



**Improving Your Game,  
From Every Angle™**



Worldwide exclusive training materials for the  
International Billiards & Snooker Federation

# How To Make A 100 Break Red Level

**Incorporating:**

**Practice 1: Technique – A, B, C.**

**Practice 2: Questions – A, B.**

**Practice 3: Straight Pots & Long Pots – A.**

**Practice 4: Break Building – A, B, C, D.**

**Practice 5: Safety – A.**

**Practice 6: Matchplay & Psychology – A, B.**

**Practice 7: The Black Ball – A.**

Course devised and introduced by Nic Barrow

[www.thesnookergym.com](http://www.thesnookergym.com)

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**Design, layout, publishing by:  
Nic Barrow  
Managing Director  
The Snooker Gym Ltd  
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# How To Make A 100 Break.

## Introduction.

After many years of competing in, and coaching, the game of snooker I have begun to see some key fundamentals for performance and learning that apply to all ages and standard of player.

This course is a collection of all those ideas I have tried and tested throughout the years. I have put it into one structured format that will lead any student from the very beginnings of the game as far as he or she would like to go – in all the key basics of the game that will provide the platform for enjoyable ongoing improvement.

The purpose of this programme is to introduce players to the main seven areas of the game from absolute beginner level, and guide them through incremental steps up to 100 break standard in each area of their game.

Each certification level in the 'How To Make A 100 Break™' system includes practices, drills, tests and a coach's evaluation for each of the seven areas. Within each of these seven main areas of snooker, all the tasks are lettered from 'A' onward for ease of future reference with yourself and other enthusiasts, players and coaches.

Your approved Snooker Gym™ Instructor will guide you through the knowledge contained here so that you can incorporate it smoothly into your own matchplay. They will also help you to traverse the pitfalls you may encounter as you find your feet in this most fascinating sport.

By the time you have earned the black certificate in this system, you will be well into century break standard. More importantly, you will have the corresponding level of ability and insight into all areas of snooker. This will provide you with the structure of knowledge and skill that will support you for life in reaching the very top of the game if you choose to do so.

Whilst this system covers all the most important areas of the game, there will always be knowledge to be acquired outside the confines of any course. Your Snooker Gym™ Instructor will be able to guide you through each level here and advise you when the time is right to deepen your knowledge even further.

Nic Barrow

Dubai

November 30<sup>th</sup> 2002.

Revised and updated November 5<sup>th</sup> 2009

# Tips for using ‘How To Make A 100 Break’

A few simple rules apply to each practice, with exceptions mentioned on each practice:

1. It is allowed to pot a ball into any pocket unless a restriction is otherwise mentioned.
2. Everything is to be played with centre cue ball striking unless otherwise mentioned.
3. No cannons are allowed with the cue ball onto balls other than the object ball, unless otherwise mentioned.

You will find it useful to practice these shots on both sides of the table to be comfortable with dealing with rest shots and shots where the cushion is obstructing your body and your balance.

When practicing positional play, it is assumed you make very small chalk marks on the cloth so the balls are placed in exactly the same position, to ensure repeatability of your ‘scientific positional

play test'. There is a huge difference in the position of the cue ball you will get if you play the shot in exactly the same way, if there is even a very small difference in the starting position of the cue ball. This is because we are not dealing with millimetres or centimetres, but rather percentages. Moving the cue ball one centimetre can reduce the angle of your shot by 30%. You would then have no chance of replicating the same position with the cue ball unless you played the shot in a totally different way.

# Explanation of the DVD references in the system.

Throughout this guide, you will see references that appear in the following format:

**See TSG DVD:  
14.7**

**Or: TSG: 14.7**

The first number represents the DVD number in the 10 DVD set Snooker Gym DVD Series.

The second number represents the scene number within that DVD.

These video clips will explain everything you need to know about the practice drill you must perform.

You can view the DVD's in the following ways:

1. Purchase the DVD's by going to your nearest stockist, or by visiting [www.thesnookergym.com](http://www.thesnookergym.com)
2. Share the cost by buying The Snooker Gym DVD Series with a group of your friends who all want to improve their game. You can then sit, watch, and learn from the DVD's together.

3. Convince your local professional or coach to become a Snooker Gym Instructor, where they will receive the full DVD set and be able to explain all the practices to you as well as all your friends in the club.
4. Ask your club to sell The Snooker Gym DVD Series. You could then use the club's copy of the DVD's to learn your practice routines. Other members of the club will also buy the DVD's and start improving their games... giving you even better match practice yourself.



# Height & Power & Side.

Throughout The Snooker Gym Training System you will see numbered codes on how to strike the cue ball, both in the written body of text and also in the shot diagrams.

## **H**

H applies to the Height you will strike the cue ball and is the first value you work out when planning how to strike the cue ball for your desired position. There is a scale of 1-10 with maximum lowness on the cue ball being H1, perfect centre ball striking H5 and the highest part of the cue ball being H10.

An important point to know is that H1 means H1. Not H1.1 or H0.9 – being ruthlessly accurate with this is the only way to guarantee accurate feedback on the power of the screw shots you play. If the only variable in a screw shot is the power you play, you will learn very fast. However, if you do not know for sure if you are hitting where you are aiming on the cue ball, your ability to equate how you play the shots to the results you get will be greatly diminished.

## **P**

P applies to the Power you will play the shot and is always the second value you work out for your desired strike. The 1-10 scale starts with the P1 trickle shot that would push the cue ball only six feet or so without striking any object ball. P5 represents half of the maximum power you feel you can play while maintaining a degree of control over the cue. In reality, though, even the top professionals reduce their accuracy when increasing power, which is why you very rarely see them doing so. P10 is the most power you can play whilst keeping your body more or less still!

