

PICKLEBALL STUDY GUIDE

(revised 07/05)

I. History

- Pickleball was created during the summer of 1965 by 3 U.S. Congressmen and their families who lived a short ferry ride from Seattle, Washington on Bainbridge Island. The families played Pickleball in their backyards on hard surfaces, on driveways, and on residential dead end streets.
- The name came from Congressman Joel Pritchard's dog, a cocker spaniel, named Pickles, who kept running away with the ball whenever it landed off the court.
- During the 1970's the popularity of the game grew in the Seattle area and today it is played throughout the United States, Canada, Japan, Singapore and Western Europe.
- Pickleball is a game of shot placement and long rallies, not power and strength.

II. Game Description

1. The game is played with a wooden paddle and the size of a racquetball paddle.
2. The official ball is 3 inches in diameter, made of hard plastic with holes in it (like a whiffle ball).
3. A badminton or tennis net may be used with an official net height of 36 inches.
4. The court size is identical to a doubles badminton court 20 ft wide by 44 ft long (about ¼ the size of a basketball court).

III. Rules of Pickleball

A. Serving

1. Players must keep one foot behind the endline when serving.
2. The serve must be underhand and the paddle must pass below the waist .
3. The serve must be hit the ball in the air and it is **not allowed to be bounced** and then hit.
4. The serve must be hit diagonally cross-court and it must clear the non-volley zone.
5. Only one serve attempt is allowed except on a **“let”** (the ball touches the net on the serve, but lands in the proper service court).
6. At the start of the game, the serving team is allowed only one fault before the serve is given to the opponents.
7. After that, both members of each team will serve and fault before giving up the ball to the opposing team.
8. When the receiving team wins the serve, the player in the right-hand court will always start play.
9. **A team scores points only when serving.**
10. A player who is serving continues to do so until he/she or his/her team make a fault (an error).

B. Playing the ball

1. **Double Bounce rule:** Each team must play the first shot off the bounce. The receiving team must let the serve bounce, and the serving team must let the return of the serve bounce before playing it. After the two bounces (one per side) have occurred, the ball can be either volleyed or played off the bounce until a fault is made.
2. After the ball has bounced once on each side, both teams can either volley the ball in the air or play it off the bounce.
3. To **volley** means to hit the ball in the air without letting it bounce.
4. No volleying / smashing the ball is permitted in the **7-foot non-volley zone**.

5. Points are lost by (**faults**):
 - Hitting the ball out of bounds
 - Hitting the ball into the net
 - Stepping into the non-volley zone and volleying the ball
 - Volleying the ball before the ball has bounced once on each side of the net
6. A ball landing on any line is considered **good** (in, should have been played).

C. Scoring

1. A team scores points only when serving.
2. The game is played to **11 points** and a team must win **by two**.

IV. Doubles Play

1. When the serving team wins a point, its players will switch courts and the **same** player will continue to serve.
2. When the serving team makes it's first fault, the players will stay in the same court and the second partner will then serve.
3. When they make their second fault they will stay in the same court and turn the ball over to the other team.
4. Players switch courts only after scoring.
5. **Doubles strategy:**
 - The team that reaches the front court in a net position first will be in the best position to win the point.
 - The most effective position fo play is when both players on the same team are side-by-side in the attack position one foot behind the non-volley zone line.