

So I hear you are a pretty good semi-pro player! Nope.

Page 1 of 4

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Nope.

But you are a damn good rookie right? Probably go SP at the next major.

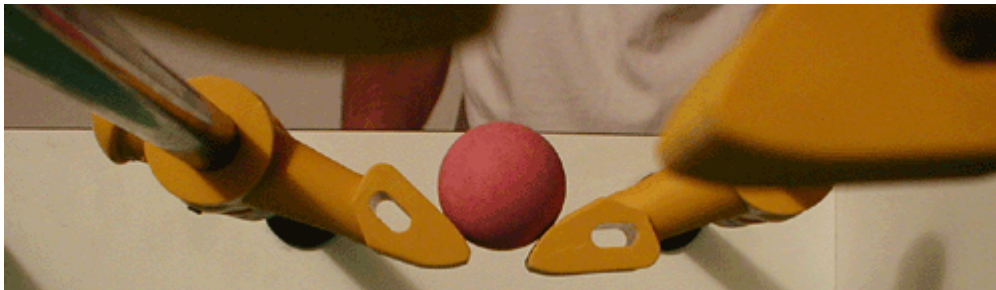
Um, no.

But hey, at least you aren't one of those guys that make people want to ban DYPs statewide when they draw you. Right?

Now that you mention it...

Well... at least this guide will make you the best BAR HACK EVER!!!!

## 5 Bar Of Doom's Guide to Shooting the Perfect Aerial



An aerial shot is one of the more elusive and magical moments in foosball. If you have ever seen someone shoot one, chances are you would give your first-born child and the appendage of your choice to that person in exchange for that skill. Well today is your lucky day. You will walk away from this tutorial with limbs and family members intact, and perhaps also with the knowledge to use that 3rd dimension to your advantage. Who cares if you are just a bar hack? When you shoot this aerial, those 2 chicks in the corner drinking Pabst Blue Ribbon are gonna know who's boss.

### The Setup

First, the ball and the men must be in the right place. Just knowing this information is half the battle.

The men (typically either the near goalie man, and the near 2 bar man OR the far goalie/far 2 bar man) must be aligned perfectly straight. I find this is easier to do on the near side at first, so you can look over the table and see it. This is important so when you hit the ball, it has less chance of falling off the side of misaligned guys.

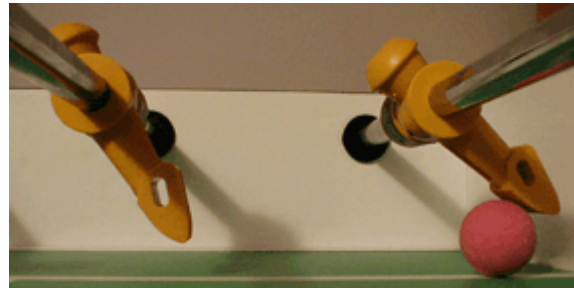
The ball should be in position for the goalie man to hit it, underneath the toe of the man some, but not enough that it should pin or stub the ball when you swing through (see illustration). This will help you get the extra force you need without sacrificing any control. The picture shows me doing this with a rather slick ball, so with a "fuzzier" ball you might have to place it a bit farther



forward.

The front (2 bar) man should be tipped SLIGHTLY backward (see illustration again). This is also extremely important. It doesn't have to be EXACTLY like it is in the photo, play around with it if you want, but that angle is pretty much the sweet spot.

Now, your men should be set up like in the photo. It's time for step two:



## Hitting the Ball

This is the most frustrating part, and will take some practice, along with some disbelief along the lines of "am I doing this right?". Don't worry, as long as you follow my instructions, it will happen.

I was taught how to shoot this shot at Worlds this year (2002), by Rob Atha, the 16 year old kid from the UK that won Semi-Pro Doubles (he also won Semi-Pro Singles in Vegas!!). You may have trouble with this shot, but he would set it up **in front of the goal** (no kidding) and he would set it up **every time**. When I first started practicing this shot on the last night of Worlds, I was setting it up maybe 1 out of 50 times. Now, it's more like 1 out of 2 or 3 at the worst (depending on the ball). Just practice it and you will be doing it in no time.

Here is a brief overview of the motion. You will swing forward with the goalie man. It will hit the back of the 2 bar man, and bounce upward. Once it hits the back of the 2 bar man, you move that man up, along with your goalie rod already in motion, and if you are lucky, you'll catch it.

Now a more detailed look, first only talking about the goalie rod (don't worry about the 2 bar yet). You are going to swing forward with the goalie man, ending up in the position shown by the photo of the men holding the ball up. The trick is to not under or overswing this position, you want to end up right there or the goalie man won't be in the right position to catch the ball. To properly kick the ball up enough, I usually "wind up" some with my goalie man. This actually has two purposes. First, it allows me to hit the ball harder. Second, with the "bounce" I get from the ball off of the man, the man is travelling behind the ball slower which is also necessary.

