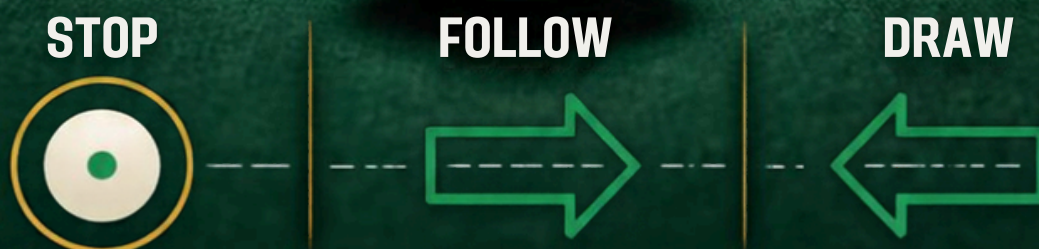


CONTROL THE CUE BALL

The 3 Fundamental Shots Every Pool Player Must Master



Stop **It**. Follow It. Draw **It**.

CONTROL THE TABLE.

ROBERT RYDER

RYDER PUBLISHING

THE THREE SHOTS THAT CONTROL THE TABLE

Before learning advanced position play, every pool player should be able to control the cue ball with three fundamental shots.

1. STOP SHOT

The cue ball stops after contacting the object ball.



2. FOLLOW SHOT

The cue ball continues forward after contacting the object ball.



3. DRAW SHOT

The cue ball comes backward after contacting the object ball.



The goal is not simply to pocket the object ball. Know where your cue ball is going next.

Master these three shots and you begin moving from simply making balls to actually controlling the table.



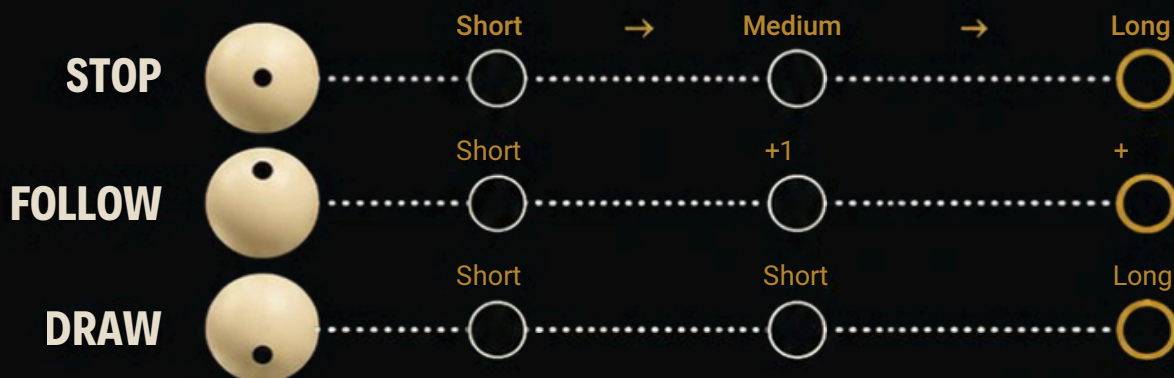
CONTROL THE AMOUNT

The same shot can produce different cue-ball distances.

Stop, follow, and draw are directions. Speed determines how much the cue ball moves in that direction.

Your goal is to learn a controlled range, not one perfect-looking stroke.

SHOT DIRECTION	TIP LOCATION	SPEED EFFECT
STOP	Center 	Balanced speed, minimal travel
FOLLOW	Above center 	More speed creates more forward travel
DRAW	Below center 	More speed and a clean hit create more backward travel



Control comes from combining direction, speed, and a predictable stroke.

FROM MAKING THE SHOT TO TRUSTING THE SHOT



1

BEGINNER

MAKE THE SHOT.

Learn to produce stop, follow and draw consistently.

2

INTERMEDIATE

CONTROL THE SHOT.

Learn exactly how far the cue ball stops, follows or draws.

3

LEAGUE / TOURNAMENT

TRUST THE SHOT.

Choose the shot while standing.
Get down.
Commit to it.
Make your normal stroke.
Stay down.



