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# SNOOKER RULES

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## AGE GROUPS

| Age  | Events       | Participants Advancing to Provincial Games |
|--|--------------|--|
| 55+  | Open Singles | 1 per Zone                                 |
| 70+  | Open Singles | 1 per Zone                                 |
| <b>TOTAL NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS PER ZONE = 2</b> |              |  |

1. **The Alberta 55 plus Games and all sanctioned ALBERTA 55 PLUS events will** follow the world standardized rules for 8-Ball by the Billiards Congress of America.

These rules can be obtained by searching [www.bca-pool.com](http://www.bca-pool.com) or by contacting:

**Billiards Congress of America**  
**Headquarters Address**  
Billiard Congress of America  
12303 Airport Way  
Suite 160  
Broomfield, CO 80021  
**Toll-Free Main Office: 866.852.0999**

## 2. THE SNOOKER TABLE

- a) The rules of snooker state that a regulation full-sized table should have a playing surface of 5 feet 9 1/2 inches x 11 feet 8 1/2 inches. To facilitate the hosting of snooker at the Alberta 55 plus Games, host communities can be shown flexibility in using table sizes available in the host community. For example, a 6-foot x 12-foot table can be a 4.5 foot x 9 foot table
- b) The height of the table from the floor to the top of the cushion rail officially must be between 2 feet 9 1/2 inches and 2 feet 10 1/2 inches.
- c) The bed of the table is covered with green napped billiard cloth on which the spots for the various balls and the baulk line are marked out.
- d) The baulk line, 29 inches from the face of the baulk cushion (also known as the bottom cushion), is the line on which the spots for the yellow, green and brown balls are placed – these three balls are sometimes referred to collectively as the baulk colors.
- e) From the yellow spot to the green spot is described a semicircle (radius 11 1/2 inches) known as the D.
- f) The blue spot is positioned midway between the two center pockets.
- g) The pink spot is positioned midway between the blue spot and the face of the top cushion.
- h) And finally, the black spot is positioned 12 1/4 inches away from the face of the top cushion in a straight line with the pink, blue and brown spots.

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## 3. THE SNOOKER BALLS

- a) A set of snooker balls consists of: fifteen reds; one yellow, one green, one brown, one blue, one pink, one black (known collectively as the **colors** or **colored balls**); and one white ball (known as the **cue-ball**).
- b) Regulation size balls for full-sized tables measure 2 1/16 inches in diameter.

## 4. THE RULES OF PLAYING SNOOKER

- a) At the start of each frame – a **frame** is the snooker term for one game or a rack – the colored balls are placed on their respective spots, with the red balls placed in a triangle with the apex red ball as near as possible to the pink ball without actually touching it.
- b) The basic idea of snooker is that players play alternatively to pocket balls (referred to in the game of snooker as to **pot** or **potting balls**) to build-up a frame winning score.
- c) And when there is no opportunity to pocket a ball, make it as difficult as possible for your opponent to achieve this aim by playing defensive or what is referred to in the game of snooker as a **safety shot**.
- d) To build-up a score, a player must first attempt to pocket any of the red balls (worth one point each) into any of the six pockets on the table.
- e) Having pocketed a red ball, the player is then free to select and pocket any colored ball into any pocket to add to their score – if more than one red ball is pocketed in the same stroke a player scores accordingly but is free to select and pocket only one colored ball.

## 5. SCORING

- a) Both players are responsible to determine the point count of each player's break.
- b) Each colored ball is worth the following points: **Yellow** (2 points), **Green** (3 points), **Brown** (4 points), **Blue** (5 points), **Pink** (6 points), & **Black** (7 points). Please note: Once a red ball has been pocketed the colored ball only needs to be nominated by the player if there is reasonable doubt to which colored ball the player is aiming for.
- c) Once a colored ball has been pocketed, unlike a red ball, which stays in the pocket, it is returned to its respective spot on the table.
- d) A player can then attempt to pocket another red ball and continue the sequence to build-up their score.
- e) However, if the pocketed colored ball's spot on the table is occupied or obstructed by another ball, the colored ball must then be placed on the vacated spot of the highest valued ball and left there till such a time it is pocketed, then returning it to its spot – assuming that its spot has since been vacated.
- f) In the event of all the spots being occupied, the colored ball is then to be placed as near to its own spot in a direct line toward the face of the top cushion (the cushion nearest to the black spot).

## 6. THE START OF A FRAME

- a) The break-off is the opening shot played in a frame of snooker.
- b) The player that has the break-off is allowed to place the cue-ball anywhere within the area known as the **D** and play for the red balls.
- c) As it is extremely difficult to pocket a red ball from this spot, it is usual practice for a player to try and return the cue-ball back to the baulk area (preferably to the baulk cushion or behind one of the baulk colored balls) as a safety shot.

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## 7. THE END OF A FRAME

- a) A frame is technically still alive until only the black ball remains with the cue-ball on the table.
- b) Once this situation has been reached, the player who is more than 7 points (the value of the black ball) behind has lost the frame.
- c) Of course, some frames are closely fought, and a player may need to pocket the final black ball to win. This is known as a **black ball game**, and the player who pockets the black ball or whose opponent commits a foul stroke on it wins the frame.
- d) If the scores are level once the final black ball has been pocketed at the end of a frame, the black ball is replaced on its spot and the players spin a coin to decide who will place the cue-ball in the area known as the **D** and play from then on. The normal rules of a black ball game are then contested

## 8. TIE BREAKER INFORMATION

If a two-way tie exists at the end of round robin play, and extra single game is to be played. If a three-way tie exists at the end of round robin play, players will toss coins until one person has the “odd” coin and receives a “bye” in the playoff game. The other two players play an extra single game, with the winner of this game going on to play an additional game against the player who received the “bye”. Winner of this game receives the higher standing.

