

Sixteen-Ball

(World Standardized Rules)

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Note: These rules follow the format of the Billiard Congress of America (BCA) rulebook, Billiards: The Official Rules and Records Book (World Standardized Rules). All section references, e.g. §1.6 **Standard Call Shot**, refer to the 2021/2022 edition (not this document).

Sixteen-ball is played with 15 numbered object balls and the cue ball.

Shooters take turns pocketing pairs of balls whose numeric values total 16. Shots are called. §1.6 **Standard Call Shot**¹.

Each legally pocketed pair scores two points. The 8-ball is pocketed last and scores two points. The first player to reach 16 points wins.

1. Players

Sixteen-ball can be played with any number of players, either individually or in teams. It is typically played with two players (i.e. *singles*) or two teams of two players (i.e. *doubles*).

2. Pairs

The 15 object balls are divided into the seven **pairs** that total 16:



The second ball in a pair is known as the first ball's **partner** (e.g. the 14-ball is the 2-ball's partner, etc.).

The partner of the in-process pair is called the **target** ball.

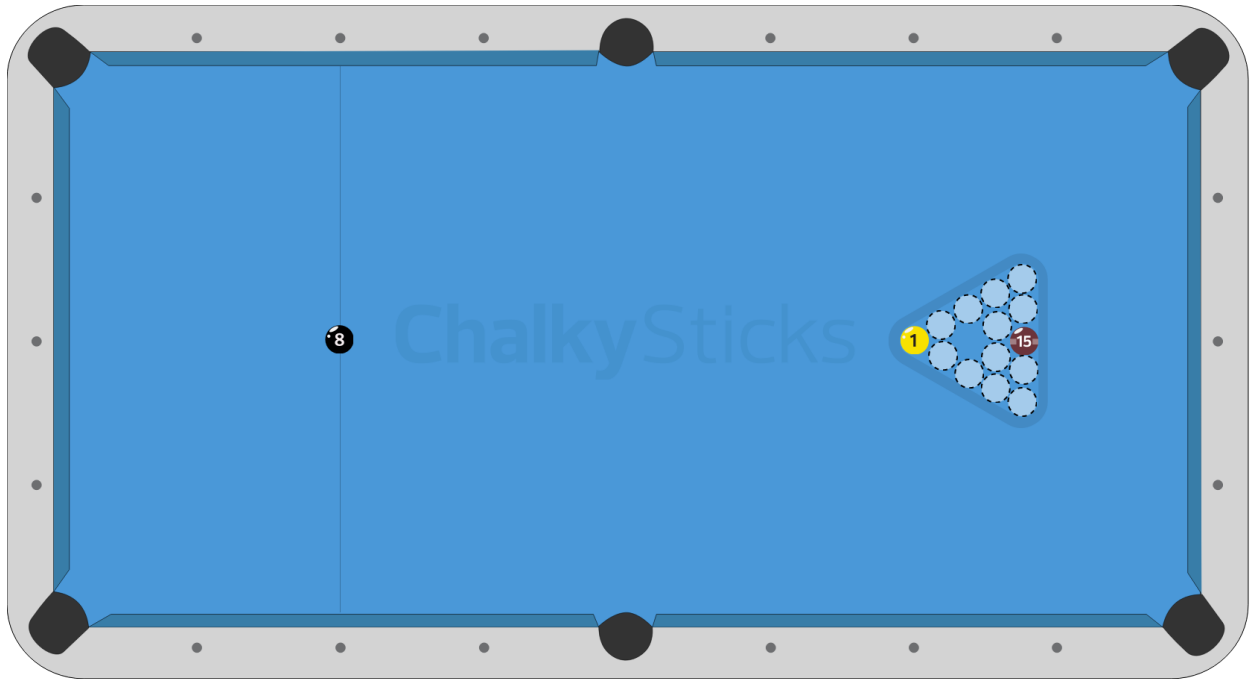
Partner balls that can be legally pocketed but are not the target ball (i.e. after the break), are designated **pending partner** balls.

A ball whose partner is no longer on the table is **rogue**.

¹ Billiards: The Official Rules and Records Book (World Standardized Rules).

