

# Poker Pool Rules

Poker Pool is a game that combines the skill of pool with the luck of the cards in poker to create a game that requires different strategies each time you play. A great game when you have an odd number of players.

Poker Ball Pool should be played according to the General Rules of Pocket Billiards unless explicitly noted otherwise in this specific Bank Pool rule set.

## Object of Game

A full rack of the standard 15 pocket billiard balls are racked at random with no preset order. The game requires two to six players, however general consensus seems to indicate that playing with three players is the most desirable. Each player is dealt seven cards from a full poker card deck that consists of 52 cards. (A Custom Poker Pool Deck can be used which has 4 cards to match each ball for a total of 60 cards.) Each player is responsible for protecting their hands throughout the course of the game. Card to Ball representation is as follows:

- Ace = 1 ball
- 2 = 2 ball
- 3 = 3 ball
- 4 = 4 ball
- 5 = 5 ball
- 6 = 6 ball
- 7 = 7 ball
- 8 = 8 ball
- 9 = 9 ball
- 10 = 10 ball
- Jacks = 11 ball
- Queen = 12 ball
- King = 13 ball

There are also specialized sets of poker ball pool ball sets available from Aramith. See the image below of the 2 1/4" Belgian Aramith Poker Billiard Ball Set (16 Ball Set) from Imperial International. Instead of the balls displaying the typical numbers, they are marked with an "A", "K", "Q" or "J" and includes 4 blue, 4 purple, 4 red and 4 yellow balls

The 14 and 15 rotation balls are considered neutral. The object of the game is to run your hand out. For example, if you have a hand of two Queens, two Kings, one 4, one 6, and one 8, your objective is to pocket the 12, 13, 4, 6, and 8 balls. The shooting player discards their hand as their ball(s) are pocketed. If the above player for instance, pockets the 12 ball, they immediately discard their pair of queens. This game is primarily played for money at a predetermined amount per card left in your hand at the conclusion of the game.

## Procedures and Play

After the cards are dealt, the opening break belongs to the player or team that won the previous game. Order is based upon cards held at the conclusion of the previous game. The person hanging on to the most cards go last. In the event of a tie, high card is used to set the order. The

most common break is a soft break somewhat like a straight pool break where the on coming player has no real shot. The player who is shooting is the only player who can discard as the matching balls are pocketed. For example, if player X misses a 3 ball and player Y comes to the table and decides to sink the 3 ball (likely because player B also has a 3 in his hand), player X must hang on to their 3 until it is their turn again. If there is a winner established before player X returns to the table, player X's 3 card will count against them.) In the game, ONLY balls which match cards in the shooter's hand may be pocketed. For every ball pocketed, the shooter must discard the matching card(s) immediately. There are only two neutral balls (the 14 and 15) for which the shooter can pocket to obtain position or as a defensive shot at anytime during the game. Combinations are legal as long as only the shooter's held balls are made. The shooter continues to shoot only after a legal or neutral ball is pocketed.

## Fouls

A scratch constitutes a single foul which results in loss of turn and drawing one card from the unused deck. Scratches are pocket scratches, failure to contact an object ball, not driving a ball to the rail after contact. etc. Pocketing a legal ball and scratching is a double foul which results in a loss of turn and drawing two cards from the unused deck. Pocketing a ball which is not held by the shooter is also considered a double foul. Pocketing a legal ball and a non legal ball on the same shot also constitutes as a double foul. This happens with frequency on break out shots. Players must be very aware of how clusters will react upon break outs as the penalties are severe. When a foul occurs, the shooter who commits the foul may not discard even if a legal ball is made. The shooter must hang on to the card until their turn is up. After all foul shots players must draw a further card to add to their hand. Failure to declare "last card" results in the player drawing a further two cards.

## Taking Turns

When a shooter steps to the table, it is the shooter's responsibility to discard all cards that are out of play. Balls that other shooters have pocketed which match the shooter's held cards. If the shooter fails to discard out of play cards at the conclusion of the shooter's turn, they must wait for their turn again to discard. If all the cards in the shooter's hands have been made prior to the shooter's turn, the shooter automatically wins when their turn comes up. During the course of the game, the amount of cards held is public knowledge as players have to respond to count checks by other players.

## Winning the Game

The game is won when there are no more cards left in the shooter's hand. This may come as a result of making all the held balls or getting to the table with all held balls out of play. At this time the winner collects their wins according to the number of cards held by each of the losers. The order of the next game is set based on number of cards left in the player's hands. The fewest go after the break, held by the winner, and the most go last. Tie games are broken by dealing high card.

## Poker Pool Strategy

There are different and numerous strategies in this game. Most are hinged on the players involved, skill levels, etc. As in any card game, bluffing comes into play as a shooter who doesn't

have an open shot may not elect to make contact with one of his balls, performing a bluff, but perhaps positioning a legal ball or locking up another player's options.

