

APA Pool Leagues



**3 Quick Tips
to Take Your
Pool Game
Up a Notch**

Your Grip

Be sure to keep your gripping hand in a neutral arm/wrist position. Try to avoid curling of the wrist. If you curl the wrist, it will change the way the cue stick strikes the ball. So, try and keep it relaxed. Think of the cue stick like a bird, you want to hold it just tight enough that it won't fly away, but loose enough to open up your hand on the back swing. If you hold it too tight, the cue stick will follow the swing of your arm – you want it to continue to go back and forth.

You want uniform tension throughout the swing. So, as you pull back your stroke, you don't want to get tighter or looser. As you go forward, no tension.

Where you grip the cue stick will depend on your height. However, it also depends on how low you get down on the cue stick when shooting. When the tip of my cue stick pulls back, and my tip strikes the cue ball, my hand should be perpendicular to the ground. That way you have the opportunity for full back swing if necessary and full follow-through if necessary.

Takeaways:

Neutral Arm/Wrist Position

Uniform Tension Back and Forth

When At Strike Position Make Sure Your Forearm is Perpendicular to the Ground

The Bridge

Here are 3 types of bridges I use:

First, the **Open V Bridge**. Take your thumb and put it on your index finger. A common mistake is when you run your shaft along the edge of your thumb. You want to make sure your cue is inside the V that is formed between your thumb and your finger. As you stroke, the cue should go towards or across your middle finger.

Next is the **Closed Bridge** which can sometimes be difficult to master, but it's similar to the Open V Bridge. You take your thumb, and instead of putting it on your index finger, you put it on your middle finger. You're once again creating a V, and staying away from pushing the cue along the side of your thumb, but instead of crossing the middle finger you'll be crossing the ring finger. So, thumb on the V and loop the index finger over the cue stick. That will create a nice bridge.

I use a **Closed Rail Bridge** when I'm bridging from the rail, but I have some space between the rail and the cue ball. With the closed rail bridge I take the length of my thumb and put it again on the tip of my middle finger with my index finger looped over the cue stick. I use this often on 9-Ball breaks.

Types of Bridges:

Open V Bridge

Closed Bridge

Closed Rail Bridge





Your Stance

When you stand at a shot, first make sure you know your target. I look at my smallest possible target on the object ball. I then lock my chin behind the cue ball on exactly where I want to hit the object ball. Then, I keep using my eyes to look between the cue ball and the object ball. Once I lock in my chin for the shot, my right toe should be on my shot line. Once in position, and assuming you are right-handed, I then casually walk my left foot out diagonally forward. When I get down on the shot I want to make sure I have clearance, balance and alignment. For true alignment, my head, shoulder, elbow, wrist and right toe are in-line straight towards my target. Then, I want to make sure I'm comfortable and balanced. You don't want too much weight going forward or backwards. You want to feel solid. If you need more clearance due to your body type, be sure to move your left foot further out diagonally rather than adjusting your right foot.

Keys to a Good Stance:

- Balance
- Alignment
- Clearance