## **L & R**

L & R applies to the amount of Left or Right hand side required for a shot. The ten point scale goes from L5 being the most amount of left hand side you can play without miscueing, to L1 being the tiniest amount of left hand side. R1 equates to the tiniest amount of right hand side and finally R5 is the maximum right hand side you can play without miscueing.

A very important observation here is that R5 is less with H10 or H1 than it is with H5! The reason for this is that the cue ball is fatter at H5 than it is at H10 or H1. Therefore, the scale R1-5

means the range of minimum to maximum side spin available at any given cue ball height.

So for example, when you need to pot a straight black and screw back off the side cushion with a lot of side spin, you can apply more side spin by playing H2 than by playing H1. You will still get enough screw back to get where you want with the cue ball, but this option of ‘cheating’ extra side spin is very useful if you know when to use it.

## Other H & P & S points.

H10 will often be written into a routine, but in actual fact should be H6 if a professional was playing the shot. This is done for a safety margin of accuracy when striking the cue ball. Most people reading this will be at a less than professional standard and when aiming at H6 may indeed hit H5 by accident or through a subconscious need to play a stun shot if they are not certain about the reaction of the cue ball when striking H6. This is a deliberate 'error' from my side even though H6 gives you less chance of an early unintentional swerve of the cue ball, and even though H6 gives more chance of a solid hit due to the fact you are striking a fatter part of the cue ball.

On long shots, though, H6 or H7 will often be written where you need a follow through effect on the cue ball. This is to get you into the habit of gaining a more solid hit in the fatter part of the cue ball on long shots, although if you find yourself getting a stun effect on the cue ball, do go a bit higher on the cue ball to create a better reaction.

A 'stop shot' means a straight pot where the cue ball remains in the place it was when it contacted the object ball. It does not mean that the cue ball should finish where the object ball was, as that would mean the cue ball after contact would be rolling forward the diameter of one ball. Whenever a stop shot is mentioned, your target is to leave the cue ball motionless after it strikes the object ball – even if the cue ball follows through or screws back one centimetre, you may be satisfied with the shot and continue your practice, but you will not be allowed to call it a stop shot.

H2/3 means height 2 or 3.

R5 applies to side of table shown, not the mirror image shot on the other side of the table! In this case, you would need to use the mirror image side spin which in this case is L5.

Power is not usually mentioned in these exercises. This is because you usually have the three parts of a four piece jigsaw available to you. These are the angle of shot, cue ball destination and height required on the cue ball. The power will come to you by experimentation, and will vary according to the table you find yourself on.

Flicks of left or right hand side is a method that some professionals use when playing angled pots, but in the practices contained here your goal is to learn the art of playing centre ball. When you have mastered this, by all means try this potting method of using a trace of side, and you will then have the ability and flexibility to do both. I suggest you wait until you are at century break standard before trying this method of using a trace of side.

# Different ways to practice.

Plan your practice. This is the single biggest benefit you will ever give to yourself in your practice time.

Remember, Proper Planning Prevents Pretty Poor Performance!

Feel free to write notes and tips for yourself in the margins next to each practice, or simply record your highest break on the page of the practice you are playing.

Below are some of the key patterns you can employ in how you practice. Mix these up so that you maintain interest and at the same time expand the range of your concentration and experience with each type of shot.

**Difficulty... to increase or decrease, that is the question.**

On individual pots, you should be consistently getting between six and eight out of ten of whatever shot you are playing. If you are getting less than this, make the shot easier by reducing

distance, power or complexity. If you are getting more than this consistently, make it a little harder unless you are a professional. In this case you should be good enough to pot some of these shots nine or ten out of ten, and will be just confirming your accuracy with them before moving on to the next routine.

## **Play until complete.**

This requires discipline. A great example of this is a friend of mine in Oxford who used to start playing in the morning and not stop until he had made a century break – even if it was eleven'o'clock at night.

## **Play until correct.**

This would involve playing a routine until you are happy with the accuracy of the pot and the position of each shot. An example of this would be a player who is learning to clear the colours. They may well spend five, ten, twenty or minutes or more experimenting until they can play the yellow to their satisfaction, but once they have would carry on until the next shot was played properly and so on.



This is a great way to maintain a sense of accomplishment, and you will often stumble across shots you must improve on, that you actually assumed you were perfect at.

## **Mistakes on purpose.**

This is a great way to break a pattern or habit, and by going more deeply into a mistake you can often burn it out.

For example, if you are consistently missing on the left hand side of the pocket your goal would be to miss even further to the left and then differing degrees of striking to the left. If you know how to deliberately repeat the mistake, you will find it easier to play it correctly.

# Nic's 'Observe Predict Plan' Principle.

The individual components of this principle may also be used throughout the practices as a proper noun. Thus, the proper noun Observe or Predict or Plan may be shown, in which case you would know it is a shot where you would get benefit from applying the Principle in more depth.

Here is a description of the three parts of Nic's Observe Predict Plan Principle:

# Observe

Play a shot and Observe the path the cue ball takes. Keep playing with different height and power, and Observe where the cue ball goes. If you have any targets for the cue ball at this stage, you are NOT in the Observe phase and therefore NOT following instructions. Targets are not allowed here!

## **Predict**

Play the same shot again, and now that you have had a bit of experience with it, commit to playing it a certain way and Predict where you think it will go if you do so. Keep Predicting until your ability to tell the future is improved.

It is very important here to have the awareness of whether you are playing the shot as you intended or not. It would be vital to know that you struck H4 when in fact you were aiming H5. You will then have very accurate feedback between the result you have and how you played it, which is the gateway to improvement and crucial for the next step.

