

FLOW MASTERS POOL LEAGUE (FMP)

FLOW Masters Welcome and Sportsman's Conduct Expectations

Welcome to the world of Flow Masters Pool (FMP). FMP is a game and format that you will come to love almost immediately! It combines good competitive play for the more experienced pool players with a play format that is very considerate of the working person, i.e., understanding that many players have an early rise for work the next morning. The format is designed to be fast yet challenging!

In FLOW Masters, you play three of the most popular games, all rolled into one match, that is, 9-Ball, 10-Ball, and 8-Ball. Playing all three format adds variety to the match and, therefore, leads to even more excitement and playing enjoyment!

All matches are a race to six (6). And to speed up match play further, FMP has been designed so that you play the fastest format first, followed by other formats that typically take slightly more time to complete. What that means is you play the race to six (6) in the following sequence: four (4) games of 9-ball, followed by four (4) games of 10-ball, followed by three (3) 8-Ball, in that order, with no deviation in the order of formats played or number of games played in a particular game format. You may not substitute 1) a game type for another or 2) the number of games played per format. The order and number stand!

If, however, you find that you played a game out of order or played additional games of a given type, those games (and therefore points) shall be discarded and play then resumes with the next required game format. As soon as a player reaches six (6) games won, the match is complete.

Because this is a gentlemen's/gentlewomen's game, there is a high expectation that play all games and match using the highest level of respect for your competitor, those around you, and to those that are orchestrating the league. Disrespect to others, in any form or fashion, will not be tolerated. We always expect all players to act with civility and decency, paying the utmost respect to the establishment and all of its sports equipment.

To be clear, un-sportsman-like conduct is not welcomed, which includes abusive language, obscene gestures, abuse/damage of equipment/facilities, debilitating intoxication that leading to any kind of disruption including, but not limited to, flagrant displays of rooting against the other team.

Disruptions such as making loud noises or movements while someone is addressing a shot is "sharking" and is strictly prohibited.

Physical contact or threats of physical contact or harm will not be tolerated and is strictly forbidden.

Verbal abuse or comments designed to make a player or a team uncomfortable or unwelcome will not be tolerated and is strictly forbidden, as well.

Any actions of the aforementioned type directed toward any player may result in negative action taken toward the player committing the infraction. Any team or team member that is made to feel uncomfortable or is threatened before, during, or after a match should immediately contact a FLOW

Masters representative and report such an incident. Please provide the name and as much detail as possible. See [Contact Us](#) for a listing of FLOW Masters representatives to contact.

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At the sole discretion of the FLOW Masters Board of Directors any team member or entire team can be suspended for any period, up to, and including, a lifetime suspension.

Becoming a Member of FLOW Masters

In order to play, you must first become a member of the league. Doing so is quite easy. First, commit to playing fair, which helps to ensure that you and others have an enjoyable experience. Second, that you register with the league, meaning that you fill out our registration form, providing contact information and information about your playing ability, knowledge, and skill. And lastly, that you become an active member by paying your annual dues, a fee which is set by the Flow Masters League Operators and Board.

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FLOW Masters General Rules of Play

1.0 The Flow Masters Games. Flow Masters consists of the well-known formats of pool: 9-Ball, 10-Ball, and 8-Ball, played in that order. The object is to be the first player to win six (6) games within the match. The overall objective is hard and challenging play, but with the goal of getting your match play in without taking up enormous amounts of time.

2.0 Order and Number of Games.

2.1 The team captain or their designee may either flip a coin or lag to determine what team will put up first. The winner of the lag will be the Home team and may elect to either put up first or have the opposing team put up first. Put ups will alternate between matches.

2.2 Again, games will be played 9-Ball first, followed by 10-Ball, followed by 8-Ball. The order is designed to play the fastest games first. You will play four (4) games of 9-Ball, then four (4) games of 10-Ball, followed by three games of 8-Ball. It is a race to six (6).

2.3 Games must be played in the order specified. (See the game score sheet.) If for any reason you realize that you have played games out of order, as soon as realized, you must revert to the correct order. Any games played outside of the specified order will not count. For example, let's say that you started correctly with 9-Ball and proceeded to play five games instead of the four that you are supposed to play. Upon realizing the error, you should revert to playing the correct format, in this case, 10-Ball, and that one extra game of 9-Ball will not count. It behooves you to maintain awareness of the count and format. Otherwise, you may spend extra and unnecessary time attempting to complete your match.