Pocketing the ball is only part of the shot.
Positioning the cue ball for what comes next is the real skill.

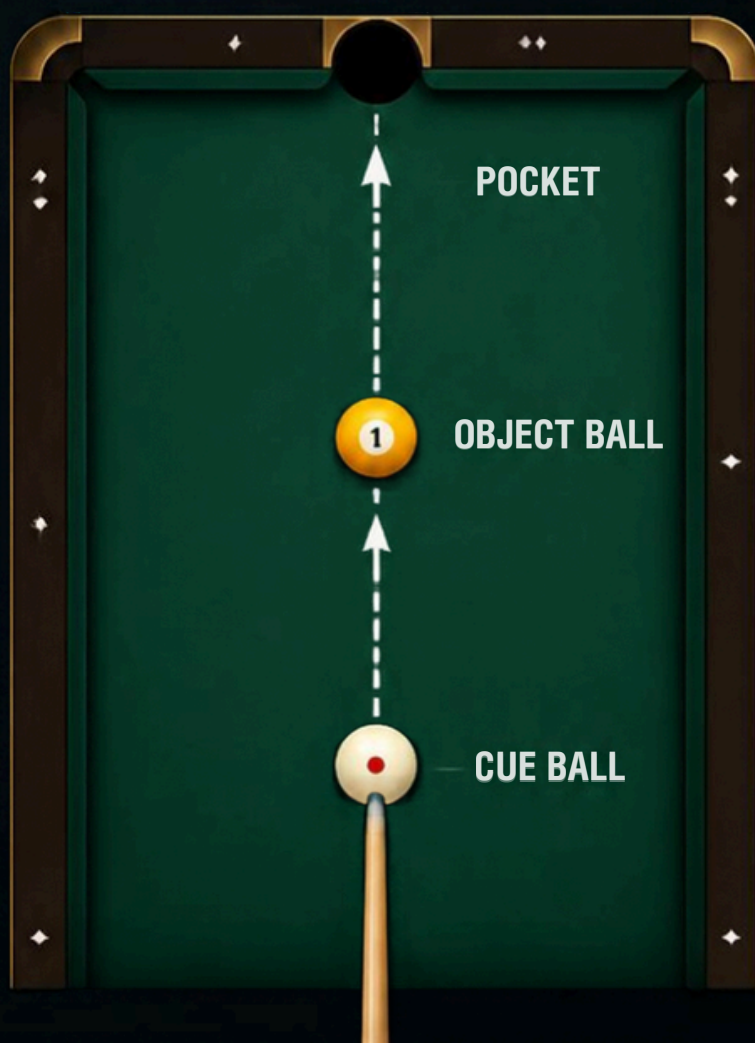
1. THE STOP SHOT

- Pocket the object ball.
Stop the cue ball at contact.

The stop shot is one of the first cue-ball control shots every player should master. Begin by practicing it with the cue ball, object ball and pocket in a straight line.

BEGINNER SETUP

- ✓ Place the cue ball and object ball in a straight line with the pocket.
- ✓ Start approximately 12–18 inches apart.
- ✓ Aim through the center of the cue ball.
- ✓ Strike close to the vertical center.
- ✓ Keep the cue as level as practical.
- ✓ Use a smooth, controlled stroke.
- ✓ Keep your head and body still.
- ✓ Follow through naturally.
- ✓ Do not jab or poke at the cue ball.



When executed correctly, the cue ball reaches the object ball with little or no forward or backward rotation and stops at contact.

BUILD YOUR STOP SHOT

BEGINNER DRILL

1. Set up a straight-in shot.
2. Place a small piece of chalk beside the expected cue-ball stopping point.
3. Shoot 10 stop shots.
4. Count a shot as successful only when:
 - ✓ The object ball is pocketed.
 - ✓ The cue ball stops within approximately one ball-width of the intended contact point.



FIRST GOAL: 7 OUT OF 10

PROGRESSION

12 inches → 18 inches → 24 inches → Longer distances



**CONSISTENCY FIRST.
DISTANCE SECOND.**

2. THE FOLLOW SHOT

**Pocket the object ball.
Send the cue ball forward.**

A follow shot uses topspin. The cue ball contacts the object ball and continues forward along the shot line or toward the intended position zone.



