

Proper Fundamentals

Cue and tip preliminaries

The cue should be straight. The cue should have a comfortable weight. The most common weight is 19 oz. The ferrule should be tight and not cracked. The tip should be well shaped between a dime and a nickel radius. The tip should hold chalk well and the surface not be not too hardened and smooth. The bridge hand and cue shaft should be clean and dry.

Grip

The grip should be natural, relaxed, and light (but closed) cradling the cue. The forearm should be perpendicular to cue at CB impact. The wrist should be in a comfortable position with the cue hanging beneath the forearm. The cue should be allowed to pivot on the index or middle finger with the other fingers relaxed without any wrist motion during the stroke.

Hand bridge

The closed or open hand bridge should have a solid foundation with the fingers spread and as much hand contact area as possible. The bridge should be stable and a reliable guide for the cue to slide without too much resistance. The bridge length should be between 6 to 12 inches. A complete back-stroke distance should be used on all shots. A shorter bridge length can be used for extremely soft shots.

Mechanical bridge

The mechanical bridge should be held firmly on the table if possible with the opposite hand. A reverse dart grip or with the elbow out or with the elbow down if cue elevation is required can be used. The forearm should be perpendicular to cue at CB impact if possible.

Pre-shot routine

A consistent cadence and tempo for the entire shot routine should be used. Chalk and check tip before every shot. Establish the “vision center” over required aiming line while standing, with the rear foot also on this line. Create a straight approach onto the aim line. Keep chin locked with eyes focused on the aiming line and OB when sliding the bridge into the line.

Stance

Use consistent feet placement. Place the rear foot at about a 45° angle, and the front foot at least a shoulder width to the side and forward of the rear foot, pointing roughly forward. Create a stable, well-balanced, comfortable body position with a tripod formed by bridge hand and the two feet with some weight on bridge hand and the remaining weight balanced equally between the feet. The front arm should be extended straight. If the front arm needs to be bent for comfort be sure to bend it the exact same amount on all shots. The head should be low, but a comfortable height over cue as level as possible. There should be clearance between the body and stroking arm during the entire stroke.

Alignment

The cue tip should be on the cue ball vertical centerline. The stroking arm, cue stick, and “vision center” should all be in the vertical plane of the aiming line. The head should be in consistent “vision center” position over the cue stick while checking aim and tip position. Keep the tip of the cue within a half an inch of the CB.

Pre-Stroke routine

Use consistent, complete, slow, and straight warm-up strokes. Use a slow smooth pre-stroke motion with a distinct “pause” at the start and end of the pre-stroke routine. Check the tip position and aim during the pauses. During the pre-stroke routine focus on the CB when the tip approaches the cue ball and focus on OB or an aiming target during the backward stroke. Your eyes should stay locked on the object ball on your final back swing.

Final stroke execution

Use a slow, smooth final back-swing with a slight pause at the end. Use a pendulum swing with no elbow drop before CB contact. Accelerate smoothly into the CB. No head, body, or bridge movement during the stroke. The grip should be relaxed during the entire stroke. Use a straight and complete follow-through of approximately 4 to 8 inches. Keep the body, head, and tip down and still after the follow-through.