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*Supporting narrated video (NV) demonstrations, high-speed video (HSV) clips, technical proofs (TP), and all of my past articles are available at [billiards.colostate.edu](http://billiards.colostate.edu). The reference numbers used in the articles help you locate the resources on the website.*

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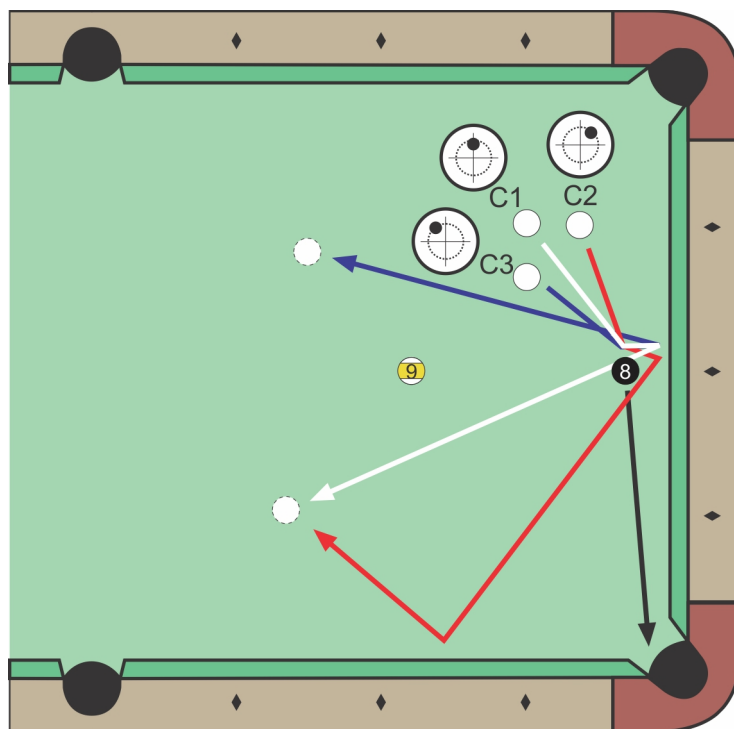
This is the sixth article in a series dealing with the “Video Encyclopedia of Nine-ball and Ten-ball (VENT),” a five-disc instructional DVD set I recently created with fellow Billiards Digest columnist Bob Jewett. VENT teaches all of the skills, knowledge and strategy one needs to excel at 9-ball and 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 are available online at [DrDaveBilliards.com/vent](http://DrDaveBilliards.com/vent).

The topic for this month is end-game patterns, featuring shots demonstrated in online video [NV 1.7](#) (an excerpt from Disc III of VENT). The focus is on pocketing the last two balls of a 9-ball or 10-ball game. End-game patterns are very important, and you must practice them. A good player needs to be able to plan position and finish a game confidently.

The End-Game Pattern section on VENT-III shows the best ways to get from the 8 to the 9 with the cue ball (CB) and 8 in different places on the table. The 9 is always placed in its racked position since, as shown on VENT-I, the 9 shouldn’t move on the break with a good rack unless it is kissed, which doesn’t happen often. As always, with every ball layout shown, ask yourself how you would play it before you read or look at what I recommend.

**Diagram 1** shows common end-game patterns where the 2<sup>nd</sup>-to-last ball (the 8) is close to the foot rail. Obviously, the goal is to pocket the 8 and get position on the 9 for the win. From CB position C1, the natural angle heads in the perfect direction into the line of the 9 so the best play is to just roll the ball. Any time you can roll the CB forward for natural shape into the line of the next shot, this is usually the best play.

