

World Standardized Rules of Nine Ball (9 Ball)

Nine ball is played with nine **object balls**, numbered one through nine, and a **cue ball**.

- The object of the game is to **pocket** all nine balls or the **nine ball** at any time during the game.
- The object balls do not need to be pocketed in order; however, the player must contact the lowest numbered ball first.
- If any ball is pocketed during a legal **stroke**, the player's turn continues until the player misses, fouls or wins the game by **pocketing the 9 ball**.
- When a player's turn is over due to a foul, the incoming player has **ball in hand** anywhere on the **table**; otherwise the player must play the **cue ball** from its original position.

Racking & Breaking for Nine Ball

- The **object balls** must be **racked** in a diamond shape with the one ball being the **apex ball** and on the **foot spot**.
- The **nine ball** must be in the center of the rack with the other balls randomly placed within the diamond.
- Typically, the winner of the **lag** or previous game performs a legal break with **cue ball** in hand behind the **head string** unless **handicap** rules apply.

Nine Ball Legal Shots & Fouls

- All fouls result in **ball in hand** for the opposing player.
- The breaking player must contact the one ball first and drive four or more object balls to the **cushions** without pocketing the **cue ball**. If any of these requirements are not met, the incoming player has **ball in hand** anywhere on the **table**.
- If, at any time, object balls are driven off of the **table** or **pocketed** during a foul, they are not spotted with the exception of the nine ball.
- The next shot after the break, whether it's the incoming player or breaker, the player may **push-out**. If the player does not elect to **push-out**, the player must contact the lowest numbered ball first and then the **cue ball** or the object ball must contact a **rail** for the **shot** to be legal.
- When a player fouls the player gives his opponent **cue ball** in hand anywhere on the **table**.
- A player loses the game when the opponent legally pockets the nine ball or commits three successive fouls in that one game. A warning by either the non-shooting player or referee must be give between the 2nd and 3rd foul.

~Rules adapted from the World Pool-Billiard Association Standardized Rules~

Variations of Nine Ball

Some players play with additional rules or variations of games for any given reason. Some intend to make it fun or more challenging and others to make it fair when the difference in playing ability is significant. Below are some of the variations we've heard about.

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Back Pocket Nine Ball

- The object of the game is for each player to pocket the **nine ball** in the players one designated pocket.
- Before the break, the breaking player designates one corner pocket at the **head of the table** for themselves and the other pocket automatically becomes the opponents designated pocket.
- The strategy is to keep the **nine ball** away from the opponents designated pocket and pocket the **9 ball** in your designated pocket.