

PICKLEBALL

2016

SECTION 1 History

Pickleball is a combination of badminton, tennis and ping-pong. Pickleball began in 1965 when 2 fathers made up a game to keep their children from being bored in the summer. The game got its name from the family dog named Pickles. Pickles kept stealing the ball and hiding it in the bushes. Pickleball has 3 unique qualities: the serving position, the double bounce rule and the no-volley zone.

SECTION 2 Court and Equipment

Court Specifications:

The 20-foot x 44-foot court is standard for singles and doubles. It includes a non-volley line that is 7 feet from the net, running across the 20-foot width. A service centerline connects the baseline to the non-volley line.

Net Specifications:

1. Size: 21 feet long x 2 ½ feet wide.
2. Location and Height: Suspended over court centerline. Net heights shall be 36 inches at sideline and 34 inches at center.

SECTION 3 Definitions

Carry - Hitting the ball in such a way that it does not bounce away from the paddle but tends to be carried along on the face of the paddle during its forward motion.

Cross-court - The court diagonally opposite your court.

Dead Ball – A dead ball is declared after a fault.

Dink Shot - A soft shot that is intended to arc over the net and land within the non-volley zone.

Double Bounce - A ball that bounces more than once, on one side, before it is returned.

Double-Hit - One side hitting the ball twice before it is returned over the net. Double hits may occur by one player or could involve both players on a team.

Drop Shot - A groundstroke shot that falls short of the opponent's position.

Fault - A fault is any action that stops play or a rules violation.

Groundstroke - Hitting the ball after one bounce.

Hinder - Any element or occurrence that can affect play. For example, a stray ball that enters the court or people disrupting play by walking across the court.

Lob - A shot that returns the ball as high and deep as possible, forcing the opposing side back to the baseline.

Non-Volley Zone – The section of court, adjacent to the net in which you cannot volley the ball. It includes all the lines comprising the zone.

One Hand Out - A term used to describe the condition when a serving team loses the first of its two allocated serves.

Overhead Slam/Smash - A hard overhand shot usually resulting from an opponent's lob, or high return, or a high bounce.

Passing Shot - A volley or groundstroke shot that is aimed at a distance from the player that is designed to prevent the return of the ball, i.e., line drive close to sideline.

Rally - Continuous play that occurs after the serve and before a fault.

Side Out - Declared after one side loses its service and other side is awarded service.

Technical Foul - The referee is empowered to add one point to a player's score or a team's score when in the referee's judgment, the opponent is being overly and deliberately abusive.

Volley - Hitting the ball in the air, during a rally, before the ball has a chance to bounce onto the court.

SECTION 4 Service Rules

1. The serve must be made with an underhand stroke so that contact with the ball is made at or below waist level.
2. The server must keep at least one foot behind the baseline during serve. The server may serve with one foot inside the serving court baseline, as long as the other foot remains on the floor and outside, and not touching the baseline, at the time the ball is struck. The serve must be made from within the confines of the serving court centerline and sideline.
3. The serve must be made without bouncing the ball off the court before hitting it.
4. The serve must be made to the crosscourt (diagonally opposite court) service court.
5. The service must clear the net and the non-volley line and land into the opponent's service court. Serves may land on any service court line, except the non-volley zone lines.
6. A serve striking the net and landing within the opponent's service court is called a "let" and justifies another serve.
7. The Receiver: There is no restriction on the receiver's (i.e., the player returning the serve) position. The receiver typically stands behind the baseline but, if desired, may stand inside the service court.
8. Double Bounce Rule: The serve and the service return MUST be allowed to bounce before striking the ball. That is, each side must play a groundstroke on their first shot following the serve. After the initial groundstrokes have been made play may now include volleys.
9. Readiness: Serves shall not be made until the receiving side is ready and the referee has called the score.
10. If the server serves the ball while the receiver is signaling "not ready," the ball will be re-served with no penalty and the server shall be "warned" by the referee to check the receiver.
11. After the score is called, if the server looks at the receiver and the receiver is not signaling "not ready," the server may then serve. If the receiver attempts to signal "not ready" after the serve is made then the serve stands - whether or not the ball is returned.

SECTION 5 Service Sequence Rules

1. Singles (two players)

A. At the start of each game the server begins the serve on the right side and alternates from right to left to right, etc., as long as the server holds serve.

