

Rules of Diamondball

Characteristics

Discipline of: Pool

Players: 2

Equipment: Pool table, Pool balls, One or more Cue sticks, Mechanical bridge, Triangle rack or Diamond rack, Billiard chalk, Billiard brush

Introduction

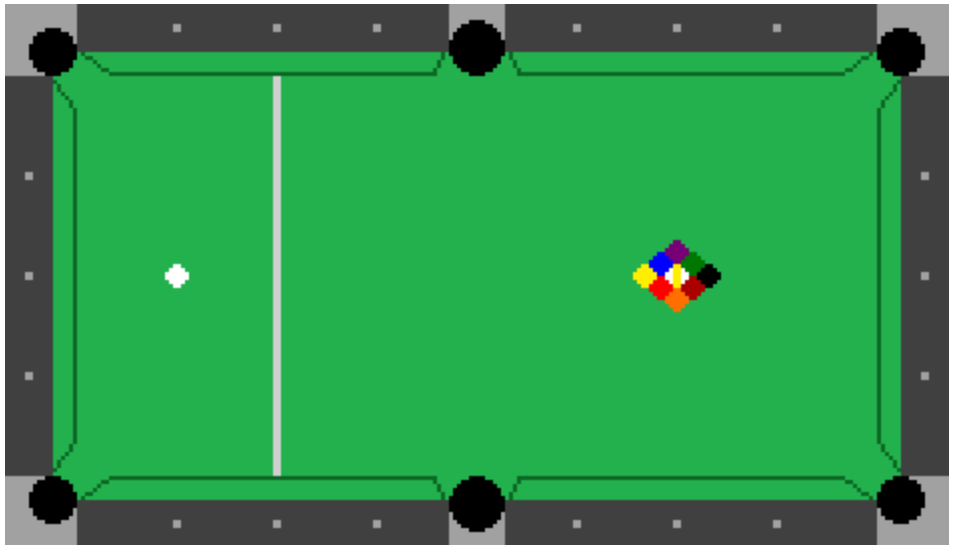
Diamondball is a discipline of the cue sport pool. It is played on a rectangular billiard table with pockets at each of the four corners and in the middle of each long side. Using a cue stick, players must strike the white cue ball to pocket nine colored billiard balls, hitting them in ascending numerical order. An individual game (or rack) is won by the player legally pocketing the 9-ball. Matches are usually played as a race to a set number of racks, with the player who reaches the set number winning the game.

Setup

Each rack begins with the object balls (numbered 1-9) being racked in a diamond shape, with the 1-ball at the front, the 9-ball in the center and situated on the foot spot, and all other balls being placed randomly, with all balls touching.

Deciding who breaks

To determine the order of play, the players compete in a lag. During the lag, the players each near simultaneously shoot a ball from the kitchen (the area between the head rail and the head string, which is denominated by the diamonds halfway between the head corner pockets and side pockets) to the foot rail and back toward the head rail. The shooter whose ball comes to rest closest to the head rail wins the initial break.



Players may also decide who moves first through a game of chance or via mutual agreement.

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Breaking

Before breaking, the player may place the ball anywhere within the kitchen. The break consists of hitting the 1-ball, with the attempt to pocket any ball or have at least four balls hit cushions. If the 9-ball is legally pocketed on the break shot, the player automatically wins the game. This is sometimes known as a golden break. If the breaker fails to make a successful break, then the opponent can opt either to play from the current position or to call for a re-rack and either re-break or have the original breaker repeat the break.

Second shot of the rack – Push out

If no fouls are committed on the break shot, the player may choose to play a push out instead of a normal shot. The player must make their intention to make a push out known, and then the player is not required to hit the lowest numbered ball first or drive a ball to a pocket or a rail after making contact with the object ball. If no foul is committed after a push out, the other player chooses who will shoot next.

Gameplay

The aim of the game is to hit the lowest numbered ball on the table and pocket balls in succession to eventually pocket the 9-ball. A player's turn continues as long as the lowest numbered ball on the table is contacted first by the cue ball, and any one or more of the object balls are pocketed in any of the six pockets with no foul being committed. Object balls that are pocketed or forced off the table remain off the table for the remainder of the rack. When the table passes to another player, they must play from where the balls were last positioned, except if the prior turn ended in a foul (see Fouls). In that case, the incoming player takes ball in hand, anywhere on the table.

Pocketing the 9-ball

A player wins by legally pocketing the 9-ball, regardless of how many balls have been pocketed beforehand. If a player pockets the 9-ball and commits a foul or forces the 9-ball off the table, that player loses the game. If the 9-ball has left the table and the winner cannot be identified, the situation is handled like a stalemate (see Stalemate).

Restoring a position

When it becomes necessary to restore a position (i.e., the balls need cleaned, or are disturbed by the players or outside interference), all disturbed balls that are still on the table must be placed as close as possible to the positions they were in prior to the disturbance before taking the next shot. If the balls cannot be restored to their original positions, then the situation is handled like a stalemate (see Stalemate).

Stalemate

If both players are unable or unwilling to make any progress, the rack is restarted and the original breaker will break again.

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Fouls

A foul is any action that is against the rules of the game. The list of fouls is as follows:

- Causing the cue ball to be pocketed or is forced off the table (a.k.a. scratch)
- First hitting any ball other than the lowest numbered ball on the table with the cue ball, except during a push out
- Not hitting any balls with the cue ball
- Hitting the cue ball more than once on the same shot
- Touching the cue ball with anything other than the tip of the cue, except for balls in hand, which may be touched by anything *except* the tip of the cue
- Causing any object ball on the table to touch anything that is not the table or another ball, including the cue ball when it is in hand
- Failing to pocket or hit a cushion with any ball after making contact with the object ball, except during a push out
- Pocketing the 9-ball without hitting the lowest numbered ball first
- Causing any ball to be forced off the table
- Shooting with no feet on the floor (you must always have at least one foot on the floor when shooting)
- Playing a push shot (the cue tip maintains contact with the ball longer than the split-second allowed for a normal shot)
- Slow play
- Shooting when the balls are still moving (You must wait until all balls have stopped moving before taking your next shot)
- Intentionally interfering with normal play
- Playing out of turn
- Any other action that is against the rules of the game

If the player commits one of these fouls during play, their turn ends immediately, and the next player will have cue ball in hand anywhere on the table. If the player commits several of these fouls in a single shot, it is still counted as only one foul. If a foul is not called before the next shot begins, the foul is assumed not to have happened.

If a player commits three consecutive fouls, that player loses the rack. The fouls must be in the same rack, and a player who is on two fouls must be warned when they come to the table that they are on two fouls. Otherwise, a possible third foul will be considered to be only the second.

Resignation

At any point, a player may resign and their opponent wins the rack.

End of rack

A player wins the rack if they legally pocket the 9-ball or the opponent resigns. A player automatically loses the rack if they pocket the 9-ball and commit a foul, cause the 9-ball to be forced off the table, or commit three consecutive fouls.