EXECUTION



Aim slightly above the vertical center of the cue ball.



Use a smooth stroke with enough speed to develop forward roll.



Keep the cue level and finish through the cue ball.

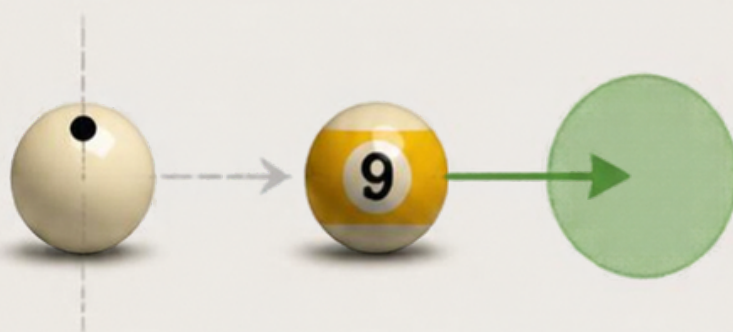


Do not lift the cue immediately after contact.



Picture the cue ball's landing zone before you get down.

CUE BALL → OBJECT BALL → FORWARD ZONE



COMMON MISTAKE

Too much speed creates distance, but not control.
Build the roll with a relaxed stroke.

BUILD YOUR FOLLOW SHOT

Distance-Control Drill

Set up a straight-in shot and choose a landing zone beyond the object ball. The goal is not simply to roll forward, but to arrive in a predictable area.



SHORT FOLLOW



MEDIUM FOLLOW



LONG FOLLOW



Shoot **10** balls at each distance.



Mark the intended landing zone with chalk.



Score a success when the object ball is pocketed and the cue ball finishes inside the zone.



TARGET: 6 OUT OF 10 IN THE ZONE

Soft roll



Natural roll



Firm roll

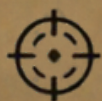


Under pressure, choose the speed you can reproduce, not the speed that looks impressive.

3. THE DRAW SHOT

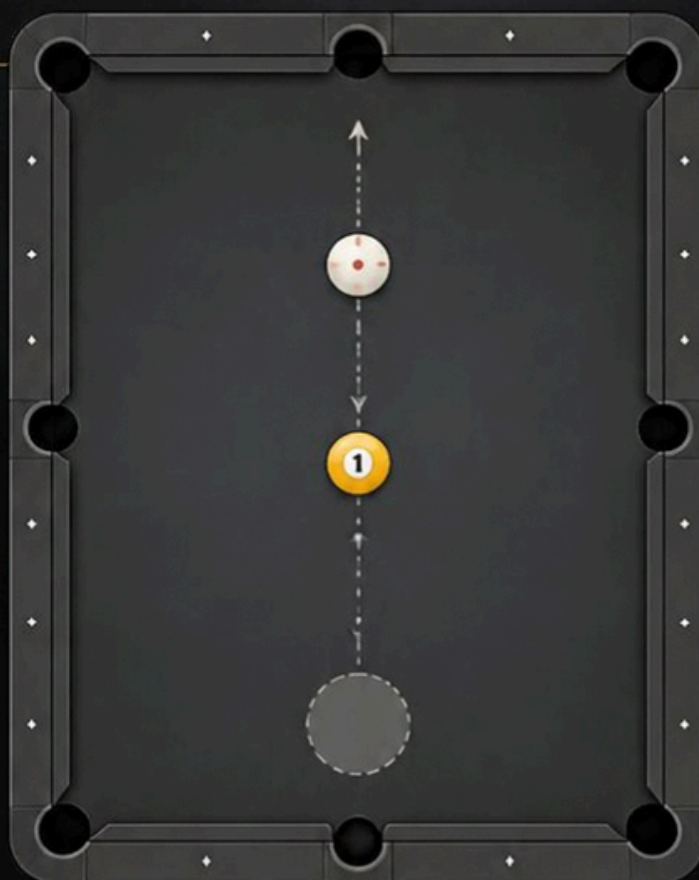
**Pocket the object ball.
Bring the cue ball backward.**

A draw shot uses backspin. The cue ball contacts the object ball and travels backward after the collision. Draw is controlled by tip placement, stroke quality, and speed.



