

How to Play Straight Pool

- **Objective**

- The player must nominate a ball and a pocket. The player is awarded one point for every correctly nominated and pocketed ball on a legal stroke and can continue a turn until failure to pocket a nominated ball or commits a foul. The player can pocket the first 14 balls, but before continuing a turn by shooting at the 15th (and last remaining) ball on the table, the 14 pocketed balls are racked as before, except with the apex space vacant. The player then attempts to pocket the 15th ball in a manner so that the racked balls are disturbed, and he can continue the run. The player who scores the predetermined point total for a game (usually 150 in major tournament play or any agreed upon total in casual play) prior to the opponent, wins the game.

- **Players**

- 2 or 2 teams

- **Balls Used**

- Standard set of object balls numbered 1-15, plus the cue ball.

- **The Rack**

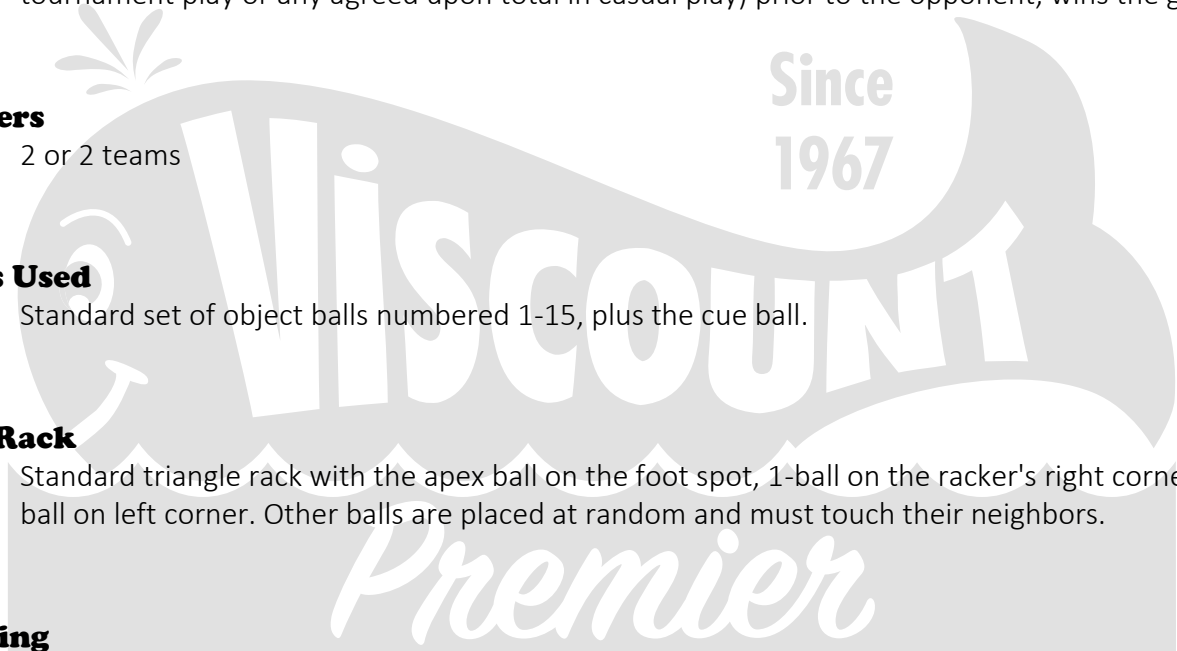
- Standard triangle rack with the apex ball on the foot spot, 1-ball on the racker's right corner, 5-ball on left corner. Other balls are placed at random and must touch their neighbors.

- **Scoring**

- Any ball legally pocketed counts one point for the shooter.

- **Opening Break**

- Starting player must either (1) designate a ball and a pocket into which that ball will be pocketed and accomplish the shot, or (2) cause the cue ball to contact a ball and then a cushion, plus cause two object balls to contact a cushion. Failure to meet at least one of the above requirements is a breaking violation. Offender's score is assessed a 2-point penalty for each breaking violation. In addition, the opponent has the choice of (1) accepting the table in position, or (2) having the balls re-racked and requiring the offending player to repeat the opening break. That choice continues until the opening break is not a breaking violation, or until the opponent accepts the table in position. The three successive fouls rule does not apply to breaking violations. If the starting player scratches on a legal opening break, he is charged with a foul and assessed a one-point penalty, which applies toward the "Successive Fouls Penalties". The incoming player is awarded cue ball in hand behind the head string, with object balls in position.