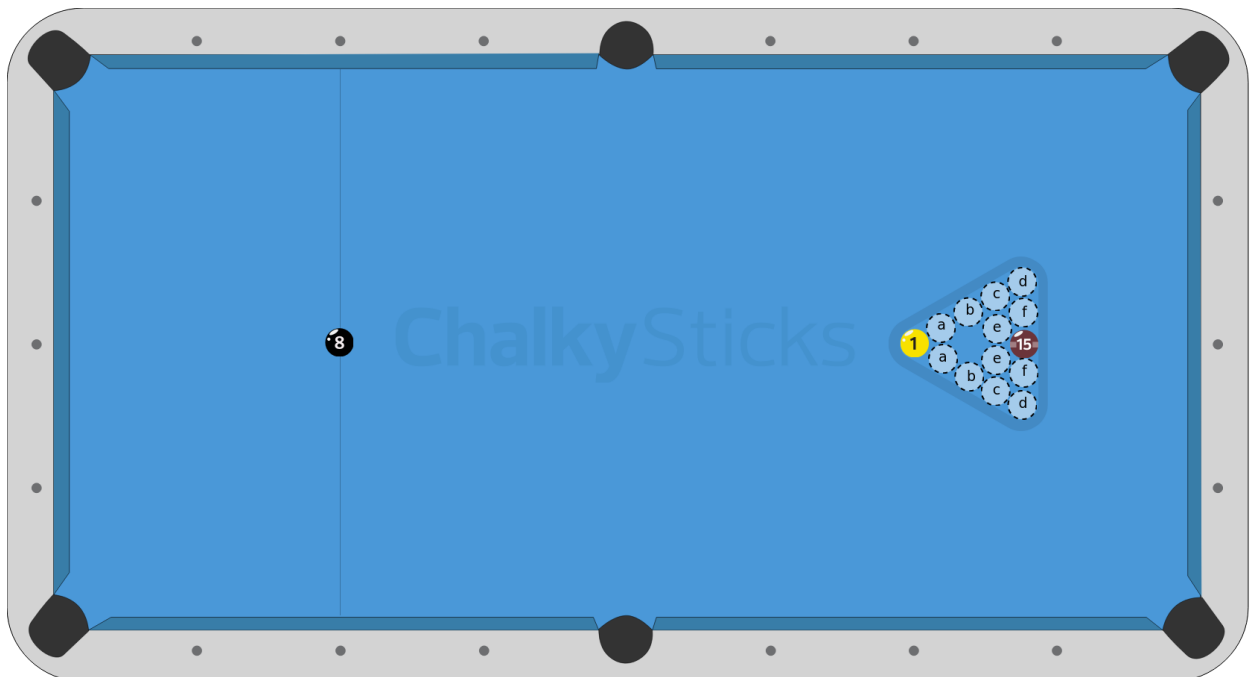
3. The Rack

The sixteen-ball rack is similar to an eight-ball rack with the 8-ball removed and placed on the head spot. The remaining 14 object balls are racked as tightly as possible in a triangle shape with the 1-ball at the apex of the triangle and on the foot spot and the 15-ball in the middle of the last row, opposite the 1-ball.



