

Guide to Practicing Without a Pool Table

Fundamentals associated with bridge, alignment, grip, stance, table approach, stroke mechanics, rhythm and cadence can all be practiced without the use of a pool table. The following is a guide to getting you started with training without a pool table.

The equipment

All you need is: 1) An adjustable ironing board, or you could also use a table 2) Painter's tape 3) A Sharpie 4) Donut hole reinforcers 5) A bath towel 6) A standing mirror 7) A practice cueball.

1) An ironing board (or table)



A typical adjustable ironing board is perfect for practicing pool (thank you Barry Stark, snooker coach). The bed of an ironing board has nice padding and adjustable legs that you can easily position at 30 inches, the same height as the bed of the pool table.

Here you can see an example of an ironing board next to a pool table. It is adjusted to be the exact height of the bed of the pool table.

You could also use a typical kitchen or dining room table. They tend to be a little lower, around 29 inches, but it will still get the job done. It is recommended that you use a pad so you do not damage the table.

- 2) **Painter's Tape:** Any typical painters tape will do. You will put the tape on the ironing board or table as a means of helping with stroke alignment and you can also put it on the floor to help with aligning your feet properly.
- 3) **A sharpie:** A medium tipped black sharpie will be used to draw a line down the center of the tape. This will be used to hone your stroke alignment.
- 4) **Donut hole reinforcers:** These are the loose leaf notebook paper reinforcers found in any stationary section where school supplies are sold. Affixed to the painter's tape, these will be used to hold the practice cueball in place
- 5) **A Towel:** A standard rolled up bath towel will be placed at the end of the ironing board or table so that you can actually stroke a cueball during the practice session.

6) A standing mirror A simple standing mirror can be set up to the side of the student and also directly in front of the student to allow the student to self-observe and hone head alignment, grip and stroke mechanics.

If you are interested in a more portable, versatile mirror alternative, you can use a tripod affixed with a clamp and portable acrylic shatterproof mirror. This kind of setup can also be brought to the pool hall & used for additional training such as mirror image kicking and banking. And of course, the tripod can also be used for recording.

Tripod: <https://a.co/d/55N83E4>



Tripod Clamp: <https://a.co/d/ib0YWRw>



Safety Mirror: <https://a.co/d/4az2y3V>



The complete setup



7) A practice cueball

There are many practice cueballs on the market. There are advantages to using a practice cueball vs. a standard cueball. Practice cueball's typically have markings on them to help you hone your tip placement on the cueball for various striking positions. While we do not endorse any specific products, this is an example of one of them. This is the icue practice ball.



The Setup

Here you can see the setup. Painters tape stuck down the middle of the ironing board. A line drawn with the sharpie down the center, a towel positioned at the end to catch the cueball, a donut hole reinforcement stuck down where the cueball will be placed.



