

BERKELEY HILLS COUNTRY CLUB  
**PICKLEBALL**



**HANDBOOK & REFERENCE GUIDE**



Established 1964

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome .....	3
History of Pickleball .....	4
Terminology & Slang .....	6
Basic Rules & Overview .....	9
Scoring.....	12
Court Layout & Ball .....	13
Court Etiquette .....	15



## Pickleball at Berkeley Hills

Pickleball at Berkeley Hills just keeps getting better! What began with a handful of players and some temporary nets and lines in 2022 has grown into a full-fledged pickleball complex to rival any in the area, with eight dedicated, lighted courts and a full schedule of league play activity.

The pickleball program at Berkeley Hills features multiple intraclub league play opportunities for members throughout the year, with well-attended spring, summer and fall leagues competing on Wednesday evenings. This year's fall league is on pace to feature over 100 participants.

Berkeley Hills pickleballers also compete in ALTA pickleball, and the courts are active throughout the week with pickup games both casual and competitive.

While many clubs and HOA's are adding pickleball courts to their list of amenities, the community and play opportunities at Berkeley Hills put our pickleball program in a class by itself!

# WELCOME

Dear Pickleball Enthusiast,

Welcome to the world of **PICKLEBALL!** Whether you're a seasoned player or just picking up a paddle for the first time, this guidebook is your go-to resource for all things pickleball.

Pickleball is more than just a sport; it's a rapidly growing phenomenon that has taken communities across the country by storm. With its unique blend of elements from tennis, badminton, and ping-pong, pickleball has proven to be easy to learn, yet endlessly exciting to master. In fact, what started as a casual backyard game in the 1960s has grown into a beloved pastime for players of all ages, and a sport that's expanding globally at an incredible pace.

This guidebook is designed to be your ultimate reference. Inside, you'll find everything you need to know to elevate your game and deepen your understanding of pickleball. We'll take you through the history of the sport, the official rules, scoring systems, and even court dimensions to help you gain a complete grasp of the game. You'll also find explanations of key terminology.

The rise of pickleball has been nothing short of remarkable, with dedicated courts springing up in neighborhoods, parks, and recreation centers everywhere. It's a sport that brings together people of all skill levels and backgrounds, creating a vibrant community centered on fun, fitness, and friendly competition.

We hope this guidebook serves as a valuable companion on your pickleball journey. So grab your paddle, rally your friends, and hit the court with confidence.

*Creig Matthieson*  
Director of Racquet Sports

## 1960s

**1965** After playing golf one Saturday during the summer, Joel Pritchard, congressman from Washington State and Bill Bell, successful businessman, returned to Pritchard's home on Bainbridge Island, WA (near Seattle) to find their families sitting around with nothing to do. The property had an old badminton court so Pritchard and Bell looked for some badminton equipment and could not find a full set of rackets. They improvised and started playing with ping-pong paddles and a perforated plastic ball. At first they placed the net at badminton height of 60 inches and volleyed the ball over the net. As the weekend progressed, the players found that the ball bounced well on the asphalt surface and soon the net was lowered to 36 inches. The following weekend, Barney McCallum was introduced to the game at Pritchard's home. Soon, the three men created rules, relying heavily on badminton. They kept in mind the original purpose, which was to provide a game that the whole family could play together.

**1967** The first permanent pickleball court was constructed in the backyard of Joel Pritchard's friend and neighbor, Bob O'Brian.

## 1970s

**1972** A corporation was formed to protect the creation of this new sport.

**1975** The National Observer published an article about pickleball followed by a 1976 article in Tennis magazine about "America's newest racquet sport."

**1976** During the spring of 1976, the first known pickleball tournament in the world was held at South Center Athletic Club in Tukwila, Washington. David Lester won Men's Singles and Steve Paranto placed second. Many of the participants were college tennis players who knew very little about pickleball. In fact, they practiced with large wood paddles and a softball sized plastic ball.

