

12 Components of a Trick Shot Artist

The rest of this chapter will help to prepare you for your career as an entertainer. The list below provides you with a capsule summary of the necessary attributes of a trick shot artist. After that we'll move on to a detailed discussion of how to prepare for and give your show.

Attitudes

Personality – It helps if you are outgoing and like to show off. If you are a natural born ham who loves to be the center of attention, you've got it made.

Desire – You must want to be a star, to be the life of the party or you love to see people have a good time around a pool table.

Preparation

Practice – Some of these shots take practice setting up, some in execution, and many require that you master both components. So plan on spending the necessary time at the table.

Props – Assemble a bag of tricks, just like a skilled magician. Audiences love prop shots well out of proportion to the their degree of difficulty.

Shot Selection – Learn to select shots that will: 1) make you look good, 2) generate a response from the audience. There are over 170 shots in this book. An exhibition usually consists of 10-20. Choose wisely.

Variety – You must be able to pick shots that are high in skill and/or entertainment value. And this means mixing up your show.

Know Your Equipment – The table and the balls can make a big difference in the set up and/or execution of a good percentage of the shots in the book. Study, test and learn the equipment you will be performing on. Learn to make the necessary adjustments.

Your Show

Conversation – Your value as an entertainer will rise dramatically with you skill in the conversational arts.

Know Your Audience – You can and should tailor your shots to your audience. The show you give to knowledgeable pool players may differ greatly from the one that you might, for example, give to a gathering of novices on your home table.

An Eye for Talent – Audience participation is a part of any worthwhile show. Get'em into the act. Remember: everybody wants to be a star.

Escape Lines – You will make some shots on nearly every attempt once you get the hang of them. To truly impress audiences composed of knowledgeable pool players, you will have to go out on a limb and play some shots that are not guaranteed. It will help to short-circuit any hecklers if you have a humorous escape line or two handy.

Abandoning a Shot – You must know when to give up on a shot that just doesn't seem to want to cooperate. This may be due to the conditions or to a temporary decline in your skills. I recommend 1-3 tries. Be sure to have a good reason why you are going to move on to the next shot. A humorous escape line is much better than a weak excuse.