

# Shuffleboard Basics

Family Friendly

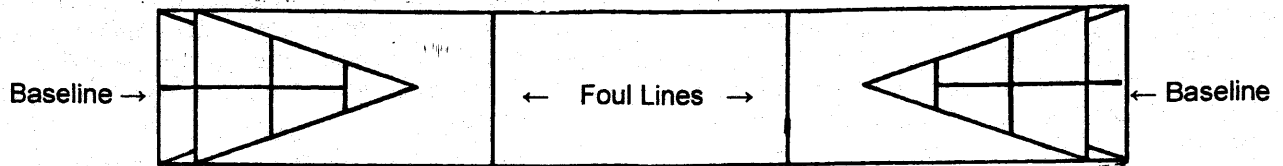
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Start Playing Today

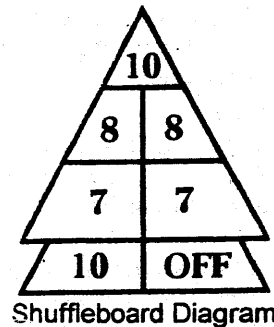
Get a "Quick-Start" in shuffleboard with just the basics.

**Equipment:** Learn about shuffleboard courts, disks and cues.

**The Court:** The court is 52 feet long and 6 feet wide. It is waxed and may have other products added to its surface to make it slippery. The playing area is from one baseline to the other. Walk beside the court - not on it - when possible.

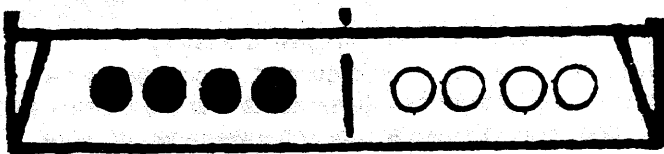


**Diagrams:** There is a diagram at each end of the court. Each diagram has six scoring areas surrounded by 1-inch-wide border lines. Each area is worth a specific number of points (see the diagram to the right). A disk must be totally inside a scoring area to count as a "good" disk and it will score points that can be added to (or - if in the ten-off, subtracted from) your score on the scoreboard. **If a disk touches any border line then it is "no good" and it scores ZERO points.** A disk touching a border line is called a "liner".



**Note:** The 10-off area has two jobs. One is as the 10-off scoring area - called the "kitchen" and the other, is as the "starting areas" - used for staging and shooting the disks.

**Starting Areas:** The ten-off area is divided into two equal starting areas by the "separation triangle" or a line.



Place the disks within these starting areas before any shots are taken. The yellow disks go on one side of the triangle and the black disks go on the other side. Make sure that none of the disks is touching any line. All disks are shot from within the starting areas. The lines of the separation triangle (or the line) do not count as border lines for the kitchen.

**Foul Lines:** The two lines between the diagrams (see the court above) are the foul lines. **A disk must touch or pass over the second or farther foul line (from where you are shooting) to be in play.** If it stops between the lines, it is a foul and must be removed from the court before the next shot.

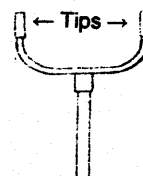
**Note:** Courts usually do not have the numbers painted on them because paint layers can interfere with a gliding disk and because the numbers can become helpful aiming spots.

**Disks:** Disks come in sets of 8 - usually 4 yellows and 4 blacks. Each disk is 6 inches in diameter, about one inch thick and weighs around 15 ounces.

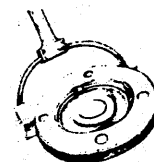


Wear closed toe shoes to help prevent bumps on your toes from disks shot with force.

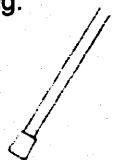
**Cues:** Shuffleboard cues can be up to 6 feet and 3 inches long. The "head" of the cue is used to push or shoot disks to the opposite end of the court. The little cap at the other end is used for gathering the disks and for gripping the cue when shooting. Hold your cue in a vertical and upright (head up in the air) position when you are not shooting.



Cue Head



Rubber Cap



## Playing A Shuffleboard Game

All shuffleboard games have the following basic features: you need to score 75 or more points to win a game (or have the higher score in a frame game - which can be used if time or physical capacity is an issue); the game always starts at the "head" of the court (scoreboard end); yellow always shoots first to start a game; the players alternate shooting until all eight disks have been shot to the opposite end of the court; no scores are put up on the scoreboard until after the 8th disk of the round has come to a stop and the final scores for the round are determined. Additionally, the colors alternate shooting first throughout the game. A match is usually 3 games and the player or team that wins 2 games first - wins the match. The etiquette of the game expects players to always shake hands at the end of the match.

### 2 Players Play Singles

Two players on a court play singles and they walk from one end of the court to the other throughout the game. One player plays the yellow disks and the other plays the black disks.

