
Supporting narrated video (NV) demonstrations, high-speed video (HSV) clips, technical proofs (TP), and all past articles are available online at billiards.colostate.edu. Reference numbers used in the articles help you locate the resources on the website.

Recently, Bob Jewett and I created the [Video Encyclopedia of One Pocket \(VEOP\)](#), a 5-volume full-length instructional video series that covers all the skills, knowledge, strategy, and moves you need to master this great game. Complete information, including free online video excerpts, can be found at DrDaveBilliards.com/VEOP. The series is about one pocket (1P), but many of the shots, techniques, and principles also apply to other pool games. In this article, I look at useful bank-shot reference tracks presented in Volume IV of VEOP and in online video [NV K.3](#).

Whether you like or use systems or not, it is helpful to learn common bank tracks or reference lines useful in 1P. A good place to start is with 1-rail banks from up-table as shown in **Image 1**. To practice these, set up a row of balls a diamond off the side rail as shown. Then, with cue ball (CB) in hand, hit a pocket-speed stop shot for each ball position to pocket each ball in the bottom-right corner. At pocket speed, the object ball (OB) will be rolling into the cushion, which makes the results consistent. The purpose for drills like this is not just to get practice. They also help you build a memory of reference tracks and lines that will help you aim similar shots in game situations. These 1-rail track lines are easy to remember. As shown in the top-left of Image 1, on my table (which is typical), the tracks are a little steeper than 45° close to the side pocket, close to 45° close to a diamond above the side, and a little shallower than 45° above that. As shown in the bottom-right of Image 1, 45° is easy to visualize in any corner of a pool table using lines through corresponding diamonds.

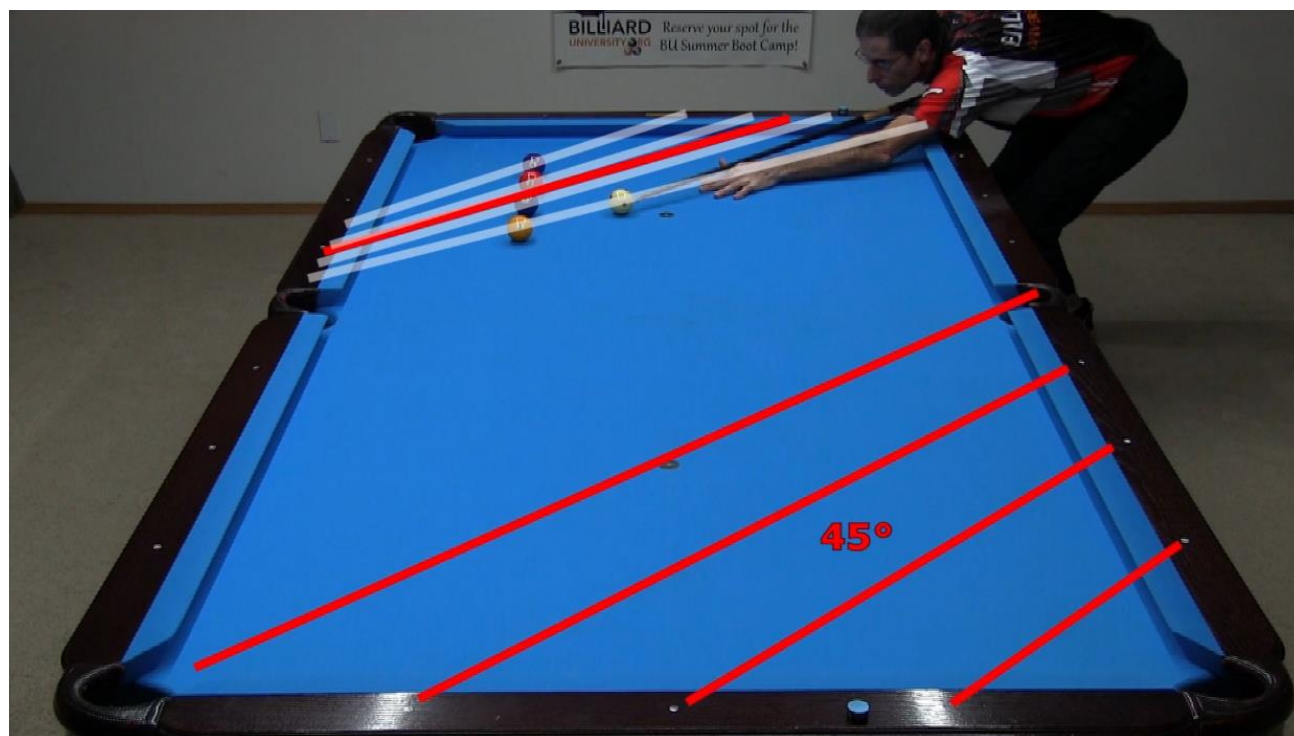


Image 1 1-Rail banks

Now let's look at 2-rail banks off the head cushion as shown in **Image 2**, again banking to the bottom-right corner. The balls close to the head rail won't have full roll, so shot speed is critical. With slightly slower speed, the OB will develop more roll into the first cushion, causing it to go long off the first cushion, sending the OB short of (above, on the side-rail side of) the bottom-right corner pocket (see Image 3). And with slightly faster

speed, the OB will slide more into the first cushion, causing it to go short off the first cushion, sending it long (on the end-rail side) of the bottom-right corner target (see Image 3). With the OBs farther from the rail, the speed isn't as critical since the ball will have full roll over a range of speeds. The 6-ball is on the head spot, which is usually close to the limit of what is possible on most tables if you barely miss both to-left corner pocket points. On many tables, this shot will go long, but it goes go on the table in the video. I was even able to get it to go a tad short, which is unusual. You always need to test out a table under a given set of conditions to know what is possible. As shown in Image 2, all these 2-rail tracks are very close to 45° into the head rail, which is good to know as a reference for aiming any 2-rail banks from up table.