EXECUTION

- ✓ Aim below the vertical center of the cue ball.
- ✓ Use a level cue and a complete follow-through.
- ✓ Strike through the cue ball rather than stabbing downward.
- ✓ Start with a short distance between cue ball and object ball.
- ✓ Increase the distance only after the cue ball returns reliably.



CUE BALL

OBJECT BALL

DRAW ZONE

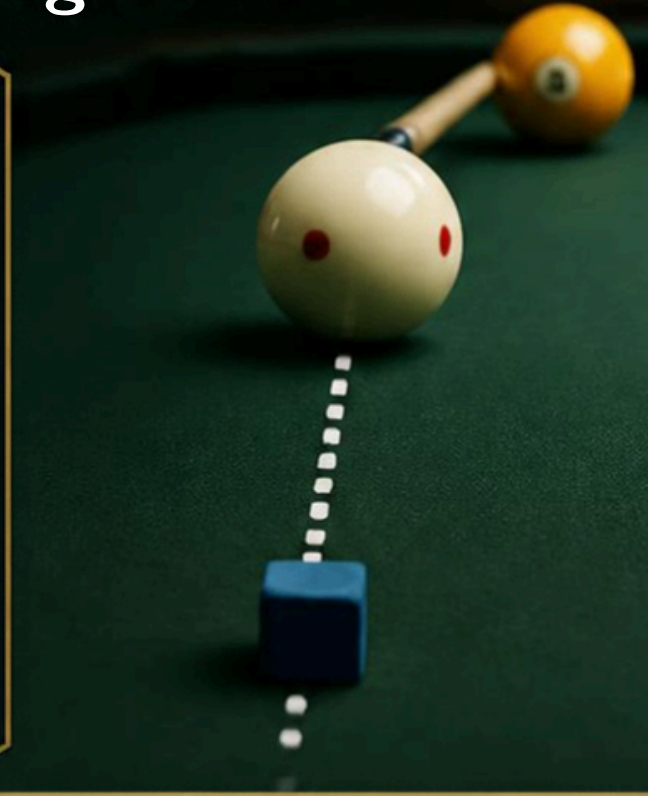


**Draw is not created by hitting harder.
It is created by delivering a clean
stroke to the correct contact point.**

BUILD YOUR DRAW SHOT

Return-to-Target Drill

1. Set up a straight-in shot with the cue ball 12–18 inches from the object ball.
2. Place chalk behind the cue ball to mark the starting line.
3. Choose a return target behind the original cue-ball position.
4. Shoot 10 shots with a relaxed, level stroke.
5. Move the target farther back only when the return is repeatable.



FIRST GOAL:
5 OUT OF 10 RETURNS

PROGRESSION

TOUCH DRAW



CONTROLLED DRAW



DISTANCE DRAW



TROUBLESHOOTING



STOPS INSTEAD OF DRAWS:
check tip position and stroke quality.



JUMPS OR MISCUES:
level the cue and avoid forcing the shot.



DRAWS TOO FAR:
reduce speed before changing the target.

CHOOSE THE SHOT THAT LEAVES YOU A SHOT

Position play starts before the stroke.

1

Where does
the cue ball
need to go?



2

Which natural
direction helps
it get there?



3

What speed can
I reproduce under
pressure?



STOP

Use when the next
shot is near the
center line or when
you need to
hold position.



