

Shuffleboard Strategy Explained

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Shuffleboard is 30 percent luck, 20 percent skill and 50 percent strategy. There no guaranteed method or system of playing shuffleboard with sure end-results. It is a game of insecurity, 40 percent offense and 60 percent defense.

Following are five fundamental shots in shuffleboard:

1. Place a St. Pete's Cross Block, very important, A St. Pete's is a block on the opposite side of the board in front of your opponent, not necessarily in the scoring area.
2. Clearing the board of the St. Pete's Block.
3. Placing score behind St. Pete's Block.
4. Placing a good block to hide your score.
5. Make your hammer shot.

The scoreboard is your Silent Captain and dictates how you should play and what shots you should attempt. Play offensively and make your hammers.

If the score is tied and you do not have the hammer, play defensively and try to prevent your opponent from scoring. Good delivery is very important. Good coordination and balance with a smooth steady swing is necessary.

The principal means of winning is taking advantage of your opponent's errors. Make your hammer shots on strange boards,

keep board clean and depend on your hammer shot for scoring until you get the feel of the board.

There are three speeds of shots:

1. Slow – Which you must allow for drift.
2. Medium – In order to tap a stick on a disc.
3. Hard – To clear and scatter discs and overcome board drift.

Never leave a disc on the board that your opponent may use to his advantage. Don't be a Kitchen player unless you are behind and have to catch up about half way through the game. It's a poor percentage shot. If you are in the Kitchen and can't knock out, try to score.

When playing a Kitchen player avoid putting your discs in the 7 spot unless you happen to be behind then you should try to put in deep sevens, hoping he might go in the Kitchen while trying to get you out.

In the final frame of the game, if a 10 will win and an 8 will tie, shoot for the 8, by shooting across to 10 and 8. It always seems that under pressure, a 10 is harder to make.

After learning the basics, a shuffler should establish his or her own game plan and play according to what he or she has found is most comfortable through practice and actual game experience.

How do I play when I shoot first and my opponent has the hammer?

1. Put a disc on the opposite side of the board in front of your opponent. St. Pete Block does not have to be in the scoring area.
2. If your opponent knocks block out, put your next two discs in the same location. If your opponent should happen to stick on any of your discs and gives you a disc to hide behind, use it. You should try to score on your last disc.
3. Never leave your opponent's disc on the board if it is in a location that will allow him to double, nudge or hide.
4. Use your opponent's disc to hide behind if you can.
5. Be aware of the score and shoot off the board if you have the game won.

How do I play when my opponent shoots first and I have the hammer?

1. If your opponent puts a block in front of you, always knock it off the court and make sure yours always goes off also.
2. If your opponent puts his disc where he cannot use it, put in a block of your own. If he puts in a block you can use, but he cannot use, always take advantage of his mistake and hide one of your discs, especially if he has the hammer shot.
3. If your opponent is in the kitchen, put a block but not too close to the kitchen.

4. Never leave your opponent's disc on the center or cross lines.
5. If your disc is in the kitchen and your opponent has a good 7, 8, or 10 disc in the open, always shoot a your opponents disc rather than your kitchen. You have a chance of knocking out your disc in the kitchen and scoring, otherwise you could stick it in the kitchen and lose everything.
6. Do not try kitchen shots unless you are behind or on rare occasions.
7. Shoot the last disc off the board if you have the game won in the last frame.