

Cornerman Billiards Bar Rules 8-Ball

World Standardized Rules

Most of these rules will contradict any semblance of WSR (World Standardized Rules)

Special notes are *italicized*.

1. OBJECT OF THE GAME. Bar Rules Eight Ball (often called Straight 8, much to the chagrin of this author) is a call all the details game played with a cue ball and fifteen object balls, numbered 1 through 15. One player must pocket balls of the group numbered 1 through 7 Solid colors, and the other player has 9 thru 15 Stripes. In the case of the special Casino Ball Set, one player has the Yellow ball group, and the other has the Red ball group. The Black Ball in the Casino Ball Set replaces the 8-ball. **THE PLAYER POCKETING HIS GROUP FIRST AND THEN LEGALLY POCKETING THE 8-ball WINS THE GAME.**

2. CALL ALL THE DETAILS. Bar Rules 8-ball is a Call All the Details game.

Call All the details is not the same thing as Call Shot. In Call Shot, one must only call the ball and pocket.

However, in Call All the Details of Bar Rules 8-ball, the player must call every little kiss, combo, and cushion intended. The exception to this is that the player does not have to call any incidental cushion contact of the object ball or the cue ball approaching the pocket or ball in a pocket.

Calling All the Details is generally viewed as the worst way to play our sport.

Example 1: Playing an object ball into a corner pocket, it is not required to call or not call contacting the cushion adjacent to that pocket with the object ball as the object ball approaches the pocket.

When a called ball contacts either the cushions or pocket points along the rails adjacent to the called pocket on its final approach toward the pocket, such contact does not count against the called shot. If an otherwise legal called shot is pocketed in such a manner, the ball counts as long as the shot conforms with the shooter's called intentions, and no foul or scratch occurs.

Example 2: Playing a kick shot to a ball hanging in the corner pocket, it is not required to call or not call contacting the cushion adjacent to that pocket with the cue ball as the cue ball approaches the ball hanging in the pocket.

In a called kick shot to a hanging object ball, if the cue ball contacts either the cushions or pocket points along the rails adjacent to the called pocket on its final approach toward the object ball pocket, such contact does not count against the called shot. If an otherwise legal called shot is pocketed in such a manner, the ball counts as long as the shot conforms with the shooter's called intentions, and no foul or scratch occurs.

Example 3. Playing the cue ball directly to pocket a ball hanging or near a pocket and not kicking to another non-adjacent cushion first, it IS necessary to call the contact with the cushion with the cue ball if the intent of the player is to play cushion first with the cue ball. For the object ball, Example 1 still holds true.

Although obvious straight in shots and obvious one-rail bank shots are by definition "obvious," an opposing player has the right to remind you before or after your shot to call your shot. Persistent non-calling leads to brawls. It is the opponent's right to ask about the details of any shot if he is unsure of the shot.

The opening break is not a called shot. Any player performing a break shot in 8-ball may continue to shoot his next shot so long as he has legally pocketed any object ball on the break.

3. RACKING THE BALLS. The balls are racked in a triangle at the foot of the table with the 8-ball in the center of the triangle rack and the first (front) ball of the rack on the foot spot. The rest of the balls are positioned randomly. There is no rule requirement for specific ball groups in any of the corners.

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Many bars have an unwritten rule of racking in the Solid-Stripes-Solid-Stripes-Solid fashion down the rack. This ends up with a solid on every corner. Though not illegal, this rack is discouraged as it gives an advantage (about 3:2) to the solids going in on the break.

No extra points are given for twirling the rack or racking with the 8-ball riding the balls like a tank commander.

Tapping the head ball with another object ball is discourage. But really, the result better than hitting a loose rack.

4. **WINNER BREAK.** Determination of who breaks can be done by coin flip, lag, lot (nobody determines the break by lot) or just agreeing. The winner of the game controls the table and has the Break Shot against the next challenger.

Most every bar is a "Challenge Table" setup. The following are methods (good or bad) on who is up next:

- The quarters on the table (many bar tables do still have coin holders for this)*
- The chalk board (best practice)*
- The table knock (no idea why people do this, but it's not uncommon)*

5. **JUMP AND MASSE SHOT FOUL.** Jump Shots and Masse Shots are legal in bar rules, so long as there are no local rules by the bar and if they are shot with a legal stroke. A player may not scoop or intentionally miscue the cue ball to jump over a ball. If a player illegally jumps by scooping, be prepared for strange looks if you try to tell them that this is illegal. Try to tell them ahead of time. Just a suggestion.

