
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.

I recently posted an online video ([NV J.94](#)) that discusses and demonstrates important technique changes I have made to my game over the years that resulted in the most improvement. These changes might help raise your game to the next level too. As shown in **Image 1**, the video features “Doofus Dave” (on the left) who demonstrates how poorly I did things in the past, and “Dr. Dave” (on the right) who demonstrates the effectiveness the new techniques.



[Image 1](#) Video Title Screen Thumbnail Image

Align Vision Properly

I used to align my head with the cue close to my dominant eye since that is what came naturally. But what comes naturally isn't always the most effective. I often missed shots because of this, especially long shots. I noticed the problem one day when I was doing a stop-shot drill and I was sending the cue ball (CB) to the right on every shot even though every shot looked straight to me. Once I found my true personal “vision center,” I immediately started missing fewer shots. See the videos, articles, and other information on the [“vision center” resource page](#) at billiards.colostate.edu if you want to learn more about how to find your own personal “vision center” head position. Many people think and recommend that the cue should always be centered between the eyes or be directly under or close to your “dominant” eye, but your personal vision center position can be very unique and totally unrelated to which eye might be dominant or not.

Find Personal Best Stance

I used to stand like old pool books and videos told me to stand, using a closed stance, bending at the waist with the back leg locked, but it caused me lots of neck, back, and hamstring discomfort and chronic pain, especially when I played often or in long sessions. Once I found my “personal best stance” using the

“stance dance” procedure demonstrated in the videos on the [“stance advice” resource page](#), I no longer had discomfort, and it became much easier to position my vision center accurately and consistently. This definitely made my play better and more enjoyable. All resource pages mentioned in this article are linked in the YouTube video description of [NV J.94](#).

Aim While Standing

I used to get down in my stance too quickly without aiming the shot carefully while standing. When I aimed in my low stance position, I often missed shots, especially long back-cuts, because I wasn't perceiving the shot angle correctly. It is much more effective to aim and align while standing, where you can more clearly see the shot, the line to the pocket, the ghost ball position, the shot angle, and the required line of aim (see [Image 2](#)). I learned to aim while standing like most top players do. I also learned to trust and maintain the required “shot picture” as I dropped straight down into my stance. “Aiming While Standing” might be the one thing that has helped my game the most. For more information, see the [DAM Aiming System Advice resource page](#).



[Image 2](#) Aim While Standing

Use Smart Eye Pattern

In my early days, I had a terrible “eye pattern,” not focusing very well on things that are important. I used to move my eyes back and forth quickly while moving the cue during my pre-shot routine. I also didn't lock my focus on the OB target before my final stroke. Because I wasn't checking the tip position and cue alignment carefully, and because I wasn't developing intense focus on my target, I was not very effective. Once I learned to quiet my eyes and actually focus on the things that are important, I immediately got better. Now I keep my cue still at address, carefully checking the tip position and making sure my cue is aligned with the line of aim I established with my “Aim While Standing” “shot picture.” I also now lock my focus on the OB

target as I drop down into my stance to help guide me down straight while maintaining the “shot picture.” And I also lock my eyes on the OB target before my final stroke to have still and intense focus (see **Image 3**). All these things resulted in better accuracy and consistency. For more information see the [“Eye Pattern Best Practices” resource page](#).



Image 3 OB Focus Before Final Stroke

Keep Elbow Still

In my early pool days, I was a “rail banger,” where I would move my shoulder and drop my elbow during shots, causing the cue to sometimes slam into the rail, making a clanking sound (maybe you’ve heard this before). This made draw shots very difficult and inconsistent because if the elbow drops before the hit, the tip comes up resulting in much less or no backspin. As demonstrated in the video, despite having a low tip position at CB address, it is easy to hit the CB above center, resulting in a follow shot. I also sometimes miscued on follow shots, with the tip rising above the ball. Once I learned to keep my shoulder and elbow more still, with a pendulum stroke, my accuracy and consistency improved on every shot, especially, stun, draw, and follow shots. For more information, see the [“Elbow Drop” stroke “best practices” resource page](#).

Learn CB Control Principles

In the past, I used to worry about scratching (or I did scratch), I couldn’t hit carom and kiss shots effectively, and I had poor position-play skills. Now I use the 90° rule, the 30° rule, and the 3-times-the-angle system (for draw shots) to accurately predict and create the CB motion I want over a wide range of shots. For more information and system demonstrations, see the [CB Control resource page](#). To be a good player, you must have excellent CB control. You need to be able to pocket a ball, but you also need to be able to position the CB well enough to be able to keep pocketing balls.

Control Shot Speed with Stroke Length

I used to try to control shot speed using the same full stroke length with different stroke speeds. Sometimes it would work; but other times, my finesse and consistency were terrible. A much better approach is to pull back less for slower-speed shots and more for faster-speed shots, still accelerating smoothly the same way on every shot. The changing stroke length automatically creates the desired speeds. It is like putting or chipping in golf, where you control the ball travel distance by the amount you pull back the clubhead. For more information and demonstrations, see the [“Speed Control Advice” resource page](#).

Everything mentioned in this article is clearly demonstrated in online video [NV J.94](#), so be sure to check it out. And more importantly, give everything a try at the table, especially if you think something might help your game. Also, if you want to learn more, the resource pages mentioned in this article and linked in the YouTube video description cover everything in great detail with lots of good examples. I hope you enjoy the video, and I hope the things that helped me so much over the years help you too.

Good luck with your game,
Dr. Dave



[NV J.94](#) – Changes in Your Pool Game that Can Have the Biggest Impact

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 Advanced 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](#).