

The Half-Ball Aiming System

THE KEY FACTOR in my game's acceleration over the years is what I've learned regarding the achievement of maximum effect and speed with the help of my late mentor and best friend Ernie Presto. People have always been kind enough to ask, "Why does your cue ball always seem to have so much life to it with so little effort?" Well, part of it is due to the hand/eye coordination nature gave me. I can't help you with that. But, it mostly has to do with how I strike the object ball. I can help you there.

One of my secrets is this: Whenever I can, ***"I try to hit the first ball exactly half-full,"*** (as close to half-full as possible). The reasons are quite enlightening. 1) It's the purest form of carom you can make, because you're hitting equal parts of the ball with very predictable deflection results 2) All things being equal, the cue ball and the object ball both travel at the same speed after a half-ball hit, so calculating the speed of the shot for position is easier 3). Making a half-ball hit throws the object ball off the cushion with the most English. 4) And with the exception of aiming for thin-ball hits, half-ball hits are the easiest to visualize and execute with or without English on the cue ball.

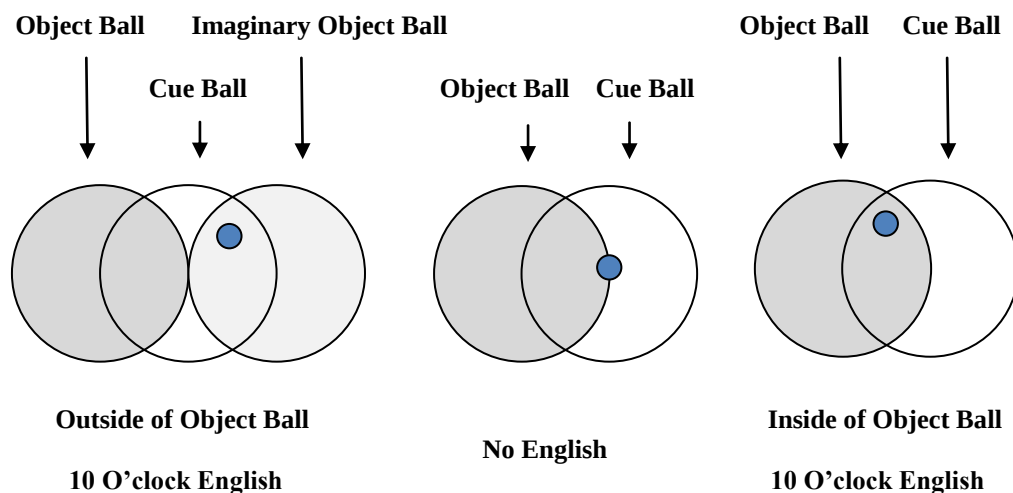


Diagram 1