

# Ask Allison

by Allison Fisher

## Sighting Shots

**H**i everyone, and thanks for writing to me with your questions. If you would like for me to answer any particular questions, please email me at askallison@allisonfisher.com.

This month I would like to address the difference between aiming and sighting a shot.

Those players who have developed a good routine will know that they don't just get down on a shot and expect to see a magic point to aim at. Aiming starts from an upright position with body alignment. Before even getting down on a shot a player should stand in front of the shot and, once a decision is made on how the shot will be executed, line his or her body up a certain way. This is not the same for everyone. For example, I line up my right leg, while others turn their bodies more and may use the cue stick to align for the shot. You can do this either by placing the cue stick level and stepping in around it or by dropping the cue down the line of the shot from above after lining up the stance.

How do you sight the shot?

If you are a beginner, it is very hard to understand how to see the shot. When first starting out, many players don't understand how to cut a ball. The contact point is different from where we aim the cueball. The contact point is the part of the object ball that we want to cover with part of the cueball. The contact point on a shot is the farthest point from the pocket. When we look at a half-ball shot, we would like half of the cueball to cover half of the object ball, as this part of the object ball is farthest from the pocket. Another way to explain this is to imagine a mirror image. If I am playing a fine cut, I pick an edge of the object ball that is farthest from the pocket and then I imagine the same portion of my cueball covering that, thus creating a mirror image.

What makes this particular shot tough is that you are literally aiming to miss the object ball, which makes it uncomfortable because you are aiming with your vision into thin air because the target has almost disappeared. To be good at these shots you need to have a lot of trust in

your set-up and mechanics, which goes back to what I first mentioned.

With plenty of practice you will learn how the shots look and how to aim and sight. For a beginner the easiest way to start seeing the various angles is to set up a line of five balls across the side pocket about a diamond out. Put another ball behind each one in line with the pocket. This ball will represent a ghost ball. This is where we want our cueball to contact the object ball. Now move the cueball

with ball in hand each time to five different locations. The first represents a full-ball contact. If you place the cueball about a foot from the other two balls in a straight line, you will see that the whole ball is covered in front of you. This is the farthest point from the pocket. This is the point at which we want our cueball to strike the object ball. The other shots are as follows: half ball, three-quarter ball, quarter ball, and thin cut.

Each time take ball in hand and move the cueball around so that you are only covering the desired position on the object ball. You will see that no matter where you place the cueball the ghost ball is fully covered. But when you look at the object ball only portions are covered. Therefore the aiming point and contact points are completely different. Good luck! ♦

*Considered by many to be the leading lady in women's pool today, Allison Fisher started her illustrious pool career by winning the World Snooker Championship at the age of 17. She continued playing snooker and living in England for the next ten years, accumulating a stunning array of titles. In 1995, Allison relocated to the U.S., where her domination continues on the women's pro tour. She currently resides in Charlotte, NC, and has recently become a BCA-certified instructor. Her countless collection of awards, titles, and championships have made Allison one of the most popular and well-respected players in the game today.*



**Those players who have developed a good routine will know that they don't just get down on a shot and expect to see a magic point to aim at.**