**1978** The book, The Other Raquet Sports, was published and included information about pickleball.

## 1980s

**1982** Pickleball pioneer, Sid Williams began playing and organizing tournaments in Washington state.

**1984** The United States Amateur Pickleball Association (U.S.A.P.A.) was organized to perpetuate the growth and advancement of pickleball on a national level. The first rulebook was published in March 1984. The first Executive Director and President of U.S.A.P.A. was Sid Williams who served from 1984 to 1998. He was followed by Frank Candelario who kept things going until 2004. The first composite paddle was made by Arlen Paranto, a Boeing Industrial Engineer. He used the fiberglass/nomex honeycomb panels that commercial airlines use for their floors and part of the airplane's structural system. Arlen made about 1,000 paddles from fiberglass/honeycomb core and graphite/honeycomb core materials until he sold the company to Frank Candelario.

## 1990s

**1990** Pickleball was being played in all 50 states.

**1992** Pickle-Ball, Inc. manufactured pickleballs in-house with a custom drilling machine.

**1997** Joel Pritchard passed away at age 72. Though he was Washington State's Lieutenant governor from 1988 to 1996, he is probably better known for his connection to the birth of pickleball.

**1999** The first pickleball internet website, Pickleball Stuff, launched and provided players with information, equipment, and products.

## 2000s

**2001 - 2009** The game of pickleball was introduced for the first time in the Arizona Senior Olympics through the efforts of Earl Hill. The tournament was played at Happy Trails RV Resort in Surprise, AZ and drew 100 players. It was the largest event ever played to that point. Over the next few years the event grew to nearly 300 players. There are 39 known places to play in North America listed on the Pickleball Stuff website. This represents 10 States, 3 Canadian Provinces and about 150 individual courts. Pickleball was included for the first time in the Huntsman World Senior Games, held each year in St. George, Utah during October. A new corporation for the sport was established as USA Pickleball Association (USAPA). Mark Friedenberg was named the first president of the new USAPA and the first Board of Directors was established.

2020s

**2010-2013** To help foster the growth of the sport on an international level, USAPA established the International Federation of Pickleball (IFP) organization and corresponding website (ifpickleball.org). USAPA starts the year off with a record 4,071 members.

**2014** USAPA launched a new, more user-friendly website. Pickleball Channel launched making it the first professional media group for the sport

**2015** USAPA surpasses 10,000 members for the first time. After 6 years in Buckeye, AZ, USAPA moves the USAPA National Championships to Casa Grande, AZ. Total number of courts per Places2Play continues to grow and breaks through 10,000 courts and finishes the year at 12,800 for both indoor and outdoor courts.

**2016** USAPA reports it now has more than 17,000 members. USAPA creates a national certified referee certification program. Pickleball Magazine launched as the sports first full-color, professional print and digital publication. USAPA members receive a free digital copy and a discount on a mailed subscription. The first US Open Pickleball Championships were held in Naples, FL and included the first nationally televised broadcast of pickleball on CBS Sports Network. More than 4,600 locations are now listed on Places2Play. USAPA selects St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital as it's national charitable partner. The Super Senior International Pickleball Association (SSIPPA) was created and partners with USAPA and sanctions all their tournaments.

**2017** USAPA and the International Pickleball Teaching Professional Association (IPTPA) launched a Pickleball Hall of Fame. Inaugural inductees were Joel Pritchard, Barney McCallum, Sid Williams, Arlen Paranto, Mark Friedenberg, and Billy Jacobsen. With over 1,300 players, the USAPA National Championships sets a record for participants and for the first time, a 2-hour segment of the event airs to a nation-wide audience on CBS Sports Network. USAPA membership doubles in two years and is 22,000 by December.

**2019** The Sports Fitness Industry Association 2019 report indicates pickleball continues as one of the fastest growing sports in the U.S. as participants reaches 3.3 million. USAPA reaches almost 40,000 members by the end of the year, a 1,000% growth rate since beginning of 2013.

2020s

**2020** USAPA rebranded as USA Pickleball, aligning more consistently it with other US sports governing bodies and our USA Pickleball National Championships.

**2021** USA Pickleball Membership reached the 50,000 milestone and ended the year with just over 53,000 members, a 43% increase from the previous year and the largest single growth year to date for the organization. With over 2,300 registered players, the 2021 Margaritaville USA Pickleball National Championships presented by Pickleball Central was the largest tournament in the world to date.