## Plan

In the final phase, you will use the experience you gained in the first two steps to Plan where you want the cue ball to finish and work out the way you think you need to play it to get this result. Keep refining the way you play the shot until you get the result you want.

In order for you to get even more benefit out of these routines, you can read 'Improve Your Practice, Improve Your Game', as well as 'Positional Play Prowess' from The Snooker Gym Training Guide Series which both go into these concepts in more depth.

# The Rules.

All rules mentioned in the questions section are taken from 'Rules of the Game of Snooker and English Billiards'.

There are five sections in both the rule books of Snooker and English Billiards. The section of each rule included in this training system is mentioned alongside the rule.

For your reference, these five sections are:

Section 1: Equipment.

Section 2: Definitions.

Section 3: The Game.

Section 4: The Players.

Section 5: The Officials.

# Practice 1: Technique

See TSG DVD:

4.10 Pre shot routine

4.12 Pre shot rehearsal

1.13 Post shot routine

A.

To show that you fully understand the  
TOP THREE BASICS,  
explain them to a friend, player or coach.

BEFORE you play the shot:

*Stand behind your cue ball aiming line.*

Put your nose on that line!

*In your mind, see where you want the cue ball to finish.*

What is your next ball?

What is your desired angle and distance from the next ball?

In your mind, see and hear the cue ball move at the correct speed from where it is now, then to the object ball, then to the desired position.

*In your mind, feel how to play the shot.*

Know correct height to strike the cue ball.

In your mind, feel the correct speed of striking the cue ball.

In your mind, see and hear the object ball going into the pocket at its correct speed.

### DURING the strike:

*Keep the bridge hand perfectly still at all times.*

This makes sure you know what the cue is doing, and keeps the cue moving straight.

### AFTER you play the shot:

*Keep still on the shot, in the same position you were in when you were cueing. Hold this position until the ball touches a pocket, or a cushion, or stops altogether.*

This is important because you will then know what these were doing during and after the strike:

The object ball – did it go where you wanted?

The cue – did it go as straight as you wanted?

Your body – did it stay as still as you wanted?



## **B. See TSG DVD:**

### **3.19**

Stand up, cue in a rifle position under centre of chin, aim cue like a rifle to ingrain cue being in centre of chin when cueing up.

## **C. See TSG DVD:**

### **1.5**

### **1.6**

Improve Grip Hand.

# Practice 2: Questions.

A.

## Snooker dictionary

**See Diagram: Snooker Dictionary.**

Top of the table / Top cushion

Bottom of the table / Bottom cushion

Side cushion / middle pocket

Black cushion / green cushion / yellow cushion

Corner / top / yellow / green / black / baulk

bottom pocket

Baulk area

Baulk cushion

Baulk line

Baulk colours

‘D’

Pack

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### Spot.

The small mark on the table that the coloured balls are placed on.

### Bridge / bridge hand.

The hand nearest the cue ball, and that the cue rests on.

### Grip.

How the hand furthest from the cue ball holds, or 'grips' the cue.

### Fluke.

When a ball 'on' unintentionally goes into a pocket, allowing you to continue your break or turn at the table.

### Kiss.

When any ball touches any other ball. Often used to describe a light, slow glancing blow from one ball to another.

### Double kiss.

When any ball touches any other ball twice in quick succession. This usually occurs when the ball being struck is next to a cushion, meaning it

can be struck by the other ball, rebound from the cushion and strike the first ball again.

### Whisper.

Practice this for a few seconds to learn quiet club communication that does not disturb the other members!

### Kick.

What is it?...

An unclear, dull sounding, 'heavy' contact between two balls.

How does a kick happen?...

*Dirt between balls.*

If chalk or dust particles, or a hair is in place between the contact point of two balls, then often a kick will occur.

*Deep mark on the spot.*

If the object ball is on its spot and the cloth has become worn after a lot of use, the spot on the cloth will often have formed a 'dimple', or low point, in the cloth. In addition, chalk and slate dust also have a habit of gathering underneath the spots. These can cause small elevations, or raised points, in the cloth. This will have the effect of causing the object ball to jump out of its small

hole, or over the raised points, after contact with the object ball. In doing so, the direction of the object ball will often be distorted from its natural path. This is the reason you can sometimes hear and even see the object ball jumping slightly after it has been played from its spot on a table with a worn cloth.

A kick usually results in the object ball being sent in the wrong direction, as if you had hit the object ball on a thicker angle than you intended. There is more chance of a kick happening if the shot is played slowly, as there is a greater contact time between the two balls. This means there is more time for heavy contact to cause havoc between object ball and cue ball.

