



## Common Misconceptions



How well do you really know the rules of APA League play? What follows is a collection of statements that may seem to be common knowledge. Some are true, but many have never been true. As you read through them, try to keep track of the number of times you are surprised by the “real” rule!

### **It is a foul to use chalk as a pocket marker.**

**FALSE!** It is NOT a foul; however, it is not recommended, as a piece of chalk is a “common” item found on the table and if there are multiple pieces of chalk on the rails, arguments can ensue. We also discourage the use of money (paper or coins), cell phones or pocket knives, though using any of those items does NOT constitute a foul.

### **It is a foul to move the cue ball using the cue stick’s tip or ferrule.**

**FALSE!** Any part of the cue or hand may be used to position and, if not satisfied, adjust the position of the cue ball while placing it on the table when a player has a ball-in-hand. The only time a foul is committed is if the player is in the “address” position and touches the cue ball with the tip of the cue stick, while preparing to take the shot or taps the cue ball and then strikes through it (hitting the cue ball twice).

### **Splitting tables is optional.**

**FALSE!** League Rules (OTM pg. 27 #17) If you are not in your fourth match at Official League start time plus 2 hours, a second table should be used (tables must be same size). Splitting matches is waived only if BOTH TEAMS AGREE to continue playing on one table (if either team wants to split, you must split).

### **New players get two time-outs.**

**TRUE!** Regardless of gender, brand new players (who are in reality a skill level zero) get two time-outs. Gentlemen will start both 8-Ball & 9-Ball “as though” they are a four, while ladies start 8-Ball “as though” they are a three and 9-Ball “as though” they are a two.

### **Players must lag to determine who breaks the first rack.**

**TRUE!** Players often agree to flip a coin; however, the rule is lag for break, so if either player wants to lag for the break, a lag must be used.

### **Players with an 8-Ball skill level start 9-Ball at that level and vice-versa.**

**TRUE & FALSE!** If you have an established handicap (described as a skill level based on 10 actual match scores) in one format, you will carry that skill level to start the other format; however, if your handicap is not established (less than 10 actual scores) the player would start as a “new” player. It is always recommended that you check with the League Office to determine the correct starting skill level.

**A stalemate occurs when ball-in-hand is given back and forth three times.**

**FALSE!** A stalemate occurs as soon as the players (involved in the match) agree that neither is going to make use of a ball-in-hand. That can happen with the first ball-in-hand given.

**Breaking down the cue-stick during a match is a loss.**

**FALSE!** The act of breaking down a cue-stick prior to the opponent taking their last shot is considered unsportsmanlike and often times sharking. Players should refrain from doing so, as it is disrespectful to the shooting player. It is not a foul, loss of game or concession.

**It is permissible to place a piece of chalk on the rail as an aiming device.**

**TRUE!** A piece of chalk may be placed on the hard surface of the rail. Altering the appearance of the cloth on a pool table (using chalk to draw a line or spot, or wetting your finger to dampen the cloth) is not allowed.

**Marking defensive shots will increase your skill level.**

**FALSE!** Proper scorekeeping includes the marking of defensive shots (no intent to pocket a ball). Defensive shots are part of the game and therefore part of the formula that calculates a player's skill level. Failure to mark them will cause your skill level to go up much more often than marking them will.

**Winning a match will raise your skill level (losing will lower it).**

**FALSE!** One win or one loss will not cause your skill level to change. It is a combination of scores (averaged) that determines your skill level. You can win a match and go down and likewise, you can lose a match and go up.

**A team match can NOT start until the Team Captain arrives.**

**FALSE!** A team may begin play with one player present at the official start time.

**A safety is a defensive shot; however, a DEFENSIVE shot is not always a Safety.**

**TRUE!** Proper scorekeeping is an integral part of The Equalizer Handicap System. If score is not kept accurately, it can cause players to be incorrectly handicapped. APA's definition of a defensive shot is one where the shooter had NO INTENT to pocket one of their category of balls. A shot taken with the intent to give up their turn at the table and avoid giving up ball-in-hand to the opponent is also a defensive shot (no intent to pocket a ball).

**If anyone other than the player calls or suggests a time out, the player may refuse it.**

**FALSE!** Anytime anyone other than the shooter mentions a time-out (do you want a time-out?) a time-out is charged. Only when a player asks for a time-out can the coach refuse it and the time-out is not charged.