

# Rules of Play

## New York Shuffleboard Association

*Version 2.0*

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# 1 Playing Shuffleboard

## 1.1 Game

### 1.1.1 Object

The object of the game is to propel discs, using a cue, toward the scoring area at the opposite end of the court to score, prevent your opponent from scoring, or both.

### 1.1.2 Game Types

There are three types of games, based on the number of players:

- Walking Singles - two individual people compete against one another, playing odd-numbered frames from the head of the court (where the scoreboard is) and even-numbered frames from the foot of the court (the opposite end)
- Non-Walking Singles - two individual people compete against one another, playing from a single end of the court; another match may happen simultaneously on the other end of the court
- Doubles - two teams of two people compete against each other, with one member from team A and B on each end of the court

There are two different game-end scenarios:

- Points Game - a game is complete once a player or team has reached 75 points
- Frames Game - a game is complete once a predetermined number of frames have been played - frame games must have an even number of frames

The player or team with the most points after a game-end scenario has been met is the winner. In the event of a tie, see [Section 1.3.4](#).

### 1.1.3 Divisions

The New York Shuffleboard Association does not separate tournaments or leagues by gender or sex.

### 1.1.4 Amendments

The Tournament Director(s) or League Manager(s) may amend any of these rules for the event. Any amendments or omissions will be announced before the event begins.

## 1.2 Equipment

### 1.2.1 Discs

Discs shall be no less than 9/16" and no more than 1" in thickness, 6" in diameter, and no less than 11 1/2 ounces in weight. Four (4) discs shall be colored yellow, four (4) colored black. These eight (8) discs comprise a set. (Other color combinations may be used.) Care should be taken that all discs in a set shall be uniform in weight and thickness.

Players shall not be required to play with discs, new or old, that are not in satisfactory condition. Defective discs will be replaced by good discs, if available. Any change of discs must be made before practice begins.

Players shall take care to ensure the same set of eight discs remain on their court through the entirety of the match.

