

OFFICIAL WPA BLACKBALL POOL RULES

1. THE GAME

The **Game** shall be known as "**Blackball**" and referred to in these rules as the "game". It is intended that players and teams should play **Blackball** in the true spirit of the game and in a sportsmanlike manner. It should be clearly understood that the referee is the sole judge of what is fair and unfair play. The referee shall take whatever action is necessary to ensure that these rules are observed.

2. REQUIREMENTS OF THE GAME

The game is played on a rectangular six-pocket table with **15** balls, plus a cue ball. Balls comprise of two groups, **1 - 7**, which are plain or red/blue coloured balls, and **9 - 15** which are striped or yellow, plus the **Blackball** which can also be numbered eight. Alternatively, two different colours may represent the numerical groups **1 - 7** and **9 - 15**. Balls in the two groups are known as "object balls".

3. OBJECT OF THE GAME

The player or team pocketing their group of object balls in any order and then legally pocketing the **Blackball** wins the game.

4. COMMENCEMENT OF THE GAME (OR RE-START)

- a. The balls are racked as illustrated with the **Blackball** on the black spot which is at the intersection of the centre and corner pockets.
- b. Order of play is determined by the winner of the lag. The winner of the lag has the option of breaking or requesting his/her opponent to break.
- c. The opening player plays at the triangle of object balls by striking the cue ball from any position **within baulk**. He/she must pocket a ball or cause at least four object balls to hit a cushion. Failure to do so is a foul break and will result in the opposing player receiving one free visit, from where the cue ball lies.
- d. On the first occasion a player legally pockets an object ball, including following a foul, then that denotes his/her group unless he/she pockets a solid (red) and a striped (yellow) ball, then the table is still open.
- e. If no ball is pocketed from a legal break, the player faces an open table. If one or more balls from the same group are potted the player is on that group. When one or more balls of different groups are potted the player must nominate his group of balls.
- f. If a foul is committed on an open table and one or more object balls are pocketed, then those balls are ignored in determining the groups to be played and the oncoming player has a free visit and faces an open table.
- g. If the player pockets the **Blackball** from the break, the player breaking wins the game.
- h. If a player pockets the **Blackball** and the **Cue Ball** from the break, it is loss of frame.
- i. If a ball or balls are legally pocketed, this entitles the player to one additional shot and this continues until the player either:
 - (i) Fails to pocket one of his/her set of allocated balls, or
 - (ii) Commits a foul, at any time.
- j. Combination shots are allowed provided that the player contacts one of his/her own group of balls first and pot both his and the opponents ball in any order.
- k. A player may play his last object ball or balls and pot the **Blackball** in the same shot providing the player pots his own last object balls or balls with the same shot for the player to win the game.

5. FOULS

- a. Potting the cue ball - 'in-off' (also from the break)
- b. Playing from outside baulk when obliged to play from baulk.
- c. Potting an opponent's ball without potting a ball from your own group.
- d. Failing to cause the cue ball's initial contact with the player's own group of balls.
- e. Striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip.
- f. Playing a shot before all balls have come to rest from the previous shot.
- g. Playing a shot before all balls that require spotting, have been spotted.
- h.
 - (i) Touching the table while having a cigarette (lit or unlit) in hand or mouth.
 - (ii) Causing a cigarette (lit or unlit) to touch the table or enter the space directly above the table.

