



Inside English

In this article I want to discuss shooting with inside english, something that occurs as a problem for many players including experienced ones, and one of the most frequently discussed problem among accomplished shooters. Most of the shots that require english are played with outside english, the case of cutting a ball to the right with some left on the cue ball for example. This phenomenon alone may account for the fact that shots requiring inside english often cause a fear reaction for many players.

It's time now to isolate the shot and give it our full attention. Beginning with shot A from the diagram set the balls as shown to pocket the object ball and play position for the ball at point C. Probably you will see before shooting that the shot requires a high cue ball hit with some left-hand english.

Before playing the shot for the position described play it once or twice with stop on the cue ball. Naturally the cue ball does not stop but sails off on the perpendicular line away from your next shot, just the opposite of your intention. Remember that the stop shot is not merely a function of where you hit the cue ball but is more closely associated with how you hit the cue ball, the punch stroke. Knowing this will help you understand that, despite a high left hit on the cue ball, using a punch stroke will move it too far away off the object ball toward to return it from the rail for the next shot. To execute the shot you must combine a smooth follow stroke with high left to move the cue ball toward point x, from where the left spin can easily make it return to point c for a shot on your next ball.

Because the first shot is played best with a relatively soft stroke, incorporating the follow stroke will not be difficult. Before we move on to shot B we need to discuss one more aspect of the shot

to appreciate fully the importance of using the follow stroke for most shots with inside english. With shots that require inside english deflection causes a miss more often than it does on shots requiring outside english, perhaps because deflection pushes the cue ball away from the object ball when using inside english. Let's examine a technique that will take a lot of the deflection out of the shot for greater accuracy. Stated simply, a smoothly executed follow stroke with gradual acceleration causes less cue-ball deflection than a punch stroke. Play shot A five times in the context of keeping your tip on the cue ball and note the results.

For shot B you will place the cue ball on the center spot and pocket the object ball again with the goal of shooting the ball on the bottom rail next. Play the shot one time to pocket the ball and move the cue ball three rails around the table for your next shot. If you completed the shot successfully you must be applying all of the principles discussed so far. If not let's dissect the shot into its elements to produce success. If you are over cutting the object ball that's deflection; regardless of stroke more speed always produces more deflection. To pocket the ball with enough speed to get around the table you may have to aim at the object ball to shoot it straight into the rail to compensate enough for the deflection. If you are pocketing the object ball but leaving the cue ball short of its desired position there are several possible causes. Make sure that you are hitting the cue ball with plenty of high and enough left-hand spin to move it around the table. Once again, be certain also to apply your follow stroke to the cue ball. When the shot is played well the cue ball tracks over the center spot on its way down table for the next shot. Play the shot at softer speeds to put the cue ball on this track adding speed gradually until you are incorporating all of the shot's elements to achieve the intended result.

The shot with inside english occurs as a problem for many players and still causes fear for some of the game's best players. This exercise provides two common examples of this special shot and provides an opportunity, through mastering the exercise, for you to generate comfort and confidence where others sense fear and dread.