### Cannon.

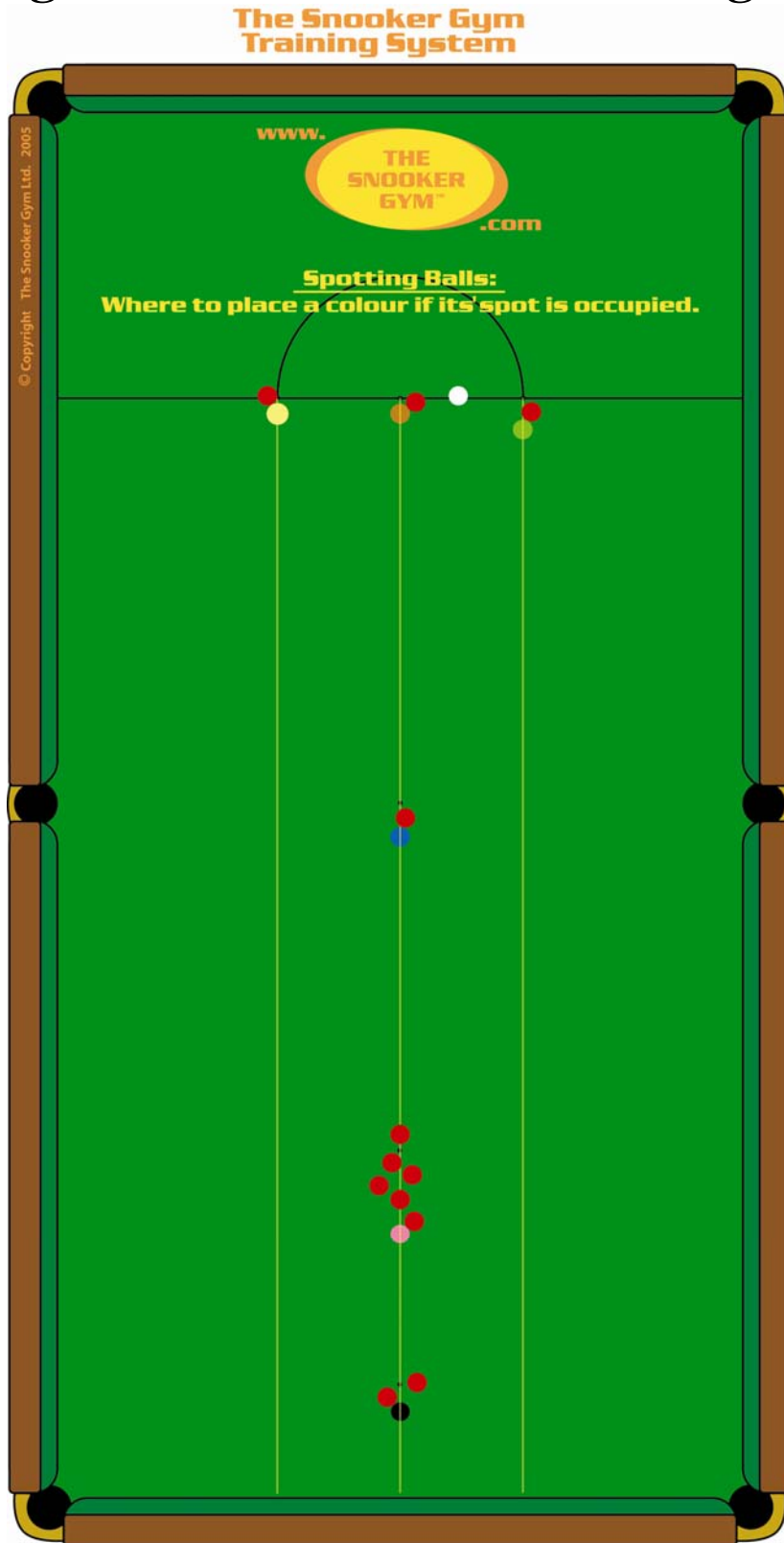
After the cue ball has truck its desired its object ball, the cue ball's next impact with another ball is called a cannon.

EG: "I potted the black and, with the cue ball, cannoned the red."

OR: "I want to pot the blue into the middle pocket and cannon into the pink so that I can split the pack of reds below the pack."

# B.

## Spotting Balls - where do the colours go?



*How to check if a ball spots?*

Roll the ball slowly onto the spot until it either goes on the spot or is blocked by the intervening ball.

*Where does the colour go if the spot is occupied?*

It goes on the highest value spot, as long as this spot is not blocked by any other ball. The black spot is the highest value spot, going down to the yellow which is the lowest value.

With its own spot covered, and no other spot available the ball goes as close to the spot as possible, without touching the interfering ball, in a straight line between the spot and the centre of the top cushion.

With the yellow or green spot partly covered (ABOVE the spot *or* BELOW the spot) – the colour goes as close to the spot as possible, without touching the interfering ball, in a straight line between the spot and the *nearest part* of the top cushion (IE NOT the centre of the top cushion).

With two spots available – the ball will go on the highest value spot available. If two colours are potted in this situation, the highest value colour will be spotted first.



Where does the black go with the black spot, and all the area beneath it, covered - as close to the spot as possible, without touching the interfering ball, in a straight line between the spot and the centre of the top cushion.

In this situation the black would actually be spotted above its own spot, but as at 2006 and having played the game for twenty eight years, I have never seen or heard of this happening even once!

# Practice 3: Straight Pots & Long Pots.

A.