**2022** The Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) named pickleball the fastest-growing sport in America for the second consecutive year in its annual 2022 Topline Participation Report. The 2022 Margaritaville USA Pickleball National Championships drew nearly 2,300 registered players with the professional players competing for \$150,000 in prize money. The Indian Wells Tennis Garden hosted 5,522 fans at the peak of Championship Sunday, the largest-ever pickleball attendance in history. In 2022, "pickleball" was one of the hottest trends in the U.S., receiving an unprecedented level of media coverage by major domestic and international outlets.

**2023** USA Pickleball membership numbers reached the 70,000 mark in February of 2023, after a nearly 30 percent increase in membership growth in 2022. In its 2023 Topline Participation Report, the Sports & Fitness Industry Association (SFIA) named pickleball the fastest-growing sport in America for the third year in a row. According to the report, pickleball is now up to a total of 8.9 million players in the United States over the age of six years old, an increase from 4.8 million in 2022.

## HOW IT GOT IT'S NAME

In the summer of 1965, pickleball was founded by Joel Pritchard, Bill Bell and Barney McCallum on Bainbridge Island, Washington. Within days, Joan Pritchard had come up with the name "pickle ball"—a reference to the thrown-together leftover non-starters in the "pickle boat" of crew races.

## **ACE**

A serve that is not touched by the intended receiver, resulting in a point for the serving side.

## **AROUND THE POST (ATP)**

When a player hits a legal shot around the outside of the post on either side of the court. The shot will not go over the net, but around it.

## **ATTACK**

When a shot is at an advantageous angle or height that allows a player to strategically execute a targeted offensive play.

## **BACKHAND**

Using the side of a player's paddle that positions the back side of their hand toward the net.

## **BACKCOURT**

The area near the baseline, roughly the few feet inside the court from the baseline.

## **BACKSPIN**

Also called "Slice" or "Chop", applying spin to the ball by striking it with high to low motion, causing the ball to spin in the direction opposite its flight direction.

## **BANGER**

A (sometimes annoying) player that only hits hard drives and shots at opponents.

## **BASELINE**

The back line marking the edge of the court.

## **BERT**

The partner shot to an Erne. A shot where a player jumps to hit the ball, but rather than jumping on their own side, the player jumps to the partner's side or cross-court.

## **BODY SHOT**

When the pickleball hits another player's body. This is legal and results in a point.

## **CARRY**

A type of shot or hit when the ball is cradled and moved with the paddle direction rather than hit directly.

## **CENTER LINE**

The middle line dividing the court in half on either side from the kitchen line to the baseline.

## **CONTINENTAL GRIP**

Gripping a paddle handle to create a V with the index and thumb on the paddle handle.

## **COOKIE**

An easy shot you should happily enjoy.

## **DEAD BALL**

A ball is declared after a fault; the point is over.

## **DILLBALL**

Shot that is inbounds and has bounced once; a live ball.

## **DINK SHOT**

A soft shot that arcs over the net and falls into the opposing non-volley zone.

## **DOUBLE BOUNCE**

A ball that bounces more than once on one side of the net before being returned resulting in a lost point.

## **DOUBLE HIT**

Ball is hit twice by one team before returning over the net. Double hits may occur when the same player hits twice or can involve both players on a team.



**ERNE**

When a player lunges over the corner of the kitchen (Non-Volley Zone) out of bounds to get closer to the net and smash the ball without breaking the rule of placing one's feet in the Non-Volley Zone before the ball hits the ground.

**FALAFEL**

"Dead paddle" or a short shot due to hitting the pickleball ball with little or no power.

**FAULT**

A fault is any action that stops play because of a rule violation.

**FLICK SHOT**

When you flick your paddle downward as you extend your arm near the net and reach for a ball that otherwise would barely land in the kitchen and be difficult to hit with speed.

**FLABJACK**

A midair pickleball shot that must bounce once before it can be hit during one of the first two shots of any point (the return of serve or return of the serve return). After the third shot, no bounce is necessary, and it can be volleyed (hit in midair without bouncing).

**GAME**

A series of points played until one team has accumulated 11 points (winning by 2 points). Some pickleball tournaments play games to 15 or 21 points (win by 2).

