



TAP 9 BALL TEAM RULES

UP TOP TAP – OAKLAND COUNTY, MI

Object of the Game

Team Tap 9-ball is played with nine object balls numbered 1 through 9 and the cue ball. On any shot the cue ball must contact the lowest numbered ball on the table first to begin a legal shot. Once you have contacted the lowest numbered ball, any completions that follow allow you to continue your turn at the table. On balls numbered 1 thru 8 the shooter does NOT have to call their pocket. **A player wins the game when he/she has legally pockets the 9-ball in a MARKED pocket.**

Beginning Play

Start your match by captains flipping a coin, winner of the toss decides if they want to throw first, or allow the away team to throw first. After this has been determined, player selections will be alternated for the following matches until all league matches are completed.

A team will forfeit the 1st match if they are not ready to play within 15 minutes of their scheduled start time. Thereafter, a team will forfeit a match every 15 minutes if they are not ready to play. A player can represent their team in active play once per night and represent that specific division on only one team per night. A player may only play on one table at a time. Multiple nights and division play are accepted and encouraged.

If a team must replay they can do so 2 times in a session and NOT in the last two weeks of regular league play. The opposing team may choose which player replays, but must stay under the 25 SL cap.

Lagging For the Break

Once you have selected your players, they must lag to see who breaks. Once two players have been selected, they must simultaneously "lag" for break. The "lag shot" is executed by striking an object ball from behind the head string, to the foot rail, and attempting to have it come to rest closest to the head rail. **If your lagging ball is pocketed or contacts a side rail you lose the lag. If the two lagging balls make contact, players must re-lag.**

Racking the Balls

The object balls, numbered 1 through 9, are racked in a diamond shape with the 1-ball on the foot spot, the 9-ball in the center of the diamond and the 2 ball in the back. The rack should be tight with all balls touching.

The Break Shot

The player entitled to the break has cue ball-in-hand 100% behind the head string. The breaking player must first drive the cue ball directly into the one-ball, causing at least 4 balls to hit a rail, including the cue ball. Pocketing a ball also constitutes a legal break. If either task has not been accomplished, **the opposing player is entitled to ask for a new rack and may elect to break.** This is at the non-breaking player's discretion. An attempt to break resulting in the cue ball crossing the

head string, but not hitting the rack, is a foul. The incoming player now has cue ball in hand anywhere on the table. If any balls, other than the 9-ball, are driven off the table during the break shot a foul has occurred, the balls are pocketed and the opponent has cue ball in hand. All objects balls that are pocketed remain down. If the 9-ball is driven off the table a foul has occurred, the opponent has cue ball in hand and the 9-ball is spotted. It is then ball-in-hand for the incoming player anywhere on the table. On a legal break with no fouls committed, pocketing the 9-ball is a win.

(NOTE: For scoring, the breaker gets the number of balls added to his or her score under the "made on break" (MOB) column). Any balls off the table are recorded as Dead Balls.

Cue ball off the table

If a player drives the cue ball off the table (including the break) it is the incoming player's turn, ball in hand anywhere on the table.

Continuing Play After the Break

If the player pockets a ball on the break, that player continues to shoot until he/she misses, commits a foul or plays defense without pocketing a ball. When this happens, your opponent assumes control of the table and does the same until the 9-ball is legally pocketed. (NOTE: If a foul is committed on any shot, the incoming player has cue ball-in-hand anywhere on the table.)

"Push out" After a Legal Break

The "push out", also known as "roll out", is allowed one time only on the shot immediately following the break. The player executing this shot must clearly announce their decision to their opponent before shooting or it is treated as a normal shot. Push Outs are recorded as a Defensive shot. To execute this shot you may shoot the cue ball anywhere on the table. The cue ball is not required to contact a rail nor is the shooter required to contact the lowest numbered ball on the table. Any balls pocketed on a push out stay down and count as a Dead Ball on your score sheet, with the exception of the 9-ball, which is spotted. Spotted balls are not counted as completions in this case. Following the push out the opponent has the option to shoot or pass the shot back to the player who executed the push out. (NOTE: Scratching on a push out is a foul). When the push is given back to the player that performed it, it is considered a Defensive shot on the score sheet.

Continuing Play

After a legal break or legal push out, the player who has command of the table continues to shoot until they miss, foul or win the game. This is continued until a winner is determined.

Skill Shot/Good Hits

The shooter must make the cue ball contact the lowest numbered ball on the table before any other ball to execute a legal hit. You do not have to call your pocket except for the 9 ball. After that, a ball on the table (any ball) must contact a rail. Pocketing a ball is also a good hit. If the cue ball first strikes any ball other than the lowest numbered ball on the table, or the cue ball is pocketed or a ball fails to hit a rail, it is a "bad hit". A bad hit means a foul has been committed and the opponent comes to the table with cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.

Shooting the 9-ball

In TAP team 9-ball the 9-ball is always the game ball for both players. The 9 ball is the only ball a shooter is required to call, and mark, a pocket for. If the 9-ball is pocketed legally, the game is over,

however, if a foul is committed while the 9-ball is pocketed then the 9-ball is spotted and it is ball-in-hand for the incoming player.

If the 9-ball is shot into the wrong pocket, it will be spotted and it's the opponent's turn playing the cue ball where it rests. The shot is scored as a Miss.

If player calls 9-ball combo shot, legally strikes lowest ball, does not pocket 9-ball but does pocket another ball, player continues shooting.

