

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 objects 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 the **target** ball.

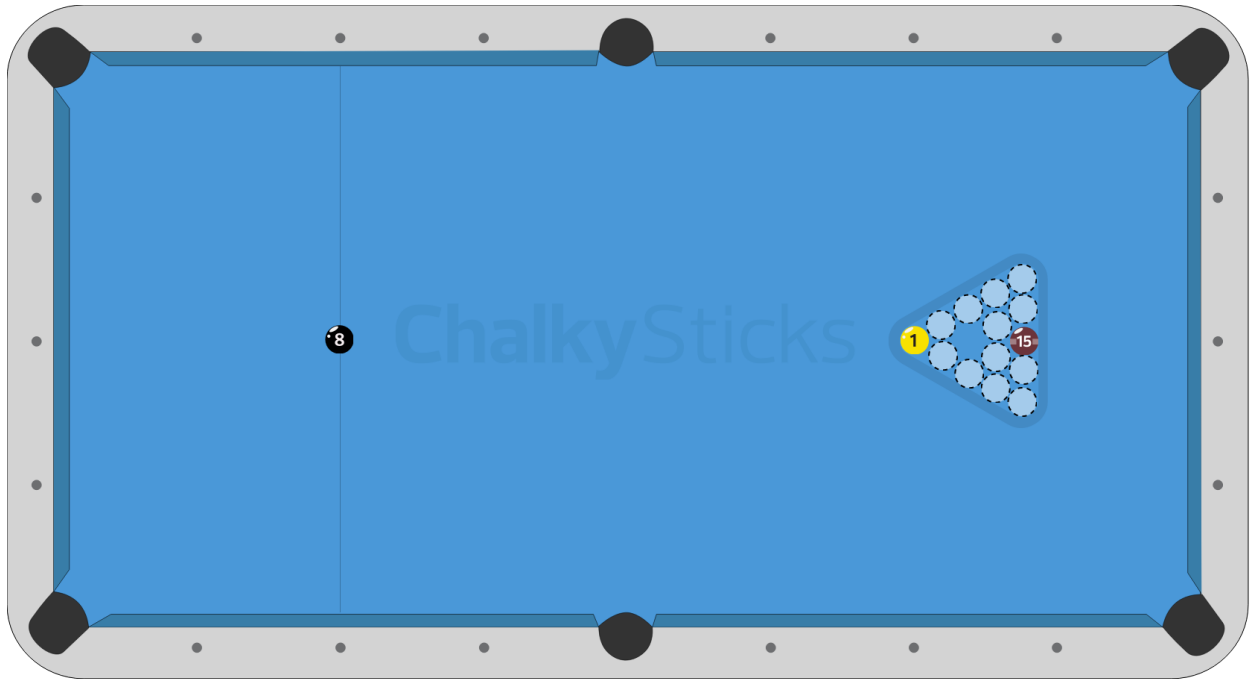
Partner balls that can be legally pocketed but are not the target ball (i.e. after the break), are designated **pending partner** balls.