B. The server must serve to the crosscourt (court diagonally opposite) service court.

C. The server's score will always be even (0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10...) when serving from the right side and odd (1, 3, 5, 7, 9...) when serving from the left side (only in singles play).

2. Doubles (four players):

A. The service always starts in the right-hand court and alternates from right to left to right, etc., as long as server holds serve.

B. The server must serve to the crosscourt (court diagonally opposite) service court.

C. The team serving the initial serve of each game is allowed only one fault before passing service to the opposing team. After that, each team member must serve and fault before passing service to the opposing team.

D. The serving team will rotate positions after scoring a point. After the first server faults, the second serve is performed from whatever side the second server is playing. The service will continue to rotate positions as long as the server continues to win points.

E. If the wrong team member accidentally serves the ball the serve stands. If the serving team wins the point, the players rotate positions and the next service is then given back to the correct server. The referee shall give a technical warning. Another occurrence will result in a technical foul and a point awarded to the receiving team.

F. The receiving team does not alternate positions. The receiving team cannot switch positions until after the return of serve.

G. The team's points will be even when the game's starting server is on the right-hand side. Points will be odd when the game's starting server is on the left-hand side.

SECTION 6 Line Call Rules

1. Served balls that clear the non-volley line and land on any service court line are good.
2. Balls in play (except on serve) that land on any court line are good.

SECTION 7 Fault Rules

A fault is any action that stops play or a violation of the rules. A fault will be declared for the following:

1. Hitting the ball into the net on the service or any return.
2. Hitting the ball out of bounds.
3. Failure to hit ball before it bounces twice on player's court.
4. Violation of a service rule.
5. A player, or player's clothing, or any part of a player's paddle touches net when the ball is in play.
6. If the ball while in play, strikes a player or a player's clothing. The exception to this rule is if the ball strikes the player's paddle hand then it is considered in play. If in doubles, the serve strikes the opposing player positioned at the net not receiving the serve then it is a point for the serving team. This rule also includes all balls that appear to be hit out of bounds. In tournament play if you catch the ball or try to stop it from heading out of bounds then you lose the rally.
7. If the ball while in play, strikes the roof, walls, or other objects that are not part of the court.

8. Violation of non-volley zone rules.

9. Violation of the other rules.

SECTION 8 Dead Ball Rules

1. A dead ball is declared after any action that stops play.

2. A ball is not declared dead until it has bounced twice or has violated one of the fault rules.

3. A hinder (ball on court, etc.), called by the referee, will result in a dead ball, and a replay.

SECTION 9 Non-volley Zone Rules

1. The non-volley zone is formed by the non-volley line that is parallel to the net and stretches across the court, and the two (2) sidelines extending from the net to the intersection of the non-volley line.

2. A fault will be declared if in the act of volleying the ball, a player, or any article of clothing (e.g., jewelry, tissues, hair clip, etc.) or any part of the paddle, enters into the non-volley zone or touches any non-volley zone line. For example, a fault will be declared if in the act of volleying the ball, one of your feet touches a non-volley zone line.

3. A fault will be declared if in the act of volleying the ball, a player's momentum causes the player or any article of the player's clothing, or any part of the player's paddle enters into the non-volley zone or touches any non-volley zone line before the ball is declared dead.

4. A person may enter into the non-volley zone if the ball bounces in it first.

Examples:

A. You volley the ball and your momentum carries you into the non-volley zone but after your opponent returns the ball. It is a fault because the ball was in play.

B. You volley the ball and you lose your balance and touch the non-volley line with either your hand or your paddle. Your opponent returns your shot. It is a fault because the ball was still in play.

C. You volley the ball and your momentum carries you into the non-volley zone but after your return strikes your opponent's body. There is no violation of the non-volley zone rules because once the ball strikes the player it is declared a dead ball.

D. You volley the ball and your momentum carries you into the non-volley zone but after the ball strikes your opponent's paddle and is headed out of bounds. The ball is in play until it bounces out of bounds. Since you fell into the non-volley zone before the ball bounced out of bounds it is a fault.

4. A fault will be declared if the player violates the intent of the non-volley zone rule. All volleys must be initiated outside of the non-volley zone. A maneuver such as standing within the non-volley zone, jumping up to hit a volley, and then landing outside the non-volley zone is prohibited. If you are inside the non-volley zone for any reason, you cannot volley the return until your feet are legally positioned (i.e., on the floor) outside the non-volley zone.

