



**Puzzled
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Cue Up the Easy Mark!



The final stop on our road trip – the famous Cue Club in Las Vegas, NV. To our surprise, we find an adorable kid fumbling with a cue stick twice his size. “I bet you fifty dollars I can knock in these nine balls in nine shots!” he says to us.

We laugh: “OK, but you gotta call each shot before you sink it.”

We’re pretty sure this kid is so young, he’d have trouble just **counting 1 to 9**, let alone sinking all nine balls in a row.

“Sounds fair,” he says. Though the kid’s baby face makes him look like an easy mark, his two-piece, custom-made pool cue should definitely have been a red **flag**! He looks at the table a few seconds and then takes out a piece of paper and a pencil, quickly writes out a note and hands it to us:

Using Roman numerals and no spaces, the order in which I will sink the balls in their pockets will be

IIIVVIIIIVIIIIIXIV.

I will sink three balls into the TLC pocket, and their numbers will all be less than 6.

I will sink three balls into the BLC pocket, and their numbers will all be greater than 4.

I will sink two balls into the RS pocket, and their numbers will have a difference of 5.

I will sink the 9 ball into the TRC pocket.

Three shots in a row will all sink into pockets at the top of the table.

No two sequential shots will sink into the same pocket.

Order of shots
ball pocket

1 st		
2 nd		
3 rd		
4 th		
5 th		
6 th		
7 th		
8 th		
9 th		

“You got it?” he asks, smugly. Then, without warning, the fumbling baby-face child morphs into a smooth-movin’ baby-shark. He is amazing, sinking shot after shot – sometimes with balls jumping over other balls – and he always manages to stop the cue ball right where it contacts the ball he is sinking. Nine shots later, we’re reaching for our wallets. We definitely “got it!”