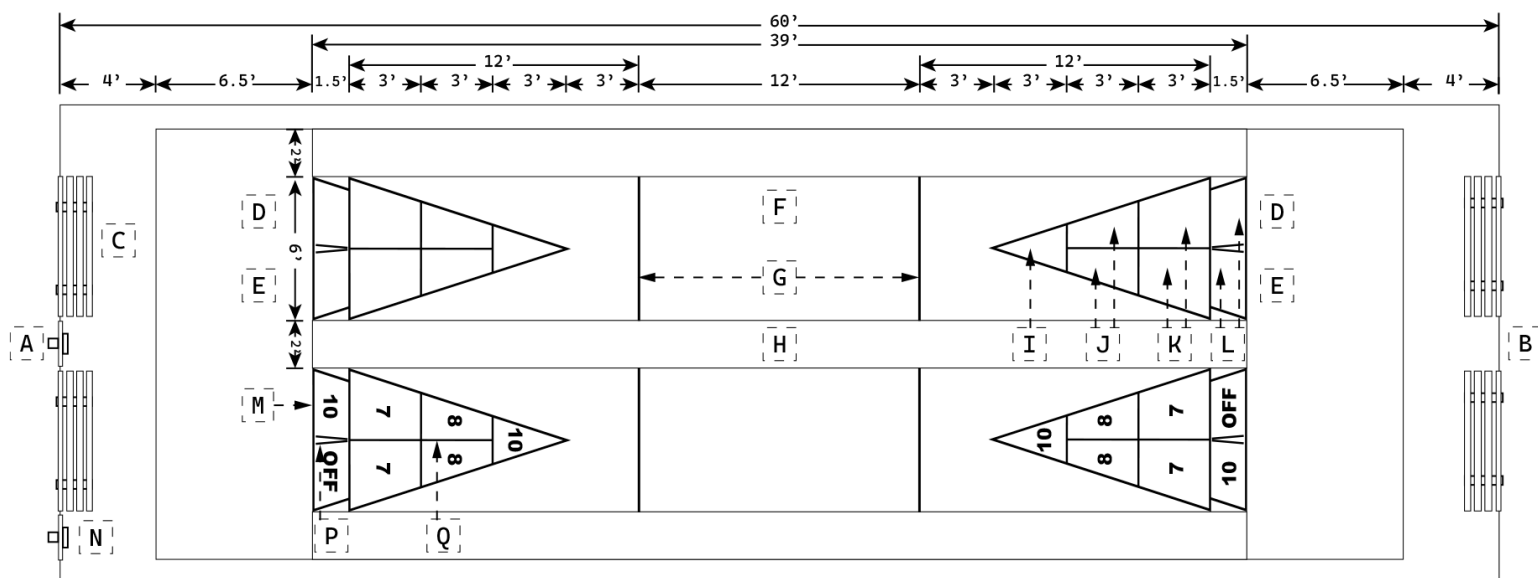
### 1.2.2 Cues

The cue shall not have an overall length of more than six feet, three inches (6'3"). No metal part of the cue shall touch the playing surface of the court.

## 1.2.3 Courts

Courts must be the following dimensions:

**Figure 1.2.3 Shuffleboard Courts**



- A. Head of Court (Determined by where the scoreboard is)
- B. Foot of Court
- C. Bench
- D. Black Side
- E. Yellow Side
- F. Dead Zone
- G. Lag Lines
- H. Alley
- I. 10 Scoring Area
- J. 8 Scoring Areas
- K. 7 Scoring Areas
- L. Kitchen
- M. Base Line
- N. Scoreboard
- O. (intentionally unused)
- P. Separator Lines
- Q. Center Line