Image 2 2-Rail banks

It is helpful to practice the effects of OB distance to the rail. As shown in **Image 3**, the middle track at the 4th ball position is a good one to work on. The ideal track line to pocket the ball is 45° into rail; but as shown in the video, we recommend setting up the CB for an angle slightly less steep into the head rail to better explore distance and speed effects. At this angle, the bank comes up short of the pocket (see Image 2). Shooting along that same line with the OB frozen to the cushion instead, the bank goes long. Distance to the rail, and therefore the amount of topspin the OB has when it hits the cushion, is critically important. At a certain “Goldie Locks” distance away from the head rail, the pocket-speed bank goes along this line. You should practice this for several of the OB positions, and at different distances from the rail to get a feel for how to adjust your aim relative to the 45° reference, depending on how close the OB is to the rail.

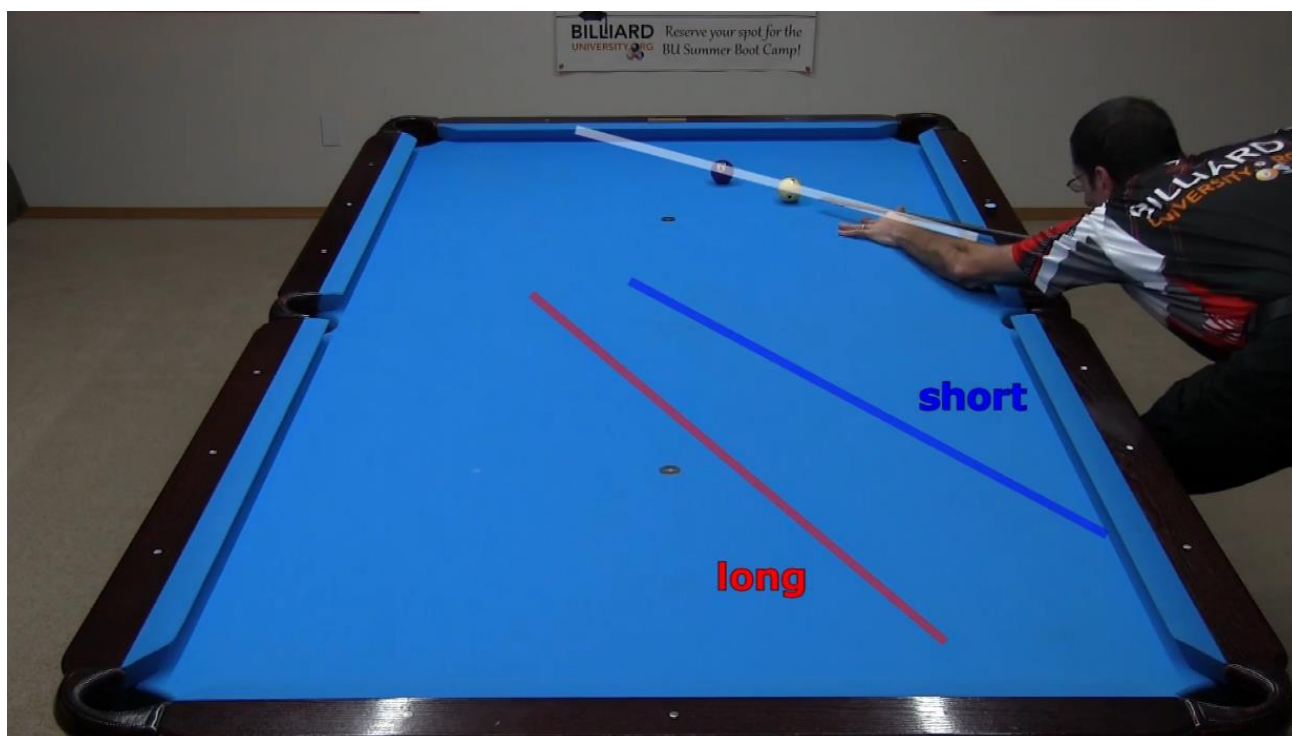


Image 3 Distance and speed effects

Check out online video [NV K.3](#) to see demonstrations of all the banks illustrated and discussed in this article. Better yet, try out the banks on your table to find and practice the reference tracks. That way, the next time you need to bank to your pocket from up-table, you won't need to count diamonds, do calculations, or try to visualize or "feel" the correct angle of the shot. You just need to remember the practiced reference track angles. If you want to learn more about the great game of one-pocket, check out the Video Encyclopedia of One Pocket (VEOP) in online video [NV K.1](#) and at DrDaveBilliards.com.

Good luck with your game,
Dr. Dave



[NV K.1](#) – Video Encyclopedia of One Pocket (VEOP) Trailer

[NV K.3](#) – Bank Shot Reference Tracks You Need to Know, from VEOP-IV

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 do not fully understand, please refer to the [online glossary](#) at billiards.colostate.edu.

Dr. Dave is a PBI Master Instructor, Dean of the Billiard University, and author of the book: [The Illustrated Principles of Pool and Billiards](#) and numerous instructional DVD series, all available at: DrDaveBilliards.com.