6. **LEGAL BREAK SHOT.** To execute a legal break, the breaker starts with the cue ball fully behind the head string. That is, the front edge must be behind the head string. Please don't argue about the base of the ball. These are bar rules. Get that front edge behind the line.

With the cue ball behind the head string, the breaker must hit the racked balls with the cue ball. That's it. There are no rules for how many balls must contact a cushion. There are no rules on which ball or cushion the cue ball must contact.

If he fails to hit the rack, the player gets to try it again. Repeated failures to hit the rack will only be tolerated if the player is cute (choose your gender).

7. **SCRATCH ON A LEGAL BREAK.** If a player scratches on a legal break shot, it is NEVER EVER EVER EVER a loss of game (unless the 8-ball drops as well). Those who blurt out "you lost" when you scratch on the break but don't drop the 8-ball should be asked to leave the premises.

On a scratch on the break, the incoming player has ball-in-hand in the kitchen (front edge behind the line). Any discussions of "base of the ball" will not be tolerated.

8. **OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE ON THE BREAK.** If a player jumps an object ball off the table on the break shot, it is a foul and the object ball that jumped off the table is spotted as close to the foot spot as possible on an imaginary line running towards the foot rail. If there is no room, then the object ball spots on the same imaginary line, starting above the foot spot towards the head of the table. The player gives up his turn. No other penalty applies.

In many places, there is no penalty at all. The breaker can continue shooting after the jumped ball is spotted.

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9. 8-BALL POCKETED ON THE BREAK. If the 8-ball starts moving toward a pocket on the Break Shot, it is MANDATORY to yell out, "8-BALL!!!!" even if it has ZERO chance of going in.

If the 8-ball is pocketed on the break, it is an automatic WIN as long as the player did not pocket the cue ball or drive the cue ball off the table on the same stroke.

If the cue ball scratches or jumped off the table, and the 8-ball is pocketed on the same stroke, it is an automatic LOSS of game. Sorry about your luck.

10. OPEN TABLE. The table is open when the choice of groups (stripes or solids), has not yet been determined. When the table is open, it is legal to hit a solid first to make a stripe or vice-versa.

Some areas do not allow a combination or carom involving both sets of balls in order to establish the player's group. Always ask first on this idea. (See Section 16 Combination Shots)

11. CHOICE OF GROUP. On the break, Bar Rules use the Take What You Make rule. Making a ball on the break determines that set of balls as the player's set. However, if a player makes at least one ball of each, the table is still open (See Section 10).

Some areas will stipulate that if a player makes more balls of one set than the other, then the set with more balls down on the break is his.

To determine the Choice of Group when the table is still open, the player must legally and successfully pocket a ball from one of the sets (per Call All the Details). Making that ball determines his set. When the table is open, it is legal to hit any solid in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid (see special note in Section 10).

However, when the table is open and the 8-ball is the first ball contacted, no stripe or solid may be scored in favor of the shooter. The shooter loses his turn, any balls pocketed remain pocketed, and the incoming player addresses the balls with the table still open. The 8-ball is not neutral, so it is never a legal shot to hit the 8-ball first or in the middle of any combination.

Many areas allow the 8-ball to be used in the middle of a combination or carom.

12. LEGAL SHOT. On all shots except on the break and when the table is open, the shooter must hit one of his group of balls first before any other object ball. He may drive the cue ball into a cushion or cushions first, but the first object ball contacted by the cue ball must be his ball. Failure to do so is a loss of their turn. There are no other penalties for failure to hit his group or to drive a ball to a cushion.

13. SAFETY SHOT. Bar Rules 8-ball is an Honest Effort game. The player must make an attempt at pocketing a ball. Any obvious safety play are grounds for ejection from the vicinity.

Exceptions:

- 2-way shots are encouraged as a best practice, as long as there is a reasonable chance that the play will result in an object ball sort of going that general direction

- In the situation where balls are tied up and there is no possible way a ball can even be a 2-way shot, the general rule is to make the following statement:

"Dude I got nothing."

Then play a shot that opens balls. Bear in mind that rail nursing will not be tolerated, nor will lagging the cue ball somewhere that doesn't attempt to touch the Cluster. Prepare for a fight.

