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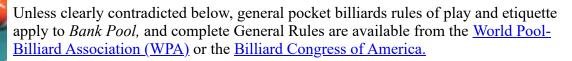Home   About Us   Playing The Game   Hall Of Fame   Marketplace   Message Board

Complete *Bank Pool* Rules

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Unless clearly contradicted below, general pocket billiards rules of play and etiquette apply to *Bank Pool,* and complete General Rules are available from the World Pool-Billiard Association (WPA) or the Billiard Congress of America.

Common 'house rule' variations are noted in italics.

1. Object of the game

The object of *Bank Pool* is to outscore your opponent(s) in pocketing balls by bank shots only. Each player in turn may shoot any object ball into any pocket, but every shot must be a legal bank shot to count. The first player to reach the required winning count wins the game.

2. The break

2.1 Players may flip a coin or lag for the first break. All object balls are tightly racked in no particular order in a standard rack with the head ball placed as nearly as possible on the foot spot. For games that follow, the winner of the previous rack has the option of breaking in the following rack. Any object balls pocketed on the break entitle the breaker to continue their inning, but they are not scored for the breaker, instead they are held for spotting at the end of the breaker's inning. If the breaker fails to meet legal breaking requirements, the opposing player has the option to start play where the balls lie or require their opponent to re-break. There is no further penalty unless a foul or scratch occurs.

2.2 Full Rack Banks: All fifteen balls are tightly racked in the standard triangle formation. On the opening break the cue ball may contact any ball first, but after contact, at least two object balls must contact a cushion.

2.3 Nine-Ball Banks: Any nine balls are tightly racked in the standard nine-ball diamond formation. On the opening break the head ball must be struck first, driving at least one object ball past the side pockets.

Players my elect to have the break alternate between players regardless of which player won the previous rack.

In any multi-player 'ring game' the break rotates in the same order in which the players shoot. Every time the break completes a cycle through all the players (each player has broken one rack), then a new shooting and breaking order is drawn. Likewise, if any player(s) enter or exit the game, a new shooting and breaking order is drawn.

3. Continuing play

3.1 *Bank Pool* is a call shot game. On every shot the ball, the pocket and the path of intended cushions must be obvious or specifically called prior to commencing the shot. In the event that a called ball takes a different path to the pocket than that which was called, the pocketed ball does not count and it is spotted without penalty to the shooter.

3.2 A player's inning continues as long as they legally pocket their called bank. Players can only score one ball per shot; any additional object balls that are pocketed on the same stroke are held for spotting at the end of the shooter's inning. A player's inning ends when they fail to legally pocket a called or obvious bank, or the cue ball scratches or jumps the table, or the shooter fouls.

3.3 Every shot must be pocketed cleanly, without contacting any other object ball on its route to the called pocket.

3.4 No combination shots are allowed.

3.5 The cue ball must contact the called ball first; no carom shots are allowed.

3.6 Every shot must be played ball first; no rail-first shots are allowed.

3.7 The cue ball is only permitted to contact the object ball once on its route to the pocket. Any ball pocketed on a double kiss is spotted without further penalty, and the shooter's inning is over.

Some house rules permit rail-first shots, as long as they are called, and as long as a bank is designated following the rail-first contact.

Some house rules and some multi-player games permit rail-first shots directly into a pocket, as long as the cue ball strikes at least three cushions before the object ball is contacted.

4. Safety play
Safeties are allowed in **Bank Pool.** Standard World rules 3.19 apply; after the cue ball contacts at least one object ball, the shooter must either pocket a ball or cause the cue ball or at least one object ball to contact a cushion. There is no penalty for directly or indirectly pocketing an object ball. Pocketing any ball other than a legal called bank does not entitle the shooter to continue their inning.

5. Fouls
5.1 Unless otherwise announced by the tournament director, **Bank Pool** is played according to the World General Rules 1.16.1, 'cue ball fouls only'. In the event that a player accidentally moves a ball, the opponent may elect to have the disturbed ball remain in its new position or be restored to its original position. When balls are restored, they shall be placed as close as possible to their original positions, with no advantage to be gained by the offending player. If no official is available to restore disturbed balls, then the players must come to agreement on satisfactory replacement of the disturbed balls prior to continuing play.

5.2 Any scratch or foul ends the shooter's inning, and a penalty of one ball is charged. If a called ball is pocketed on the same stroke, that ball is forfeited also. If the shooter has no legally scored balls to their credit, they owe a ball for each such offense, which is paid as necessary by spotting at the end of the first inning or innings in which they legally score.

5.3 It is a foul to jump the cue ball off the table. There is no penalty for an object ball jumping off the table; any such balls are simply spotted at the end of the shooter's inning.