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

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

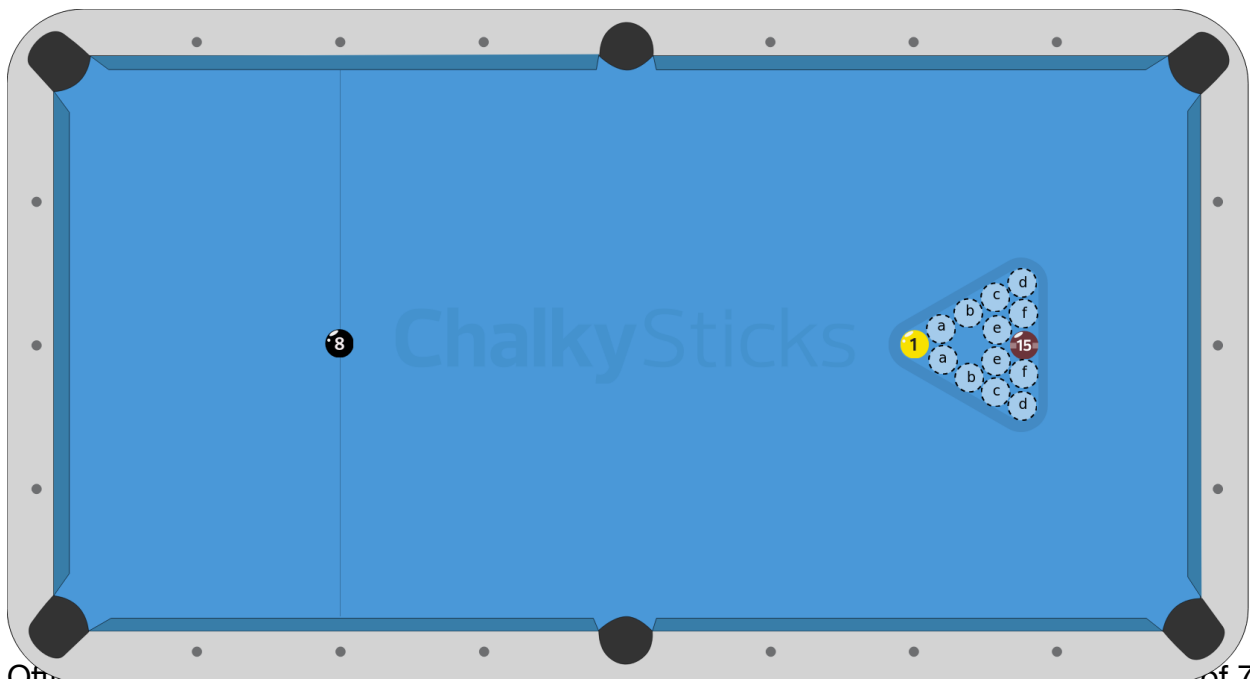
3. The Rack

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 on the foot spot with the 1-ball at the apex and the 15-ball in the middle of the last row, opposite the 1-ball.