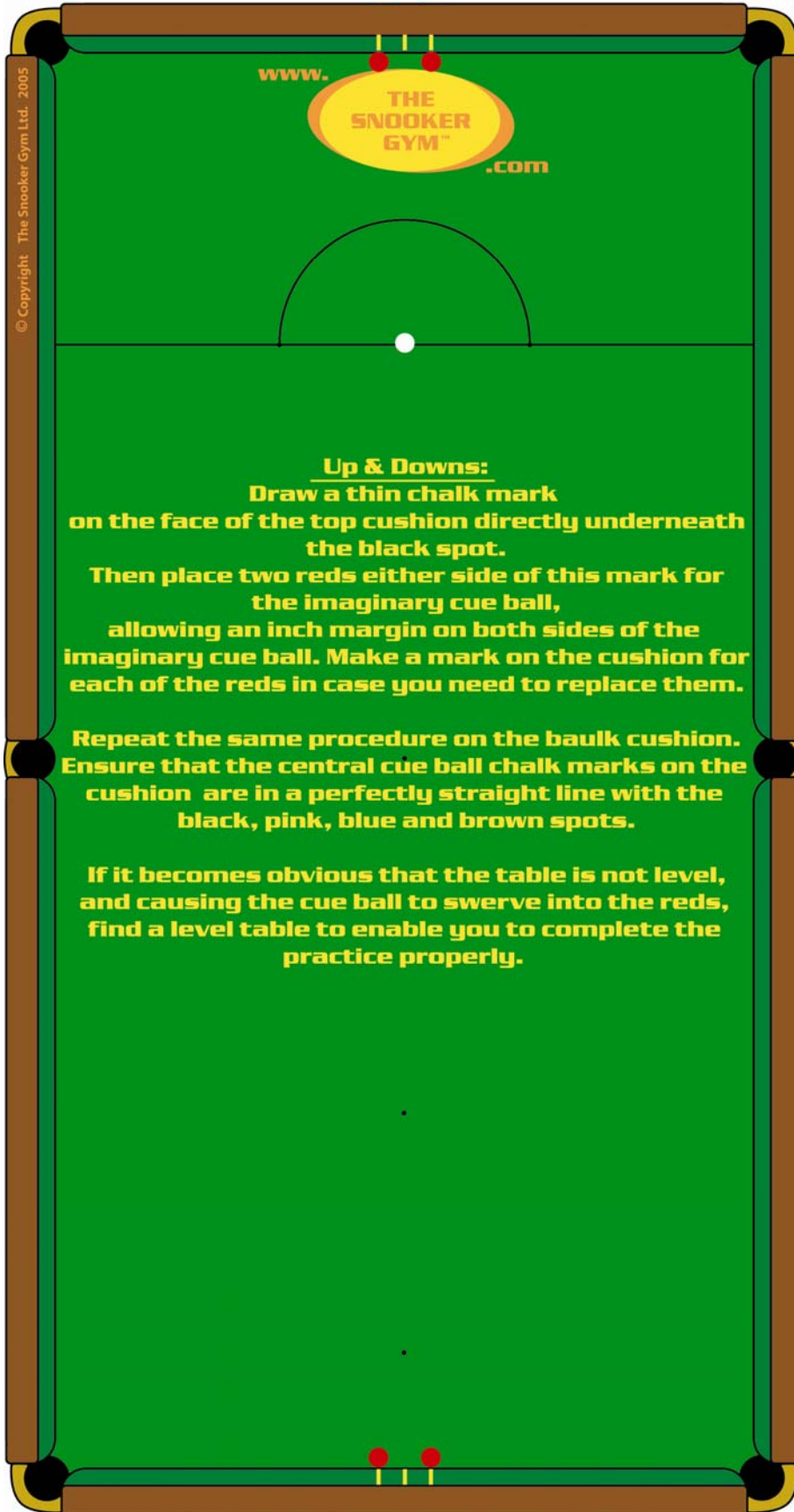
See diagram: Up & Downs.

‘Up & Downs’, cue ball to within two balls on top cushion mark.

Five times.

Here, the target is for the cue ball to land in baulk so that you can develop cue speed control.

## The Snooker Gym Training System



# Practice 4: Breaks.

## A.

### Position:

Blue – stop and follow.

Put a blue on the spot, put the cue ball half way between the blue and a middle pocket. Pot the blue with a stop shot, and then pot the blue with a follow through shot.

## B.

### Pinks:

Pot five.

Pot five pinks from the spot into the corner pocket. They should be straight pots, and the cue ball can be any distance from the pink.

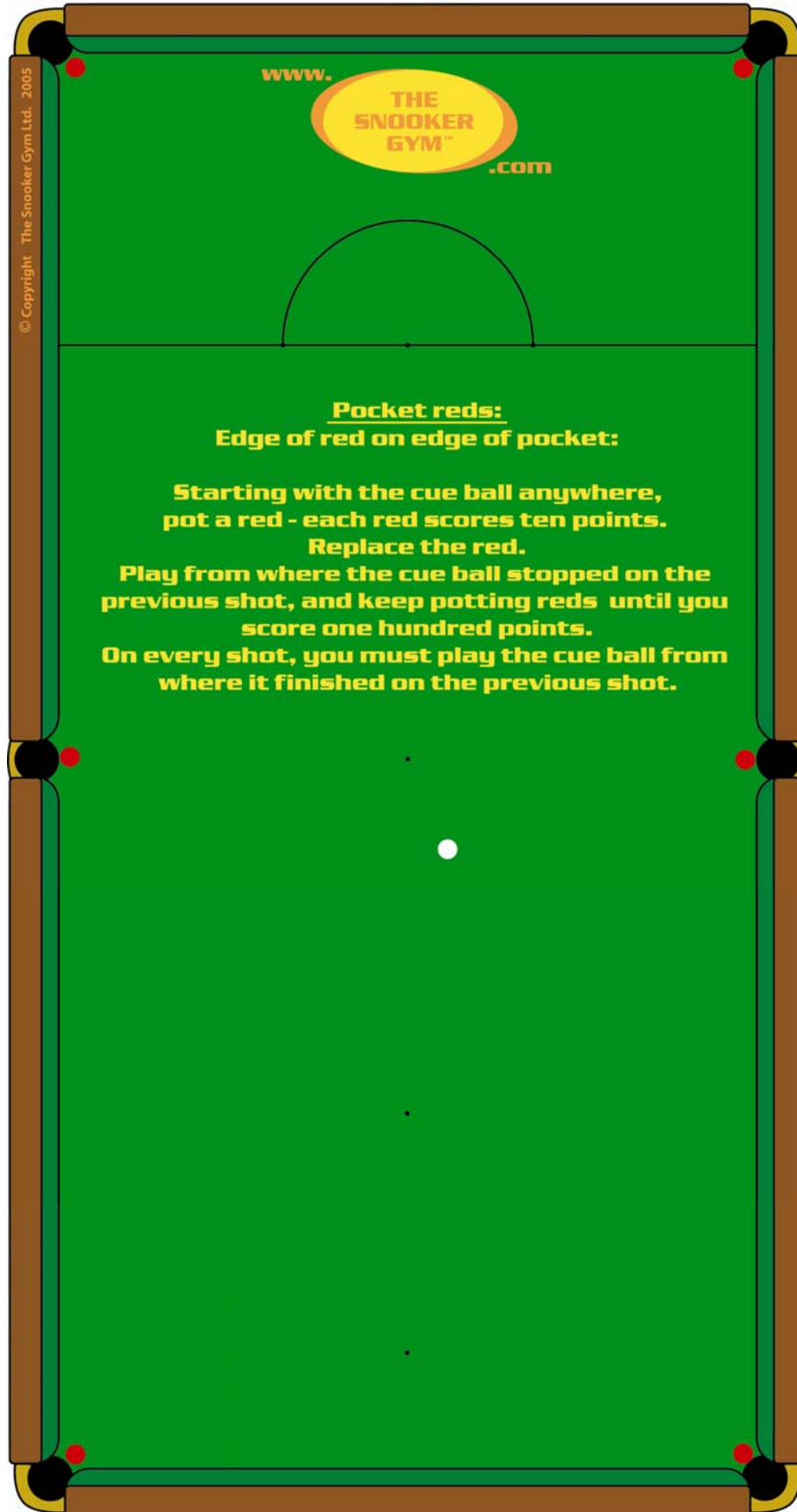
## C.