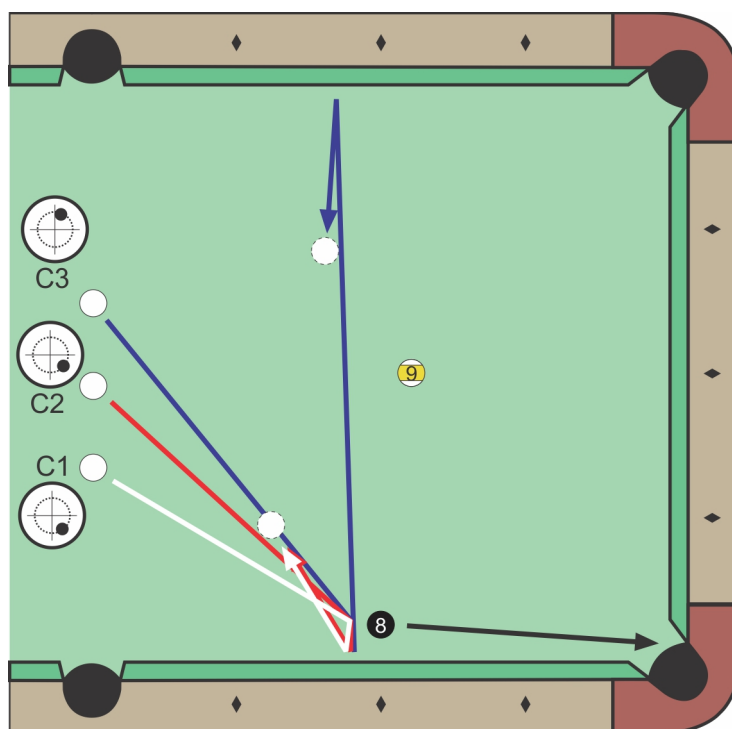
From CB position C2, with the small cut angle, a good play is to follow forward with inside english off two rails. This shot is coming across the line of the 9 ball shot, but it is fairly easy to control follow distance. Although, when using running english like this, you need to be careful to not use too much speed. As demonstrated in online video [NV 1.7](#), an alternative at this angle is to draw with outside english off two rails. This approach is a little tougher to control for most people. From CB position C3, the angle into the cushion is steep enough to roll the CB with outside english to create a good line into the 9 ball shot. Another option is to use inside follow to take a line similar to the shot from CB position C1. An advantage of outside english is that it can limit or prevent throw, even with cling or skid. For more information, see the “[gearing outside english](#)” resource page in the “english (sidespin)” FAQ page at [billiards.colostate.edu](http://billiards.colostate.edu).



**Diagram 1 Foot-Rail End-Game Patterns**

**Diagram 2** shows common end-game patterns where the 8 is close to the side rail. Again, the goal is to pocket the 8 and get position on the 9 for the win. From CB position C1, it is easy to kill the CB with slow stun and right sidespin. This type of shot is better than a straight shot at the 8 because it is easy to execute and it gets the CB a little closer to the 9 than a straight draw shot would. Even with a bigger angle, as shown from CB position C2, it is still possible to hold the CB. Depending on equipment conditions, it is also possible to hold the CB at an even larger angle, as demonstrated in online video [NV 1.7](#).

A more natural play with a medium to large cut angle, as from CB position C3, is to go across the table by rolling the CB with a touch of outside english. This is a very easy shot to execute and control. Coming off the 2nd rail increases the margin for error with shot speed, due to the braking action of the cushion. Outside english is required on this shot to get the desired line across the table, but it also has the added benefit of limiting or preventing throw, as mentioned above. As demonstrated in online video [NV 1.7](#), when the angle is even bigger, the right play is to roll across the table twice, to the other side of the 9.



**Diagram 2 Side-Rail End-Game Patterns**

Be sure to practice common end-game patterns like the ones in this article. You want to be able to finish games confidently and consistently. Many more examples from various CB and 8 ball positions are presented in the “End-Game Patterns” section of VENT-III. Other categories and approaches covered on VENT-III (“Position Play and English”) include no-rail shape, one-rail shape, two-rail shape, three-rail shape, position off pocket hangers, and straight-in shot options.

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 1.1](#) through [NV 1.11](#). Enjoy!

Good luck with your game,  
Dr. Dave



- [NV 1.1](#) – Video Encyclopedia of Nine-ball and Ten-ball (VENT) Instructional DVD Trailer
- [NV 1.2](#) – 9-ball Side Soft Break, and Corey Deuel Pattern Racking, an excerpt from VENT-I
- [NV 1.3](#) – How to Train a Pool Table for Accurate and Consistent Ball Racking, an excerpt from VENT-I
- [NV 1.4](#) – How to be Creative and Consider Various Options in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-II
- [NV 1.5](#) – Defensive Strategy in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-II
- [NV 1.6](#) – Common Two-Rail Position Plays in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-III
- [NV 1.7](#) – Common End-Game Patterns in 9-ball and 10-ball, an excerpt from VENT-III
- [NV 1.8](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Object Ball Hide Safety Examples, an excerpt from VENT-IV
- [NV 1.9](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Ball-In-Hand Shot Option Examples, an excerpt from VENT-IV
- [NV 1.10](#) – 9-ball/10-ball Rail Cut Shot Principles and Examples, an excerpt from VENT-V
- [NV 1.11](#) – 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](http://billiards.colostate.edu).

*Dr. Dave is a PBIA 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](http://DrDaveBilliards.com).*