

# San Francisco Tavern Pool League rules for 8-ball

SPRING 2010

**SPORTSMANSHIP:** Sportsmanship is simply treating your teammates and opponents with courtesy and respect. By following a few simple guidelines you can help ensure everyone gets the most out of their league experience:

1. Know the rules
2. No "Sharking". Sharking is any act designed to upset your opponent or disrupt their concentration at any time during the game. Examples of sharking are using profanity, sarcastic comments, refusing to acknowledge an obvious foul, standing close to your opponent's line of vision, unreasonable delays during shooting, or creating sudden noise.
3. Resolve disputes the right way. Refer to the rules whenever there is a dispute.
4. Respect your host and their equipment.

**IF A SHOOTER BELIEVES A PLAYER IS ENGAGING IN UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT, THE PLAYER SHOULD BE CAUTIONED AND A FOUL CAN BE CALLED FOR REPEATED CONDUCT. THE CAPTAINS OF BOTH TEAMS SHOULD BE NOTIFIED IF A WARNING HAS BEEN ISSUED.**

The tavern owner or bartender has the right to remove from the premises any player whose conduct disturbs the peace of the premises. The offending player shall forfeit all games for that evening, which are not completed prior to their removal from the premises. Any player involved in illegal activities, such as gambling, is subject to suspension by the Board.

**THE RACK:** Head Ball on the foot spot, the eight ball in the middle, and a ball from each group on opposite foot corners.

**OPENING BREAK:** The home player flips a coin; the visiting player calls the flip. The winner of the flip has the option to break or rack. The 8-ball pocketed on the break is a win (including on a re-rack): The 8-ball pocketed with foul on break is a loss of game. Breaking shooter, with cue ball behind the head string, must either 1) pocket a ball, or 2) drive four numbered balls to a rail. If the shooter fails to make a legal break, the opposing player may either elect to shoot the balls as they are, or have the balls re-racked and break them themself.

**OPENING BREAK/CHOICE OF GROUP:** The choice of stripes or solids is not determined on the break even if only one ball is pocketed. The table remains open until a player legally pockets an object ball from one group. Any ball, including the 8-ball, may be used for a combination shot while the table is open. The player may ask captain or referee if table is open without using a time-out.

**LEGAL SHOT:** On all shots except the opening break, the shooter must hit a legal object ball (when the table is open any colored ball, including the 8-ball, is a legal object ball) and then 1) pocket a numbered ball, or 2) cause the cue ball or any other ball to contact a rail. If a ball balanced on the lip of a pocket falls into the pocket before the cue ball is struck by the next shooter's cue and assuming the table is not bumped or jostled by the incoming shooter, the first player may continue at the table, subject to rules concerning the 8-ball below.

**FOULS:** After all fouls the player may take the cue ball in hand anywhere on the table to position it for the next shot, except after a foul or scratch on the opening break shot in which case the shot must be taken from behind the head string. The cue ball may be moved by hand, ferrule or shaft of the stick, but not the tip of the stick.

The following are fouls:

1. Failure to execute a legal shot as defined above.
2. A scratch shot: cue ball falling into a pocket or over the edge off the table.
3. Touching any ball with the cue ball during a time-out, or with ball in hand.
4. Shooting without at least one foot touching the floor, except where the tavern fails to provide a working bridge.
5. Moving or touching the cue ball by means other than a legal play. NOTE: (1) double hit on the cue ball is a foul. (2) touching the cue ball with the tip of the stick without executing a legal shot constitutes a foul.

**Judging Double Hits.** When the distance between the cue ball and the object ball is less than the width of a chalk cube, captains or other persons designated to watch the game should pay special attention. In such a situation the following guidance may apply: if the cue ball follows through the object ball more than 1/2 ball, it is a foul.

6. Jumping the cue ball over another ball by striking the cue ball below its center.
7. Deliberately moving any ball that clearly may alter the game will be considered a concession of the game. (Examples include stopping the 8-ball from going into a pocket, stopping the cue ball from hitting a ball....)
8. Touching or interfering with any ball while it is moving on the table (see "Object balls accidentally moved" and "Loss of Game, item 7" below).
9. Coaching.
10. Unsportsmanlike conduct after a warning has been issued.

**RULES CLARIFICATIONS:** A rules clarification may be requested in the presence of both captains by a player during their game without using a time-out.

**OBJECT BALLS ACCIDENTALLY MOVED:** If an object ball is touched or accidentally moved during a player's turn, it is a foul if 1) the moved ball hits any other ball on the table 2) the moved ball, in its original position, would have been struck by a ball in play. In all cases of accidentally moved balls, the opposing player has the option (if he/she requests) to return the ball(s) to its original position. It is the responsibility of the opposing player to request that moved ball be addressed.

**OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE WITH SHOOTER:** It is the captain's and each player's responsibility to keep bystanders away from the playing area and otherwise protect the shooter from being bumped or jostled while shooting. However, when shooting the 8-ball, if the player is bumped during the stroke and this causes a foul, the balls shall be repositioned as they were and the shot taken over.

**OBJECT BALLS JUMPED OFF TABLE:** If an object ball is jumped off the table, it is a miss and loss of turn, not a foul. Balls jumped off the table from the opponent's group will be pocketed. Balls from the shooter's group will be spotted on the foot spot.

