

12. ULTIMATE POOL LEAGUE (UPL) 10-BALL RULES

Section 1 — Spirit of the Game

UPL 10-Ball is played in a fair, respectful, and sportsmanlike manner at all times. Players are responsible for knowing the rules and conducting themselves appropriately. Unsportsmanlike conduct may result in penalties including standard fouls, loss of rack, or further disciplinary action at the discretion of league officials.

Section 2 — Player Responsibility

It is the responsibility of each player to be familiar with the UPL 10-Ball Rules.

League officials will make reasonable efforts to ensure that the rules are available to all players. However, the ultimate responsibility for understanding and following the rules rests with each individual player.

No relief will be granted based on a player's failure to obtain or understand the rules.

Section 3 — Equipment

UPL 10-Ball is played on a standard six-pocket rectangular pool table with six rails using:

- One cue ball
- Ten object balls numbered 1 through 10
- Cue sticks (players may switch cues during a match, including break cues)
- Bridge or rest
- Cue extensions (built-in or add-on)
- Chalk compatible with the table cloth
- Gloves
- Reasonable amounts of hand powder

Equipment must be used only in its intended manner. Misuse of equipment is a standard foul.

All equipment generally accepted throughout the industry is permitted unless otherwise restricted by the League Director or Tournament Director.

Definitions

Playing Surface: The flat area inside the table rails.

Head String: The imaginary line between the second diamonds on the side rails at the breaking end of the table.

Section 4 — Object of the Game

UPL 10-Ball is a call-pocket rotation game played with ten object balls numbered 1 through 10 and a cue ball.

The balls must be played in ascending numerical order, and the cue ball must first contact the lowest numbered ball on the table to establish a legal shot.

The shooter must call the intended object ball and the intended pocket on every shot except the break.

Only one object ball may be called on each shot.

Details of the shot, including cushions struck, combinations, caroms, or other balls contacted or pocketed, do not need to be called.

If the intended shot is not obvious, the shooter must clearly indicate the called ball and pocket before the shot is played. The opponent or match official may request clarification if the intended shot is unclear.

If the called ball is legally pocketed in the called pocket, the shooter continues their turn.

If the 10-ball is pocketed on a legal break, it is re-spotted and the breaker continues.

If the 10-ball is pocketed before it is the final remaining object ball on the table, it is re-spotted and play continues.

A player wins the rack by legally pocketing the 10-ball as the final remaining object ball in a called pocket.

Section 5 — Lag for Break

A lag determines which player breaks first.

Each player simultaneously strikes a ball from behind the head string toward the foot rail. The player whose ball comes to rest closest to the head rail wins the lag.

A player automatically loses the lag if their ball:

- Crosses into the opponent's half of the table
- Fails to contact the foot rail
- Contacts a side rail
- Is pocketed
- Leaves the table
- Comes to rest on the playing surface within the area of the corner pocket

Players must strike their lag shots at approximately the same time. If one player's ball reaches the foot rail before the opponent's ball is struck, the lag will be replayed.

If both players commit a lag foul or the result cannot be determined, the lag is replayed.

Breaks alternate after the first rack unless otherwise specified by match format.

Section 6 — Ten-Ball Rack

The ten object balls are racked in a triangular formation with:

- The 1-ball placed at the apex of the triangle
- The 10-ball placed in the center of the triangle
- The 10-ball positioned on the foot spot



The remaining balls are placed randomly within the rack and may not be intentionally patterned.

The rack must be tight and properly aligned before the break shot is taken.

If the rack is incorrect before the break shot, the balls must be re-racked.

If the rack is discovered to be incorrect after the break has been played, the result of the break stands and play continues.

Section 7 — The Break

The breaker must place the cue ball behind the head string and may not position it beyond the head string by more than half of its diameter.

A pocket does not need to be called on the break shot.

On the break shot, the shooter must strike the one (1) ball first.

Failure to contact the one (1) ball first on the break will result in a standard foul, and ball in hand will be awarded to the opponent

To perform a legal break, the breaker must earn a minimum of three cumulative points:

- 1 point for each object ball pocketed (including the 10-ball)
- 1 point for each object ball that completely crosses the imaginary center line between the side pockets without being pocketed

If a legal break is not achieved, the balls must be re-racked. The opponent then chooses who breaks.

If the 10-ball is pocketed on a legal break, it is re-spotted on the foot spot after all balls have come to rest. If the foot spot is occupied, the 10-ball is placed as close as possible on a direct line between the foot spot and the center of the foot rail. If that position is not available, the 10-ball is placed as close as possible on a direct line between the foot spot and the center of the head rail.

If the breaker pockets one or more object balls on a legal break including the 10-Ball, the breaker continues their turn.

If the cue ball is pocketed (scratch) on the break, the incoming player receives cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.

If the cue ball leaves the playing surface on the break, the incoming player receives cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.

