Mass Senior 8-ball League Rules (updated July 2024)

Age requirements: All players in the Mass Senior 8-ball league must be at least 60 years of age at the start of the season. Players under 60 (but over 50) who played during the 2023 season will be grandfathered and allowed to continue playing.

Rule #1: Out of courtesy and to avoid arguments, you should clearly call all your shots. (Before a player shoots, his opponent or the referee should remind him to call the ball and pocket). Even "obvious" shots to experienced players may not be obvious to rookies. Just call the ball and the pocket. Details are immaterial. Also, you must call all non-obvious shots (e.g. combinations, banks, kiss/billiard shots, or when there is more than one pocket you could be shooting at). Again, just call the ball and the pocket. If you don't call a non-obvious shot and the ball goes in, you lose your turn (just as you would, if you called a pocket and sank a ball in another pocket). All balls pocketed in the game remain pocketed, except the cue ball.

Rule #2: To execute a legal break, the breaker (with the cue ball behind the head string) must either pocket a ball or drive at least three numbered balls off a rail. If not, the opponent has three options:

1) play the table as it is
2) give the shooter another chance to break
3) take the break, himself

When breaking, it is not necessary to hit the head ball (the ball that is on the head spot).

Rule #3: Scratching on the break gives the opponent the cue ball behind the head string. Any other scratch or foul gives the opponent the cue ball anywhere on the table. This is known as "ball in hand." When shooting from behind the head string after a break scratch, you may shoot directly only at an object ball that is in front of or on the head string. Directly hitting an object ball that is behind the head string is a foul.

Rule #4: If you sink the 8-ball on the break, *you win*, unless you scratch on the shot as well, in which case you lose the game.

Rule #5: The table is always open immediately after the break shot, and it remains open until a player sinks a legal called shot (i.e., without scratching or fouling). When the table is open, it is legal to hit any solid or stripe ball first in the process of pocketing the called stripe or solid. Hitting the 8-ball first is not allowed and is a foul.

Rule #6: A foul is committed (1) when you don't hit any of your object balls first; or (2) after you hit one of your object balls first, no ball is pocketed or hits a rail. So, if after you have hit one of your object balls first, any ball hits a rail or any ball (other than the 8-ball or cue ball) is pocketed, then there is no foul. If a player is about to shoot at the wrong ball, then his opponent or referee should remind him what group of balls he should be shooting for.

Rule #7; All of the shooter's balls are classified as object balls.

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Rule #8: If you sink the 8-ball before all your balls, you lose; or, when shooting on the 8-ball, you sink it in a pocket you didn't call, you lose; or, if you foul in the process of sinking the 8-ball, you lose; or, if you sink the 8-ball on the same stroke as the last of your group of balls, you lose.

Rule #9: If any object ball is jumped off the table, it is a miss and loss of turn, not a foul. If it is the 8-ball, it is loss of game. The shooter's object balls are spotted, and any of the opponent's jumped balls will be pocketed. A cue ball jumped off the table is treated the same as a scratch.

Rule #10: If the shooting player intends to play safe by pocketing an object ball, then, prior to the shot, he must declare a safety to the opponent. If this is not done and the shooter's ball is pocketed, he will be required to shoot again.

Rule #11: If you scratch or foul when shooting on the 8-ball, you don't lose unless you sink the 8.

Rule #12; If a player intentionally marks the table in any way before executing his shot and does not remove the mark prior to the shot, he has committed a foul that gives his opponent "ball in hand" anywhere on the table.

Rule #13; A double hit is a foul. That is, if the cue stick contacts the cue ball more than once on a shot, the shot is a foul.

Rule #14: ***Accidental hit:*** If you inadvertently move balls (other than the cue ball, which would be a foul) around with the bridge, cue butt, arm, etc., before, during, or after your shot, your opponent has the option of leaving the balls where they are, or putting them where they were or would be; and there is no foul. Exceptions: If the 8-ball is pocketed this way, it goes back where it was; or, if the cue tip moves the cue ball without making a legitimate hit, it is a foul.

Rule #15: ***Split hit:*** If the cue ball strikes a legal object ball and a non-legal-ball or bank at approximately the same instant, and it cannot be determined which was hit first, it will be assumed that the legal ball was struck first, (Benefit of the doubt goes to the shooter).

