

# Hammer Strokes and similar

When the mallet is struck steeply downwards onto the ball in “hammer strokes” and jump strokes, there is a risk of faults under a number of rules including 13(a)6 and 13(a)11. These risks increase the more steeply the mallet comes down onto the striker’s ball.

A firmly-played hammer or jump stroke will make the ball “rebound” from the lawn if played cleanly - if it doesn't, this is evidence the ball was trapped by repeated or prolonged contact with the mallet, as is a muffled contact sound. Slow-motion video evidence shows that hammer strokes played even at relatively gentle angles like 30 degrees to the horizontal are in fact often double taps, even though this was not obvious to the naked eye.

To foster consistent playing and refereeing standards, it will be normal practice to fault any firmly-played stroke where the mallet strikes the ball more steeply than at 45 degrees to the horizontal and which is not seen to rise from the surface as a result. A badly played hammer stroke at less than 45 degrees may also give rise to audible double taps and should be faulted accordingly.

Hammer strokes in particular should routinely be watched by a referee (or experienced player, if no referee available) to ensure the stroke is played fairly.

The same faults might arise when hitting down on a ball in a hoop hampered by another ball close behind the striker’s ball – however these are often played quite gently and so not give rise to these particular faults. The referee should make a decision about such gentle strokes based on their judgement of the particular stroke.