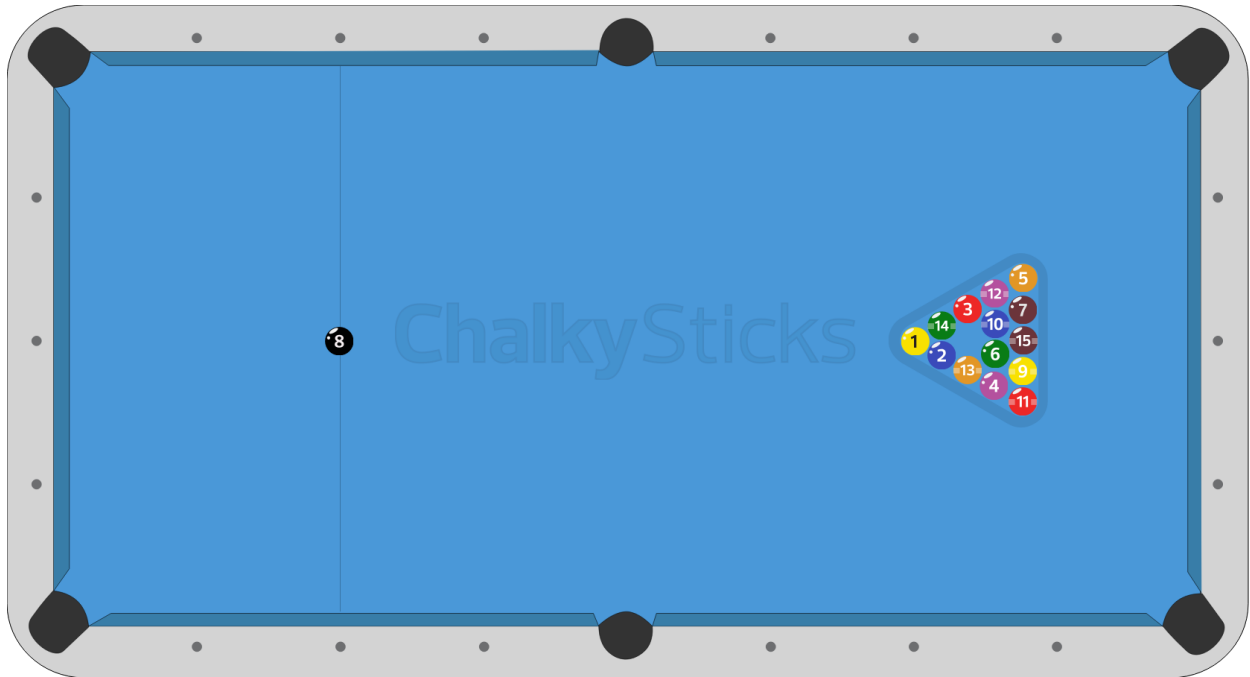
3.1. Rack Pairs

The six remaining pairs are split between the 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 are 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 when the first ball in a pair is pocketed.

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

5. The Break

Players lag to determine who breaks.

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

In addition to standard fouls, the following rules apply to all break shots:

1. The cue ball must strike the racked balls directly; it may hit any ball in the rack.
2. The cue ball can not be hit into the 8-ball. Striking the 8-ball first with the cue ball on the break is a foul.
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).

If the breaker fouls, the balls are repacked and the break passes to their opponent.

5.2.1. Break Points

Any pair pocketed on a legal break immediately scores two points.

If the 8-ball is pocketed on a legal break shot, the shooter scores 8 points.

If the 8-ball is pocketed and the shooter fouls, their opponent is credited 8 points.

5.2.2. The Break Turn

Because balls are not called on the break, the partner balls of any pocketed balls become **pending partner** balls. Pending partner balls may be pocketed at any time during the shooters turn, including in the middle of a pair. Each is worth two points.

To complete pairs, the breaking player may either begin pocketing a new pair or sink pending partner balls. Only a single pair may be in-process at a time.

Points are immediately awarded for any legally completed pairs or pocketed pending partners. 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. Cueball obstruction

If the cue ball's position interferes with racking the 8-ball or remaining fourteen balls, the cue ball is in hand and the **Legal Break Shot** rules apply.

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 the 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. Contact with other balls, cushions involved, or the order in which balls are pocketed are all irrelevant.

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

Pairs must be completed in sequence and only one pair may be in-process at a time.

Balls pocketed when the called shot misses, is pocketed incorrectly, or fouls are considered dead and do not score any points for the shooter. If pocketed balls are the first in a pair, their partners become rogue. If the 8-ball is pocketed, points are awarded to opponent (see **Scoring** below).

6.1. Pending Partners

If any balls in addition to the called ball are pocketed on a legal shot, their partners become **pending partner** balls during the current turn. Each may be pocketed at any time during the turn, including in the middle of a pair, and immediately score two points.

👁 The shooter calls the 15-ball and pockets the 5-ball in the same shot. On her next shot, she may either call the 1-ball (partner to the 15-ball) or the 11-ball (pending partner to the 5-

ball). Each scores two points. If her next shot misses, both the 1-ball and 11-ball become rogue.

6.2. At-risk Balls

Rogue balls may be pocketed in the middle of a pair. Such balls are designated **at-risk**. Failure to subsequently pocket the pair's partner awards all *at-risk* points to the the shooter's opponent.

- 👁 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.

6.3. 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 should be pocketed last. It cannot be legally called until it is the sole remaining ball.

If a break shot fouls, all balls are re-racked (including the 8-ball). In all other cases, the 8-ball is not pulled when pocketed.

Per **Subsequent Breaks**, after the final ball on the table is pocketed, the cue ball remains in position for the next break.

10. Scoring

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

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

Rogue balls score **one** point.

At-risk balls score **one** point.

When pocketed in a legal shot, the *8-ball* scores **two** points (i.e. pocketing the 8-ball in additional to any called ball or as the last ball on the table).

Pocketing the 8-ball and fouling awards points for the 8-ball to the opponent (i.e. eight points on a break or two points for other shots).

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