2.4 The scoresheet will be used to capture each player's name and ID number and their wins and losses through match play. Each win will result in one (1) point being awarded to the player. At the end of the match, the total accumulations shall be recorded in/on the appropriate places on the sheet. See Attachment 1 for a copy of the Flow Masters Scoresheet.

3.0 Match Start.

3.1 Matches should start at the agreed upon time assigned by the Flow Masters League Operator and the Establishment Owner/Management. Team Captains should put up a player for the assigned match. If a team does not put up a player within 15-minutes of the start of the play, that player's match will be forfeited.

3.2 For all other matches, if a player is not ready to start their match within 15-minutes, that match must be forfeited, as well.

3.3 The player's name and ID number must be placed on the scoresheet. The sheet will be used to record the wins and losses of each player, as well as the totals for each team. Team captain signatures must be affixed to the scoresheet to attest that data shown for each player is correct.

3.4 If at least three players from a team are present and available to play a match, all three players must play.

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3.5 If a team captain is not able to field three players, he may use a player who has already played in place of the one who is missing. A player may not play more than two matches during any team match.

3.6 Of the two players present for play, the opposing team may select which player they elect their player to play against. Note 1: This rule is allowed for the entire session, but not including the Playoffs (and for tournaments).

3.7 When rule 3.5 occurs, only one of the two matches will be associated with the player. The other match will be associated with the “Open Carryover”, so that the match can be attributed to the team but not the player. This rule helps to ensure a player does not inappropriately amass more wins than the number of weeks played!

3.8 The captain (or player) may decide which match goes where, i.e., one to Open Carryover and the other to the player. If a player is smart, they might always elect to have their strongest match play attributed to them and the weakest match play attributed to Open Carryover.

3.9 Nearing the end of the session, if a player finds that he is in jeopardy of losing their ability to play in the playoffs due to a lack of having six matches played, then and only then will both matches be allowed to be attributed to the player. However, once six matches have been reached, if the player plays twice, only one of the matches will be associated with the player. The other will be attributed to “Open Carryover”.

3.10 And to be consistent with rules 3.4 and 3.5, adding new players to the roster will be allowed up to and including Week #5. See Rule #17 for additional guidance as you make or consider making adjustments to your team roster.

3.11 During playoffs, rule 3.5, above, does not apply. A player may only play one match, regardless of the number of players present. If a team cannot field three separate and distinct players, all no-show matches will be forfeited with a score of 0-6.

4.0 Make-Up Matches.

4.1 Make-up matches are allowed up to and including Week #5. Exceptions are allowed at the sole discretion of the league operator(s).

5.0 Lagging for the Break.

5.1 The two opposing players must lag to determine who will shoot/break first. The player who wins the lag breaks first.

5.2 The players will lag at about the same time to make each ball contact the foot cushion, with the goal of returning the ball closer to the head cushion than the opponent.

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5.3 A lag shot is bad and cannot win if the shooter's ball:

- (a) crosses the long string;
- (b) contacts the foot cushion other than once;
- (c) is pocketed or driven off the table;
- (d) touches the side cushion; or
- (e) the ball rests within the corner pocket and past the nose of the head cushion.

5.4 The players will lag again if:

- (a) a player's ball is struck after the other ball has touched the foot cushion;
- (b) the referee cannot determine which ball has stopped closer to the head cushion; or
- (c) both lags are bad.

6.0 The Rack.

6.1 Rack your own Balls. Every player will rack and break their own balls. With this format you cannot win or lose the game on the break.

6.2 For 9-ball, the 1-ball must be placed at the head of the rack and the 9-ball in the middle.

6.3. For 10-ball, the object balls are racked as tightly as possible in a triangular shape, with the 1-ball at the apex of the triangle and on the foot spot and the 10-ball in the middle of the triangle.

6.4 The 2-ball and 3-ball are placed on the ends of the last row (left/right orientation does not matter). The other balls will be placed in the triangle without purposeful or intentional pattern.

6.5 For 8-ball, the 8-ball must be placed in the middle and the balls on the wings, at the bottom of the rack must be different, i.e., one high ball and one low ball.

6.6 For all racks, the head ball must be placed on the spot.

7.0 The Break.

7.1 **Legal Break.** The cue ball is placed behind the head string and the breaker must drive at least four (4) balls into a rail or pocket a ball.

7.2 **Break Miscue/Bad Break.** If upon attempting a break you miscue and at least four balls do not hit a rail, the opponent has the option of allowing the shooter to attempt a break again or taking control of the rack and breaking themselves.

7.3 In the game of 9-Ball, if you pocket the 9-Ball on the break, the 9-Ball is spotted and the shooter continues to shoot. If you pocket the 9-Ball on the break and scratch, the 9-Ball is spotted, and the opponent is then awarded the table and shoots the first shot with cue ball-in-hand anywhere on the table.