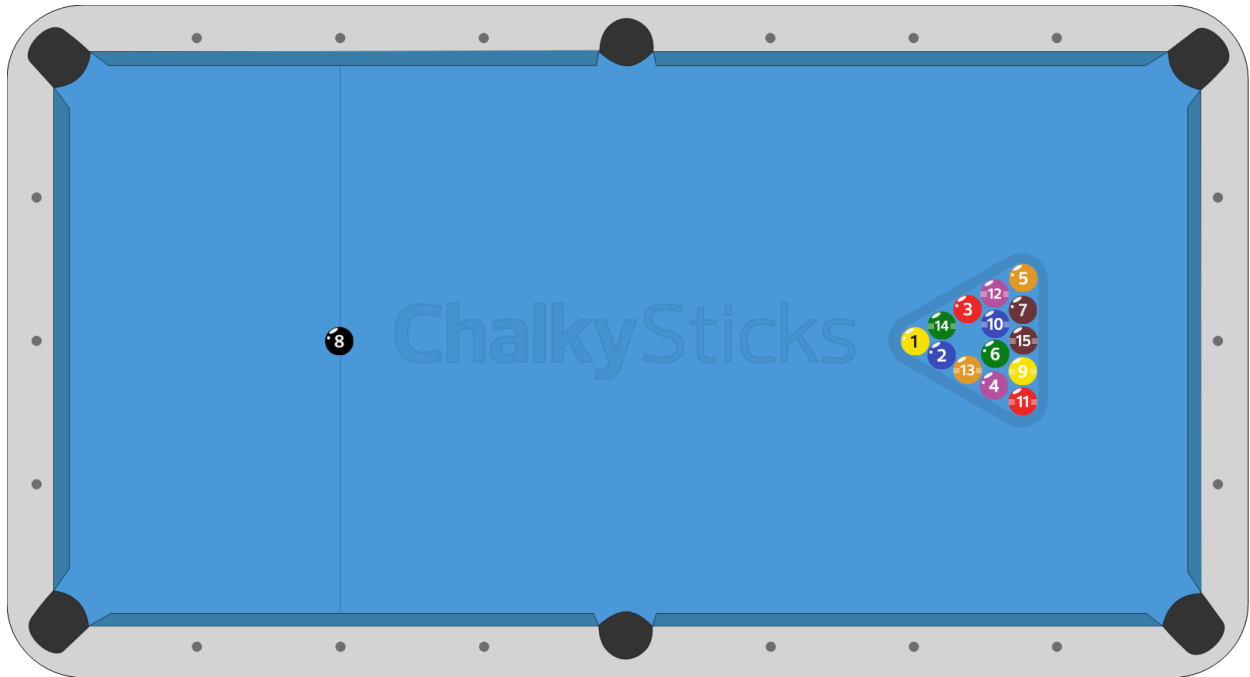
3.1. Rack Pairs

The six remaining pairs are placed on opposite sides of the rack. Two pairs will be adjacent in the middle of the second and fourth rows. The placement of the specific pairs does not matter.



3.2. Example Rack

The diagram below shows a legal rack in which the 8-ball, 1-ball, and 15-ball are all in their required positions; the only the adjacent pairs in the second and fourth rows.



4. Rogue Balls

If a player fails to pocket a partner ball during their turn, it becomes rogue. No points are awarded for the first ball pocketed when a rogue ball is created.

Rogue balls may be pocketed by any player and score one point.

5. The Break

The player who wins the lag chooses who will break the first rack. §1.2 **Lagging to Determine Order of Play**². For all subsequent racks, the player who pockets the final ball of the previous rack breaks.

5.1. The First Break

The cue ball must be behind the head string on either side of the 8-ball.

5.2. Legal Break Shot

The following rules apply to all break shots:

1. The cue ball can not be hit into the 8-ball. If the cue ball strikes the 8-ball first on the break, the balls are re-racked and opponent breaks.
2. The cue ball must strike the racked balls directly; it may hit any ball in the rack.
3. If no ball is pocketed, at least four object balls must be driven to one or more rails or it is a foul (see **Standard Fouls** below).
4. If the breaker fouls, the break passes to their opponent.

Any pair pocketed on the break immediately scores two points.

Because balls are not called on the break, the partner balls of any pocketed balls become **pending partner** balls. Each is worth two points.

Pending partner balls may be pocketed at any time during the shooters turn, including in the middle of a pair.

To complete pairs, the breaking player may either begin pocketing a new pair or sink pending partner balls.

Each new pair started must be completed in sequence. Points are immediately awarded for any legally completed pairs including partners to balls sunk on the break. Any balls without their partners become rogue after the breaker's turn ends.

Because partner balls to those sunk on the break may be completed at any point during the breaker's turn, it is advantageous to pocket balls on the break.

 Pocketing the 1-ball and 4-ball on the break allows the breaker to shoot at the 12-ball or 15-ball at *any* point between pairs during her turn; each ball is worth two points.

5.3. Subsequent Breaks

The last ball pocketed may be the 8-ball, a final partner ball, or the last rogue ball, depending on prior play. When no balls remain on the table, all 15 balls are re-racked with the cue ball left in place.

5.3.1. Can't Rack

If the cue ball's position interferes with racking the 8-ball or remaining fourteen balls, the cue ball is in hand and the next break is treated like **The First Break**. The cue ball is considered to interfere with a new rack if it is within a ball's width of the head spot (8-ball) or the outline of the triangle in the rack area below the foot spot (the remaining fourteen balls).

Much like pocketing balls on the break provides an advantage, leaving the cue ball within the rack location below the foot spot gives the breaker ball in hand, eliminating the requirement to break from behind the head string. Alternatively, however, leaving cue ball just short of interfering with the new rack could incur a severe disadvantage.

