



APPENDIX D

*Five Minute Lessons*

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This appendix contains several short subjects that can be introduced as appropriate during a teaching session to cover specific problems or questions that the student might have. It includes:

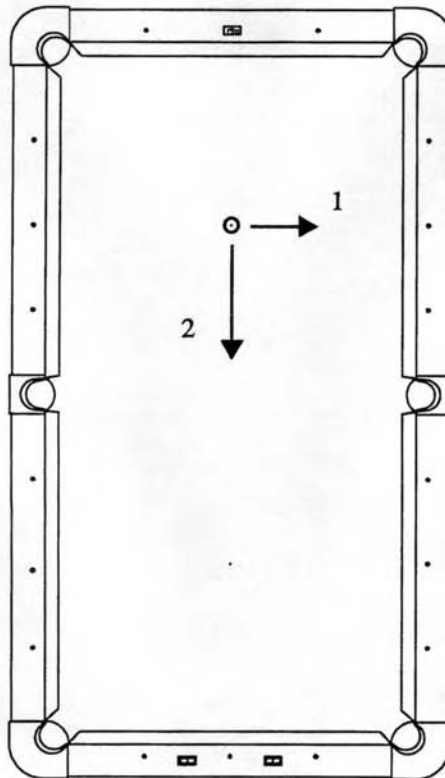
1. Back to the tip -- "over the spots" but no standing up.
2. Softly to the side -- for the student with only "full" speed.
3. Watch that tip! -- an exception to "object ball last".
4. Soft kicks only, hard kicks only -- learn the rails.
5. No fiddling -- a way to focus on hit, english, and speed.
6. "Zen" draw -- eliminate all motion except the essential.
7. Maximum soft draw -- an objective test of spin/speed ratio.

## Back to the Tip Drill

Place the cue ball on the spot. Have the student shoot the cue ball directly to the side rail to return to hit the tip. They should use center ball. After slow speed is mastered, have them shoot harder. After the short dimension is mastered, have them shoot the long way so the ball will travel a total of twelve diamonds. This drill can be done by two students on the same table if they are not shooting along the same line.

Several points are learned:

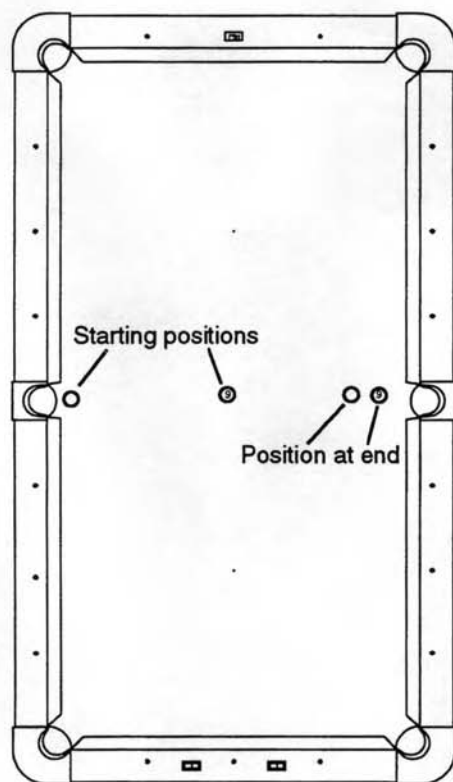
1. True cueing -- if they get any english the cue ball won't come back to the tip.
2. Staying down -- the cue tip must remain in place for the ball to come back to.
3. Accurate sighting.



## Softly to the Side Drill

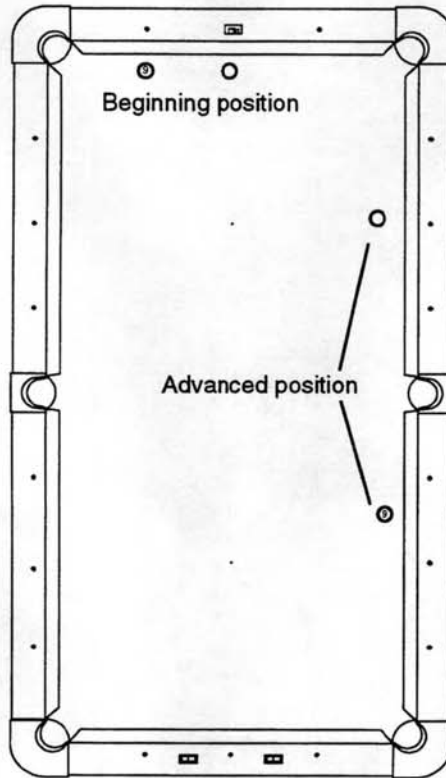
This drill is especially good for students who only have one speed -- as hard as possible. It was suggested by Advanced Instructor Ed Nagel.

Place an object ball on the center spot and the cue ball near the jaws of a side pocket. The goal is to shoot the ball in the opposite side pocket, but to take at least four strokes to do it. On each shot, the cue ball should contact the object ball nearly full and drive it towards the far side. The cue ball and object ball are left in position after each shot. Ideally, the object ball will move only an inch or two on each stroke -- there is no requirement to hit a rail, in fact it must not.



## “Watch That Tip” Drill

The student is usually advised to look at the object ball last. In this drill, they should be looking at their tip during the final stroke. This encourages follow through and accurate cueing since there is immediate feedback on any failure. This is best done as part of a progressive practice drill, beginning with very short straight-in shots and moving on to longer shots and eventually cut shots and english shots.