Yellow always shoots first to start a game. Black then shoots a disk. They alternate shooting until all eight disks have been shot to the opposite end of the court. Then they calculate the score for both colors and add or subtract it to/from any existing scores on the scoreboard (see last page) and then walk to the opposite end of the court. (Walk beside the court - not on it.) Then it is black's turn to shoot first followed by yellow's first shot. Continue as above.

Play until one player gets 75 or more points up on the scoreboard and wins the game. If both players have 75 or more points then the higher score wins.

For the second game, the players switch sides on the court and play the other color disks. Don't switch the disks. As always, yellow shoots first at the head of the court to start the game and then black shoots. Games 2 & 3 are conducted just like the first game.

### 4 Players Play Doubles

Four players on a court play doubles and they each play at one end of the court throughout the game.

The two players playing the yellow disks are partners and one of them plays at one end of the court and the other plays at the opposite end of the court. The two players playing the black disks are also partners and one of them is at one end of the court and the other one is at the opposite end of the court.

The partners are teams and they shoot their disks from the same side of the court. The team on the yellow disks is trying to beat the team on the black disks and vice-versa.

To begin the game, yellow shoots first at both ends of the court then black shoots first at both ends of the court. The teams alternate shooting first throughout the game.

Scores are added to the scoreboard (see last page) until one team has 75 or more points and wins the game. If both teams have 75 or more points then the higher score wins. The teams then switch sides on the court. Don't switch the disks. Games 2 & 3 are conducted just like the first game.

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### Strategy: Shot choice can be the difference between winning and losing.

New players are sometimes surprised to learn that there is quite a bit of strategy in shuffleboard. Since the game objective is to get 75 or more points on the scoreboard first, then you want to choose those shots that are most likely to help your cause and/or hinder your opponent's cause. You will often have to make a choice between two or more shots. Think strategically and choose the shot that is more likely to improve your chances of winning that game. Always think about your shot choices before you shoot. A few basic beginner's strategy tips are listed below.

**Score With Your Hammer:** When you have the last shot of the round you have the "hammer" and the advantage in that round. Score with your hammer and add points to the scoreboard.

**Knock Out Your Opponent's Scores:** If your opponent has a scoring disk, then hit it and knock it out of scoring position if you can. Don't let them score any more points than necessary.

**Knock Your Kitchens Out:** If one of your disks is in the kitchen (the ten-off area), then hit it and knock it out if you can. You will save yourself 10 points.

**Go For 7s and 8s:** Try to score a 7 or an 8 with your hammer because those scoring areas are large and you have a good chance of making a score. Don't go for a 10 because its smaller area makes it a lower percentage shot.

**Block Your Scores:** If you have a scoring disk, then block it so your opponent can not hit it and knock it out of scoring position. Block and protect as many of your scores as possible so you can get more points on the scoreboard.

**Reduce Their Score:** If your opponent has a lead in score of 10 or more points then bump one or more of their disks into the kitchen and make them lose some points.

**Tiebreaker:** If a game ends in a tie then just continue playing until each player on the court has had the last shot (hammer) one more time. Then the higher score wins - even if the score is less than 75 - which could happen if one or more disks end up in the ten-off (kitchen).

**Shooting:** Shuffleboard requires accurate shooting to complete your shots. Beginners can become good shooters if they learn and practice the five basic elements of a good shot.

**Grip:** The manner of holding the cue while making a shot is called the "grip". Grip the cue lightly on the rubber cap at the end of the cue with the thumb and the first and second fingers. Hold the cue just firmly enough to keep it from slipping out of your hand when you are shooting. A light grip gives you a better "feel" for your shots.



Right Handed Grip



Left Handed Grip



Aim Carefully.

**Aim:** Make sure your cue tips are in contact with the disk before you start your shot and then aim your shot by looking down your cue and along an imaginary line to your target disk or to the scoring area where you want your disk to stop. Keep your eye on the target.

**Footwork:** When you are ready to shoot, you "walk into" the shot with the two-step footwork. Start with your feet comfortably apart and about evenly placed. If you are right handed then your footwork sequence is: right-left. Take your first step with your right foot and the second with your left foot. The second step is often a little longer than the first. (If you are left handed then your sequence is: left-right.) The objective of the footwork is for you to end up balancing your weight on the foot opposite your shooting arm. Don't step on the baseline.

Step 2



Step 1



Start



Right Handed Footwork

Left Handed Footwork



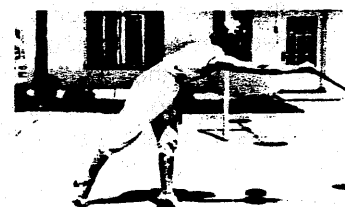
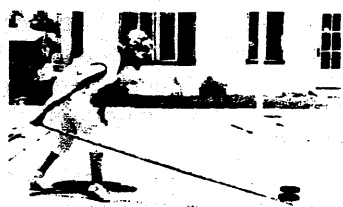
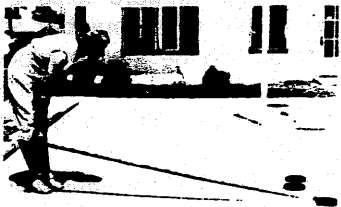
**Stroke:** The stroke is the swing of your arm when you make a shot. Start with your arm straight down beside your body. Do not bend your elbow. As you move forward with your footwork, bring your arm forward like a pendulum as you shoot the disk to the opposite end of the court.

