

PICKLEBALL RULES

A. The Game

- a. Pickleball is a simple paddle game played using a special perforated, slow-moving ball over a tennis-type net on a badminton-sized court.
- b. The ball is served underhand without bouncing it off the court and is served diagonally to the opponent's service court.
- c. Points are scored by the serving side only and occur when the opponent faults (fails to return ball, hits ball out of bounds, etc.). The server continues to serve, alternating service courts, until server faults.
 - i. Unique Pickleball Features:
 1. Two Bounce Rule: Following serve, each side must make at least one groundstroke, prior to volleying the ball (hitting it before it has bounced).
 2. Non-Volley Zone: A player cannot volley a ball while standing within the non-volley zone.

B. Service Rules

- a. Serve Motion—The serve must be made with an underhand stroke so that contact with the ball is made below waist level. (The arm must be moving in an upward arc and the paddle head shall be below the wrist when it strikes the ball).
- b. Server Position—The server must keep both feet behind the baseline during the serve with at least one foot on the court surface or ground at the time the ball is struck. The serve must be made while the server's feet are within the confines of the serving area. These confines lie behind the serving court baseline and on or between the imaginary lines extended from the court centerline and each sideline.
- c. The Serve—The ball must be struck before it hits the court surface. The ball must land in the opponent's crosscourt (diagonally opposite court) service court. (The serve must clear the net and the non-volley line and land in the opponent's service court. The serve may land on any service court line except the non-volley line).
- d. Service Faults—During the service, it is a fault if:
 - i. The server misses the ball when trying to hit it. If the ball lands on the ground without the server swinging at the ball, it is not a fault.
 - ii. The served ball touches any permanent object before it hits the ground. (ex. Ceiling, wall lights, net posts, etc.)
 - iii. The ball touches the server or partner or partner of the server.
 - iv. The ball lands on the non-volley line.
 - v. The served ball lands outside the service court.
- e. Service Lets—The serve is a let and will be replayed if:
 - i. The serve touches the net, strap, or band and is otherwise good and lands in the service court.
 - ii. The ball is served when the receiver is not ready.
 - iii. Any player calls a timeout because an object has come onto the court.

1. Note: There is no limit to the number of lets a server may have.
- f. The Receiver—the receiver is the player diagonally opposite from the server. In doubles, this position corresponds to the player's score and starting position. There is no restriction on the receiver's position.
- g. 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 the first shot following the serve. After the initial ground strokes have been made, play may include volleys.
- h. Readiness—Serves shall not be made until the receiver is ready and the score has been called. The score shall be called after both the server and the receiver have returned to their respective positions.
 - i. Not Ready—The receiver must signal "not ready" by: raising a hand over the head or turning their back on the opponent.
- i. The 10-Second Rule—The "10 second rule" applies to both the server and receiver, each of whom is allowed up to 10 seconds after the score is called to serve or be ready to receive. It is the server's responsibility to look and be certain that the receiver is ready to receive serve.

C. Service Sequence Rules

- a. Singles
 - i. At the start of each game, the server begins the serve on the right side and alternates from right to left, etc., as long as the server holds serve.
 - ii. The server must serve to the crosscourt (court diagonally opposite) service court.
 - iii. The server's score will always be even (0, 2, 4, 6, 8...) when serving from the right side and odd (1, 3, 5, 7...) when serving from the left side (only in singles play).
- b. Doubles
 - i. The service always starts in the right-hand court and alternates from right to left to right, etc., as long as server holds serve.
 - ii. The server must serve to the crosscourt (court diagonally opposite) service court. There is no restriction on the position of the server's partner.
 - iii. The team's points will be even when the starting server is on the right-hand side. Points will be odd when starting server is on the left-hand side.
 - iv. The team serving the initial serve of the game can commit only one fault before service is passed on to the opposing team. After that, each team member serves until the player loses the serve when the team commits a fault. After both players have lost their serves, the serve passes to the opposing team.
 - v. The server will alternate between right and left service courts upon scoring a point. After the first server's team faults, the second server will continue to serve from that server's last side position and then alternate positions as long as the serving team continues to win points.

- vi. If the ball is served by the wrong team member or from the wrong court, the service is a fault. If the fault was by the first server, then the first service is lost and the correct second server serves from the correct service position. If the fault was by the second server, then it is a side out. A point made from an incorrect service position or an incorrect server will not be retained unless play has continued and another point has been scored or the opposing team has served.
- c. Service/Side Selection and Rotation
 - i. First person listed on schedule will determine first choice of service or side.
 - ii. Sides and initial service will be switched upon completion of each game.
 - iii. Sides will be switched in the third game after the first team or player reaches 6 points. Serve remains with the player holding serve.

D. Non-Volley Zone Rules

- a. The non-volley zone is the area of the court bounded by the two sidelines, the non-volley line, and the net. The non-volley line and the sidelines are included in the non-volley zone.
- b. A fault will be declared if, in the act of volleying the ball, a player or anything the player is wearing or carrying touches the non-volley zone or touches any non-volley line. For example, a fault will be declared if, in the act of volleying the ball, one of the player's feet touches a non-volley line.
- c. A fault will be declared if, in the act of volleying the ball, the player's momentum causes the player or anything the player is wearing or carrying to touch the non-volley zone or touch any non-volley line. It is a fault even if the ball is declared dead before the player touches the non-volley zone.
- d. 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 a player is inside the non-volley zone for any reason, that player cannot volley the return until both feet are on the court surface outside the non-volley zone.
- e. 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. A player may enter the non-volley zone after hitting a ball that bounces.
- f. A player may stay inside the non-volley zone to return balls that bounce. That is, there is no violation if a player does not exit the non-volley zone after hitting a ball that bounces.

E. Scoring—Game—Match Rules

- a. Scoring—Only the serving team can score points.
- b. 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).

- c. Games 1 & 2—The first side scoring 11 points and leading by at least a 2-point margin wins. If both sides are tied at 10 points, then play continues until one side wins by 2 points.
- d. Best 2 of 3 games wins.
- e. Game 3—the first side scoring 7 points and leading by at least a 2-point margin wins. Game three is capped at 11 points.

F. Other Important Rules

- a. Carry and Double Hits—Balls hit during one continuous single-direction stroke are legal, even though they may be unintentionally hit twice or carried. Only when there is a definite second push by the player does the shot become illegal.
- b. Switching Hands—A paddle may be switched from hand to hand at any time. Two-handed shots are also legal.

UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT: Winfield Recreation Commission sponsored leagues and tournaments are designed solely for the recreational values derived by the players, managers, coaches and spectators. Any player, manager or spectator who displays any form of unsportsmanlike conduct, such as flagrant rule violation, vulgar language, engaging in fighting or obviously attempting to injure anyone, threatening or purposely touching a league official before, during or after a game or match, may be suspended from the league and/or all leagues sponsored by the Recreation Commission. In addition, the individual involved may be placed on probation. Fees will not be refunded.

Any person(s) ejected from the game or match shall leave the facility immediately, NO SIGHT/NO SOUND. Failure to do so will warrant a forfeiture of the game or match by the offending participant. Badgering or taunting the opponents, officials or spectators is strictly prohibited and is grounds for suspension. When a participant or spectator is ejected, he/she is automatically suspended for the next match. If he is ejected a second time during the same season he will be kicked out of the league for the remainder of that season and will not receive a refund.

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