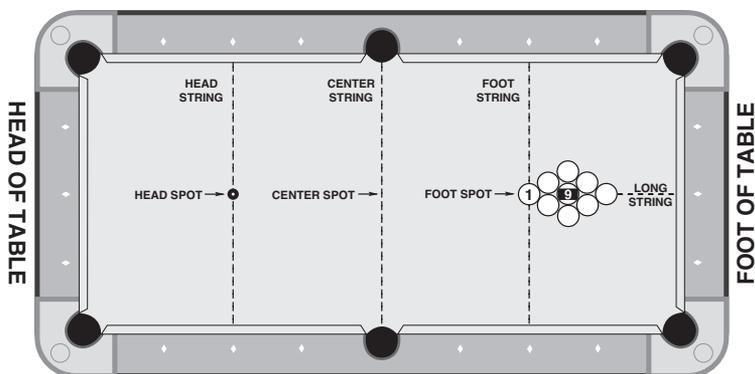

9-Ball Official Rules of Play



- A. OBJECT OF THE GAME.** Nine Ball is played with nine object balls numbered one through nine and a cue ball. On each shot the first ball the cue ball contacts must be the lowest-numbered ball on the table, but the balls need not be pocketed in order. If a player pockets any ball on a legal shot, he remains at the table for another shot, and continues until he misses, fouls, or wins the game by pocketing the 9-ball. After a miss, the incoming player must shoot from the position left by the previous player, but after any foul the incoming player may place the cue ball anywhere on the table. Players are not required to call any shot.
- B. RACKING THE BALLS.** The object balls are racked in a diamond shape, with the one ball at the top of the diamond and on the foot spot, the nine ball in the center of the diamond, and the other balls in random order, racked as tightly as possible. The game begins with cue ball in hand behind the headstring.
- C. START OF PLAY.** The home team breaks first and writes their line-up down first. The break alternates thereafter. A game starts as soon as the cue ball crosses over the headstring on the opening break.
- D. LEGAL BREAK SHOT.** The rules governing the break shot are the same as for other shots except:
1. The breaker must strike the 1-ball first and either pocket a ball or drive at least four numbered balls to a rail, failure to do so is a foul. Incoming player accepts table the way it lies with ball in hand or requests a rerack with cue ball behind the headstring.
 2. If the cue ball is pocketed or driven off the table, or the requirements of the opening break are not met, it is a foul, and the incoming player has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.
 3. If on the break shot, the breaker causes an object ball to jump off the table, it is a foul and the incoming player has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table. The object ball is not respotted.
 4. Making the nine ball on the break is an automatic win for the player breaking. However, if the cue ball is scratched when making the nine ball, the nine ball is respotted. (Using another stripe from tray)

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- E. CONTINUING PLAY.** On the shot immediately following a legal break, the shooter may play a “push out.” If the breaker pockets one or more balls on a legal break, he continues to shoot until he misses, fouls, or wins the game. If the player misses or fouls, the other player begins his turn and shoots until he misses, fouls, or wins. The game ends when the nine ball is pocketed on a legal shot.
- F. PUSH OUT.** The player who shoots the shot immediately after a legal break may play a push out in an attempt to move the cue ball into a better position for the option that follows. On a push out, the cue ball is not required to contact any object ball nor any rail, but all other foul rules still apply. The player must announce his intention of playing a push out before the shot, or the shot is considered to be a normal shot. Any ball pocketed on a push out does not count and remains pocketed, except for the nine ball. Following a legal push out, the incoming player is permitted to shoot from that position or to pass the shot back to the player who pushed out. A push out is not considered to be a foul as long as no rule is violated. An illegal push out is penalized according to the type of foul committed.
- G. FOULS.** When a player commits a foul, he must relinquish his run at the table and no balls pocketed on the foul shot are spotted, except the nine ball. The incoming player is awarded ball in hand; prior to his first shot he may place the cue ball anywhere on the table. If a player commits several fouls on one shot, they are counted as only one foul.
1. All fouls must be called and acknowledged before the next shot is taken.
 2. Touching or moving the cue ball is a foul.
 3. Coaching is a foul.
 4. Shooting the cue ball into a pocket or off the table is a foul.
 5. If the first object ball contacted by the cue ball is not the lowest numbered ball on the table, the shot is a foul.
 6. If no object ball is pocketed, failure to drive the cue ball or some object ball to a rail after the cue ball contacts the object ball is a foul.
 7. Pocketing the nine ball and the cue ball with the same stroke is a foul.
 8. Shooting without at least one foot on the floor is a foul.
 9. An unpocketed ball is considered to be driven off the table if it comes to rest other than on the bed of the table. It is a foul to drive an object ball off the table. The jumped object ball(s) is not spotted and play continues.

When the cue ball is in hand, the player may place the cue ball any where on the bed of the table, except in contact with an object ball. He may continue to adjust the position of the cue ball until he takes a shot.

- H. THREE CONSECUTIVE FOULS.** If a player fouls three consecutive times on three successive shots without making an intervening legal shot, he loses the game. The three fouls must occur in one game. The warning must be given between the second and third fouls. This rule is optional for local league and tournament play. (This rule will not be used at the International Championships.)

A player's turn begins when it is legal for him to take a shot and ends at the end of a shot on which he misses, fouls or wins, or when he fouls between shots.

When there are only two object balls on the table and a player scratches while pocketing the ball before the nine - it shall be brought up and placed on the footspot. (Using another ball from the tray.)

VNEA Rules and Scoring

- I. **END OF GAME.** The game ends at the end of a legal shot which pockets the 9-ball; or when a player forfeits the game as the result of a foul.