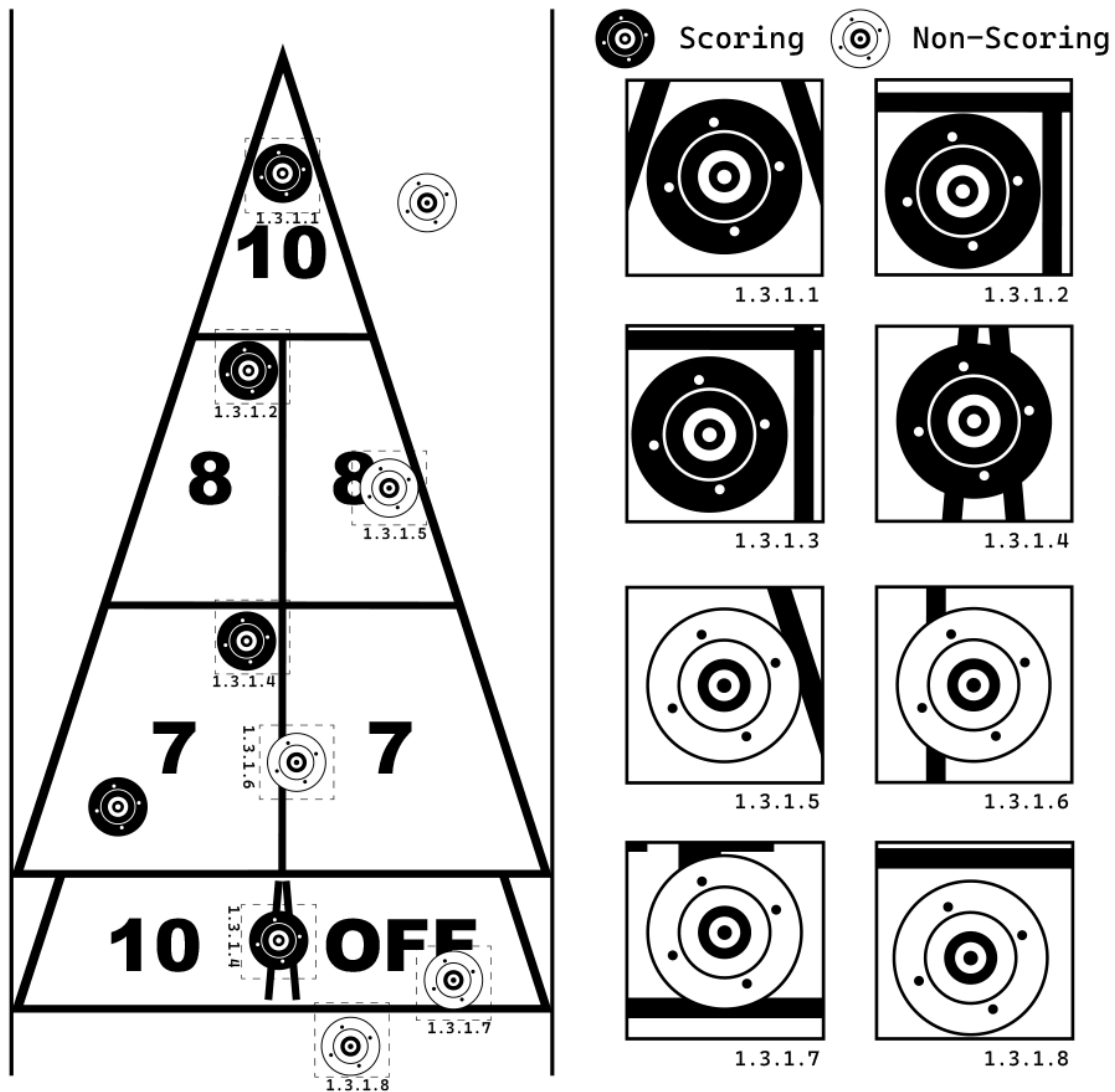
## 1.3 Score

### 1.3.1 Scoring a Frame

A frame is complete when the eighth disc is shot and all discs come to a stop. When a frame is complete, score all discs on the scoring area within, but not touching, the lines. The separation triangle in the 10-Off area is not considered a line. Play continues until all discs have been shot in that frame even if game point has been reached.

Scoring discs do not cancel each other out. If both players have a scoring “8” disc, they both receive 8 points.

Figure 1.3.1 Scoring and Non-Scoring Discs



**1.3.1.1:** +10 points. Disc is within all lines.

**1.3.1.2:** +8 points. Disc is within all lines. Must be judged from behind the biscuit and viewed from directly overhead.

**1.3.1.3:** +7 points. Disc is within all lines.

**1.3.1.4:** -10 points. Discs that land on this triangle DO count. The triangle in the kitchen is there merely to separate shooting areas.

**1.3.1.5:** No score. Disc is touching the interior line.

**1.3.1.6:** No score. Disc is straddling the centerline.

**1.3.1.7:** No score. Disc is touching the interior line along the back of the kitchen.

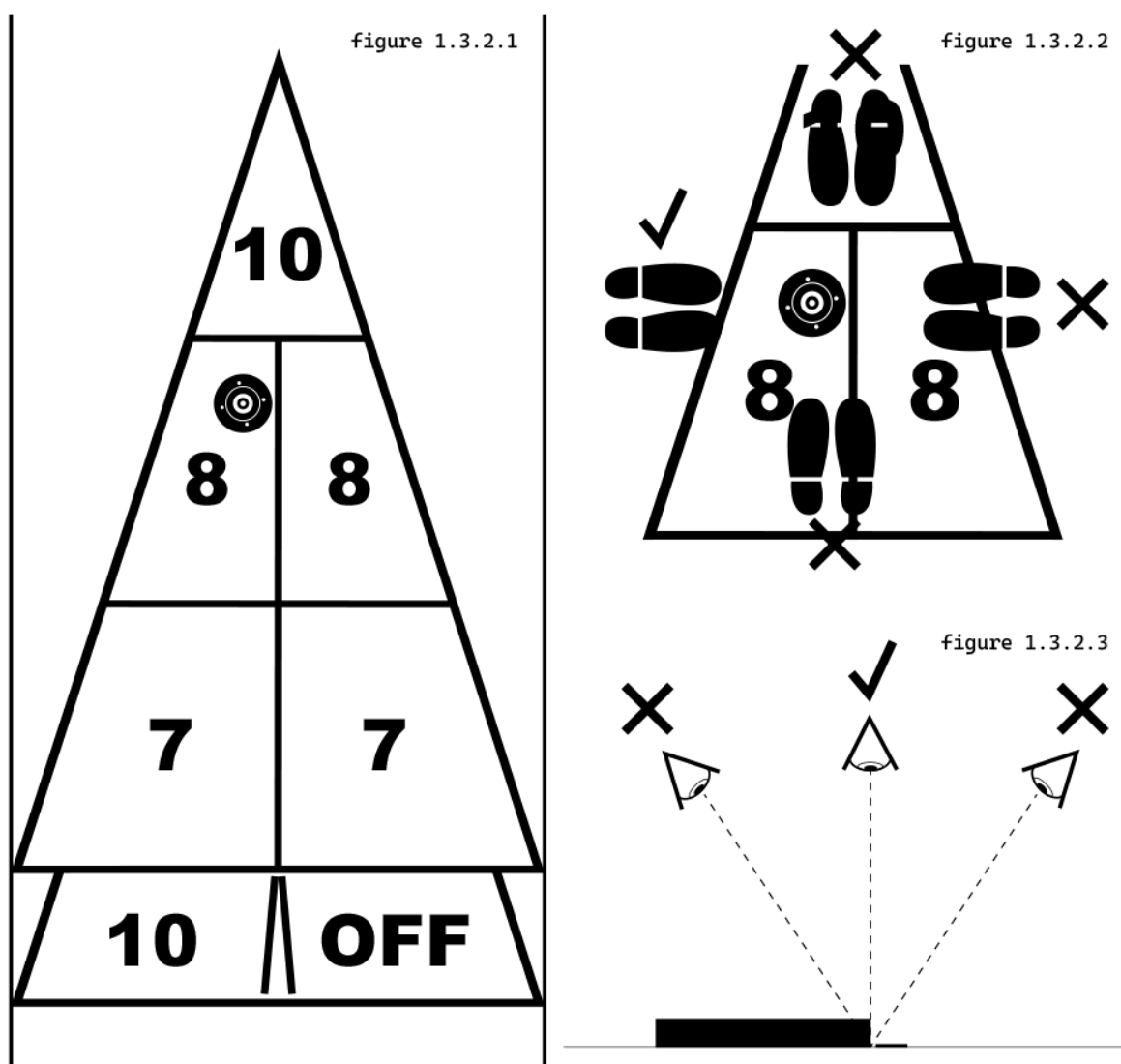
**1.3.1.8:** No score. Any Disc that has passed entirely through the board and is not touching line should be removed before the next shot is taken.

