

What's is the Lag ?

Definition Of "The Lag"

If competition or tournament rules require a lag for break then the following procedure should be used:

Each player should use balls of equal size and weight. With the balls in baulk, one player to the left and one to the right of the table, the balls are struck simultaneously to the foot cushion and back to the baulk end of the table. The player whose ball is the closest to the innermost edge of the baulk cushion wins the lag. The lagged ball must contact the foot cushion at least once. Other cushion contacts are immaterial, except as prohibited below.

It is an automatic loss of the lag if:

- the ball crosses into the opponent's half of the table,
- the ball fails to contact the foot cushion,
- the ball drops into a pocket,
- the ball jumps the table,
- the ball touches the long cushion,
- the ball rests within the corner pocket and past the nose of the head cushion, or
- the ball contacts the foot cushion more than once.

If both players violate automatic-loss lag rules, or if the referee is unable to determine which ball is closer, the lag is a tie and is replayed.

If one player strikes the ball, the other player has to strike his ball before the opponent's ball reaches the foot cushion in order to have a simultaneous lag. If this is not the case and the referee feels that the player who played second wanted to get an advantage out of that, then the lag has to be replayed.

Losing the Lag

There are few ways to automatically lose the lag — or forfeit the choice of who breaks first to your opponent: If the ball does not travel straight down the table and winds up returning to your opponent's side of the table, interfering with the path of her or his returning ball, or if the ball hits the side rail on its way down the table. Sounds unlikely? It is, but it could happen. Another way to lose the lag is for the ball to fall into a pocket, so make sure you are hitting it in a straight line up and down the table.

It is a good idea to appoint an objective party as referee. This person can watch for fouls and keep score if necessary.

You also automatically lose the lag if the ball doesn't strike the foot rail on the other side of the table or if the ball flies off the table. If the lag is tied, both players try again.