• Rules of Play

- 1. A legally pocketed ball entitles a shooter to continue at the table until he fails to legally pocket a called ball on a shot. A player may shoot any ball, but before the shot, must designate the called ball and called pocket. Details such as kisses, caroms, combinations, or cushions (all of which are legal) need not be indicated. Any additionally pocketed ball(s) on a legal stroke is scored as one point for the shooter.
- 2. On all shots, a player must cause the cue ball to contact an object ball and then (1) pocket a numbered ball, or (2) cause the cue ball or any numbered ball to contact a cushion. Failure to meet these requirements is a foul.
- 3. When the 14th ball of a rack is pocketed, play stops momentarily with the 15th ball remaining in position on the table; the 14 pocketed balls are then racked (with the space at the foot spot vacant in the triangle). Player then continues, normally pocketing the 15th (or "break" ball) in such a manner as to have the cue ball carom into the rack and spread the balls to facilitate the continuance of his run. However, player is not compelled to shoot the 15th ball; he may shoot any ball he desires. See Diagram 22 if the 15th ball is pocketed on the same stroke as the 14th ball.

| | Cue ball lies | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15th ball lies | In the Rack | Not in the Rack and not on the Head Spot* | On The Head Spot* |
| In The Rack | 15th ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in kitchen | 15th ball: head spot Cue Ball: in position | 15th ball: center spot Cue Ball: in position |
| Pocketed | 15th ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in kitchen | 15th ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in position | 15th ball: foot spot Cue Ball: in position |
| Behind Head String, But not on Head Spot | 15th ball: in position Cue Ball: head spot | | |
| Not behind Head String, and not in the Rack | 15th ball: in position Cue Ball: in kitchen | | |
| On Head Spot | 15th ball: in position Cue Ball: center spot | | *on spot means to interfere with spotting a ball on the head spot |

- 4. A player may call a safety rather than an object ball (for defensive purposes). Safety play is legal but must comply with all applicable rules. The player's inning ends when a safety is played, and pocketed balls are not scored. Any object ball pocketed on a called safety is spotted.
- 5. A player may not catch, touch or in any way interfere with a ball as it travels toward a pocket or the rack area on a shot (to include catching a ball as it enters a pocket by having a hand in the ball as it enters a pocket by having a hand in the pocket). Doing so is a special "deliberate foul" and is penalized one point for the foul and an additional 15-point penalty, for a total of 16 points. The incoming player then has choice of (1) accepting the table in position with the cue ball in hand behind the head string, or (2) having all 15 balls re-racked and requiring the offending player to shoot under the requirements of the opening break.
- 6. If the 15th (un-pocketed) ball of a rack and/or the cue ball interferes with the triangle being lowered straight down into position for racking, refer to the diagram, which indicates the proper manner of relocating balls. (The gray boxes are those situations in which there is no interference, both balls remain in position.)
- 7. When a player has the cue ball in hand behind the head string (as after a scratch) and all the object balls are behind the head string, the object ball nearest the head string may be spotted upon request. If two or more balls are an equal distance from the head string, the player may designate which of the equidistant balls is to be spotted.

• **OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE**

- The stroke is a foul. Any jumped ball(s) is spotted after the balls come to rest.

• **PENALTIES FOR FOULS**

- One point is deducted for each foul.

• **SUCCESSIVE FOUL PENALTIES**

- When a player commits a foul, penalization is one point (or more as appropriate) and a notation is made and posted by the scorer that the player is "on a foul". The player remains "on a foul" until the next shot attempt, at which time the foul may be removed by successfully pocketing a called ball, or completing a legal safety. If failing to meet these requirements on the next turn at the table, the player is penalized one point. The notation is changed to "on two fouls". If he fails to meet the requirements of successfully pocketing a called ball or completing a legal safety on the third consecutive turn at the table, penalization is one point and an additional penalty of 15 points is assessed (a total of 18 points for three consecutive fouls equals -18 points). The commission of a third successive foul automatically clears the offender's record of fouls. "The incoming player has the choice of 1). accepting the balls in position, or 2). having all 15 balls re-racked and requiring the offending player to shoot under the requirements of the opening break. Rules for the opening break apply." It should be emphasized that successive fouls must be committed in successive turns (or playing attempts), not merely in successive innings. For example, if a player ends inning six with a foul, steps to the table for inning seven and fouls (he is "on two fouls"), and then starts inning eight with a legally pocketed ball before scratching on his second shot attempt of the inning, he has not committed three successive fouls, even though there were fouls in three successive innings. As soon as he legally pocketed the ball to start inning eight, he cleared the two fouls. He is, of course, "on one foul" when he plays the first stroke attempt of inning nine.

- **Scoring Note**

- The deduction of penalty points can result in negative scores. A running score can read "minus one", "minus two", "minus 15", etc. (A player can win a game with a score of 150 while the opponent has scored but two fouls. The final score would read 150 to -2.) If a player fouls on a shot that has not pocketed a ball, the point penalty is deducted from his score at the end of the previous inning. If a player fouls and pockets a ball on the same shot, that ball is spotted (not scored) and the point penalty is deducted from his score at the end of the previous inning.

- **Stalemate**

- If the referee decides that neither player is attempting to win from the current position, he will announce his decision, and each player will have three more turns at the table. Then, if the referee still feels that there is no progress towards a conclusion, he will declare a stalemate and the original breaker at the start of the game must execute a new break shot.