### 1.3.2 Judging a Disc

When judging a disc in relation to lines, the person shall look directly down over the disc. A mounted disc, or disc resting on top of another disc, happens sometimes when players use excessive force in shooting and shall be counted if within the scoring area. Each disc shall be judged separately according to scoring rules.

When there is doubt as to whether or not a disc counts, the Tournament Director or their designate will make the final call. If the competition type does not involve a tournament director being present, a mutually agreed third party will make the final call.

Figure 1.3.2 Calling Discs



**1.3.2.1-** A disc close enough to the center line to warrant a check

**1.3.2.2 -** Illustrating where to stand to best judge a close disc- stand OVER the disc



**1.3.2.3** - Illustrating where to look at a disc to call it. Your eye should be directly OVER the disc edge. Any other angle will risk improper calls.

### 1.3.3 Error In Scoring

If an error occurs in scoring on the scoreboard at the end of the frame and it is discovered before the next frame is completed, the error must be corrected. If the error is caught later, both sides may discuss and agree on the best way to correct the error. If no agreement can be reached, the tournament director shall determine a fair resolution, or the score as written on the scoreboard must stand if no tournament director is available.

### 1.3.4 Tie Games

If both competitors have the same score after the predetermined number of frames in a frames game, or when their scores are at 75 points or more in a points game, the tie must be broken.

To break the tie, two additional frames will be played, repeating until the score is no longer tied. In a points game, if the tie-breaking frames result in scores below 75 points, the game is still complete.

If there was a color change in the game, players remain on the same color and play 2 additional frames. If still tied, players switch to their original colors (from the start of the match, no practice shots) and play 2 additional frames, continuing to switch colors and repeat 2 frames at time (to ensure each opponent receives a hammer) until the tie is broken. In this tiebreaker format, color order will be Yellow then Black every 2 frames.

## 2 Rules

### 2.1 Spirit of the Game

Shuffleboard is a highly competitive strategy- and skill-based game, but competition should never be at the expense of the joy and respect of all players.<sup>1</sup>

Arrive at your match on-time and well-prepared. Give the match and your competitors your full attention.

### 2.2 Rule Enforcement

The New York Shuffleboard Association's Rules of Play are meant to ensure all players have an agreed-upon set of rules and expectations when competing with each other. If a rule is broken during play, inform your opponent, as they may not be aware of the rule or how they are violating it.

Any dispute between players regarding the rules should be brought to the attention of the Tournament Director or their designate to clear the situation.

The Tournament Director has the final say in any and all disputes regarding play on the courts for the duration of tournaments and all other competitive events.