Practicing

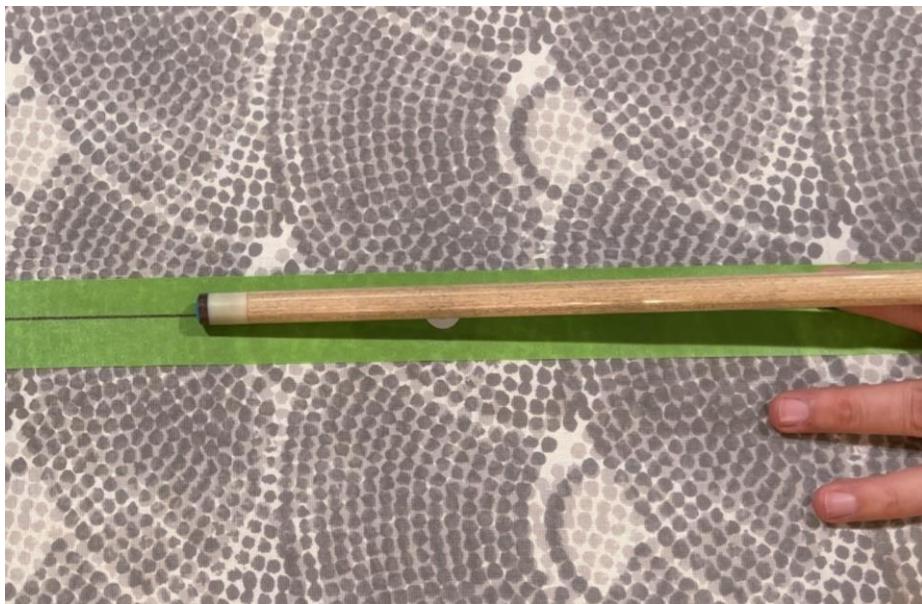
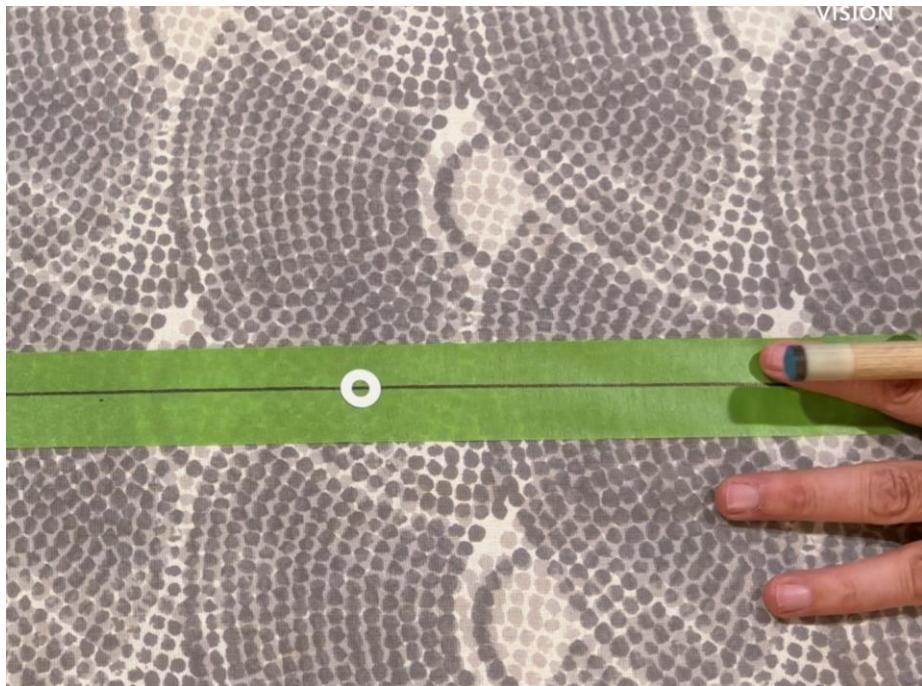
You can place the mirror to the side to observe yourself in set position and be sure your grip and alignment is at 90 degrees. In the picture below, it is easy for me to see that my arm is not 90 degrees at set position. I would be looking to adjust this.



You can position the mirror at the end of the ironing board to observe your head alignment.



You can practice stroking without a cueball, just stroking over the center line in the tape, over the donut hole reinforcement where the cueball will be located. Pay particular attention to where your cue is. If your alignment and stroke is true, it should remain centered over that line in the middle of the tape.



You can use this setup to practice your entire pre-shot routine, table approach, stepping into the shot line, dropping down onto the shot; set, pause and finish, stroking the cueball (into the towel) & freezing at the end. Pay particular attention to where your cue is. If your alignment and stroke is true, it should remain centered over that line in the middle of the tape. You could see in my finish that my tip is to the left of the center line, indicating a flaw in my stroke. I would be looking to correct for that.



You can use the practice ball to be sure you are striking the cueball where you intend to. Practice different cuing positions including high, center-ball, low, left spin and right spin. You can check the chalk residue on the ball to see where your tip made contact. Use that information to adjust accordingly.

In the picture below, I had intended to strike the cueball in the center. You could see from the mark that I was a bit below that. I would be looking to adjust for that.



In Summary

You can practice many of your fundamentals without a pool table using the equipment and techniques provided in this guide. If you are working with a professional instructor and practice what they teach using these methods, you can be sure the fundamentals you hone here will carry over to the actual pool table.