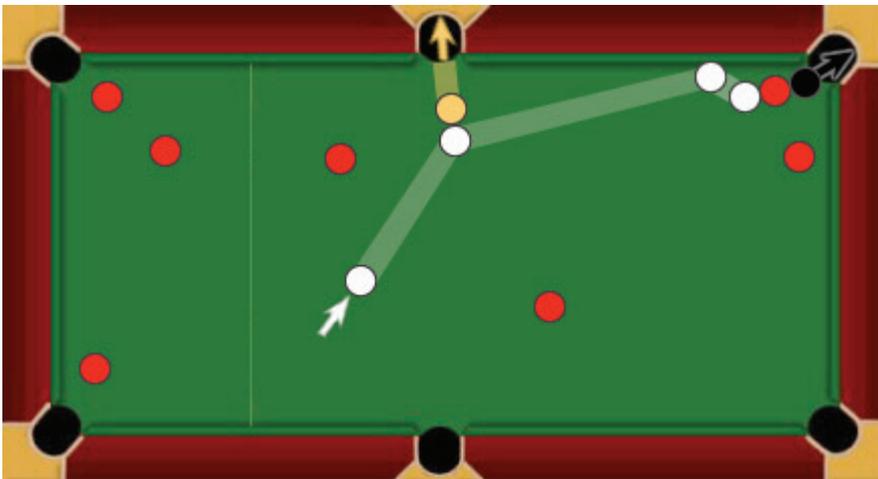


10. Combination shot defined

Two or more object balls can be potted without penalty in a single shot. In such shots the balls can drop into pockets in any order.

The object ball with which the cue ball makes initial contact must be an 'on' ball.

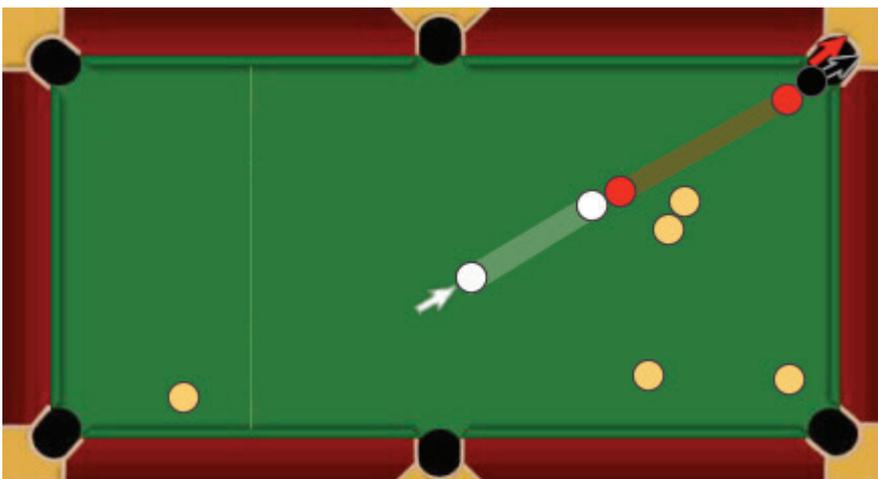
A combination shot is commonly used to clear an opponent's ball which is 'blocking' a pocket. In the situation depicted the player on reds plays a combination and by sinking both red and yellow creating an opportunity to clear the table.



11. Combination shot sinking the black

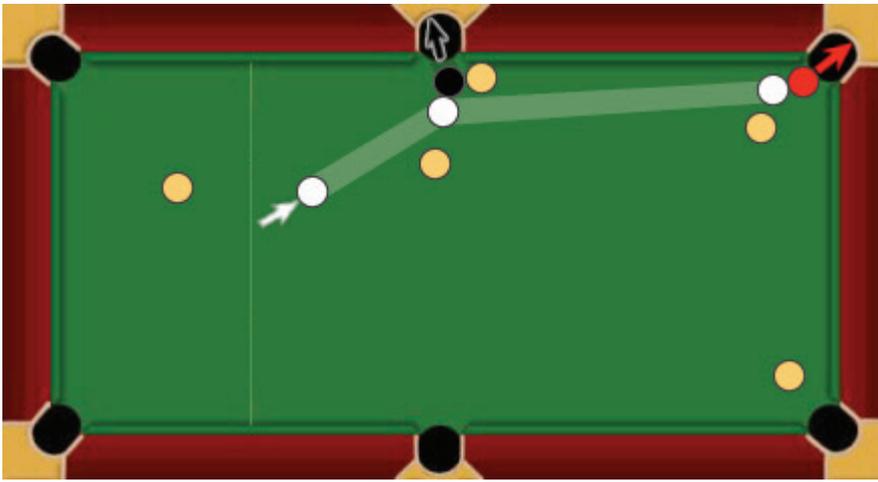
A player may sink his or her last remaining group ball (or balls) in the same shot in which the black is potted to win the frame. Initial contact, as always, must be with an 'on' ball.