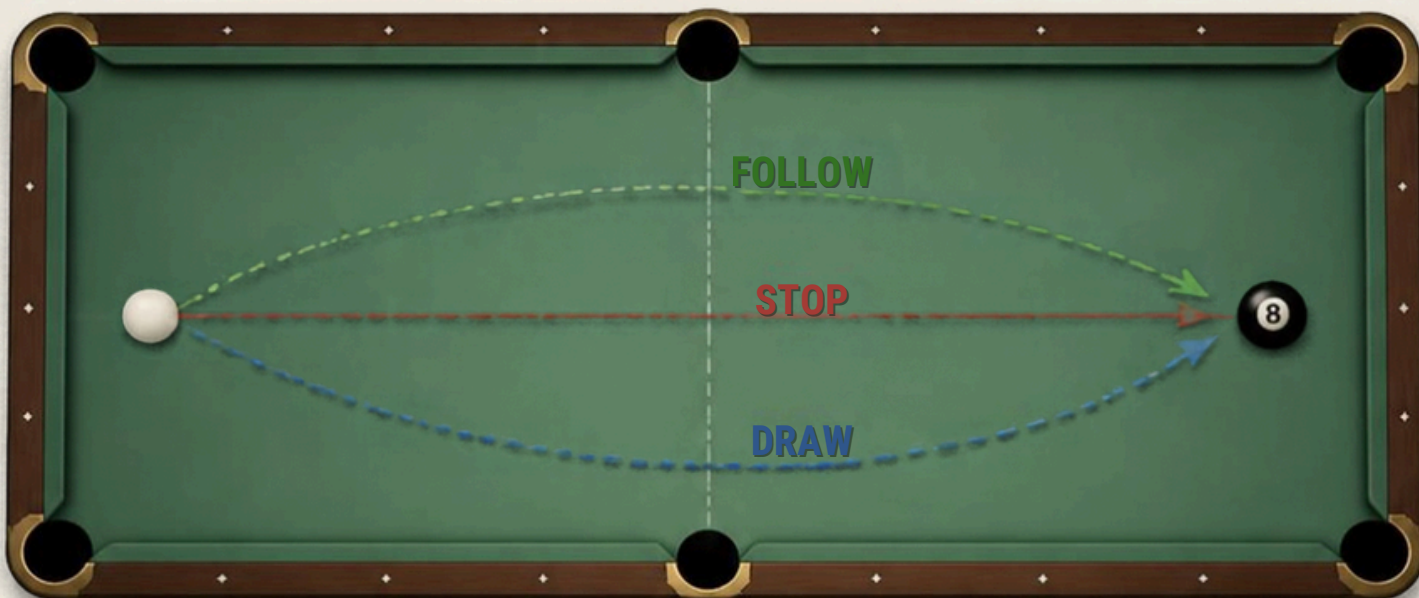
FOLLOW

Use when forward
travel opens the
next angle or moves
the cue ball toward
a clear zone.



DRAW

Use when the cue ball
must return, shorten
its path, or avoid
moving too far
forward.

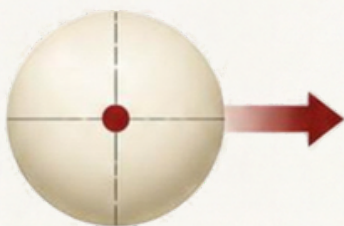


**Plan the cue-ball route while standing.
Once you get down, execute the plan
instead of redesigning it.**

TROUBLESHOOTING THE THREE SHOTS

STOP

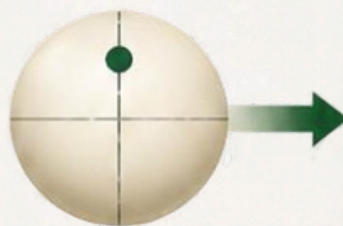
Cue ball rolls forward



- Strike closer to center.
- Reduce speed.
- Keep the cue level.

FOLLOW

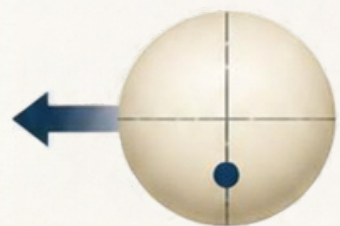
Cue ball does not continue



- Move the target point slightly above center.
- Use a complete follow-through.
- Avoid decelerating.