Additionally, the Code of Conduct will be enforced for tournaments and all other competitive events. See [Section 4 Code of Conduct](#).

### 2.3 Order of Operations

#### 2.3.1 Determining Color and Player Placement

At the start of a match, competitors will flip a coin or play a game like *Rock Paper Scissors*. The winner either chooses which color to play in the first game of the match or defers to their opponent.

In doubles matches, the team that chose the color decides which of their players will play on each end of each court. The other team then decides where their players will play. Players must continue to play from the same ends of the court in additional games of the match.

Example:

Alice and Bob are playing a best-of-3 doubles match against Chris and Diane. Alice and Bob win the coin toss, but decide to defer the color choice. Chris and Diane choose to play as Yellow in game 1, assign Chris to the head of the court, and assign Diana to the foot of the

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<sup>1</sup> Based on the sport Ultimate's Spirit of the Game

court. Alice and Bob then assign Bob to the head of the court and Alice to the foot of the court. In game 2, Chris and Diana play Black and Bob and Alice play Yellow.

Alternatively, a tournament may pre-determine which color each competitor plays in game 1 and which team places their players first.

If a match has multiple games, competitors change colors at the start of each game, unless it is the last game of a match (i.e. game 3 in a best-of-3 match). In this case in a frame game, players will start on the colors they played in game 1 and change colors halfway through the match. In a points game, *Lag* will be played, and the winner chooses their color for the last game.

### 2.3.2 Lag

Lag is a tie-breaking game played by two opposing players shooting from the head of the court, attempting to shoot a disc as close as possible to, or onto, the far lag line. Yellow shoots a practice disc, followed by black. Both discs are then removed. Practice is repeated with each player's next two discs. The last disc shot by each player shall be left on the court. The disc closest to the far lag line wins. Measurement is from the center of the disc to the center of the lag line. If the last black disc shot touches the yellow disc, the yellow player wins.

### 2.3.3 Practice

Two rounds of practice (eight total practice discs) on assigned color are allowed by each player before the first and second games of a match. If additional games are necessary, no practice is allowed.

If a match is a single game with color change, two rounds of practice are allowed before the first frame on a new color.

In walking singles, players still have two rounds of practice: one at the head of the court and one at the foot of the court.

Practice may be skipped or shortened if all players on the court agree.

### 2.3.4 Shooting Order

To start a game, play begins at the head of the court with the first frame. A frame is complete once all eight discs have been shot, in alternating color order (i.e., yellow, black, yellow, black, etc). Yellow shall always be played from right side of the head of court, and left side on the foot of the court.

In Frame 1, yellow shoots the first disc. Play alternates between colors until all discs are shot. In Frames 2 and 3, black shoots the first disc. In frame 4, yellow shoots the first disc. This pattern repeats until the game is complete.

Before a game begins, the scoreboard must have a designation of which color leads, either via a tournament bar on its side or tick marks drawn on the scoreboard.

Figure 2.3.4 Scoreboards

A B			
-	7		
10	7		
3	15		
4	15		
12	5		
19	12		
19	12		
19	20		

### 2.3.5 Error in Color Lead

Error in color lead shall be corrected if discovered before the first disc of the following frame has been shot, and the frame shall be played over. Otherwise play continues in the order started at the beginning of the game unless all players agree to switch hammers to account for the improperly played frame and create an equal number of hammer frames across the game.

## 2.4 Play Area

### 2.4.1 Standing Area

The area between the baseline of the court and an imaginary line, even with the back of the bench, and bounded on the sides by the farthest line of each adjoining alley, should be considered part of the court.

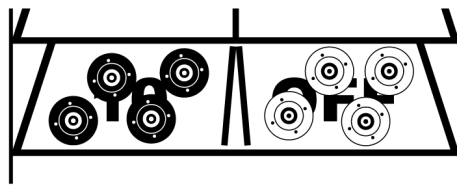
Players may stand behind the baseline extension and in the alley between the courts, before or while shooting, but not on an adjoining court.

## 2.4.2 Shooting Area

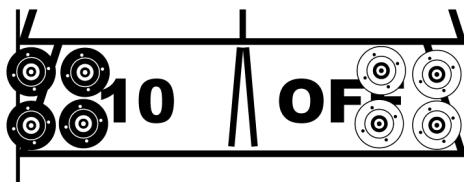
Players shall keep all four (4) of their discs within, but not touching, the lines of their respective half of 10-off area.