In this instance the player on yellows pots the final yellow ball and in the same 'combination' shot wins the frame by potting the black.



12. Combination shot potting two object balls in the same pocket

In certain circumstances a combination shot can be played in which two balls are potted in a single pocket. Here the red is played to pot the black and then to follow through to drop into the same bag and clinch the frame.



13. Combination shot with a free table

After a foul the oncoming player has a 'free shot' and may play onto any object ball on the table. The player on 'reds' may legally strike and pot the black ball and then, in the same shot, sink the last remaining group ball to win the frame.



14. Playing away from touching balls

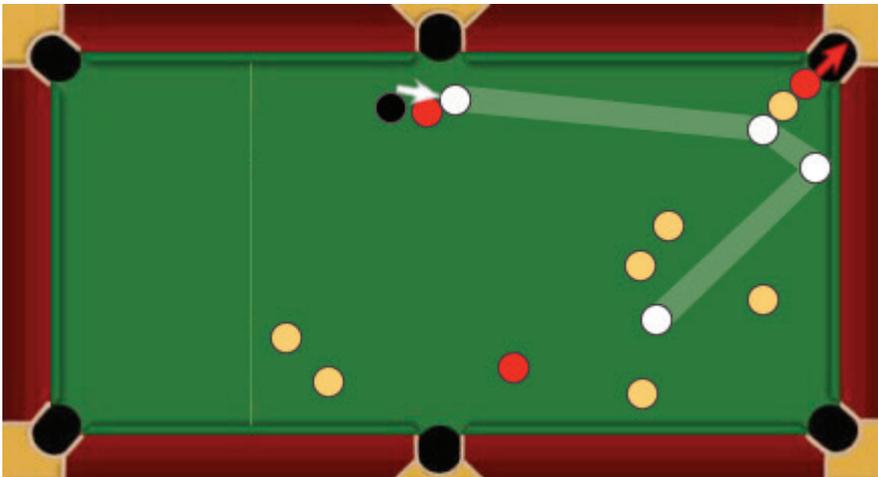
It is necessary to play away from any object ball declared to be touching the cue ball.

If, in doing so, the touching object ball moves, then it is a foul.

If the cue ball is touching a ball from your own group (or indeed any 'on' ball) then that object ball is regarded as having been 'struck'. It is then only necessary to meet the requirements of a legal shot. That is a ball must be potted or a ball strike a cushion.

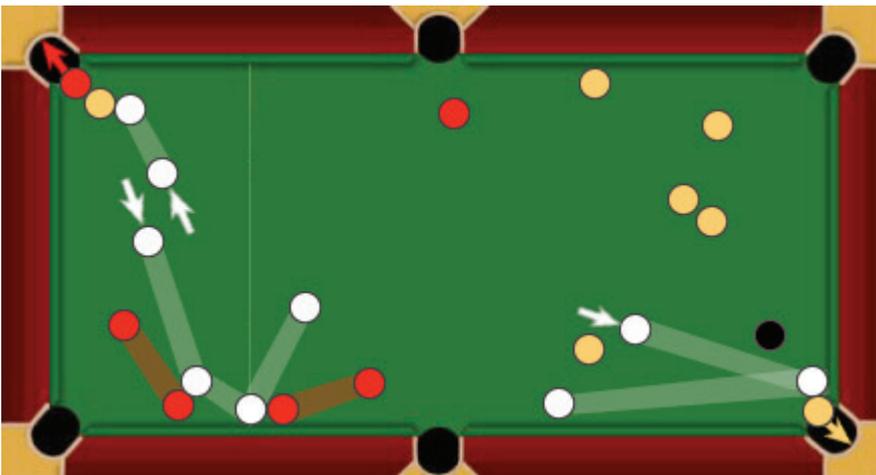
In the diagram the player is on reds. The cue ball is deemed to have 'struck' the touching red and the player takes advantage of this opportunity by playing the cue ball onto the cushion and laying a snooker.

If playing away from a touching ball 'not on' the requirements of a legal shot must be met and initial contact on playing the shot must be with an 'on' ball.



15. Making the most of a 'touching ball' situation

In this scenario the cue ball is touching the red object ball. The player is 'on' red and is considered to have struck the touching ball from which he 'plays away'. By playing onto the yellow it's possible to sink the obscured red and the player has an excellent opportunity of clearing the table.



