

HANDY HINTS FOR EIGHT BALL

The Stance

1. Comfort is essential
2. Weight forward
3. Rear leg fairly straight and braced rigid
4. Front knee taking the weight

Position your legs in line with your shoulders and the cueing line of your intended cueing stroke. Good alignment is when your shoulder, cueing arm and feet are all in the same line of your extended stroke

Common Faults

1. Both knees bent
2. Legs spread sideways instead of in line with stroke
3. Weight on haunches, instead of forward.
4. Front knee sagging outwards
5. Standing too straight on, feet out of alignment

Important Head/Eye Procedures

1. Get the chin right down to cue level
2. Keep the head down and still, until the ball has been struck or is in the pocket
3. Avoid eye swivel – keep focussed on the exact point you are cueing the white ball to contact

Common Faults

1. Head too far above the cue
2. Jerking up head on the stroke
3. Allowing the eyes to follow the object ball or to precede it
4. Thinking about position of white for next shot, thus you take your eye off your shot during the stroke

Bridging over balls

1. Confidence being more than half the battle with difficult bridges
2. Shorten the backward action, slow down the action, retain control over the cue
3. Play the cue straight along its line. Don't try to flick the top of the ball
4. Hold position momentarily after stroke. It helps to keep control of what you are doing

5. Be satisfied with an unambitious stroke. Don't try anything too clever, unless there is no other option

Common Faults

1. In General, a tendency to funk it, resulting in playing much too hurriedly and haphazardly
2. By some, a tendency to attempt complicated strokes when a plain ball stroke, at moderate pace is already sufficiently difficult.
- 3.

Contact

1. Cultivate a complete smooth driving action, Don't swing at it
2. Some players use a slight pause before the forward drive. It will give you control over direction and pace
3. Accurate striking of the cue-ball affects the whole course of the stroke. It is very difficult to attain and needs much practice. You must therefore devote great concentration to it, in every shot you play
4. Don't allow obsessions about certain angles to worry you, you can get them all if your action is good enough
5. Don't trust entirely on instinct for the correct angle
6. When you are finally ready to strike, take just one quick look at the point on the cue-ball you intend to strike
7. At the moment of striking, the eyes must be on the contact point of the object ball
8. Force yourself to cut the pocket right out of your line of vision when striking
9. Having decided to pot, don't harbour doubts – have a go

Suggested Cueing Tips

1. Length of bridge – Bridge hand to cue tip, 12" to 15" (30cm-40cm)
2. Short backward movement, about 5" (15cm)
3. Concentrate on a consistent follow through, say 8" (24cm)
4. Keep the flat, horizontal piston-like action throughout, particularly in the finish of the stroke
5. Dead level cue finish. Note control by flexing cue hand
6. Eyes holding the head down after the finish
7. Whole body bolted down throughout cue movement
8. The pause of feathering, takes place with the cue tip up to within ½ inch of the cue ball not at the back of the stroke
9. Do not clutch the cue in a stranglehold with your cue hand. Your power should not come from the grip on your cue, but from the feel, to be played, your cue action is a soft push

Shorten your bridge and your cue hold, shorten your stroke, when cue tip is ½ inch from cue ball, with 10” bridge

Common Faults

1. Bridge too long, causing sloppy action
2. Bridge too short, causing cramped jerky style
3. No follow through – stabbing
4. Bad finish with cue in the air or pulled off the line
5. Dipping cue action
6. Uncontrolled finish
7. Head up
8. Movement in various parts of the body

The Bridge

1. A firm unshakable bridge is gained by gripping cloth with finger pads
2. Bridge – arm straight and taught
3. Brace back the shoulder of the cue arm
4. Pad on base of thumb flat on table

Common Faults

1. Bridge fingers bunched together
2. No grip on cloth with bridge – fingers
3. Pad on base of thumb off the table
4. Thumb badly cocked
5. Elbow of bridge – Arm loose and bent
6. Cueing shoulder too far forward
7. General slackness of arm and shoulder

Back Spin (Screw Shots)

1. Do not start on the screw shot (back spin) until you have mastered the plain-ball action
2. Make sure, whatever happens, you concentrate on potting your ball.
3. Screw is the application of reverse spin
4. Holding the butt of the cue medium to firm is essential
5. Extra force is usually unnecessary, and may have adverse effects, because it tends to develop inaccuracy. A good smooth cueing motion will achieve more control and spin
6. The cue ball must be struck low (and make sure it is)
7. For more back spin (screw) increase your cue speed

8. The stance must be braced even more than usual, particularly the bridge arm and shoulder
9. The bridge must be lowered. The butt must not be raised and the action must remain horizontal
10. The bridge is lowered by turning the hand over onto the pad at the base of the thumb, the knuckles are not lowered
11. The cue action is shorter. It is snappy, with a tightening of the grip on impact
12. During your cueing stroke, accelerate to impact the spin required
13. Continue cueing motion through the white ball, impact so cue tip grips and spins the ball
14. You must feel the tip holding onto the spinning the ball, like an accelerated push shot, try to get the tip to grip, creating spin

Common Faults

1. Too much force
2. Too little spin
3. Wrong bridge and dipping cue
4. Cue ball not struck low enough
5. Body movement or sloppy stance
6. No follow through.
7. Loss of rhythm and control (snatching)
8. Failing to grip cue on impact
9. Applying side
10. Stopping the cue with the bridge instead of the cue hand
11. Failure to concentrate on potting the ball

Passing tips

- ◆ Watch other players, analyse their style
- ◆ Study your opponents, as they shape up
- ◆ Do they conform to the rules I have so far laid down
- ◆ If not, you will be a better player than they are
- ◆ This study of others, particularly of their faults, helps you remember what you are trying to do yourself to cure those faults
- ◆ Our aim is two-fold, to lead you into good 8-ball habits and at the same time, to lead you out of bad ones

- ◆ Regular good focussed practice sessions are more valuable than a long session with no concentration
- ◆ Stay relaxed during all your shots
- ◆ Develop a consistent smooth cueing action for all your shots. Work on a repetitive consistent cueing action

- ◆ Practice at developing a comfortable rhythm and having repetitive strokes for all your shots. This will assist you to cue the vital shots similarly to an easy shot

- ◆ Practice shots you have a weakness with

- ◆ Practice with a player at around your level or better to push yourself to improve more.

- ◆ Seek knowledge or coaching from top players or coaches

“Good luck!!!! Enjoy our great game of eight ball”