5.3.2. No Line of Sight

If the cue ball's position cannot strike any ball in the rack directly, the break is treated like the first break and the cue ball may be placed anywhere behind the head string on either side of the 8-ball.

6. Legal Shots

Every shot except the break must be called (§1.6 **Standard Call Shot**³). A legal shot is one that pockets the called ball in the designated pocket without fouling.

Any ball may be hit first in a combination, including the 8-ball.

Pairs must be pocketed sequentially (i.e. ball, ball's partner) and only one pair may be in-process at a time. If additional balls are pocketed on a legal shot, their partners become **pending partner** balls during the current turn.

👁 The shooter calls the 15-ball and pockets the 5-ball in the same shot. She scores two points if the 15-ball was a partner or one point if it was Rogue. She may pocket the 11-ball (pending partner to the 5-ball) at any point during her turn to score two points.

The order in which balls are pocketed doesn't matter as long as the called ball is pocketed in the called pocket. For the example above, it doesn't matter if the 5-ball is pocketed before the 15-ball; the result is the time.

Rogue balls may be pocketed in the middle of a pair. However, failure to pocket the pair's partner awards any points for pocketed rogue balls to the other player.

👁 After pocketing the 4-ball, the shooter pockets three rogue balls. If they fail to pocket the pair's partner 12-ball following the rogue balls, the 12-ball becomes rogue, the other player is awarded three points for the rogue balls pocketed, and the shooter's turn ends. Alternately, if the 12-ball is successfully pocketed after the three rogue balls, the shooter scores five points (two for the 16 combination and three for the rogue balls) and continues shooting.

If a shot is made as called but one or more additional balls are also pocketed:

1. Points are immediately awarded for **rogue** or **pending partner** balls.
2. If the 8-ball is pocketed in addition to the called ball, it scores two points.
3. The shooting player must always complete the pair started by the called shot. If any non-rogue balls are also pocketed, their partners become **pending partner** balls. She may pocket them (in any order) in the subsequent shots during her turn to complete the pairs

except in the middle of a pair. Each **pending partner** ball scores two points when legally pocketed.

4. When the shooter's turn ends, all uncompleted partner balls become rogue.

Balls pocketed when a called shot misses or is miscalled are considered dead and do not score any points. If they are the first in a pair, their partners become rogue.

6.1. Combinations

All combinations are allowed. The object ball does not need to be hit first. The 8-ball may be used anywhere in a combination shot.

7. Continuous Shooting

The shooter remains at the table as long as she continues to legally pocket called balls or wins the game by scoring 16 points.

8. Standard Fouls

If the shooter commits a standard foul, play passes to her opponent. The cue ball is in hand and the incoming player may place it anywhere on the playing surface. §1.2 **Cue Ball in Hand**.

The following are the standard fouls in sixteen-ball:

1. **Failure to contact the target ball.** The target ball does not need to be hit with the cue ball but it must be contacted by another ball and any ball must touch a bank after the target ball is contacted.
2. §6.1 **Cue Ball Scratch or Off The Table**
3. §6.6 **No Rail after Contact**
4. §6.4 **No Foot on Floor**
5. §6.5 **Ball Driven off the table.** The only jumped object ball that is spotted is the 8-ball (§1.4 **Spotting Balls**).
6. §6.6 **Touched Ball**
7. §6.7 **Double Hit / Frozen Balls**
8. §6.8 **Push Shot**
9. §6.9 **Balls Still Moving**
10. §6.12 **Cue Stick on the Table**
11. §6.13 **Playing out of Turn**
12. §6.15 **Slow Play**
13. §6.16 **Ball Rack Template Foul**

9. Pocketing the 8-ball

The 8-ball is pocketed last. After the 8-ball is pocketed, the cue ball remains in position for the next break.

When pocketed out of turn or not as called, two points are awarded to the opponents and the 8-ball remains pocketed. Play continues until all balls have been legally pocketed.

Per **Subsequent Breaks**, if the 8-ball was pocketed early, the cue ball remains in place after the last ball is pocketed (whether a partner or rogue ball).

10. Scoring

Pocketing the *8-ball on the break* scores **eight** points.

Each legally pocketed *pair* scores **two** points.

Note: Pocketing the first ball in a pair never scores any points. A combination only scores when *both* balls are legally pocketed in the same turn. If the pocketed ball's partner is not legally pocketed during their turn, the partner ball becomes rogue.

Rogue balls score **one** point.

The *8-ball* scores **two** points.