Discs must be played from within the respective half of the 10-off area. Discs may not be played while touching the front or back line, or played while touching the side of the 10-off area or dividing triangle.

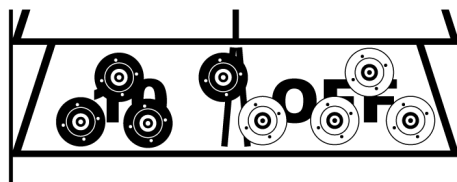
Figure 2.4.2 Shooting Position



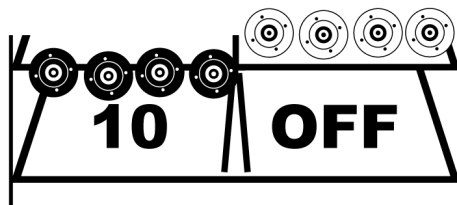
2.4.2.1  
Valid Shooting Position  
All Discs Inside Kitchen



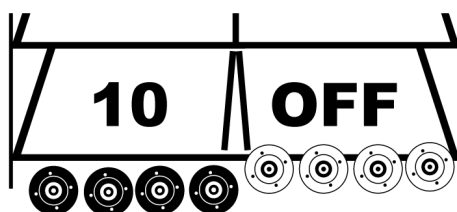
2.4.2.2  
Invalid Shooting Position  
Discs Touching Edge Lines



2.4.2.3  
Invalid Shooting Position  
Discs Touching Shooting Divider



2.4.2.4  
Invalid Shooting Position  
Discs Touching Or Past Kitchen Line



2.4.2.5  
Invalid Shooting Position  
Discs Touching Or Past Baseline

It is common practice with players to jockey or slide the playing disc backward and forward to see if there is any debris which might interfere with the disc sliding evenly. Discs in motion may

cross the outside line. A disc is played when it reaches the first lag line, before the dead zone, or goes into the gutter.

## 2.5 Shot Delivery

### 2.5.1 Touching Court

Players must not touch a foot, hand, knee, or any other part of their body to the court on or over the base line or extension of baseline at any time while executing a shot.

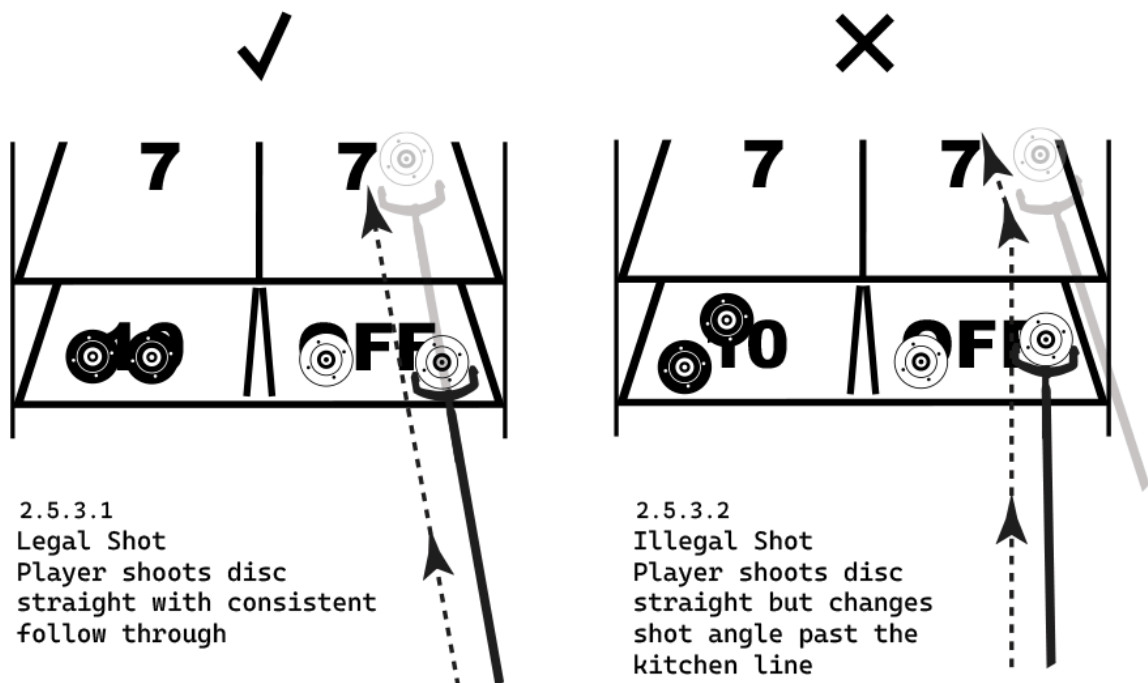
### 2.5.2 Hesitation Shot

Forward motion of a cue and disc must be continuous or accelerated, with no hesitation.