5. A player may step on the non-volley line or enter the non-volley zone at any time except when that player is volleying the ball. There is no violation if your partner returns the ball while you are standing in the non-volley zone.

SECTION 10 Scoring - Game - Match Rules

1. Scoring: Only the serving team can score points.
2. Points are scored by legally serving a ball that is not touched by the opponent (an ace) or by winning the rally (faulting by the opponent).
3. Game: The first side scoring eleven (11) points and leading by at least a two (2) point margin wins. If both sides are tied at ten (10) points then play continues until one side wins by two (2) points.
4. Match: Best two (2) of three (3) games.

SECTION 11 Other Rules

1. Hand Hitting the Ball:
Balls hit by the paddle hand below the wrist, while holding the paddle, are legal. It is a fault if the ball hits the arm or other parts of body.
2. Carry and Double Hits:
Balls hit during one continuous, single direction stroke are legal, even though the ball may be unintentionally hit twice or "carried."
3. Switching Hands:
Paddle may be switched from hand to hand at any time. Two-handed shots are also legal.
4. The Net:
 - A. The ball remains in play if it hits the net and remains in play.

SECTION 12 Tournaments

1. Game:
The side first scoring eleven (11) points and leading by at least a two (2) point margin wins the game. If both sides are tied at ten (10) points then play continues until one side wins by two (2) points.
2. Match:
The first side winning two (2) games wins the match. In the event that each participant or team wins a game, then the match shall be decided by a third game to 11 points. This is known as playing the best two (2) out of three (3) games to win a match. During the third game, when the first player or team reaches six (6) points, the players will change sides of the court and the game will continue to its conclusion.

SECTION 13 Pickleball Playing Tips

1. Playing the game develops Pickleball playing skills. However, a much higher competitive level can be realized if the player capitalizes on the various strategies available. The following strategies and tips are offered to promote continuous improvement to the pickleball player's game:

2. Learn to control placement of the serve. Deep serves to the baseline and serves to the player's backhand are potent weapons that can result in points or weak returns.

3. Capture the net - the first side to secure the net position (just behind non-volley line) is in the best position to win the rally. Non-receiving member of receiving team should be positioned close to the non-volley line at start of serve.

4. Serving side should remain one to two feet behind the baseline after serve so that deep service returns can be hit without having to run backward.

5. Selective hard line drives or passing type shots are especially effective when:

A. Opponent is weak or is a weak volley player.

B. Opponent leaves an area of the court unprotected.

C. Opposing team includes a left-hander who is positioned at the net with partner to his right. A passing shot down the middle will go to both players' backhand.

D. Passing shot is directed at player running towards the net forcing the player to return shot while off balance.

E. Passing shot is directed between players, causing some confusion as to which player should return shot.

SECTION 14 Game Variations

1. Dink-A-Dink: Both players play a half court game at the non-volley line. Non-volley line must be respected and is treated as a baseline. (Fault if ball is hit beyond line). This play is good practice for dinking.

2. Dink Game: Both players play a half court game. Game starts at the non-volley line, with dink shots from each player. After that, players may dink, lob or use passing shots to any area within the half court. This play is good practice for improving play at the non-volley line.

3. Australian Doubles/Cutthroat: Play between three players. Serving player plays against other two players and gets "two serves," before having to move to the opposite (receiving) side. Players rotate clockwise to assume new serving and receiving positions. Server continues to score points until two faults are made. Game ends when any player scores eleven (11) points and wins by two (2) points or more.

Diagram B

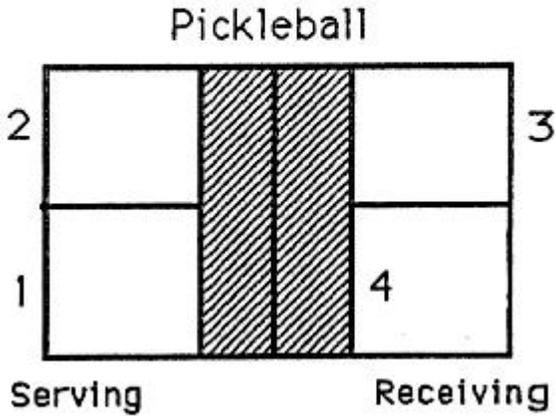


illustration of double bounce rule and position of players for doubles at start of game