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7.4 In the game of 10-Ball, if you pocket the 10-Ball on the break, the breaker may re-rack and break again or have the 10-Ball spotted and then continue to shoot. If you pocket the 10-Ball on the break and scratch, the 10-Ball is spotted, and the opponent is then awarded the table and shoots the first shot with cue ball-in-hand anywhere on the table.

7.5 In the game of 8-Ball, if you pocket the 8-Ball on the break, the 8-ball is spotted and the shooter continues to shoot. If you pocket the 8-Ball on the break and scratch, the 8-Ball is spotted, and the opponent is then awarded the table and must shoot the first shot from behind the head string.

7.6 In any match or game, in the event a player cannot rack his/her own rack, the opposing team captain must be notified in advance.

8.0 Legal Shot. On all shots, a player must hit his group of balls or the correct ball in rotation/order and cause any ball, including the cue ball, to contact a rail or be pocketed.

8.0 Bio-Breaks.

8.1 Players may call for a time out either between games, or when it is their own inning, for the purposes of taking a bio-break only. You are allotted up to two 5-minute breaks. All breaks are included in your allotted amount of time for the match.

8.2 Resuming play before the opponent has returned from an approved time out or leaving the playing area during the shooter's ongoing inning are both considered unsportsmanlike.

9.0. Open Table. Immediately following the break, the player is confronted with an open table. In 8-Ball, the table is considered "still open" until the player calls and makes their first skill shot (call ball, call pocket). For the first shot, a player may hit a combination shot, where a striped ball is hit into a solid ball or vice versa. If the ball that was called goes in the pocket, then the player has those balls. That option is only available for the opening skill shot.

10.0 Fouls.

10.1 If a foul occurs on the break and the incoming player does not place the cue ball behind the head string, the opponent or opposing team is obligated to tell the player that the cue ball is to be placed behind the line. If the opponent does not tell the player, it is not a ball in hand foul and the player will be permitted to continue to shoot.

10.2 It is a "ball in hand" foul, if after making a legal hit, the cue ball comes in contact with anything other than another ball or a rail. This includes, but is not limited to, a bridge, cue, chalk, any body part, clothing, and/or jewelry.

10.3 It is also a foul if a "double hit" occurs. A "double hit", when a second contact with the cue occurs instantaneously. Both teams must agree that such a "double hit" has occurred before awarding the foul. If it becomes questionable as to whether a "double hit" will occur, it is advisable to have someone impartial to watch the hit.

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10.4 A foul occurs when a player strikes a ball out of turn, or when the player does not execute a “legal” shot, when the cue ball is pocketed.

10.5 A foul occurs when any ball leaves the playing surface. Without exception, this results in a “ball in hand”, except for a scratch on the break. In all formats, balls pocketed on a foul will remain pocketed, except for the money ball. In that case, the money ball will be brought back onto the surface and spotted and the oncoming player will have “ball in hand”.

10.6 Three-Fouls. If a shooter commits a foul three times in a row without making an intervening legal shot, the result is a loss of game. The three consecutive fouls must occur in one game; fouls do not carry over to next game. After the 2nd foul has been committed, the opponent must verbally warn the shooter that they have committed their 2nd foul and that a 3rd foul will result in a loss of game. If a foul (or scratch) occurs in the act of breaking the balls, that does not count toward the 3-foul rule.

10.7 The 3-foul rule does not apply in the game of 8-Ball.

NOTE: If the shooter is not warned after the 2nd foul and commits a 3rd, it will not be a loss of game. Instead, the opponent must again warn the shooter that the next foul committed will result in a loss of game.

11.0 Calling Shots/Declarations.

11.1 In the games of 8-Ball and 10-Ball, players will call the ball and the pocket for each attempted shot. Kisses, caroms, and numbers of cushions need not be called. Obvious shots need not be called. It is always the opponent’s right to ask which ball and pocket is being called if they are unsure.

11.2 In all games, the money ball (8-Ball, 9-Ball, 10-Ball) must be called, i.e., the money ball must go in the pocket called. In 9-Ball and 10-Ball, the money ball may be pocket early for the win, but only if it is called and the proper ball is struck, i.e., a legal shot occurs.

11.3 In 9-Ball and 10-Ball, if the money ball is pocket, but was not called, it is spotted on the Foot Spot.

11.4 In 8-Ball, if the money ball is pocketed early or is not called, it constitutes a loss of game.

11.5 In 9-Ball, if a player calls the money ball into a declared pocket and it goes in that pocket, the game is won (if the cue ball does not scratch afterwards). If the 9-ball does not go in, but another ball does, play continues for the shooter.”

