

How to Play 9 Ball

Basic Rules

- You must always hit the lowest numbered ball on the table first.
- You do not have to sink the lowest ball necessarily; it just has to be the first ball hit by the cue ball.

Committing a Foul

- **Scratch:**
 - This occurs when you hit the cue ball into a pocket.
- **Table Scratch:**
 - The first way to commit a table scratch is to not hit the lowest numbered ball first.
 - The second way to commit a table scratch is to not hit the lowest numbered ball at all.
- **No Rail:**
 - If no ball is pocketed, to ensure fair gameplay at least one ball (including the cue ball) must touch a rail, or bank, on the table
- **Off-of-table:**
 - Occurs if the cue ball physically leaves the table, usually due to a bad jump shot

How to Handle a Foul

- If your opponent has committed a foul, their turn immediately ends, and the cue ball is turned over to the next player. This starts what is called a ball-in-hand scenario, as you are literally holding the cue ball. This allows for the cue ball to be placed anywhere on the table if the cue ball is not in contact with another ball

Win Conditions

- If the 9 ball is sunk fairly, the player who sunk the ball is declared the winner. This can be either when the 9 ball is the lowest ball on the table or that the lowest ball was hit first to pocket the 9 via a combination shot.
- If the 9 ball is sunk unfairly, or a foul has been committed that pockets the 9 ball, the player who sunk the 9 loses.