

# Tips

Here are a few hints for playing the game. No revelations here: you'll figure most of this out for yourself after you've played a while.

**Lead the Ball.** Place your shots a little ahead of the ball. Bumpers are placed inside grid squares. (The grid itself is invisible, but you'll see the bumpers line up in neat rows and columns.) When you press a key to place a bumper, the bumper will appear in the grid square that the ball is then entering. If you wait until the ball has actually reached the place where you want the bumper, it's too late. The same is true for erasing bumpers. You can see it more clearly if you practice with the "Slow Ball" option.

**Use the "Keys..." Command.** This command lets you choose the keys you want to press in order to place and erase bumpers. The default keys (slash, backslash, and erase) are easy to remember but awkward to use on most keyboards. I like to use the 4, 5, and 6 on the numeric keypad for \, erase, and /.

There are also a few keyboard shortcuts built in. Pressing Enter or Return is the same as clicking the New Game and Begin buttons with the mouse; and you can pause the game by pressing Esc or Clear as well as by selecting Pause from the File menu or typing `^P`.

**Avoid Traps, but Not Too Much.** Hitting a trap will cost you two seconds of time, and that ain't hay. But note that letting the ball go across the field and back once also takes about two seconds. Avoiding a trap can be worse than hitting one.

**Don't Place Too Many Bumpers.** Another way to say this is, "Be Accurate." The more bumpers in the way, the harder to get the ball where you want it to go. Place your bumpers carefully, and make each one count. Erase them when you can. And that goes double for flippers!

**Don't Be Stubborn.** It's easy to think of a way to get from here to there, and then keep trying it again and again when you keep missing. This wastes time. If you didn't get it the first or second time, you likely won't get it the third, fourth or fifth, either. Drop it and find a different way.