**SPOTTING BALLS:** Balls are spotted on the foot spot, as close as other balls permit, frozen to any object ball, but not the cue ball.

**FROZEN BALLS:** When an object ball is frozen to the rail, or the cue ball, the cue ball must contact the frozen ball first and then 1) pocket the frozen ball or any other object ball, or 2) drive the cue ball or another object ball to a rail. It is the opposing player's responsibility prior to the shot being taken to call the intended ball frozen; if the opposing player fails to do so, the ball will be deemed not frozen. This rule applies only to the ball the shooter obviously intends to hit first; all other balls on the table are considered not frozen.

**MARKING THE 8-BALL POCKET:** The shooter must designate the intended pocket by placing a marker next to it. The marker does not have to be "moved" if it is already next to the pocket from a previous attempt. Caroms, kisses or banks do not need to be called. Pocketing the 8-ball in an unmarked pocket results in loss of the game. The shooter's team members, members of the opposing team, or bystanders, may remind the shooter to mark the pocket when they are shooting the 8 ball. Reminding the shooter to mark their pocket is not coaching. However, telling the shooter which pocket to mark is coaching.

**OPTION TO SPOT THE 8-BALL:** If a player commits a foul and the opponent is then left with none of their group of balls on the table, the opponent has the option of either 1) taking the cue ball in hand anywhere on the table, or 2) spotting the 8-ball on the foot spot and taking the cue ball in hand behind the head string.

**LOSS OF GAME:** Any of the following results in loss of game:

1. Pocketing the 8-ball while committing a foul, or with cue ball scratch.
2. Pocketing the 8-ball when it is not the player's legal object ball, or on the same stroke as the player's last ball.
3. Jumping the 8-ball completely off the table.
4. Pocketing the 8-ball without marking the pocket.
5. Pocketing the 8-ball in a pocket other than the one marked.
6. When the 8-ball is the object ball, a cue ball scratch or jumping the cue ball off the table.
7. Deliberately moving any ball that clearly may alter the game will be considered a concession of the game. (Examples include stopping the 8-ball from going

into a pocket, stopping the cue ball from hitting a ball...)

8. If a player concedes, he or she loses the game. If a player attempts to unscrew his jointed cue stick during the opponent's turn, it will be considered a concession of the game.

**TIME-OUT:** Each player is permitted one time-out per game, for a period not to exceed two minutes, in order to seek advice from team members. A time out may only be called by the player at the table, not the captain or other team member. All team members, whether playing or not, may talk to the player during a time-out.

**NO COACHING:** When the player's turn commences (and it does so immediately when the opponent's turn ends) team members, captain and spectators may not talk to, advise, or discuss the shot strategy. However, general words of encouragement such as "take your time," "run out," or "nice shot," do not constitute coaching. Please note, also, that a casual reference to the match by an unaware spectator or bystander does not constitute coaching. The captain should warn that person to refrain from making any further comments to the shooter at the table. Suggesting the use of equipment such as a short cue (when there's a short wall) or a bridge when a player is struggling with a shot should not be considered coaching. However, showing how to use such equipment without a time-out requested from the shooter is coaching.

**CALLING FOULS/REFEREES:** The two captains referee the regular season matches. The job of watching the table may be delegated to anyone on that night's team roster, at any time (so that no person need watch all the games). The captain must let the opposing captain know who is assigned to watch the table. However, it is not coaching or interference if anyone else, including a bystander, calls a foul before either of the two players or captains (or designated referees). The shooter may ignore a foul called by anyone not entitled to call it. A foul must be called and resolved before play resumes. Ignoring a foul is unsportsmanlike conduct.

**PROTESTED GAMES:** Team captains are expected to resolve all disputes between the teams. The next shot should not be taken until a dispute has been resolved: if an agreement cannot be reached, the game should be stopped at that time and replayed immediately. If a captain refuses to replay the game, a formal protest must be noted on the score sheet with a complete statement concerning the protest submitted with the score sheet to the SFTPL. The opposing captain should furnish their viewpoint on the score sheet. However, if the two players involved agree to replay the game, the captains may not submit protests to the league. The SFTPL Board orders replays on any protested game except where 1) the facts surrounding the protest can be clearly supported in the Rules, 2) clearly unsportsmanlike conduct has occurred, or 3) where a team has created an argument solely to take advantage of replay. Protested games must be reported to the SFTPL Board within 24 hours of the match.

**MARKING TABLE:** It is not appropriate to use chalk, saliva or other markers to line up a shot. If this occurs, the opponent is free to pick up the chalk or erase any mark and caution the shooter that this constitutes unsportsmanlike conduct. If this action continues after warning, the opponent has the option of the remedies specified above.

**FRAUD:** If a member commits a fraud upon the SFTPL (such as playing under a false name or knowingly signing a score sheet containing a false name), the member shall be suspended for the remainder of the season, or longer, if appropriate.

**STALEMATED GAME:** If, after 3 consecutive turns at the table by each player (6 turns total), both players agree that attempting to pocket or move an object ball will result in loss of game, the balls will be re-racked with the original breaker of the stalemated game breaking again.

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