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# General Definitions of Pocket Billiards

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1. **STRIKING CUE BALL.** Legal shots require that the cue ball be struck only with the cue tip. Failure to meet this requirement is a foul.
2. **POCKETED BALLS.** A ball is considered as a pocketed ball if, as a result of an otherwise legal shot, it drops off the bed of the table into the pocket and remains there. A ball that rebounds from a pocket back onto the table is not a pocketed ball.
3. **POSITION OF BALLS.** The position of a ball is judged where it's base (or center) rests.
4. **FOOT ON THE FLOOR.** It is a foul if a player shoots when at least one foot is not in contact with the floor. Foot attire must be normal in regard to size, shape and the manner in which it is worn.
5. **KITCHEN DEFINED.** The headstring is part of the kitchen. If the base of an object ball is dead center on the headstring, the ball is not playable. This will apply on a scratched cue ball on the break. Likewise, the cue ball when being put in play from the kitchen (cue ball behind the string), may not be placed directly on the headstring; it must be behind it.
6. **FOULS BY DOUBLE HITS.** It is a foul if the cue ball is struck more than once on a shot by the cue tip (such shots are usually referred to as double hits). If, in the referee's judgement, the cue ball has left initial contact with the cue tip and then is struck a second time in the course of the same shot, it shall be a foul. (Note: this can be a difficult call in officiating, because on shots where the distance between the cue ball and the object is very short, the referee must judge whether the cue ball had time to move out of contact with the cue tip prior to being impeded and then propelled again by the follow through of the stroke.) Nonetheless, if it is judged by virtue of sound, ball position and action and stroke used that there were two separate contacts of the cue ball by the cue tip on a stroke, the stroke is a foul and must be so called.
7. **PUSH SHOT FOULS:** It is a foul if the cue ball is pushed by the cue tip, with contact being maintained for more than the momentary time commensurate with a stroked shot. (Such shots are usually referred to as push shots.) With a cue ball and object ball frozen, shooting the shot from any angle other than at least 45 degrees above, or at least 45 degrees to the right or at least 45 degrees to the left of center from the straight line of the frozen balls is a foul and must be so called.
8. **JUMPED CUE BALL.** When a stroke results in the cue ball being a jumped ball, meaning jumped completely off the pool table on the floor, the stroke is a foul. The cue ball may leave the playing surface and return, which is not to be considered a foul.
9. **ILLEGAL JUMPING OF BALL.** It is a foul if a player strikes the cue ball below center ("digs under" it) and intentionally causes it to rise off the bed of the table in an effort to clear an obstructing ball. Such jumping action may occasionally occur accidentally, and such "jumps" are not to be considered fouls on their face; they may still be ruled foul strokes, if for example the ferrule or cue shaft makes contact with the cue ball in the course of the shot.
10. **PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY FOULS.** The player is responsible for chalk, bridges, files and any other items or equipment he brings to, uses at, or causes to approximate the table. If he drops a piece of chalk, or knocks off a mechanical bridge head, as examples, he is guilty of a foul should such item make contact with a cue ball.

# VNEA Rules and Scoring

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11. **BALLS JUMPED OFF THE TABLE.** Balls coming to rest other than on the bed of the table after a stroke (on the cushion top, rail surface, floor, etc.) are considered jumped balls. Balls may bounce on the cushion tops and rails of the table in play without being jumped balls if they return to the bed of the table under their own power and without touching anything not a part of the table. The table shall consist of the permanent part of the table proper. (Balls that strike or touch anything not a part of the table, such as the light fixture, call pocket disc, chalk on the rails and chalk on the wood cushion tops, shall be considered jumped balls even though they might return to the bed of the table after contacting items which are not parts of the table proper).

When a stroke results in the cue ball or any object ball being a jumped ball off the table, the stroke is a foul. All jumped object balls are spotted (except in Nine Ball) when all balls have stopped moving.

12. **BALLS MOVING SPONTANEOUSLY.** If a ball shifts, settles, turns or otherwise moves “by itself” the ball shall remain in the position it assumed and play continues. A hanging ball that falls into a pocket “by itself” after being motionless for three seconds or longer shall be placed as closely as possible to its position prior to falling and play shall continue.
13. **SPOTTING BALLS.** A single ball is placed on the foot spot; if more than one ball is to be spotted, they are placed on the long string beginning on the foot spot and advancing toward the foot rail.
14. **JAWED BALLS.** If two or more balls are locked between the jaws or side of the pocket, with one or more suspended in air, the referee shall inspect the balls in position and follow this procedure; he shall visually (or physically if he desires) project each ball directly downward from its locked position; any ball that, in his judgement, would fall in the pocket if so moved directly downward is a pocketed ball, while any ball that would come to rest on the bed of the table is not pocketed. The balls are then placed according to the referee’s assessment, and play continues according to specific game rules as if no locking or jawing of balls had occurred.
15. **NON-PLAYER INTERFERENCE.** If the balls are moved (or a player is bumped such that play is directly affected) by a non-player during a match, the balls shall be replaced as near as possible to their original positions immediately prior to the incident, and play shall resume with no penalty on the player affected. If the match is officiated, referee shall replace the balls. This rule shall also apply to “act of God” interference, such as earthquake, hurricane, light fixture falling, power failure, etc.
16. **PLAY BY INNINGS.** Players alternate turns (innings) at the table, with a player’s inning ending when he either fails to legally pocket a ball, or fouls. When an inning ends free of a foul, the incoming player accepts the table in position.
17. **OBJECT BALL FROZEN TO CUSHION OR CUE BALL.**

This applies to any shot where the cue ball’s first contact with a ball is with one that is frozen to a cushion or to the cue ball itself. After the cue ball makes contact with the frozen ball, the shot must result in either:

- a) A ball being pocketed, or;
- b) The cue ball contacting a cushion, or;
- c) The frozen ball being caused to contact a cushion attached to a separate rail, or;
- d) Another object ball being caused to contact a cushion with which it was not already in contact.

Failure to satisfy one of those four requirements is a foul.

## VNEA Rules and Scoring

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A ball which is touching a cushion at the start of a shot and then is forced into a cushion attached to the same rail is not considered to have been driven to that cushion unless it leaves the cushion, contacts another ball, and then contacts the cushion again. An object ball is not considered frozen to a cushion unless it is examined and announced as such by either the referee or one of the players prior to that object ball being involved in a shot.

18. **PLAYING FROM BEHIND THE STRING.** When a player has the cue ball in hand behind the string (in the kitchen), he must drive the cue ball to a point outside the kitchen before it contacts either a cushion or an object ball. Failure to do so is a foul.
19. **SLOW PLAY RULE.** Exaggerated slow play will be penalized. Certain moments during a game or type of game may require extra thought or concentration. However, continuously taking 1 to 3 minutes between shots is not acceptable. When your opponent abuses this rule, stop play. The team captains will assign a player to time your opponent for the rest of the match. After a warning, any longer than ONE MINUTE between shots will be a foul. The third infraction will result in a loss of game.
20. **SCRATCH.** Cue ball pocketed or knocked off the table.