## Kicks Only Drill

This drill give some intense practice on hitting a ball on one or more rails. Only the cue ball and one object ball are use

**Hard kicks:** The cue ball must hit one or more rails and then the object ball. The object ball must then hit a rail. Each shot is played from the leave of the previous shot. If the object ball is pocketed, it spots. Variations are to require two or three rails. This is a good way to introduce various diamond systems.

**Soft kicks:** The same as above, except that the object ball must not hit a rail after the cue ball hits it.

## No Fiddling Drill

This drill also works by a change of the standard stroke sequence. Instead of the normal back-and-forth warm-up motions of the shooting sequence, the student should only adjust the location of their bridge hand and back hand to bring the cue stick to the position it needs to be in when it hits the object ball. There is then a single stroke, back and through, to complete the shot.

During the initial part of the shot, stress the points that the student is supposed to be considering:

- Firm bridge
- Sighting
- Correct place to hit on the cue ball
- Correct body alignment (since there is no warm-up motion, this is easier to check)
- The necessary speed for position
- The length of the final follow through

Once the student is set, there should be just the back and through motion.

## Zen Draw Drill

In this drill, the emphasis is on no motion but that required to accomplish the shot. It is especially good for students who have a difficult time getting any draw, since it almost forces them to hit the ball low. Also, it is a good way to introduce a closed bridge.

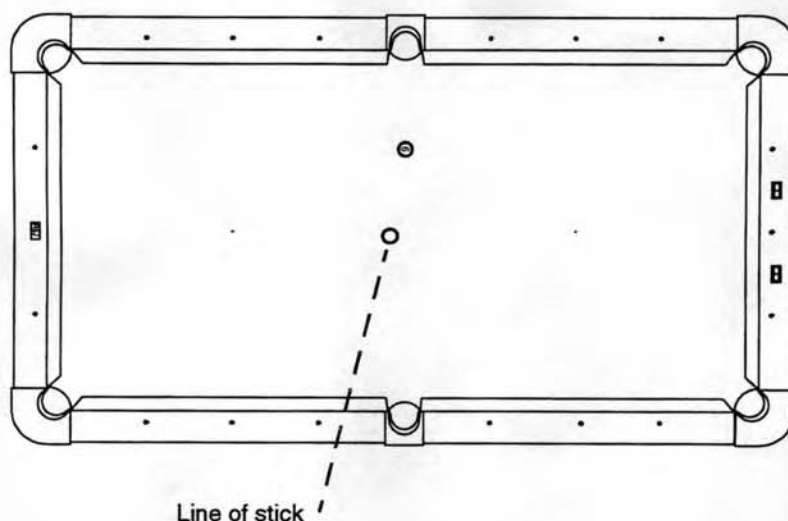
Place the object ball and the cue ball as shown. The cue ball is just above or below the center spot and the object ball is a diamond away from the side pocket. A slight angle is needed so the cue ball doesn't come straight back into the stick.

Have the student use a fist bridge. If the knuckles are flat on the cloth like they're supposed to be, the bridge will need to be only six inches or so from the cue ball, or a miscue will result.

The cue stick must be as level as possible -- only an inch or so above the top of the rail. Any higher, and a miscue will result.

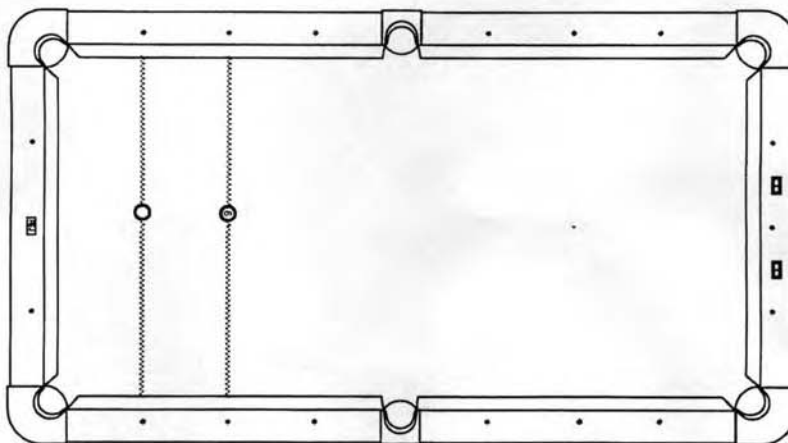
The goal of the shot is to pocket the ball in the side and draw the cue ball back to the rail. The cue stick should be left extended to the full follow through; it should not be pulled back.

Now for the hard part: the student is not permitted to move anything but the stroking forearm until the shot is over. That means they can't turn their head to look at the cue ball hit the rail, or stand up, or even rail or open their bridge. Only the forearm is allowed to move.



## Soft Maximum Draw

Here is a test to see if you are hitting as low as possible for draw:



Place an object ball on the line, and the cue ball a diamond away from it as shown. Shoot the ball straight up the table with your best soft draw. On most tables, you can draw the cue ball back to the head rail without the object ball touching the same rail (the cue ball draws two diamonds while the object ball travels less than 14 diamonds).

Here are several things you might want to work on if this doesn't work.

1. Do you have a firm bridge? Does the stroke come through levelly?
2. Is the tip well chalked?
3. Try a different cue. Many house sticks, if properly tipped, are better than some jointed cues.
4. After the tip is well chalked, hit the cue ball lower. You should *expect* to miscue at least a tenth of the time when first attempting this test or you aren't learning how low you can hit the cue ball. Learn how to care for your tip after a miscue.
5. Make sure that the cue ball and the object ball are the same weight. Many cue balls are light -- that's cheating. Some of them are heavier than the object balls -- that's impossible. You can use two object balls but switch them to make sure one's not lighter.
6. Clean the cloth and balls. Dirt destroys draw. For some fun, wax the cue ball.