DRAW

Cue ball stops or miscues

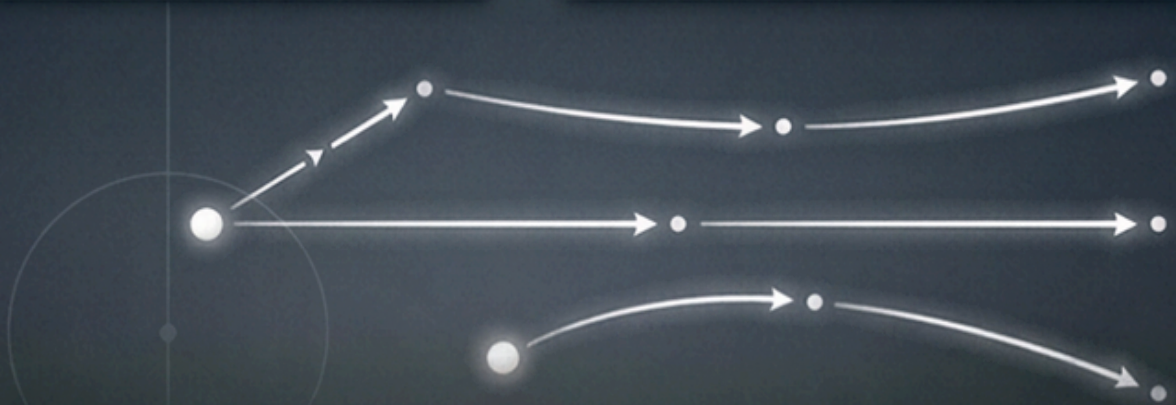


- Move the target point slightly below center.
- Use a level cue.
- Do not force the stroke.



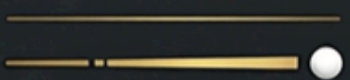
ONE CHANGE AT A TIME

If a shot misses, change one variable, then test again. Adjust tip location, speed, or distance, not all three at once.



CONTROL THE CUE BALL

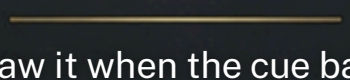
Your next level begins with three repeatable choices.



Stop it when you need to hold position.



Follow it when the table opens forward.



Draw it when the cue ball must return. Learn the route, choose the speed, and trust the stroke.

30-DAY COMMITMENT CARD

WEEK 1 — BUILD CONTACT

Practice center, above-center, and below-center contact.

WEEK 2 — BUILD DISTANCE

Train short, medium, and long cue-ball zones.

WEEK 3 — BUILD TRUST

Use the pressure routine during races, league play, or tournament sets.

STOP IT. FOLLOW IT. DRAW IT. CONTROL THE TABLE.

A 30-MINUTE CONTROL SESSION

*Short, focused practice
beats unfocused hours.*



5 MINUTES – CENTER-BALL WARM-UP

Pocket easy straight shots and focus on a quiet head and smooth finish.



8 MINUTES – STOP SHOTS

Shoot 10 shots from short distance, then repeat from medium distance.



8 MINUTES – FOLLOW AND DRAW

Alternate five follow shots and five draw shots. Record whether the cue ball reached its intended zone.



9 MINUTES – PRESSURE SET

Play a race to 5 against a personal target: stop, follow, or draw according to the next-shot plan. Restart the count after two rushed decisions.



TRACK:

POCKETED

**LANDED
IN ZONE**

**CLEAN
ROUTINE**



*Practice the decision
and the stroke together.*



THE PRESSURE ROUTINE

A repeatable routine keeps the shot smaller than the moment.

1.

READ

Identify the shot and the cue-ball landing zone.

2.

CHOOSE

Select stop, follow, or draw, then choose a realistic speed.

3.

BREATHE

Take one calm breath and release unnecessary tension.

4.

SET

Get down, confirm the line, and keep your eyes quiet.

5.

STROKE

Make the normal stroke, stay down, and accept the result.



MATCH CUE

If you feel rushed, step away and restart the routine.

One extra reset is cheaper than one committed mistake.



EXECUTE UNDER LEAGUE AND TOURNAMENT PRESSURE



SIMPLIFY THE DECISION

Choose the shot that gives you the largest reliable margin. A repeatable stop shot is often better than a perfect draw you rarely practice.



COMMIT WHILE STANDING

Pick the cue-ball route, speed, and landing zone before you bend over the shot.



RETURN TO YOUR NORMAL STROKE

Pressure changes your attention, not your mechanics. Breathe, settle, and make the same smooth stroke you made in practice.

SEE IT . COMMIT . STROKE



*Your routine is the bridge between
practice confidence and match confidence.*