## 9. SPOTTING

- a) The player not shooting will spot the ball.
- b) If there is any difficulty in spotting the ball, consult the referee.
- c) Once the final red ball has been pocketed, a player again has the option of playing to pocket a colored ball.
- d) If the colored ball is pocketed, as usual it is re-placed on the table, then a player must try to pocket the colored balls in strict order, into any pocket, in ascending numerical value from the yellow ball to the black ball – only this time, when each colored ball has been pocketed, it stays in the pocket.
- e) The accumulation of points with a series of successful pocketed balls in snooker is called a **break**.
- f) The highest break you can achieve in a frame of snooker, that is managing to successfully pocket all 15 red balls alternatively with 15 black balls and all of the colored balls in order, is officially recognized as **147** and is known as a **maximum break**.
- g) At one time in a frame, a player may find that there are not enough points available on the table to overtake their opponent’s score to win the frame (referred to as needing a snooker or snookers).
- h) So, this is the time when the player needs to employ a tactic to try and force their opponent to commit a foul stroke, in order to gain the extra points for their score.
- i) A foul stroke in snooker can be committed in several ways and carries a minimum penalty of 4 points going to the non-offending player.
- j) The value of the penalty depends on which ball the offense was committed on; foul strokes committed on the colored balls, which are worth more than 4 points, are given away in accordance to their respective value.
- k) In the event of a foul stroke having been committed on more than one ball, only the points of the highest valued ball involved are given away.

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- l) The term **to snooker** means to position the cue-ball behind another ball, thus blocking a clear path to the target-ball (s) (in snooker the target-ball (s) are referred to as the **ball** or **balls on**).
- m) This may happen unintentionally or by design by a player to try and gain those extra points to win the frame, as it forces a player to strike the cue-ball on a less direct path to the target-ball (s) with either a masse' shot (usually referred to in snooker as a swerve shot) or by playing off a cushion.
- n) This position is known as **a snooker** or being **snookered**, and failure to hit the target-ball (s) is a foul stroke – this tactic can also be deployed throughout a frame as a defensive safety shot.

## **Foul strokes can be committed with the following rule infringements:**

1. Failing to hit a ball.
2. Pocketing the cue-ball: If the cue-ball is pocketed, the non-offending player is allowed to place the cue-ball anywhere within the area known as the **D** and play from then on.
3. Pocketing the wrong balls (s): This includes pocketing a colored ball when a red ball is the target-ball; pocketing a colored ball other than the target-colored ball; and pocketing a red ball when a colored ball is the target-ball.
4. Playing a push-shot (a legal shot in pool): A push-shot is committed when the tip of the snooker cue is still in contact with the cue-ball when the cue-ball makes contact with another ball.
5. This can happen when the cue-ball is very close to the target-ball or when the cue-ball is touching another ball (known as a touching-ball).
6. A touching-ball must be announced by either a player or referee, and as moving a ball which the cue-ball is touching will inevitably be a push-shot, it must be played away from – if the/a target is touching the cue-ball, playing directly away from it is deemed a legal shot and not a foul stroke.
7. If there is any doubt, please consult the referee prior to making the shot.
8. Striking the cue-ball whilst it is still moving.
9. Striking the cue-ball with both feet off the floor – a foot must maintain contact with the floor during a shot.
10. Striking the cue-ball with anything other than the tip of a billiard cue, which must be of at least three feet in length.
11. 1) Moving any ball 2) If a shirt sleeve worn by any participant moves a ball, a penalty of loss of turn and a 4-point minimum or value of the ball will be implemented.
12. Jumping the cue-ball over another ball unintentionally or by design (a legal shot in pool).
13. Playing out of turn.
14. In some situations, after a foul stroke, the offending player may gain an advantage over their opponent – for example, the cue-ball could come to rest in a snooker or other safe position.
15. To counter this situation, after any foul stroke committed the offending player can be requested by their opponent to continue at the table.
16. However, if the non-offending player is snookered on the target-ball (s), that is the player cannot be judged to be able to strike the cue-ball to hit both sides of the object-ball (though you cannot be snookered on a red ball by a red ball), the player is allowed to nominate any ball on the table as their target-ball (known as a free-ball).
17. If the free-ball is the pocketed, it will score only in accordance as the original target-ball – in theory, before any red balls have been pocketed, if a player is awarded a free-ball there is a possible break of 155 on, though this is not recognized as the maximum break total.

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18. Other rules to take note of as regard to the free-ball are: it is permissible to pocket a target-ball using a free-ball in a combination shot (referred to in snooker as a plant, but its much more common use is for pocketing red balls in a combination); and also, a player may not snooker their opponent behind a free-ball, except that is when only the colored balls pink and black remain on the table.
19. Also, if a player is deemed by the referee to have not come close enough to contacting the target-ball (s) from a snooker, then the referee will give the option to their opponent to have the cue-ball, and any other balls if necessary, replaced in their original positions.
20. The shot is known as a miss and will be called along with a foul stroke by the referee (a miss however will not be called if any player requires a snooker or snookers at that moment in the frame), and the player must then attempt the shot again until contact is made with the target-ball (s), or the referee deems the player has made an exceptional attempt at making contact with the target-ball (s) – in calling a miss, the referee will usually take into consideration the size of the target balls such as a cluster of reds, and the pace at which the cue-ball was struck.
21. And when a player is not snookered and fails to hit the target-ball (s), a foul stroke and a miss will automatically be called by the referee.
22. Three misses of this kind will result in the automatic forfeiture of the frame – this section of rules however is much more stringently enforced in professional and top amateur level snooker