
Supporting narrated video (NV) demonstrations, high-speed video (HSV) clips, technical proofs (TP), and all of my past articles can be accessed and viewed online at billiards.colostate.edu. The reference numbers used in the articles help you locate the resources on the website.

This is the fourth article in a series dealing with the “Video Encyclopedia of Nine-ball and Ten-ball (VENT),” a five-disc instructional-DVD set I recently created with fellow Billiards Digest columnist Bob Jewett. VENT teaches all of the skills, knowledge and strategy one needs to excel at 9-ball and 10-ball. Topics include break shot strategy and effects, game planning, position play and english, safety play, and advanced principles, shots, and strategies. An outline of the entire VENT series along with video excerpts from each DVD can be viewed online at: DrDaveBilliards.com/vent.

The topic for this month is basic defensive strategy, featuring the two shots demonstrated in online video [NV 1.5](#) (an excerpt from Disc II of VENT). **Diagram 1** shows the layout for the first shot. Just looking at the starting ball positions (and not the shot choices shown), what would you do in this situation? The 8-9 cluster must be broken out to win. The 5-ball shot is fairly straight, but it would be possible to use a firm stun shot to break out the cluster. It is also possible to follow forward to get the break out, but both of these shots would be difficult. And there is no guarantee to get a good look at the 6 after the break out. Also, no easy offensive shot is available on the 6, even with good cue ball (CB) position. A better approach with this ball layout might be a defensive sequence, starting with the 5-ball shot.

Whenever you don’t think a run-out is high-percentage, you should consider a defensive play as early as possible. Here, as shown in Diagram 1, a good option is to draw back from the 5 to get good shape on the 6 for a strategic safety. The goal is to position the CB to be able to hit the 6 into the 8 to break out the cluster and hide the CB behind the 7. Obviously, it is best to get the CB close to the 7 to prevent a possible jump shot at the 6. With the final ball layout shown in the diagram, with only tough kick shots at the 6 available, a decent player would definitely be the favorite to win ... against any player.

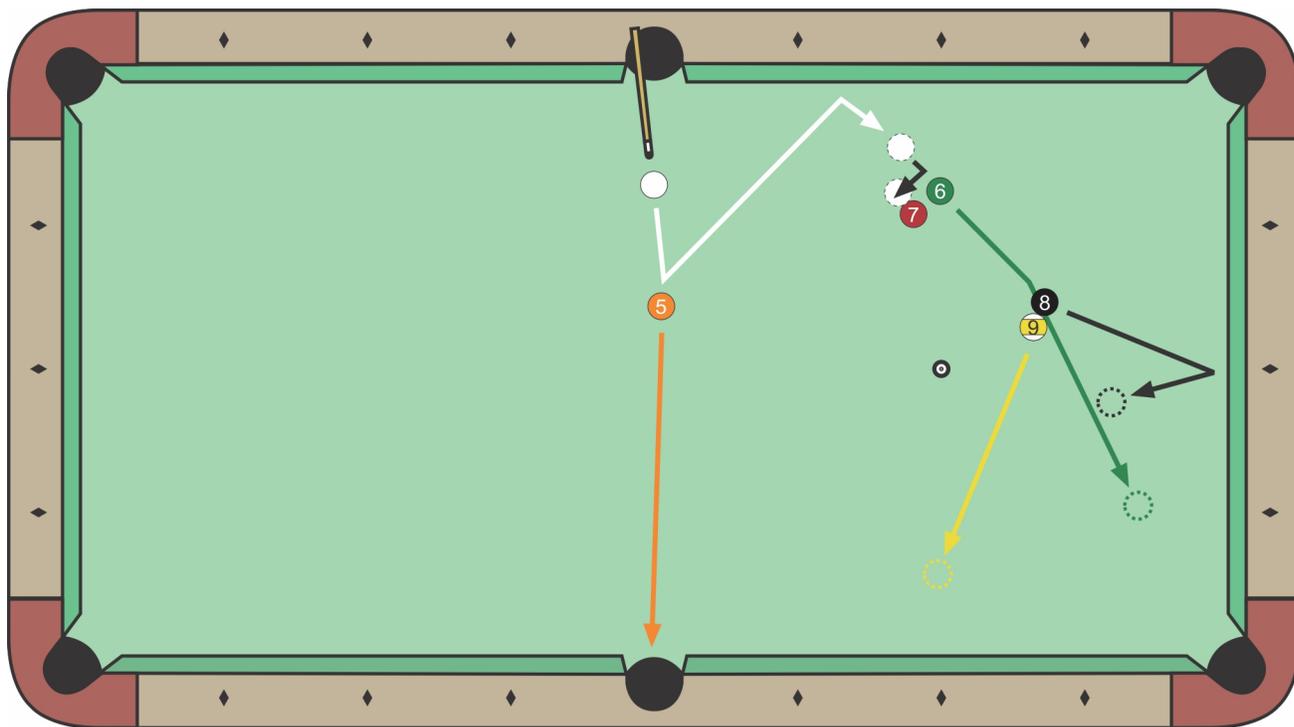


Diagram 1 Play for a safety

Diagram 2 shows the layout for the second sequence. The first shot is shown on the left side of the diagram, where the goal is to hide the 6 behind the 9 with a thin hit on the 6. Even with a fairly good hit on this shot, the opponent has a chance to play an even more-effective safety. The play is shown on the right side of the diagram, where the CB is kicked off of the cushion to get a thin hit on the 6 to lock it up behind the 9. The shot sequence is demonstrated in online video [NV I.5](#). With the final ball positions shown in the diagram, the opponent is a favorite to win. Always try to anticipate what your opponent might do in return when you are deciding what type of safety to play. If your safety attempt allows for an even more-effective safety, it might be better to choose a different option from the start.

