

Re-Tipping Your Cue

How to re-tip your cue in 5 easy steps

- * Preparing the cue
- * Preparing the tip
- * Glueing the tip
- * Shaping the tip
- * Ready for play

Preparing the cue

1. Remove the old tip, all bits of glue and leather with a sharp blade.
2. Gently scrape across the surface taking care not to dig into the ferrule or wood.
3. Providing the cue has been correctly tipped in the past, you should now have a perfectly flat surface.
4. Sometimes the surface will be uneven, and maybe the ferrule has been worn away on one side, due to somebody messing up the surface in the past (probably by trying to file it flat by hand).
5. This will need to be made perfectly flat first. There are various devices available at Billiard Stores, that you can buy and use to make a flat end on your cue. Once flat and perfectly clean, it is ready to take a new tip.



PHOTO: REMEMBER - You are not trying to make the surface flat with the blade because it should already be flat. You are just trying to remove anything still stuck to the surface.

NOTE: If you do not ensure that the surface is perfectly flat, you will probably have problems getting the tip to stick. If it does stick, the chances are that it will fly off shortly afterwards - DO THE JOB PROPERLY.

Preparing the tip

1. Lay a piece of sandpaper on a flat surface, take a new tip and lightly rub the back of it across the sandpaper until you have removed any uneven bits.
2. Make sure that you keep the tip flat as you do this or you will make it slightly convex or angled and it won't fit perfectly flat when you try to stick it.

3. Gently blow the tip to remove any dust. It is now ready for glueing.



PHOTO: Try to keep the tip flat as you sand it. If you 'rock' it you will make the surface convex or angles and cause problems when glueing.

Glueing the tip

SUPERGLUE - Some people have used superglue for many years and have never had a problem. Because it sets so quickly you must be very careful to position the tip correctly. So, if you are confident use superglue.

1. Put a drop of superglue on the cue and immediately fix the tip.
2. Be careful not to use too much or it will run down the side of the cue as you press the tip down.
3. Hold it for a few seconds, then check that it has stuck firm.
4. The tip is ready to be shaped and used immediately.

NOTE: You may find it helps to put superglue on the tip first, let it dry, then lightly sand it again, thereby forming a kind of barrier. Otherwise when you stick it on the cue, you may find the glue soaks into the bottom of the tip quickly and not stick so well.

Use **SUPERGLUE GEL** if you find normal superglue too difficult or messy. It give you more time to position the tip and does not have the problem of soaking into the tip.

CONTACT GLUE - This is probably easier to use, and you may feel more confident using it. Contact glue gives more time to position the tip.

1. Put a little glue on the cue, push the tip down onto it, then remove and leave for a few minutes until it is tacky.
2. Now carefully position the tip and press it down firmly. Use a tip clamp if you have one.
3. Leave as long as possible, preferably overnight before using.

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Another choice is TWEETEN'S 10 MINUTE CEMENT, this glue has been used for many years to re-tip cues. It gives you lots of time to position the new tip.

1. The important thing when using Tweeten's is, after applying a small dab to the new tip, smear it around to make a thin coat on both the end of the cue and the back of the cue tip, then let it dry a little.
2. Carefully position the tip and then clamp the tip onto the end of the cue and let it dry for an hour. There are various clamping devices sold at Billiard Stores, made to hold the tip firmly in place until the glue dries.

Mushroom tips - If you want a "mushroom" tip, that overhangs the ferrule, select a tip slightly bigger than your ferrule and position the tip as accurately as possible when glueing so that the overhang is equal all the way round.

Shaping the tip - before starting this step make sure the tip is stuck solidly by tapping it sharply on a hard surface,

1. Once the tip is firmly stuck, turn the cue upside down and hold the tip down on a flat surface.
2. Take a sharp blade and gently cut away any part of the tip that is overhanging. Take care to keep the blade vertical so you don't dig into the tip, but just remove the overhanging part.
3. Make sure you maintain downward pressure so that there is no danger of the tip being 'pulled' away from the top of the cue.
4. Turn the cue back up the right way and, using some sandpaper, carefully stroke 'down' the tip to create a nice gentle dome shape.



PHOTO: Carefully cut away the overhanging tip making sure you keep the blade as vertical as possible thereby 'sliding' down the ferrule, using it as a guide, and cutting the tip flush and level. Don't cut or scratch the ferrule.



PHOTO: Be careful to angle the sandpaper away from the cue so that on your downward strokes you don't scratch the ferrule and, more importantly, you don't scratch the shaft of the cue.

DO NOT sand 'up' the tip because you may pull the leather fibres apart, and completely ruin the tip. And remember to be very careful not to extend your downward strokes and 'come in' to the cue so that you scratch your ferrule and shaft.

Mushroom tips - If you fitted a 'mushroom' tip, disregard steps 1-3 above and just follow step 4.

Ready for play

Your tip should now be fitted correctly and the correct shape. But it usually takes a little time to get used to a new tip, and can take a while for the new tip to 'bed in'. To help give the tip a 'played in' feel, try tapping it lightly with a cue ball for a while.

Remember that although tips are supposed to be consistent, they do vary a great deal from box to box. Some are soft and some are hard. This can have an enormous effect on your game, and how the shot 'feels'.

Personally, I prefer a firm tip, and there have been many occasions when I have re-tipped my cue, and within a few shots I have removed it and started again! This is because the tip was just too soft for me and no amount of 'bedding in' would make it firm enough. In time, you will be able to tell straight away if you have a 'good' tip, but at first, give the tip a chance to settle.

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PHOTO: This is the sort of shape your new tip should have. Not too rounded and not too flat, just a nice gentle dome.

NOTE: There are new 'laminated' tips now available which are more consistent in feel, give better 'grip' on the cue ball, and last much longer than standard tips.

Tip maintenance

DO always keep your tip well chalked. miscues happen mainly due to a lack of chalk (although often it's just your bad cue action!).

In time your tip may become hard and shiny, so gently rough it up with some sandpaper or a file. This will help the chalk stay on the tip. Always remember to work in a downward and outward motion. If you sand 'up' the tip you may pull the leather fibres apart, and completely ruin it.

DO NOT 'spin' the cue with sandpaper around the tip, or sand sideways round the cue. This will probably scratch the ferrule and the wood just below, damaging both in the process.

Final Word

If your tip starts to wear down close to the ferrule, change it! If tips left on too long so that the ferrule is showing, this will cause damage to the cue ball every time you play a shot, as well as causing you to mis-cue.