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The proper method of “chalking” a cue.

Often overlooked and almost never discussed is the appropriate method of chalking a cue tip. Think about all of the times you have heard the squeaking sound of someone chalking their cue. If you would continue to observe that person, you would inevitably hear the distinct sound of a miscue and perhaps the all too familiar lament to the pool gods. In order to avoid these common pitfalls it would be beneficial to understand how it is that chalk adheres to the tip of your cue.

Tips are usually made of single or multi-layered leather. Just like a sweater or a piece of fabric, the leather is covered with very small fibers. It is the leather fibers that hold chalk which creates friction between the tip and the cue ball. This friction holds the cue ball just enough to provide some control.



A common mistake is to apply pressure or to rub the chalk onto the tip. The chalk is an abrasive. When the chalk is rubbed on it just polishes the tip removing the fibers that hold the chalk. It is the

application of pressure while chalking that makes that loud squeaking noise. Once polished, the tip may appear to have a shiny skin. A shiny fiber less tip will not hold chalk efficiently. When this happens the tip must be scuffed in order to break the skin of the tip and to raise the fibers that hold the chalk. This can be accomplished with a little sand paper or any number of commercially sold “scuffers”.

To avoid polishing the tip, the chalk should be lightly brushed on. Short brush strokes from the center of the tip outwards, until there is an even application of the chalk, will protect the tip and provide the best coverage of chalk.

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