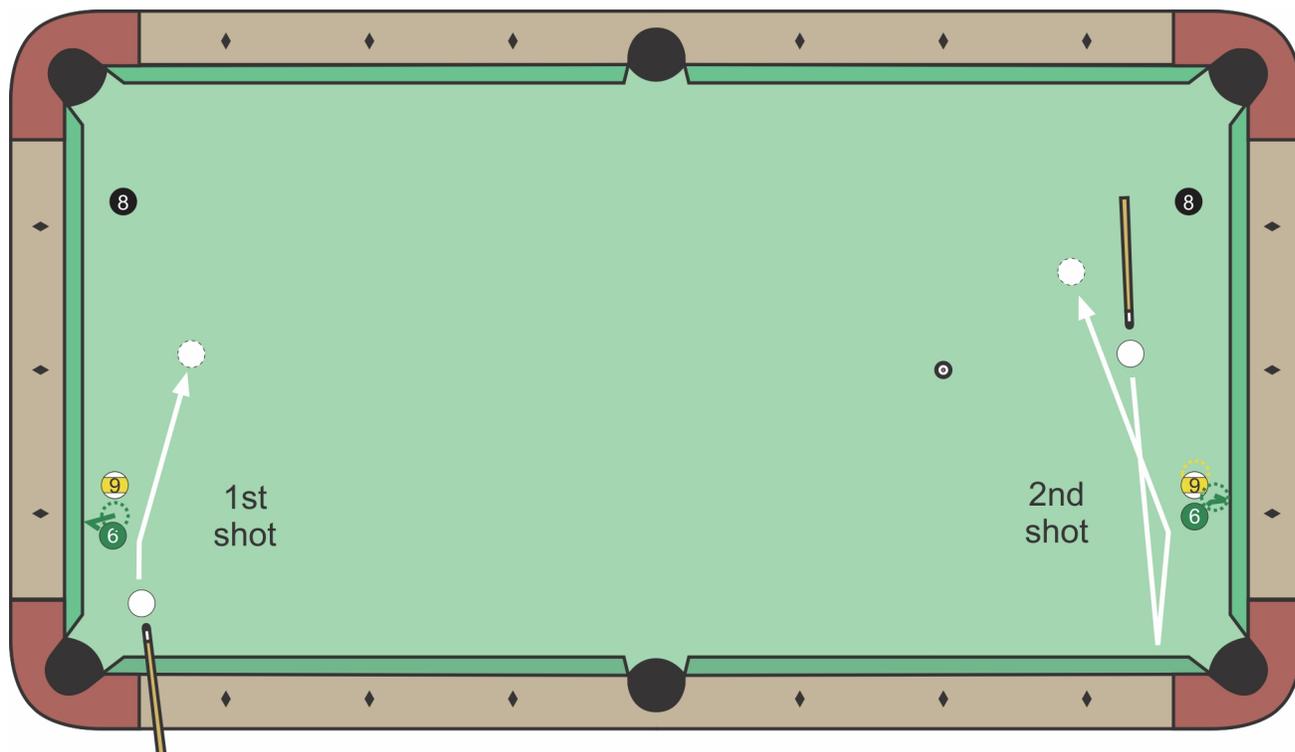


Diagram 2 Don't play a safe that will allow an even-better safe

Many more examples of a variety of defensive safety opportunities and strategies are presented on Disc II of VENT. The categories and approaches include: playing for a safety, choosing a hard shot over a hard safety, choosing a safety instead of a tough position play, not playing a safe that will allow an even-better safe. And advanced defensive play and strategy are covered in more detail on Disc IV (Safety Play) and Disc V (Advanced Principles, Shots, Strategies).

I hope you are enjoying my series of articles dealing with the "Video Encyclopedia of Nine-ball and Ten-ball (VENT)." If you want to view video excerpts from the entire DVD set, check out online videos [NV I.1](#) through [NV I.11](#). Enjoy!

Good luck with your game,
Dr. Dave



- [NV I.1](#) – Video Encyclopedia of Nine-ball and Ten-ball (VENT) Instructional DVD Trailer
- [NV I.2](#) – 9-ball Side Soft Break, and Corey Deuel Pattern Racking, an excerpt from VENT-I
- [NV I.3](#) – How to Train a Pool Table for Accurate and Consistent Ball Racking, an excerpt from VENT-I
- [NV I.4](#) – How to be Creative and Consider Various Options in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-II
- [NV I.5](#) – Defensive Strategy in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-II
- [NV I.6](#) – Common Two-Rail Position Plays in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-III
- [NV I.7](#) – Common End-Game Patterns in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-III
- [NV I.8](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Object Ball Hide Safety Examples, an excerpt from VENT-IV
- [NV I.9](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Ball-In-Hand Shot Option Examples, an excerpt from VENT-IV
- [NV I.10](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Rail Cut Shot Principles and Examples, an excerpt from VENT-V
- [NV I.11](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Advanced Herd and Cushion-Compression Shots, an excerpt from VENT-V

PS:

- I know other authors and I tend to use lots of terminology, and I know not all readers are totally familiar with these terms. If you ever come across a word or phrase you don't fully understand, please refer to the [online glossary](#) at billiards.colostate.edu.

Dr. Dave is a PBI Advanced Instructor and author of the book: [The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards](#) and the instructional DVD series: Video Encyclopedias of [Pool Shots \(VEPS\)](#), [Pool Practice \(VEPP\)](#), [Eight Ball \(VEEB\)](#), and [Nine-ball and Ten-ball \(VENT\)](#), [How to Aim Pool Shots \(HAPS\)](#) and [Billiard University \(BU\)](#), all available at: DrDaveBilliards.com.