



Roy Pastor is a BCA Advanced Level Instructor. He is a principle and instructor with the American Academy of Billiard and Cue Sports, a BCA accredited training facility. He may be contacted at Roy@Billiardacademy.com No portion of this article may be reprinted or reproduced without the express written permission of the author.

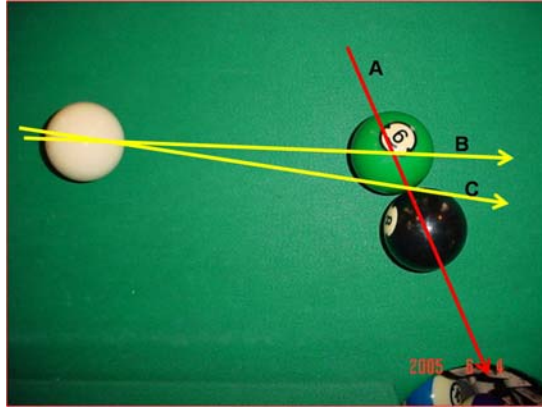
The ghost ball, An aiming technique.

As with any sport, the fundamentals of stroke mechanics is a necessary prerequisite to consistent shot making and development as a player. Once you have acquired the skills necessary to show off a great stroke, you will be able to focus on your shot selection and pocket some balls.

You have walked around the table, looked at the patterns of the balls and have decided which ball to shoot first. How and where do you aim so that your intended target goes into the pocket?

Most people understand, intuitively, where the object ball needs to be struck in order to drive it into the pocket. Draw an imaginary straight line between the center of the object ball and the center of the pocket in which you want the object ball to enter. The point where the line transects the object ball is the required point of contact.

The more difficult question becomes the necessary line of aim so that the cue ball strikes the object ball at the required contact location. The ghost ball can help the shooter visualize the necessary point of aim.



Line A, in the diagram shown above, reflects the desired path of the eight ball for a side pocket shot. The point where line A intersects line C is the place where the eight ball must be struck in order to drive it into the pocket.

Line C, however, should not be your aiming point. Because the balls are spherical, sending the cue ball along line C will guarantee a miss. Contact will be made beyond the intersection of lines A and C.

Line B demonstrates the correct path of the cue ball necessary to send the eight ball along line A.

If the cue ball and the eight ball were the only balls on the table, the shooter could visualize the six ball in order to determine the appropriate line of aim and contact point.

It is the process of visualizing the third ball, in this case the six ball, that defines the aiming technique known as “the ghost ball”.