**Follow-Through:** Reach out as far forward as you can at the end of your stroke. A good follow-through helps to increase your accuracy by reducing muscle tension in your shoulder and arm.

Stretch way out in your follow-through.



**Championship Form:** Fluid and natural.



Developing greater accuracy should be a beginner's first concern because you will need to make scores and accurately execute a variety of other shots to be a winner. Bring all the five elements of good shooting together to create a fluid and natural delivery so that you can win your share of games. Practice helps to develop accuracy. So play and practice as often as possible.

**Keeping Score:** Keeping score in shuffleboard is easy – with the scoreboard's help.

**Singles Scoreboard**

|   | Yellow | Black  | Yellow | Black |
|---|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Y | 8 7    | 7 0    |        |       |
| B | 15 -2  | 7 8    |        |       |
| Y | 13 14  | 15 -10 |        |       |
| B | 27     | 5      |        |       |
| Y |        |        |        |       |
| B |        |        |        |       |
| Y |        |        |        |       |
| B |        |        |        |       |

**Doubles Scoreboard**

|   | Yellow | Black  | Yellow | Black |
|---|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Y | 0 7    | 8 8    | 35 7   | 34 8  |
| Y | 7 8    | 16 0   | 42 8   | 42 0  |
| B | 15 7   | 16 -10 | 50 8   | 42 0  |
| B | 22 0   | 6 14   | 58 -10 | 42 -3 |
| Y | 22 7   | 20 -3  | 48     | 39    |
| Y | 29 8   | 17 0   |        |       |
| B | 37 -2  | 17 7   |        |       |
| B | 35 0   | 24 10  |        |       |

Along the side of the scoreboard (usually the left side) there is an indicator beside the score boxes to show which color shoots first in each round. The indicator is usually the actual color - either yellow or black. A "tournament bar" indicator can sometimes be turned until the color sequence starts with yellow beside the top score box and black beside the next lower score box. This is the color sequence for a singles game.

The two boxes at the very top of the scoreboard are usually painted yellow and black. The column of score boxes under "yellow" is for the scores made by the player playing the yellow disks and the column under "black" is for black's scores.

Since yellow always shoots first to start a game, the first color indicator beside the top two score boxes is yellow. (The letters "Y" for yellow and "B" for black do not usually appear on actual scoreboards.) After all 8 disks have been shot, place the resulting score in the two score boxes at the top of the scoreboard. Put yellow's score (8) in the first box in the column under "yellow" and black's score (7) under "black" - as seen above.

At the end of each round, add or subtract any new points to the previous scores and then write the updated score in the next lower box of the correct color column.

When the bottom score boxes are full then put the next new scores in the boxes at the top on the right hand side of the scoreboard and continue keeping the score down those columns. If the second set of columns becomes full before 75 points are scored then erase the first set of columns and continue keeping the score in that set of columns again.

Keeping score for a doubles game is very similar to keeping score for a singles game - with one difference. Since doubles is a team game with two players on each team, there are two score boxes in succession for each color. Turn the indicator until yellow is beside the top two score boxes and black is beside the next two score boxes.

Yellow always shoots first to start a shuffleboard game and in doubles that means that yellow at both ends of the court has to shoot first. Therefore, the first "Y" on the indicator means that yellow shoots first at the "head" of the court (scoreboard end) and when the disks are at the opposite end of the court (the "foot") then the indicator shows yellow shooting first again.

When the disks are back at the head of the court then it is black's turn to shoot first at both ends. Always check the indicator to verify whose turn it is to shoot first. Whoever has to shoot first is said to be "out".

Put the first scores (yellow 0 and black 8) in the two top left score boxes after 8 disks have been played to the foot of the court. When play is finished from the foot of the court, then write the new scores (yellow 7 & black 8) in small numbers to the lower right of the existing scores. Then add or subtract the new scores to the previous scores and update the scoreboard with the current correct score by writing it in the next lower score boxes.

Noting the new scores with small numbers helps to make sure that each color receives the correct number of points. Accounting errors might creep into the scoring process and writing the numbers down helps to detect and correct any errors. Check the scoreboard frequently for accuracy.

This notation practice is also used when keeping score in singles games. (See the singles scoreboard above.)

**You're Invited** - Come and play shuffleboard and listen to great music at the famous "St. Pete Shuffle" open house every Friday night from 7 pm until 11 pm at the St. Pete Shuffleboard Club at 559 Mirror Lake Drive No in St. Pete, Florida. We have 32 lighted courts and all the necessary playing equipment available for free use. We're "family friendly" and we welcome players of all ages. Join us for some fun and games. Bring a friend or two.