5.4 Following any pocket scratch or the cue ball jumping the table, the incoming shooter has ball in hand behind the head string. If there are no object balls below the head string,

the ball nearest the head string is spotted. If two or more balls are equally close to the head string then the highest numbered ball is spotted.

5.5 Following any other foul, the incoming shooter must shoot from where the cue ball lies. However, if the acting official rules that a player has used an illegal technique to direct the cue ball or any object balls to a more desirable location, then the incoming player has the option of either playing the balls where they lie, or requesting the official to restore all such moved balls to their location prior to the illegal maneuver. The offending player is charged the standard one ball foul penalty, and in addition may be further penalized at the discretion of the acting official under the general rules of unsportsmanlike conduct.

6. Spotting balls

Balls are spotted on the foot spot, or in a direct line below the foot spot. Spotted balls are to be frozen to other object balls that interfere, but not quite frozen to the cue ball. Any balls to be spotted are held until the end of the shooter's inning, unless all the balls have been cleared from the table, in which case all balls being held are spotted immediately.

7. Failure to call the intended shot

7.1 It is the shooter's responsibility to call any shot that is not obvious. Any single rail bank is considered obvious, unless a contrary shot was called. A ball pocketed contrary to the shooter's called shot does not count; it is spotted without further penalty, and the shooter's inning is over.

7.2 At any time the shooter assumes a shooting stance without having already called their shot, the opponent or tournament official may inquire as to what shot is being attempted. The shooter must honor such a request prior to commencing their shot. Failure to call a shot upon request shall be interpreted as an intentional safety; any pocketed balls are spotted without further penalty, and the shooter's inning is over.

7.3 Any multi-cushion shot is considered not obvious. In the event that a ball is pocketed on a multi-cushion shot without prior calling, the shooter has no recourse if either the tournament official or the opponent contends that their shot was not obvious. The disputed ball does not count; it is spotted without further penalty, and the shooter's inning is over.

7.4 If an adjacent cushion or other object balls lie so close to the called ball that the cue ball might strike either the adjacent cushion or other balls first, it is the responsibility of the opponent to summon a tournament official or the designated house man prior to the shot, to rule whether the shot is clean or not, otherwise the benefit of the doubt is afforded the shooter.

7.5 When a called ball contacts either the cushions or pocket points along the rails adjacent to the called pocket on its final approach toward the pocket, such contact does not count as a bank in defining the called shot. If an otherwise legal called bank shot is pocketed in such a manner, the ball counts as long as the shot conforms with the shooter's called intentions, and no foul or scratch occurs.

8. Conflict resolution

8.1 Unless a referee is assigned, players shall be responsible for officiating their own match. Whenever the players themselves can come to an amicable agreement on any scoring or officiating issues to their satisfaction, and play continues, their decision shall be deemed final. If at anytime in a match either player anticipates a close call, or would

like a neutral party to spot a ball, or wishes to have an official ruling in any conflict, then an official should be called.

8.2 If there is no tournament official, then the 'house man' or another mutually agreed on impartial observer should be summoned to arbitrate. Their decision should be considered final.

9. Appendix of standard *Bank Pool* call shot terminology

Cross-corner: A one-rail bank off one of the long cushions (side of the table) shot into a corner pocket

Cross-side: A one-rail bank shot off one of the long cushions (side of the table) shot into a side pocket

One-rail: Any shot banked off any single cushion

Straight-back: A one-rail bank off an end cushion (head or foot of the table) into a corner pocket

Straight-back underneath: Designates the target pocket as the one nearest the shooter on a straight back bank

Straight back twice, or Up and down: a two-rail shot banked up and down the table into a corner pocket, using only the head and foot cushions

Straight back three times: a three-rail bank up and down the table into a corner pocket, using only the head and foot cushions

Two-rails: Any two-cushion bank shot

Two in the corner: Any two-cushion bank shot into a corner pocket

Two in the side: Any two-cushion bank shot into a side pocket

Twice across in the side: A two-cushion bank back and forth across the table into a side pocket, using only the side cushions

Twice across in the corner: A two-cushion bank across the table into a corner pocket, using only the side cushions

Three times across: A three-cushion bank across the table into a corner pocket, using only the side cushions

Three rails: Any three-cushion bank shot

Four rails: Any four-cushion bank shot

Five rails: Any five-cushion bank shot

Three (or four or five) in the corner: A three-cushion (or four or five-cushion) bank into a corner pocket

Three (or four or five) in the side: A three-cushion (or four or five-cushion) bank into a side pocket

If there is no tournament official, then the 'house man' or another mutually agreed on impartial observer should be summoned to arbitrate. Their decision should be considered final.

*OnePocket.org would like to acknowledge the Billiard Congress of America for their basic Bank Pool rules, and the Derby City Classic wherever their influence appears in these expanded rules.