### 2.5.3 Hook Shot

A shot must be delivered in a straight line with continuous forward motion of the cue and disc. Changing direction of the cue and disc mid-shot is classified as a hook shot and is not permitted.

Figure 2.5.3 Hook Shots



## 2.5.4 Consecutive Discs

A player may not shoot two discs in a row, without their opponent shooting a disc in between.

## 2.6 Dead Discs

### 2.6.1 Types of Dead Discs

A disc that clearly leaves the court beyond the farthest base line, or goes off the sides of the court is a dead disc.

If a dead disc stops fewer than 8 inches beyond the farthest baseline, remove it.

A disc returning to or remaining on the playing area of the court, after having struck any object outside the playing area is a dead disc and shall be removed before play continues.

A disc that stops in front of the far lag line without touching it shall be removed before play continues

A disc that is leaning over the edge of the court and touching the alley shall be immediately removed.

### 2.6.2 Moved Discs

If any live discs are moved before the last disc of a frame has come to rest, they will be placed back in their former position, as close as possible. This includes discs moved as a result of a dead disc rebounding and causing live discs to move, discs coming from another court touching live discs, or discs moved by players at the other end of the court by mistake.

Any dispute between players about the location of the live discs or the proper way to resolve the issue should be brought to the attention of the Tournament Director to determine the best resolution to the situation. If no tournament director is available, players must agree on a close enough placement of discs to finish the frame or replay the frame entirely.

## 2.7 Other Rules

### 2.7.1 Code of Conduct

All players must follow the New York Shuffleboard Association's Code of Conduct, found in [Section 4](#). Players must not talk or make remarks to disconcert their opponent's play. Celebrate your victories; don't celebrate your opponent's misfortunes.

### 2.7.2 Coaching

Any remarks, signals, or motions to a teammate intended to provide or receive coaching are prohibited. Once frame 1 of a match has begun, do not ask anyone on or off the court for

advice about shot selection, information about the discs, or information about the court speed or drift.

You may ask players on the other end of the court for clarification of the current game situation, but not in a leading way.

A player may also walk to the other end of the court to assess the current game situation before their shot but there may not be any verbal or non-verbal communication between teammates while doing so.

### Examples

Allowed: asking how many and which discs are currently in scoring position

Prohibited: pointing out a potential shot to your partner with your cue, hands, or by using any verbal or non-verbal signals

Allowed: asking what the current score is

Prohibited: asking for advice on which shot to take

Allowed: telling your teammate the score prior to the start of a frame

Prohibited: telling your teammate the score in the middle of a frame, without their request, to influence shot selection

Allowed: Confirming what the score is mid-frame

Prohibited: asking if you should intentionally throw the last disc of the game off the court

Allowed: asking how many inches over a line a disc is (a disc is 6" in diameter) or walking down to assess the distance yourself

Prohibited: asking your teammate if there is enough room to replace a disc without it touching the line, since it may be interpreted as asking for advice on shot selection

If a match is a single game with color change, teammates may briefly communicate with each other in the time between the last frame on the starting color and the first frame on a new color.

For any official NYSA competition, a tournament director or league administrator shall determine whether coaching is allowed, and ensure it is communicated to all participants prior to the start of play.



### 2.7.3 Player Interference

Players shall not stand in the way of, have a cue in the way of, or interfere with their opponent while they are executing a play.

### 2.7.4 Delay of Game

A player or team should start the match following a court call within a reasonable amount of time as determined by the Tournament Director.

Players must not leave the court during a game without permission, except to gather discs at the end of a frame. Return to court as quickly as possible.

Players may take a short break between games. Players may not be gone for more than 10 minutes.

### 2.7.5 Substitutes

Once a tournament starts there will be no substitutes allowed in any match.