### 100 Breaks!:

**See diagram: Pocket Reds**

Pocket reds. Each red scores 10 points.

## The Snooker Gym Training System



# D.

## Colours:

Pot Yellow from spot.

Pot Green from spot.

Pot Brown from spot.

The cue ball can be played from any position the player chooses.

# Practice 5: Safety.

## A.

### Back to Baulk:

**See diagram: Back to Baulk from black end.**

White at black end.

Clip end red of imaginary triangle.

White to finish in baulk.

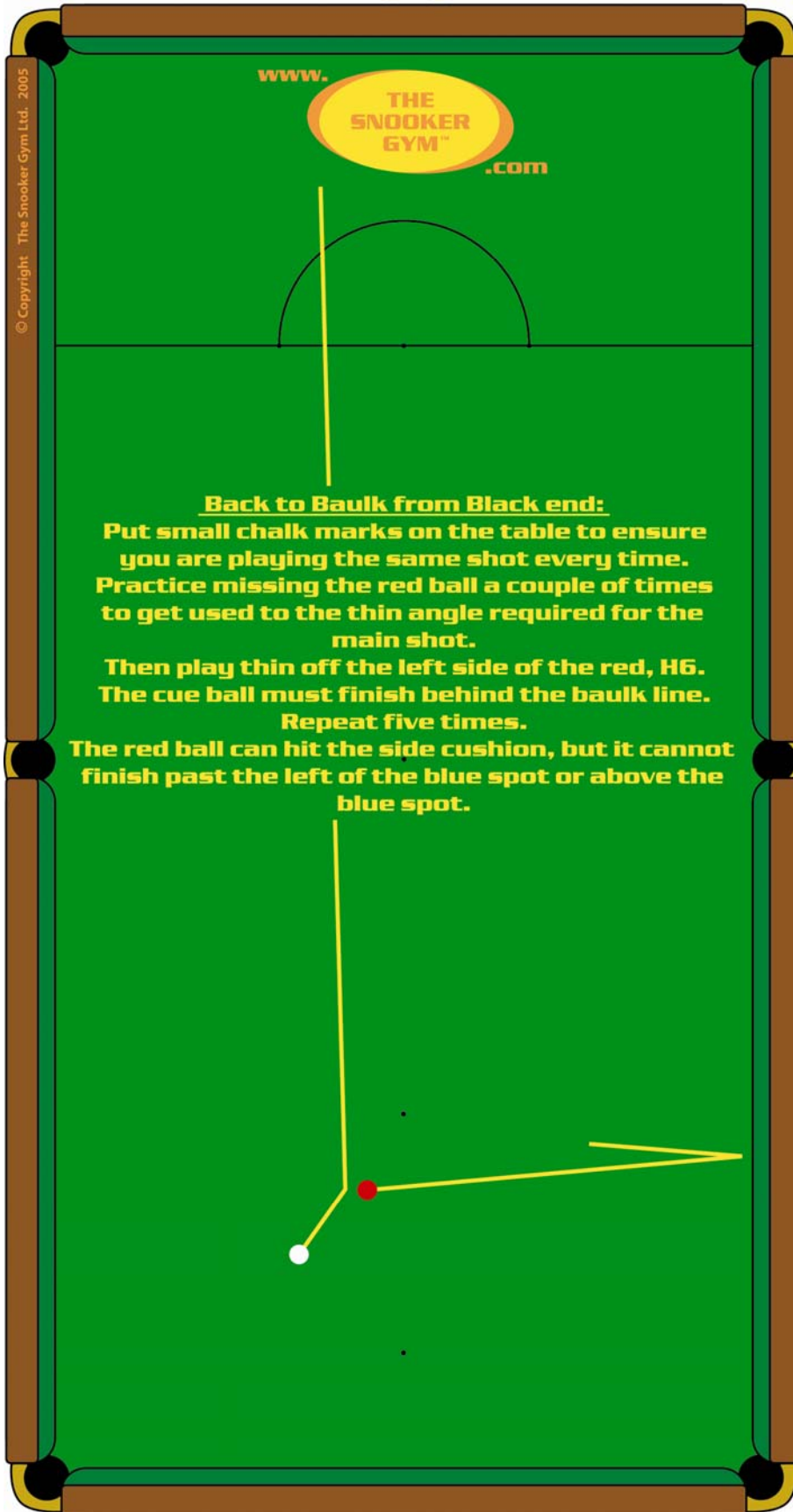
The object ball cannot cross over the centre line (from black spot to brown spot) of the table as that would mean the player has hit the ball too thick.