When you swing your goalie rod forward, your 2 bar stays stationary. **Do not swing back at the same time.** I can not emphasize this enough, it is very important. Once the ball actually **hits** the 2 bar man, then you start your upward swing. When I started, I would try to **listen** for the ball hitting the man, then swing. You will get the hang of it. Like the goalie rod motion, you should end up in a "catch" position, like the photo of the men holding the ball shows.



While you are swinging up with the 2 bar man, your goalie rod is still coming through at

the same time. Ideally, if the ball pops up and you swing correctly with both men, you will have it set up!

## Troubleshooting

This is a tedious process at first but stick with it. There are several things you can try to help you out:

- First of all, usually (for me anyway) using a fuzzier ball is easier than a really slick ball. It seems to get better lift off of the 2 bar man. Although it can definitely be done with both.
- If the ball isn't popping up enough, try hitting harder with the goalie rod. You have to hit it pretty hard.
- At the same time, if the ball is flying off the table, hit it softer.
- If the ball seems to "want" to pop up, but keeps "stalling out" in between your goalie and 2 bar, chances are you aren't lifting the men enough, or aren't lifting fast enough. It's not a really fast motion, but the 2 bar motion is very exact... it has to happen exactly after the ball hits the back of the 2 bar man.
- If you keep shooting the ball forward, chances are you are swinging too fast with the 2 bar man. Try to really wait until after the ball hits.
- If you pinch the ball in the air, between the toes of the men (but really close to the surface), you almost have it! Maybe increase the speed of your swing, but you are almost there!

Most of all, just keep at it. It will happen magically for the first time, and after a while, it will become clockwork. I have only been messing around with this off and on for a couple weeks, and I can set it up pretty regularly. Good luck!

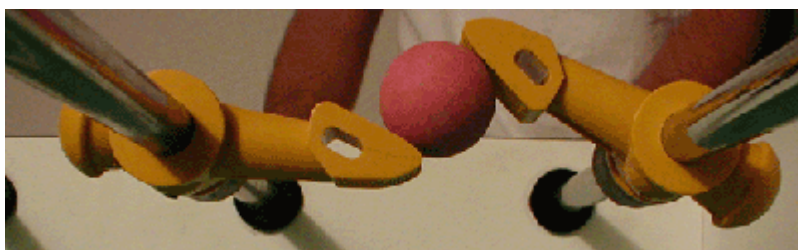
## Now What?

Once you actually have it set up, have taken a picture, and called your mom / girlfriend / Royle's mom in to show them, you are ready to shoot it! Unfortunately, it's not as easy as it seems to get the ball in the box every time.

First of all, you need to move the ball over to where it is more in front of the goal. Once you get really comfortable with it, you can set it up right in front of the goal, eliminating the need to move the ball. However, if you set it up on the side (which you should at first), you can "walk" it over, by gently moving both rods at the same time. Now it should be at least in the corner of the goal. When you actually shoot the ball, if you are moving the rods to the side at the same time, it will angle the ball into the goal for you as well.

There are a few options you have when shooting the ball. The one Rob Atha showed me, was to do a small flick with the goalie man, followed by a bigger flick with the 2 bar man to shoot the ball. The goalie man flicks the ball totally onto the back of the 2 bar toes, and before it has a chance to fall off, you flick it with the 2 bar (hopefully) into the goal. Pretty easy!

Another option (pictured) is to pinch the ball, and "flick" it. When you are holding the ball, if you slowly rotate the goale rod upward, it will pass over the ball and before the ball falls





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Page 4 of 4

through, clamp down (as pictured). Now if you apply pressure to the 2 bar rod and slowly reduce pressure on the goalie rod, the ball will be "flicked" forward into the goal. This is probably the easiest option, in my opinion. It is especially easy to move the rods sideways while you are doing this, to move effectively angle the ball into the goal.

A third option is to gently flick the goalie man, and try to get the ball set up in the cavity on the back of the 2 bar man. This is really difficult to do (in my opinion) with any regularity, so I don't suggest this way, but try it out and see what you think.

## Have fun!

Like I said, the knowledge here is HUGE, but you still need to practice this a lot to get it going correctly. Keep at it and pretty soon instead of hearing chicks say "Look at that loser playing foosball over there", you will be hearing "Check out that guy shooting the ball over the guys! It must have taken him forever to learn that! What a loser!" Variety is the spice of life my friend. Enjoy.

by [5 Bar Of Doom](#) aka Mark Madej

PS. Big props to Rob Atha from the UK, for taking the time to show me this at Worlds this year. Stay cool and I hope to see you soon!



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