

The immediate action of the referee in this case is to do absolutely nothing. The referee is not allowed to indicate in any way to the striker that he is about to foul. After the stroke has been played the referee must then determine that the cue is at least 3 feet in length. (The rule book even quotes the exact millimetres – 914) To do this without any measuring device available is still possible. The distance from either the yellow spot or the green spot to the central point of the fall of the nearest baulk pocket is exactly 3 feet and by laying the cue with one end touching either spot it is then easy to see if it reaches or passes that distance. The black spot to the centre fall of either of the top pockets is also exactly 3 ft. and can be used in conjunction with the yellow/green spot measurements to corroborate the decision.

These measurements are exact because although the playing surface of a standard table must be between certain measurements (11 feet 8½ inches by 5 feet 10 inches, plus or minus ½ inch for both tolerances) the slates themselves are manufactured to exact dimensions and it is only when the cushions are attached to the table that exactitude is sacrificed. The fall of the pockets are the only places where the precision slate edges can be accessed.