Nor can it travel past the blue line (from middle pocket to middle pocket) into the baulk half of the table.

The whole purpose of this test is to get a player comfortable with aiming the cue seemingly outside the edge of the object ball to the extent that they know through visual experience where a thin contact will be.

Repeat five times.

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# Practice 6: Matchplay.

## A.

### Play:

Play a best of three with a friend.

## B.

### Psychology:

#### Concentration.

#### What is concentration?

Keeping your mind on the one thing you are doing now. So you can concentrate on where you are walking, on what you are writing, on who you are talking to, or on how to play the next shot you are faced with.

#### What should you be concentrating on?

When opponent is at the table?

How the balls and the table are reacting so that you are comfortable with the characteristics of the table at your next visit. The score. What type of shot your opponent is playing.

What should you be concentrating on?

When you are at the table?

The shot you are about to play.

Your target for how you want the balls to finish after your shot.

When you are on the shot, looking at the balls, hearing the cue and feeling the movement of the cue – simply have total awareness of what you are doing, when you are doing it and why you are doing it.

# Practice 7: Black Ball.

A.

Pot five straight blacks off the spot. Play slowly!

## Notes:

## Notes:

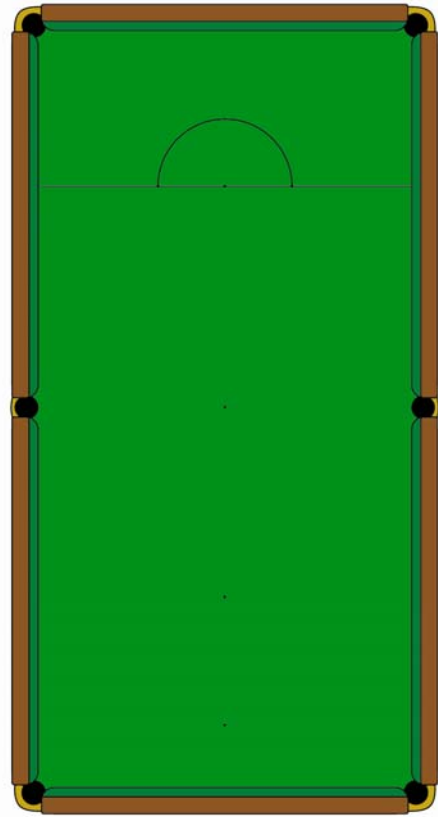
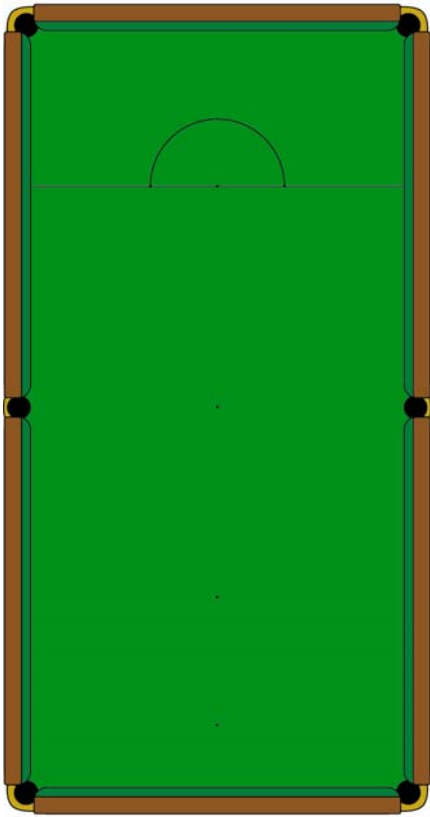
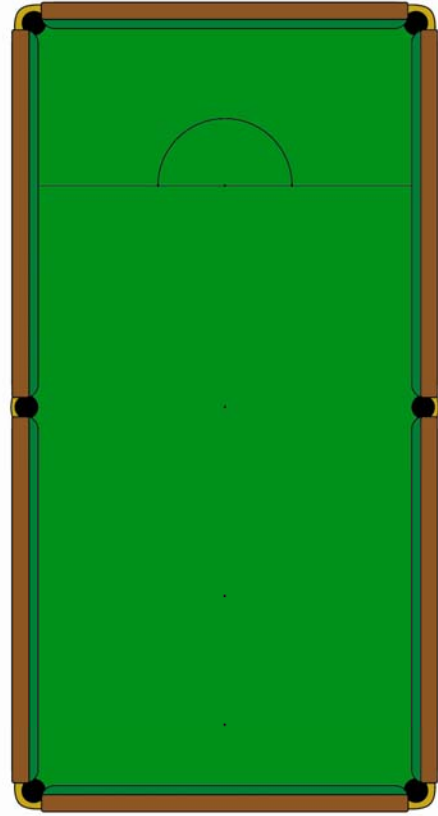
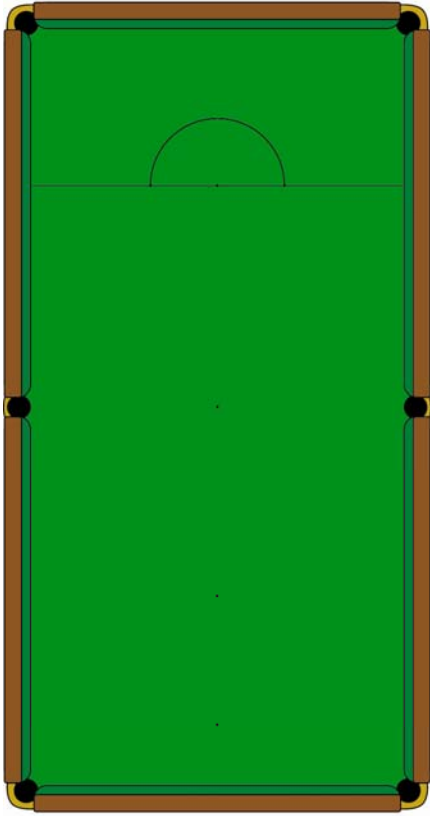
# High Breaks In Matches And In Practice:

Day	Date	Match/ Practice?	Opponent	Break	Clearance?