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14. **SCORING.** A player is entitled to continue shooting until he fails to legally pocket a ball of his group per the Call All the Details requirement. After a player has legally pocketed all of his group of balls, the 8-ball becomes his legal object ball.

15. **FOUL PENALTY.** On any foul other than scratching the cue ball, the player only loses his turn. There is no other penalty.

If the player scratches the cue ball, the opposing player gets ball-in-hand in the kitchen, with the cue ball fully behind line (front edge behind and not touching the head string). When placing the cue ball in position, any forward stroke motion contacting the cue ball will be a foul if the result is not a legal shot.

The player may use his shaft, ferrule and even the tip of his cue to position the cue ball. Using the hand however is less prone to lead to bar fights.

16. BALL-IN-HAND IN THE KITCHEN

When playing from the Kitchen, the player must either:

- a. Play to make the first cue ball contact with any object ball that is fully outside of the kitchen (trailing edge of object ball is in front of and not touching the imaginary head string).
- b. Cause the cue ball to fully pass the head string (trailing edge of the cue ball is in front of the head string) before returning into the kitchen to contact his object ball that is not fully outside the head string

The player may play an object ball that is on or fully behind the head string (definitely not in front of the head string fully) as long as the cue ball first fully passes outside the kitchen (trailing edge of the cue ball past the head string before contacting that object ball (e.g., foot rail kick, side rail spin kick or pique'/masse' shots to drive the cue ball outside of the kitchen before contacting the object ball in question).

When playing ball-in-hand in the Kitchen, if all of the incoming player's balls are not fully in front of the head string, there is no spotting rule. In other words, Too Bad – So Sad. (See Section 16 b to see what options the player has for a legal shot).

17. **COMBINATION AND CAROM SHOTS.** Combination and carom shots are allowed. However, the 8-ball cannot be used as a ball in the combination. If it is, the player loses his turn.

In most bars, the player can use his opponent's set of balls in the middle of a combination as long as his first object ball contact is his from his own set, and that all the requirements of Call All the Details are met.

In some areas, using your opponent's set of balls is not allowed. Please ask first!

In some areas, using the 8-ball in the middle of a combination is allowed. Please ask first!

18. **ILLEGALLY POCKETED BALLS.** An object ball is considered illegally pocketed when it is pocketed on the same stroke that the requirements of Call All the Details are not fulfilled. All illegally pocketed balls stay down.

19. **OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE.** If any object ball is jumped off the table, it is a foul and loss of turn unless it is the 8-ball, which is a loss of game. The object ball that jumped off the table is spotted as close to

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the foot spot as possible on an imaginary line running towards the foot rail. If there is no room, then the object ball spots on the same imaginary line, starting above the foot spot towards the head of the table (refer General Spotting Rules of WSR, but that isn't going to happen in a bar).

In many places, there is no penalty at all. The breaker can continue shooting after the jumped ball is spotted.

20. PLAYING THE 8-BALL.

The player wins when after legally pocketing all of his set of balls, he calls the pocket and pockets the 8-ball CLEANLY. The player does not have to call incidental contact with the approaching cushion, per Call All the Details (See Section 2 - Examples).

An interesting variation that comes more often than one would be imagine is that the last object ball prior to the 8-ball must go in clean, so the player cannot play a carom for their last object ball.

There are some areas that do not require that the 8-ball go clean.

It is never allowed to play both the 8-ball and the last ball of a player's group on the same stroke.

21. LOSS OF GAME.

- The opponent legally pockets the 8-ball.
- The opponent pockets the 8-ball on the break without scratching or jumping the 8-ball off the table.
- Scratching the cue ball when playing the 8-ball as the legal object ball for the player
- If the 8-ball is jumped off the table at any time
- If the 8-ball is pocketed when it is not the legal object ball for the shooting player
- If the 8-ball is pocketed and the requirements of Call All the Details are not met
- If the 8-ball is pocketed on the same stroke as the players final object ball of his group of balls. Even calling to make both the last ball and the 8-ball on the last shot is ground for dismissal.
- If the player contacts another object ball with the cue ball before pocketing the 8-ball

A combination shot or carom shot can never be used to pocket the 8-ball when the 8-ball is the legal object ball.

Many areas will allow you to play a carom of the 8-ball off the opponent's object ball. Ask first.

22. STALEMATED GAME. LOLLOL!!!! There are other players wanting to play. Whack it.