Rule #16: ***Foot on Floor:*** It's a foul if a player shoots when, at least, one foot isn't in contact with the floor. Foot attire must be normal in regard to size, shape, and the manner in which it is worn.

Rule #17; ***Stalemate:*** If, after three consecutive safe shots by both players, it is clear that no progress is being made, they may declare a stalemate and re-rack. If the two players cannot agree, then (as is the case with other disagreements) the referee casts the deciding vote.

Rule #18: ***Object Ball Frozen to Cushion or Cue Ball:*** This rule 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 object ball, the shot must result in either:

1) a ball being pocketed, or
2) the cue ball contacting a cushion, or
3) the frozen ball being caused to contact a bank attached to a separate rail, or
4) another object ball being caused to contact a cushion with which it was not already in contact.

Failure to satisfy one of these four requirements is a foul. A ball that is touching a cushion at the start of a shot and then is forced into a cushion that is 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's being involved in a shot.

Rule # 19: ***Player's Responsibility:*** It is the player's responsibility to be aware of all rules, regulations, and schedules applying to competition. While tournament officials will make every reasonable effort to have such information readily available to all players as appropriate, the ultimate responsibility rests with the player.

Rule #20: ***Reminders:***

1) If you accidentally move one or more balls before, during, or after your shot, give your opponent the opportunity to leave or put back the balls
2) If you want to measure something, the only object you can use is your cue stick
3) While masse shots are OK, jump shots are not
4) Even when your opponent commits a foul, you do not have to accept it

***TB's (Tie-Breakers) - Format to be used when matches are tied after regulation:**

1) A 2 games-out-of-3 series is played after each team, without knowing opponent's line-up, makes out a TB three-man batting order;
2) Visitors choose table for TB1 with breaker decided by coin flip called by visitors;
3) At the same time on the other table TB2, with the other team breaking, the second players in the batting order square off;
4) If a rubber game is necessary, it will be played by the third players in the batting orders on the same table as TB1 with the same team breaking as broke in TB1.

Other rules and regulations for Senior Travel 8-ball league and K.I.S.S. Tourneys

A. When racking, the 8-ball goes in the middle, any ball goes in front; and, in the other corners, you put one high ball and one low ball.
B. For each of the games played in a match appoint a referee, who should sit or stand quietly and help out when needed. If players fail to do so, he should call fouls or stop a player from shooting at the wrong ball.
C. No distracting noise or movements, cursing, or arguing loudly.
D. No kibitzing or coaching (with the exception that each team is permitted four time-outs, which can be used at any time during the match). Any conferring with a player, even between shots, constitutes coaching.
    1) A player requesting a time-out may only receive advise from one member of his own team, not multiple members at the same time. A different team member may give advice for each separate time out.
    2) During a requested time out only verbal advice is allowed. No demonstrations, no touching the balls, cue stick, bridges, etc. No marking the table cushions to assist with aiming. Pointing is OK.
E. Don't pick up the rack, dismantle or put away your stick, or remove balls from a pocket before your opponent has completed his last shot. (Penalty: loss of game)
F. In the Travel League matches, the starting four players (if they are subbed for) may re-enter, but they must stay in their proper spot in the batting order (that is, next to the number or letter they started with).
G. Substitutes in the Travel League may play a game for anybody at any time.
H. Except for tie-breakers (TB's), no one (substitute or starter) may play the same opponent more than once, or play more than four games in a regulation 16-game match.
I. At the end of the regular season the division winners compete in a 2 match-out-of-3 playoff series. The team with the better over-all, regular-season record has the home advantage. If the division champs have the same record, flip a coin for home advantage.
J. Under-age players forfeit all their games.
K. ***No postponements***: Once the schedule has been printed up and accepted, there will be no changes except in emergencies (e.g. hurricanes, terrorist attacks, etc., and even then, only If okayed by the commissioner's office). Every team should have stand-by players. If they are not available, contact Dick Carey, who can usually find a replacement player or two. If not, you will have to play shorthanded.

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Note:

- In July 2024, there were 2 additions made to the time-out rules in item D, above
- The additions are reflected in items D1 and D2
- All other rules remain unchanged from February 2024 rules document