Players cannot call out "mark your pocket" to the shooter unless the 9-ball is the only ball on the table. If other balls are in play it will result in a ball in hand foul for the opponent.

Defensive/Safety Shot

To play a defensive (safety) shot, you still must execute a legal shot by hitting the lowest numbered ball on the table first, and drive a ball to the rail. A player must call a defensive (or safety) shot when not attempting to pocket an object ball. The opposing player has the right to ask the scorekeeper to record that shot as a defensive shot. **Players must call defense prior to the shot and mark it as a (def) defensive shot.**

When calling a defensive shot, **if you pocket a ball, you must continue shooting.** That shot is marked as a COMP on the score sheet. If the 9 Ball is pocketed on a defensive shot, it is spotted and the opponent gets to shoot. Note: Some shots in 9 Ball are made simply to make contact with your object ball because the ball is hidden from a clear shot. In these cases, a Miss should be marked instead of a Defense. Scorekeepers should use good judgment when making this decision.

Fouls:

There is no "Three foul" rule in TAP 9-ball league. A player committing a foul must relinquish his/her turn at the table. The following are examples of commonly occurring fouls.

Scratch/Ball Off the Table - If a player pockets the cue ball or drives the cue ball off the table, it is a foul. If a player executes a shot and then scratches, the shot is considered complete and the ball stays down, unless the 9-ball drops or is driven off the table then it is spotted. Any other ball stays down and ball-in-hand for the incoming player. Any balls driven off the table, with the exception of the 9 ball, are recorded as Dead Balls.

NOTE: (Two balls that are stuck in the jaws of the pocket have two outcomes: 1st, if the two balls are below the playing surface and/or not touching the felt they are considered pocketed; 2nd, if the two balls are on the felt and not below the playing surface, they are in play and not pocketed.)

Push Shot - If the cue ball is frozen to the object ball, pushing through the cue ball is a legal hit. If there is separation between the two balls equal to or less than the width of a piece of chalk, the shooter must keep from double hitting the cue ball. To make a legal hit the shooter must either 1) When shooting directly at the two balls elevate the back of the cue in an attempt to put draw on the cue ball, or 2) Shoot at an angle not directly in line with the two balls. **As long as an honest attempt at either is made, no foul can be called.** If the distance between the two balls is greater than the width of a standard size piece of billiard chalk, a double hit of the cue ball is a ball-in-hand foul. When confronted with this situation, it is strongly recommended that a third party or referee be called to watch the hit to avoid controversy. **If a third party is not called, it is the shooting player's decision.** Note: Should the cue ball travel past the object ball, a foul has been committed.

“Split Hits” - When a player contacts the lowest numbered ball on the table and another ball at the same time, this does not constitute a foul. Simultaneous contact of two balls is a good hit. If it is suspected that a player may play a shot that might result in a "split hit," the non-shooting player should ask that a league official, referee or another player (that is not on either team) observe the shot.

In this instance, it would be that individual's duty to watch, and if necessary, call the hit. In the absence of an observer, should a controversy over the hit arise, the shot goes to the shooter.

Accidental Movement of Balls

If a player moves the cue ball, in any way, prior to their shot it is a foul and results in ball-in-hand to the player's opponent; this does not apply in ball-in-hand situations when a player is placing the cue ball. **If while placing the cue ball, the cue ball, or the hand holding the cue ball, touches another ball a foul has occurred.**

Should a player accidentally move, or pocket, any other ball(s) in preparing to shoot or in the execution of a shot, it is not a foul (NOTE: Should a player accidentally pocket the 9 ball, it is automatically replaced.) The opposing player has the right to replace the ball(s) or leave them where they are. Should the shooter, by reflex action, attempt to replace the moved ball(s), this is not a foul, but the opposing player has the option of placing the ball(s) back to where they were originally resting or leaving them where they were moved to by the shooter. If a player touches any moving ball, moved as a result of the shot, or the moved ball is struck by another moving ball during the shot, it is a ball-in-hand foul for the opponent. If any moving ball strikes the shooter's cue, bridge stick or their person it is a foul and ball in hand for their opponent. NOTE: (If, after missing a shot, a player swings their cue in disgust and hits any balls, it is automatic loss of game.)

Timeout

Skill level 3 and above have 1 timeout per rack. They must choose a coach and use that coach for their entire match. Players can change coaches one time during their match, but must inform the opposing team that they are changing their coach. **Skill level 2 players get 2 timeout and unlimited sideline coaching.** Sideline coaching can ONLY be done by their coach, the coach must remain seated away from the table, they cannot approach or walk around the table. Sideline coaching examples: “That’s a scratch shot” “Use draw on that shot” “Play a safety on the 3 and hide the cue ball behind the 4” – These are examples, but sideline coaching is not limited to these statements.

During a timeout, leave the time running for the entire minute. If a coach walks away from the table, they are allowed to go back to the table if they are still within their minute.

Marking your pocket

The pocket must be marked any time you are attempting to shoot the 9 ball. A coach can place your marker during a timeout. It does not matter how the pocket got marked, as long as the correct pocket is marked, for example, if you marked the pocket on the last shot, and did not pick up your marker. **Teams MAY NOT call out “mark your pocket” for an early 9 ball combo, a time out must be used. Teams CAN call out “mark your pocket” if the 9 ball is the only ball left on the table.**

Teams may call out the following:

- “mark your pocket” if the 9 ball is the only ball left on the table
- “You’re shooting the wrong ball”