### 2.7.6 Smoking

There is to be no smoking on the courts during a match.

### 2.7.7 Other Improper Action

In case of improper action of a player not specifically covered by the rules, the tournament director will ascertain the facts and determine a resolution. The tournament director has final say in any and all disputes regarding play on the courts for the duration of a competition.

# 3 Definitions

**10-off area** - The part of the scoring area on the opposite end of the court that is worth -10 points, also known as the kitchen. Players must also shoot all discs from this area on their end of the court.

**Alley** - The area between two courts.

**Apex** - The point at the top of the 10 in the scoring area.

**Baseline** - The line that separates the 10-off area from the standing area.

**Biscuit** - See “disc.”

**Cue** - Equipment used to propel discs by players, also known as a “tang”. See [Section 1.2.2 Cues](#).

**Dead disc** - A disc that has been shot and needs to be removed from play. See [Section 2.6.1 Types of Dead Discs](#).

**Disc** - Equipment that is propelled by cues, also known as a “biscuit.” See [Section 1.2.1 Discs](#).

**Doubles** - A game type where two teams of two people compete against each other, with one member from team A and B on each end of the court. See [Section 1.1.2 Game Types](#).

**End** - The two short sides of the perimeter of the court, where players shoot from. A court has two ends, the head and the foot.

**Foot** - The end of the court that does not have the scoreboard.

**Frame** - A period where each player on a single end of the court shoots four discs each, alternating between each player.

**Frame game** - A game that is complete once a predetermined number of frames have been played. See [Section 1.1.2 Game Types](#).

**Gutter** - See “Alley”.

**Half-round** - Not used in this ruleset. See “frame.”

**Hammer** - The last disc shot in a frame.

**Head** - The end of the court that has the scoreboard. Play begins from the head of the court.

**Kitchen** - See “10-off area.”

**Live disc** - A disc that has been shot, is in play, and has not entered any area that would make it a Dead Disc. See [Section 2.6.1 Types of Dead Discs](#).

**Non-walking singles** - A game type where two individual people compete against one another, playing from a single end of the court; another match may happen simultaneously on the other end of the court. See [Section 1.1.2 Game Types](#).

**Point game** - A game that is complete once a competitor has reached 75 points. See [Section 1.1.2 Game Types](#).

**Scoring area** - The area of the court that players propel discs toward in order to earn points.

**Shufflegram** - See “scoring area.”

**Side** - The half of the court that each competitor’s discs start in. A court has two sides, yellow and black.

**Singles** - A game type where two individual people compete against one another. See [Section 1.1.2 Game Types](#).

**Starting area** - See “10-off area.”

**Out** - i.e. “Yellow is out.” The player that goes first in a frame. See [Section 2.3.4 Shooting Order](#) for which player “is out” in each frame.

**Round** - Not used in this ruleset. See “frame.”

**Tang** - See “Cue.”

**Walking singles** - A game type where two individual people compete against one another, playing odd-numbered frames from the head of the court (where the scoreboard is) and even-numbered frames from the foot of the court (the opposite end). See [Section 1.1.2 Game Types](#).

## 4 Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct represents the policy for the New York Shuffleboard Association. It applies to members, elected officials, committee members, instructors, referees, and spectators. The Code of Conduct will be enforced. Any member violating the intent of the policy may have their membership revoked or may be disqualified from participation in a competition.

Play the game with a spirit of good sportsmanship and act in a responsible manner. All players should conduct themselves in a manner that will ensure a welcoming, respectful, and comfortable environment for all.

Members must acknowledge that we are all representatives of a global shuffleboard community. As such, one must respect the age, spirituality, ethnic background and race, gender, sexual orientation, and disabilities of all persons involved.

There shall be no action as an attempt to intimidate, harass or demean opponents, teammates, officials, members, and spectators. This includes; threats, hurtful language, inappropriate disruption of events, unwanted sexual attention, bullying, or stalking - in person, online, or via social media.

Be aware of one's surroundings. Be courteous, responsible, and respectful.

## 5 Acknowledgements

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The New York Shuffleboard Association's Rules of Play draws largely on The Illinois Shuffleboard Association's Rules, viewable here:  
<https://www.illinoisshuffleboard.org/documents>

*Spirit of the Game* section based the sport Ultimate's Spirit of the Game, found at <https://usultimate.org/rules>