## Other High Scores On Other Practices:

<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Where?</b>	<b>Name Of Practice</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>New Personal Best?</b>

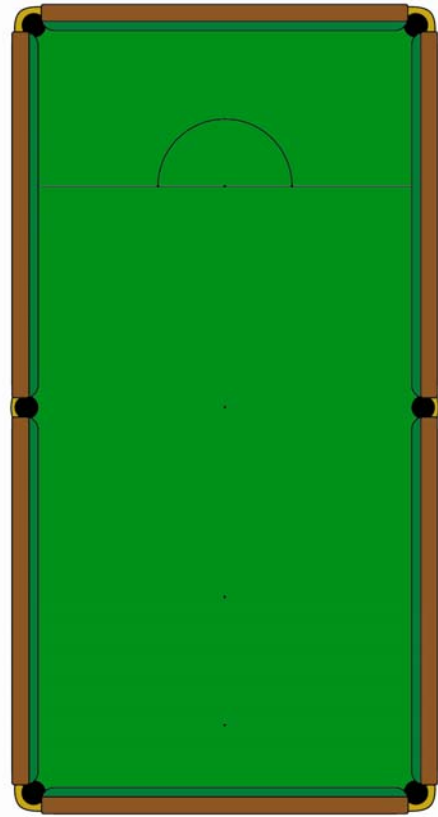
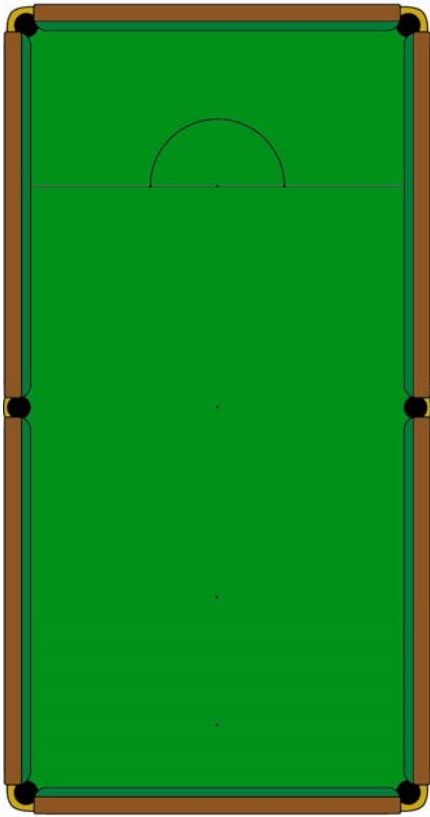
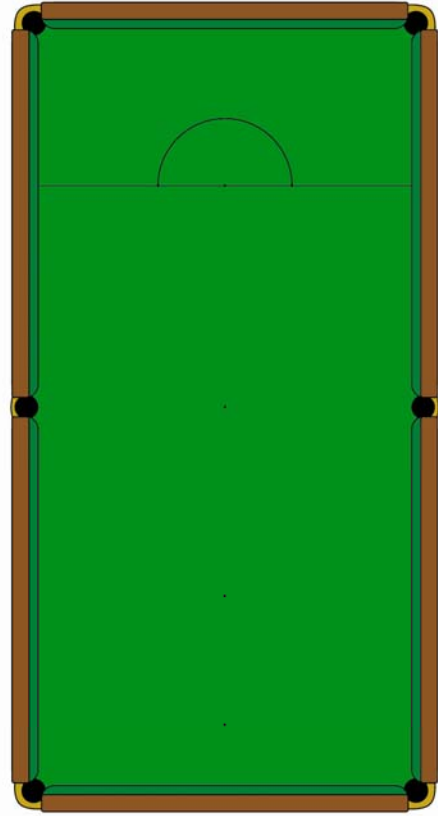
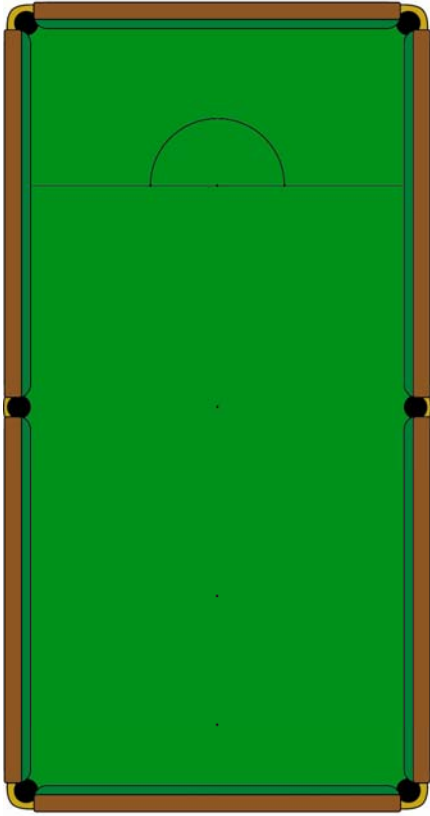
## Shots To Practice And Master.



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