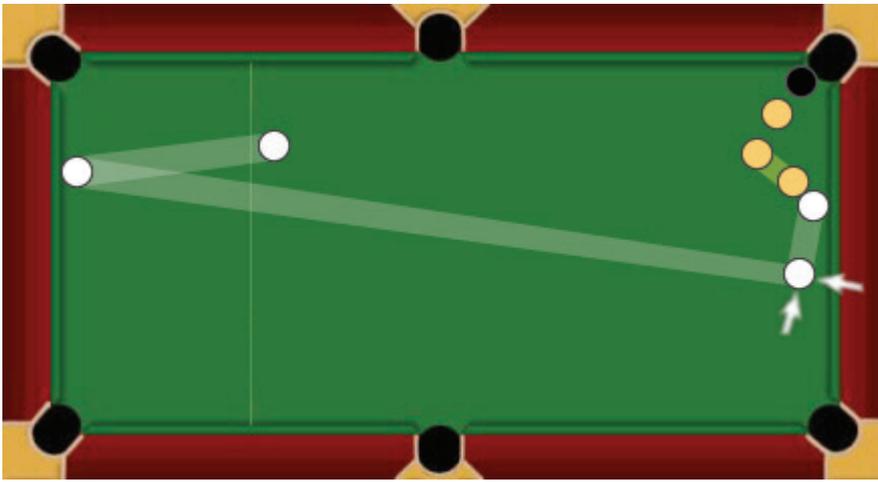
16. Free shot after a foul

Following a foul the table is declared 'open' and the oncoming player may take a 'free' shot.

It is permissible to play onto any object ball. Any ball may be potted, including the black if it is 'on'. Also play combination shots.

In each example above the player on 'reds' is taking a free shot.

To the top left, a shot is played on a yellow to sink a red ball. Bottom right, an opponent's yellow ball is played to clear the way to pot the black in the same pocket. Finally, bottom left, the player uses a free shot to bring two of his red balls into play.



17. Loss of frame shots

A player who clearly and intentionally fails to attempt to play an 'on' ball OR deliberately plays a ball which is 'not on' will lose the frame.

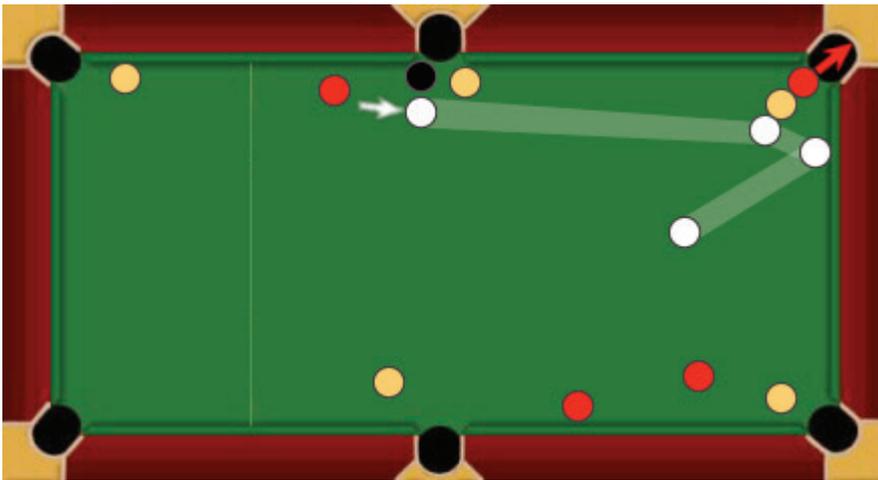
The player's group is red in the diagram. Only the black remains to be potted, but the player is snookered. There is a possible shot, up and down the table, to escape the snooker. But leave the cue ball well short, as shown, and the player risks losing the frame for playing a deliberate foul. The decision is with the referee.

Alternatively, the player may decide to strike the yellow and in doing so open up access to the black. This is undoubtedly a deliberate foul and loss of frame will be called by the referee.

18. Foul . . . but not loss of frame !

Here's a situation which is not so unusual. The player on yellows plays a yellow ball onto a red which is potted. By striking a ball from his own group first the player has fulfilled the requirements of a 'legal shot' described above.

This may be regarded as a 'tactical' option in which the player on yellows risks committing a foul in the expectation that, despite the award of a free shot and one visit to the opposing player, the remaining balls are positioned in such a way that the player on yellows remains the most likely frame winner.



19. Stalemate defined

In a situation where no legal shot is playable, whether this be by accident or design, the frame will be re-started.

To the top right, the player is 'on' the black ball. The cue ball cannot pass beyond the reds to strike the black, so the referee calls 'stalemate' and there is a re-rack.

Moving clockwise, in the next situation, the cue ball is touching the black and must be played away from that ball. If the player is on reds and the cue ball is unable to pass through the gap between yellow and black then it is not possible to play a legal shot. Again, the frame must be re-started.

It's a little different in the final example to the left. A stalemate is not called when it remains physically possible to play a legal shot..... however unlikely it is to be successful. There are two pathways to the black ball between the reds, so it's NOT a stalemate.