If the breaker commits any other foul on the break, the incoming player receives cue ball in hand anywhere on the table.

Section 8 — Legal Shot

A legal shot requires the cue ball to first contact the lowest numbered ball.

Then either:

- pocket the called ball
OR
- cue ball contacts a rail
OR
- any object ball contacts a rail

Failure results in a standard foul.

Section 9 — Second Shot of the Rack — Push Out

If no foul is committed on the break shot, the player at the table may choose to play a push out as the next shot.

The player must clearly declare their intention to play a push out before the shot is played.

During a push out shot:

- The requirement to contact the lowest numbered ball first is suspended
- The requirement to contact a rail after contact is suspended

If no foul is committed on the push out, the incoming player then has the option to:

- Play the next shot from the position left, or
- Require the original shooter to play the next shot

If the 10-ball is pocketed during a push out, it is re-spotted without penalty.

Any other object balls pocketed during a push out remain pocketed.

Section 10 — Safety

At any time after the break shot, a player may declare a safety before taking a shot.

When a safety is declared, the player may legally contact the lowest numbered ball on the table without the requirement to pocket a ball and the player's inning ends after the shot.

If the shooter pockets the lowest numbered ball on the table during a declared safety, the incoming player has the option to:

- Play the next shot from the position left, or
- Require the original shooter to play the next shot

This rule applies in conjunction with Section 10 — Wrongfully Pocketed Balls.

Section 11 — Wrongfully Pocketed Balls

If a player fails to pocket the called object ball in the called pocket, the inning ends.

If the called ball is pocketed in the wrong pocket, or if any other ball is pocketed instead of the called ball, the incoming player has the option to:

- Play the next shot from the position left, or
- Require the original shooter to play the next shot

This rule applies whether the wrongfully pocketed ball results from a direct shot, combination, carom, or any unintended pocketed ball.

This rule also applies during a declared safety.

Section 12 — Continuing Play

If a player legally pockets the called object ball in the called pocket, the player continues their turn at the table.

Any additional object balls pocketed during the same shot remain pocketed, except as otherwise provided for the 10-ball.

If the 10-ball is pocketed on a legal shot before it is the final remaining object ball on the table, it is re-spotted and the shooter continues their turn.

A player wins the rack by legally pocketing the 10-ball as the final remaining object ball in a called pocket.

If the shooter fails to pocket the called object ball in the called pocket, or commits a foul, the inning ends and play passes to the incoming player.

If no foul occurred, the incoming player must play the cue ball from the position left.

Section 13 — Spotting Balls

If the 10-ball is pocketed in any of the following situations, it must be re-spotted:

- On the break shot
- During a push out
- When pocketed in a pocket other than the called pocket
- When pocketed before it is the final remaining object ball on the table
- When driven off the playing surface
- When pocketed during a foul shot

The 10-ball is re-spotted by placing the center of the ball on the foot spot.

If the foot spot is occupied, the 10-ball is placed as close as possible on a direct line between the foot spot and the center of the foot rail.

If that position is not available, the 10-ball is placed as close as possible on a direct line between the foot spot and the center of the head rail.

If any other object ball leaves the playing surface, it is re-spotted and a standard foul is called.

Section 14 — Standard Fouls

A standard foul results in the incoming player receiving one visit with cue ball in hand anywhere on the playing surface, unless otherwise specified.

When cue ball in hand is awarded, the player may position the cue ball anywhere on the playing surface using the hand or any part of the cue. The cue ball may be adjusted multiple times until the shot is played. A forward striking motion with the cue while positioning the cue ball is not permitted.

If the cue ball is frozen to another ball when cue ball in hand is awarded, the cue ball must be repositioned before the shot is played.

Standard fouls include:

- Pocketing the cue ball (scratch)
- Failing to first contact the lowest numbered ball on the table
- Failing to complete a legal shot
- Playing a shot before all balls have come to rest
- Playing out of turn
- Playing before balls that require re-spotting have been replaced
- Double-hitting the cue ball
- Playing a push shot
- Playing a shot without at least one foot touching the floor
- Touching or moving any ball with the body, clothing, equipment, or cue
- Striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip
- Striking any object ball with the cue
- Marking the table to assist a shot
- Leaving the playing area during a rack without notifying the opponent or match official
- Receiving coaching during a rack when coaching is not permitted under Section 14
- Committing a time violation under the shot clock
- A ball leaving the playing surface and not returning on its own
- Failing to play away correctly from a confirmed frozen or touching ball
- Playing a jump shot

Jump shots are not permitted in UPL 10-Ball.

Section 15 — Coaching

Coaching is not permitted during a rack unless allowed by the match format, player division, or league regulations.

Where coaching is permitted, the number and timing of coaching opportunities are determined by league or event rules.

Coaching may only be provided when the player is not in the act of shooting.