- (iii) Touching the table while having a beverage container in hand.
- (iv) Causing a beverage container to touch the table or enter the space directly above the table.
- i. Touching the table when not in control of the frame.
Exceptions: When a player's turn is finished, that player has a maximum of 10 seconds to move away from the table (see j. below).
 Not moving away from the table within 10 seconds of the time that all the balls stopped moving from the final shot of a turn at the table.
- j. **Coaching:** During a frame, a player is required to play without receiving any advice from other persons relating to the playing of the frame. Should a team member or bona-fide supporter of a player offer advice, the Referee will issue a 'First and Final Warning' to that person that a repetition will result in the player being penalized via a foul. Because it may not always be possible for the Referee to hear if a statement made to a player is advice, the Referee may issue a First and Final warning on the grounds that any statement made by a player, other than general barracking, is deemed to be coaching.
 - In a tournament setting, a First and Final Warning may be given once only, before the commencement of the day's play as a block warning to all players and spectators.
- k. Leaving the playing area without permission. If a player needs to leave the playing area during a frame or match, the Referee must firstly grant 'Time out'.
- l. Causing the cue tip to contact the cue ball more than once in the same shot.
- m. Failing to perform a legal shot.
- n. Playing a shot while not having at least one foot touching the floor.
- o. Failing to 'Play Away' from an opponent's touching ball.
- p. A ball remaining off the table.
- q. Player's body, clothing, jewelry or hair touching any ball.
- r. Causing the cue ball to jump over any ball. (If the cue ball leaves the bed of the table and misses an object ball that would have been struck had the cue ball not left the table on an otherwise identical shot, the cue ball is deemed to have jumped over that object ball.
- s. Time foul.
- t. Catching the cue ball when going in off

6. PENALTY FOLLOWING ANY FOUL

- a. Following any foul the offending player loses his/her next visit to the table, and his/her opponent is entitled to a free shot.
- b. On the first shot only, of his/her free shot, the oncoming player may, without nomination, play the cue ball onto any ball without penalty (including his/her opponent's object balls and the **Blackball**). If he/she pots any ball or balls directly or by combination he/she is deemed to have potted a legal ball (or balls) and continues his/her visit. However, he/she may not pot the **Blackball**, which would mean loss of frame, unless he/she is on the **Blackball**. Whether a player fails to pot a ball or pot a ball on the first shot of his/her free shot, he/she will then start his/her visit.
- c. If a player is snookered (unable to play a legal full ball shot at any one of his/her own group of object balls) after a foul, then the cue ball may be played from baulk and proceed as rule 6(a) and 6(b). Moving the cue ball in this manner does not count as a shot or visit.

7. LOSS OF GAME

- a) Committing a foul in the same shot that the **Blackball** is potted. (Except on the break).
- b) Potting the **Blackball** when a ball or balls of the player's own colours are still on the table. (Except on the break).
- c) Potting the **Blackball** on the break together with the cue ball means loss of frame.
- d) Committing three fouls in the one frame.
- e) Any deliberate attempt to prevent the opponent from potting the **Blackball**, when the opponent is on the **Blackball**, by way of any other unsporting maneuver.
- f) If the player breaches the **'Spirit of the Game'** to such an extent that the frame (or match) should be awarded to the opponent.
- g) **Deliberately** interfering, by word or action, so as to disrupt an opponent's play.

8. GENERAL

- a. **Push stroke.** A push stroke is allowed but a player may play away from a touching ball of his/her own group and may be deemed to have played that ball. Should the cue ball be touching an

opponent's ball or **Blackball**, a player shall play away without penalty providing that the cue ball strikes one of his her own group and perform a legal shot.

- b. **Cue ball in hand.** When a player has the cue ball in hand he/she plays from any position within baulk and in any direction.
- c. **Player in control.** A player is said to be in control of the table from the time that his/her body, cue or clothing touches the table prior to his/her shot, through his/her visit and up until his/her opponent does likewise prior to his/her visit. Any balls which fall into the pockets during this period (including **Blackball**), he/she is said to have potted and he/she is liable to any penalties or benefits normally awarded to him/her for the potting of that ball or balls as are accorded to him/her in the rules of the game.
- d. The game is completed when the **Blackball** is potted in any pocket and all the remaining balls including the cue ball have come to rest, except when rule 4(g) applies.
- e. **Legal Shot** is to make contact with your ball on and then any other object ball, causing cue ball or any other object ball to touch a cushion.

9. GUIDANCE

- a. The term "shot" means striking the cue ball once.
- b. The term "visit" refers to one turn at the table comprising of one or a series of shots.
- c. The term "break" refers to the first shot of the game.
- d. Coaching is deemed to be unsportsmanship behaviour (see rule 1).
- e. Swearing is deemed to be unsportsmanship behaviour (see rule 1).
- f. A referee may, if requested, advise on the rules of the game.

10. ILLUSTRATION OF THE RACK