11.6 In 9-Ball, if a player makes a legal shot and something is pocketed, including the 9-Ball, play continues for that player. If the 9-Ball is the ball that was pocketed, but was not declared (called), the 9-Ball is placed on the Foot Spot, and play continues for that player.

12.0 Jump Shots.

Jump shots are legal shots, per rules of the house. If, however, the house does not permit jump shots on their tables, then we will honor their rules. A jump shot is executed properly

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when the cue is raised to a 45-degree angle and you strike down on the cue ball. Scoop shots are never allowed.

13.0 Time Outs. Time outs are not permitted in any of the formats presented. A player must be able to execute on his or her own recognition.

14.0 Time Limit for Shots. A player must execute his next shot within 45 seconds after the cue-ball has stopped from the previous shot. If the opposing player calls out, “45 seconds”, the player must take a shot within 15-seconds or a ball-in-hand will be awarded.

15.0 Scratches. A scratch on the break will result in “ball in hand” behind the head string in 8-Ball. All other scratches other than a scratch on the break will result in “ball in hand” anywhere on the table.

16.0 Safety Shots.

16.1 A player may attempt a safety shot in any of the game formats. For 9-Ball, if a safety is attempted and a ball is pocketed following a legal shot, that player must continue to shoot. For 10-Ball, if a safe is attempted and a ball is pocketed following a legal shot, the oncoming player has the option of either coming to the table to shoot or have the player continue to shoot. For 8-Ball, if a safety is called, regardless as to whether another ball is pocketed or not, the table is turned over to the oncoming player.

16.2 Players must call a safety shot in advance. If a player pockets a ball and has not declared in advance his intention to play a safety, he will be required to continue to shoot.

16.3 There is no limit to the number of safety shots played in a game.

17.0 Players Changing Teams in Mid-Session. A player is not permitted to change teams in mid-session or at any time after he or she has shot on another team. The only exception to that rule is “the survival rule”. That rule is if a team is in jeopardy of dropping out of the session because they do not have enough players, they can pick up a player that has shot on another team. However, the players points will not carry with them. Instead, the points will be awarded to “open player” with the team losing the player, and the gaining team will gain points made by the new player from that point forward.

18.0 Forfeits.

18.1 If an active team has no player to put up a match time, and after waiting an appropriate amount of time for the match put-up, the opposing team will win the individual match. If an active team has one or more players at the match, he/she is obligated to play, and match play will continue until no other team members are available.

18.2 At the conclusion of the night’s team play, the full team packet monies must be accounted for and placed in the packet **regardless of the number of players available to play**.

19.0 Teams.

19.1 Teams may join in on a league/session play up to (and including) Week 5. After that period, no other teams may be added to the roster. The only exception is a Survivability clause, where

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we will allow a team (or teams) to join if it will help keep a league/session/team from folding due to the lack of available teams or players to keep things going. Survivability mode is entered when a league/session hits three (3) teams or less or when a team hits three (3) players or less.

19.2 Any team joining late, i.e., being added within the 5-week window, will be awarded match, game, and team points as follows:

Matches Won: Team will receive one (1) point less than the team with the lowest matches point total. If the lowest matches point total is zero (0), the new team total will be zero.

Matches Lost: Team will receive one (1) point more than the team with the highest (worse) matches point total.

Games Won: Team will receive one (1) point less than the team with the lowest games point total. If the lowest games point total is zero (0), the new team total will be zero.

Games Lost: Team will receive one (1) point more than the team with the highest (worse) games point total.

MVP Points: No points will be assigned to new team players. Even though they are coming in one to several weeks behind, there are likely existing players that have amassed zero MVP points.

Admin Points: The new team will receive a point total equal to the best admin point award.

20.0 Byes.

20.1 If there is an odd number of teams and a bye must be factored in, the team with the bye will receive two (2) match win points, one (1) match loss point for that week. That way, the Team Standings list will not lag behind due to the bye needing to catch up with all of the other teams. The weeks of play may be adjusted, especially when a bye has been factored in, to ensure that an equal number of byes are issued to the teams involved.

20.2 If a bye results in an unfair advantage to a team, i.e., the session results in an unequal number of byes, the league operator will make an appropriate adjustment so that a team does not suffer irreparable harm from the bye.