Coaching includes advice on shot selection, cue-ball control, positional play, safety play, or strategy.

Any coaching received outside the permitted limits results in a standard foul.

Section 16 — Loss of Rack Fouls

A player loses the rack if any of the following occur:

- Intentionally committing a foul
- Deliberately striking an object ball other than the lowest numbered ball first
- Clearly and intentionally failing to attempt to contact the lowest numbered ball
- Committing a standard foul when the 10-ball is the final remaining object ball and the shooter has an opportunity to win the rack
- Deliberately striking the cue ball with any part of the cue other than the tip
- Deliberately striking any object ball with the cue
- Deliberately moving any ball other than as part of a legal shot or authorized cue-ball placement (except following an all-ball foul)
- Deliberately stopping a ball in motion while on the playing surface
- Playing another shot or deliberately moving the cue ball after legally pocketing the 10-ball and before all balls have come to rest
- Committing three consecutive fouls in a single rack

Sportsmanship Violations (Loss of Rack)

A Loss of Rack foul may be issued for serious sportsmanship violations, including, but not limited to:

- (a) A second offense of foul or abusive language during the same match (a verbal warning will be issued for the first offense)
- (b) Throwing, striking, or unscrewing a cue in a manner that suggests concession of the rack or displays unsportsmanlike conduct
- (c) Repeatedly arguing with the opponent, referee, or match officials after a ruling has been made
- (d) Interfering with an opponent while they are at the table, either verbally or physically

The League Operator or referee may issue additional penalties if the conduct is deemed serious, repeated, or disruptive to league play.

Section 17 — Three Consecutive Fouls

If a player commits three fouls in the same rack without making a legal shot between those fouls, the result is loss of rack.

The opponent or match official must warn the player when they are on two fouls before the player takes their next shot.

If the warning is not given, a subsequent foul will be considered only the second foul, not the third.

A foul committed on a break shot that does not meet the legal-break requirement does not count as the first foul in a three-foul sequence.

Section 18 — Stalemate Situations

A stalemate exists when no legal path is available for the cue ball to contact the lowest numbered ball on the table.

If a player believes a stalemate exists, the player must request a stalemate decision before taking a shot.

A stalemate decision will be made by a match official or independent third party. If neither is available, both players may mutually agree that a stalemate exists.

Player ability level is not considered when making a stalemate decision.

If confirmed, the rack is re-racked and the original breaker breaks again.

If not confirmed, play continues.

Section 19 — Frozen / Touching Balls

If the cue ball is declared frozen to an object ball, the shooter may not shoot directly through the frozen ball.

The cue ball must be played away from the frozen ball at an angle of ninety (90) degrees or greater, or the shot must otherwise satisfy the requirement that after legal contact, any ball must contact a rail or be pocketed.

Failure to meet this requirement will result in a standard foul, and ball in hand will be awarded to the opponent.

A ball is considered frozen only if confirmed before the shot.

If the cue ball is frozen to the lowest numbered ball, initial contact is considered satisfied.

The player must still complete the requirements of a legal shot afterward.

Slight movement caused by separation from a frozen ball does not constitute a foul.

Section 20 — Outside Interference

If balls are moved due to outside interference:

- spectator contact
- external events beyond player control

there is no penalty.

Balls are restored as closely as possible.

A re-rack occurs only if restoration is not possible.

The player at the table receives a new shot clock once play resumes.

Section 21 — Shot Clock

UPL 10-Ball uses a 30-second shot clock.

The clock begins once all balls stop moving.

Each player receives one 30-second extension per rack.

Extensions must be requested before time expires.

Failure to shoot in time results in a standard foul.

Section 22 — Balls Falling Into a Pocket

If a ball drops after a shot is complete and was not struck, it is restored.

If a ball drops during a shot but was unrelated to the shot, it is restored.

If a ball drops during a shot and would affect the outcome, all balls are restored.

The shooter continues unless a foul occurred.

Section 23 — Balls Off the Playing Surface

If the cue ball leaves the table:

incoming player receives cue-ball-in-hand anywhere.

If an object ball leaves the table:

it is re-spotted on the foot spot line hierarchy.

Re-spotted balls must not touch other balls.

Section 24 — Simultaneous Contact

Simultaneous contact is legal if the cue ball contacts the lowest numbered ball as part of the initial contact.

Section 25 — Completion of a Rack

A rack ends when:

- the 10-ball is the last remaining object ball on the table and is legally pocketed
AND
- all balls stop moving

or when a loss-of-rack foul occurs.

Section 26 — Player Responsibility

Players are responsible for knowing the UPL 10-Ball Rules.

No relief is granted for misunderstanding the rules.

Section 27 — League Authority and Final Decisions

The League Director, Tournament Director, or designated match official has final authority on rule interpretation.

Their decision is final in situations not specifically covered by the rules.