

Play Your Best Pool

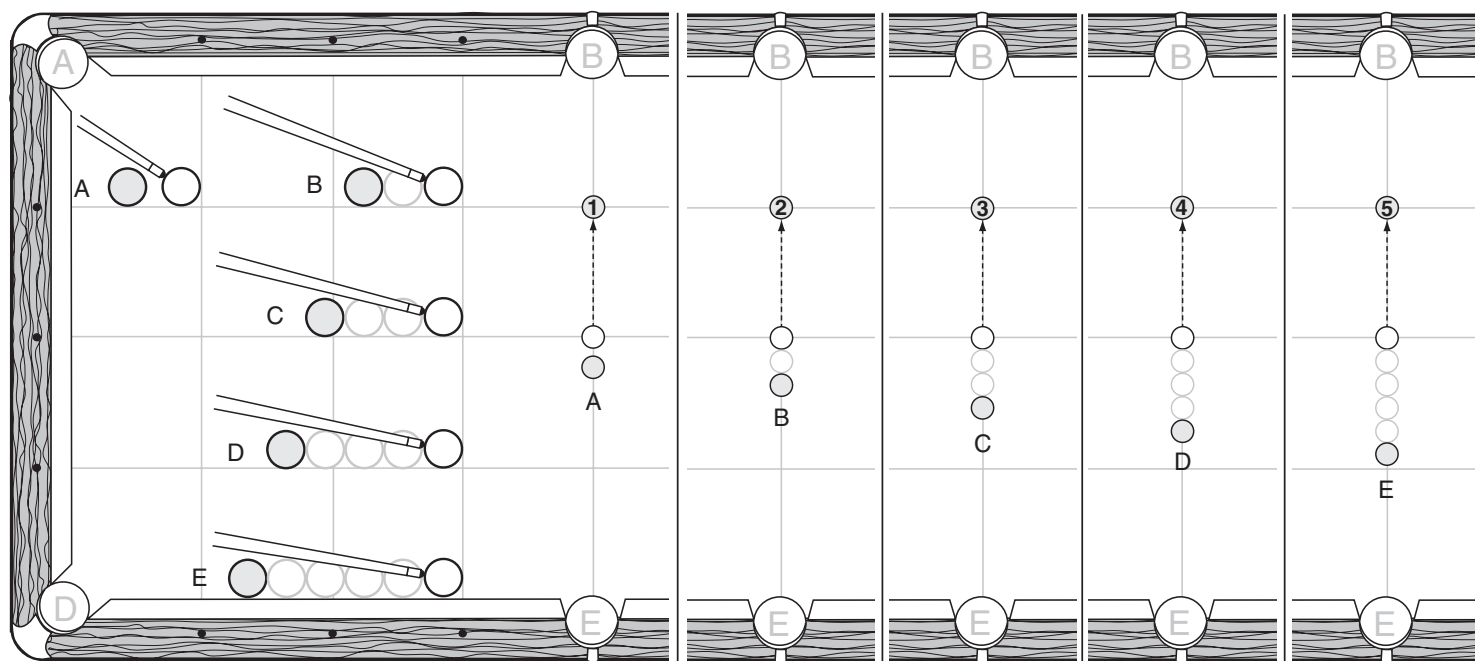
By Phil Capelle

When you must elevate to shoot over a ball, your cue will approach the cue ball at a downward angle, which puts a premium on accuracy. If your tip wavers slightly and you apply the slightest bit of sidespin, the cue ball will curve off line, causing a miss. You must be more precise, and yet precision is more difficult to achieve. This is especially true when the obstructer is right next to the cue ball. Now that I've sounded my cautionary note, let's see how you can build your skill at jacked up shots.

your stance your bridge. Pocketing the ball is the top priority, so start with a soft and short stroke using a half tip of follow. Learn how much speed you can use in your later sets. Continue to add speed until your accuracy begins to suffer.

On Shot A, you must bridge behind the obstructer because it is so close to the cue ball. On the other four shots you have a decision to make: should you place your bridge between the obstructer and the cue ball, or on the opposite side? Bridging closer will reduce any errors at contact, but a more elevated cue could offset this advantage. If you bridge on the other side of the obstructer, your cue will be at a shallower angle, but any tip errors at contact will be magnified. Try both sides and weigh the advantages of either approach. Then use the one with which you are most comfortable and effective. Once you are

Jacking Up



This is an excerpt from Phil Capelle's forthcoming book of practice exercises and techniques for learning pool. Capelle is the author of "Play Your Best Pool" and several other instructional books on pool. He has been actively involved in pool for the last 37 years and is a Certified Instructor with the Billiard Congress of America. Visit Phil at billiardspress.com

SET UP: Shot A is set up for the side pocket. The cue ball and obstructer can be set up on the same line to the side pocket.

EXECUTION: Set up as comfortably and accurately as possible. Spend more time getting settled in

comfortable playing soft follow shots, try lowering your tip for stop shots. Next, try some short-range draw shots.

A word of caution: avoid using english on these shots as it will send the shots' difficulty factor off the charts.