20.3 At present, what is deemed to be an appropriate adjustment for the team suffering irreparable harm due to any uneven distribution of byes only is to award the team two (2) Match Wins and one (1) Match Loss; along with 16 Game Wins points and 14 Game Loss points. Example: 6-4, 6-4, and 4-6. Each Match Win, along with its accompanying Game Wins points, may be assigned to a player so as to assist them in their advancement toward the MVP award. And so as to not penalize a player for the lost match, the Match Loss will be assigned to "Open Carryover".

20.4 No monies will be collected or need be paid by the team that has a scheduled Bye.

21.0 Administrative Point Awards

21.1 Teams will receive one (1) point for submission of a fully completed packet, meaning a packet that contains all required information, including captain signatures, and is error free.

22.0 Table Assignments.

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22.1 Tables for play will not be assigned. You may play on any table of your choice within the block assigned to you by the establishment owners.

22.2 However, once a schedule has been created, every effort will be made to incorporate table assignments into the schedule in order to make division play smoother, i.e., more orderly.

22.3 If table dispute arises, either FLOW management (or their duly assigned representative) or venue management will intervene to help resolve the issue.

22.4 Because this is a format full of respect for others, we would ask that you be courteous and respect each other's concerns. Escalating to non-friendly levels is highly discouraged.

23.0 Match Catch-Up.

23.1 At times, due to unforeseen circumstances, it may be necessary to award Match and Games wins and losses to a team (and players) in order to keep them on pace with other teams. The exercise of this option over playing a match (or matches) in a team against team fashion will be solely up to the League Operators - and in agreement with the teams affected. An example of an unforeseen circumstances is if a team-on-team match needs to be redone or reassigned for some legitimate reason, like a team quitting the league in the middle of a match. In this case, if the teams and Operators agree, rule 20.3 can be applied.

23.2 Every attempt should be made to conduct a team against team match. League Operators prefer this method over the application of rule 23.1.

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Definitions

Accidental Pocketing of Balls – When a ball is accidentally pocketed by the players' stick, body, clothing, etc., while the player is at the table (other than the cue ball or eight ball) it will be brought back onto the playing surface to its original placement and player will be permitted to continue to shoot. If the cue ball is accidentally pocketed, it is a foul and will result in a ball in hand for the opponent. If the eight ball is accidentally pocketed it will result in loss of game.

Accidentally Moving Balls – If any ball is moved while placing the cue ball on the table, a ball in hand foul occurs. In situations other than ball-in-hand, if any balls (other than the cue ball) are accidentally moved by the players' stick, body, clothing, etc., in a manner that does not change the complexion of the table, it will not result in a foul. The opponent shall have the option of replacing the moved ball(s) to its original placement or allow the ball(s) to remain at their current placement and the player may continue to shoot. If the opponent chooses to replace the ball(s), he/she must make every effort to replace ball(s) as closely to its original placement as possible. The shooting player must accept the opponent's placement decision. Accidentally moving the cue ball will result in a foul. In the event multiple balls are moved in a manner that changes the complexion of the table and the game, it will result in a loss of game for the player committing the said foul.

Ball in hand foul (definition one): - This is the occurrence when a player commits a foul and the incoming player is awarded "ball in hand". If the cue ball is on the surface of the pool table and incoming player accidentally moves any ball (other than the cue ball) and it doesn't change the complexion of the game it is not a foul. Please refer to rule 12. Accidentally moving a ball. If the accidental movement of any ball touches the cue ball in any way, that is a foul.

Ball in hand (definition two): This is the literal definition wherein the cue ball is literally in your hand. It is a foul if any ball is touched or moved during the placing of the cue ball on the table. It is also a foul if any ball is touched or moved by a bridge, a cue, piece of chalk, any body part, any part of a piece of clothing or jewelry while the cue ball is in the players hand or while placing the cue ball.

Loss Of Game - A player loses the game if the 8-Ball is pocketed out of turn, the cue ball is pocketed while shooting the eight ball, the 8-Ball is pocketed in a pocket other than the one designated, or if the 8-Ball jumps off of the table. If the 10-Ball is pocketed without being called, it will be brought back onto the table and spotted.

Too many games played. If the two players accidentally plays more games than the game-type allows, that games should be halted as soon as the infraction is discovered. Any and all games beyond the maximum for that game-type will not be counted, and the players should immediately revert to the game-type that should have been played. Again, the order is four (4) games of 9-ball, followed by four (4) games of 10-ball, followed by three (3) games of 8-ball.

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Winner. The team that accumulates the greatest number of points in a match will be determined to be winner of the match. If, however, the score results in a tie (in terms of points accumulated), then the deciding factor will be the team that won the most matches.