**HALF-VOLLEY**

A groundstroke shot where the paddle contacts the ball immediately after it bounces from the court. The ball is still low before it has risen to its maximum bounce height.

**HINDER**

Any element that interferes with play or an occurrence that affects play.

**KAMIKAZE**

A player who charges the non-volley line aggressively while the opponent hits the ball, often to intercept a shot quickly.

**KITCHEN**

Slang term for the Non-Volley Zone.

**LET**

A serve that hits the net cord and lands in the service court. Let serves are replayed, just as in Tennis.

**LET ACE (or Lettuced)**

A serve that hits the net and still lands in the correct service area, resulting in an ace if the opponent is unable to return it.

**LIVE BALL** - The period when the ball is actively in play, starting from the serve until a fault or dead ball is called.

**LOB**

A return shot sent as high and deep as possible, thereby forcing the opposing side back to the baseline.

**MOMENTUM**

When a player's forward motion after a shot carries them briefly into the kitchen. This is legal unless the ball is hit.

**NON-VOLLEY ZONE (NVZ)**

The 7-foot section of court on either side of the net. Pickleball players are not allowed to volley the ball in this zone. It includes all lines surrounding the zone. Also known as "The Kitchen" and the NVZ.

**NUTMEG OR 5-HOLE**

When a player hits the ball through the opponent's legs, a tricky and often surprising shot.

**PICKLE!**

Warning shouted out by the server to alert all players on the pickleball court that they are about to serve.

## **PICKLED**

The equivalent to getting “skunked” in other sports, scoring zero points in a whole game. If you lose a pickleball game 11-0, you’ve been “pickled”.

## **PICKLEDOME**

Court where the championship match in a pickleball tournament is played. Something similar to center court in tennis.

**PICKLER** - A pickleball addict. A pickleball freak who can’t stop talking about the sport.

## **POACH**

In doubles pickleball, to cross over into your partner’s side of the court to hit a shot.

## **PUNCH SHOT**

Quick, short volley shot with little backswing and short follow-through.

## **PUNCH VOLLEY**

A fast volley shot executed with a short backswing and a “punching” motion for speed and precision.

## **PUT AWAY**

A shot with no chance of being returned.

## **RALLY**

Continuous play that occurs from the time the ball is served and until play ends in a fault.

## **RALLY SCORING**

A way of scoring where every side can earn a point, and the winning team of the rally gets the point and serves.

## **REPLAY**

Any rally that is replayed for any reason without the awarding of a point or a change of server.

## **SERVER NUMBER**

The number (1 or 2) indicating which server is serving for each team in the pickleball serving sequence.

## **SIDE OUT**

Declared after one side loses its service and the other side is awarded the serve.

## **SLICE**

A chop shot used to create backspin on the ball.

## **SLAMMERS**

Hard-hitting aggressive players who rely on overpowering shots to put points away.

## **SMASH**

Shot that is hit above the hitter’s head with a serve-like motion. It is also referred to as an overhead.

## **STACKING**

A doubles offensive formation in which the two players are on the same side of the court before the serve or return and then shift into a spot they feel more comfortable with after the ball is in play.

## **THIRD SHOT**

The second return after the serve, often strategically used to gain an advantageous position.

## **TWO BOUNCE RULE**

In pickleball: after the ball is served, the receiving team must let the ball bounce before returning, and then the serving team must also let it bounce before returning. After the third hit, the ball can be volleyed (hit midair without bouncing).

## **VOLLEY**

Hitting the ball in the air before the ball has a chance to bounce onto the pickleball court.

## **VOLLEY LLAMA**

Term referring to an illegal move (fault) where a pickleball player hits a volley shot in the Non-Volley Zone.



## SIGNIFICANT RULE CHANGES FOR 2024

### Correcting Server, Receiver and Player Position Errors (4.B.9)

Faults for incorrect server, incorrect receiver and player position errors are eliminated. The referee will now correct any such player errors before calling the score. Rule 4.B.9 is the primary rule text. Several other rules have been modified or deleted to correlate with this change.

### Draping Net (2.C.6/11.L.5.b)

Rule 2.C.6 called for a replay when a ball goes over the net and hits a net that is draped on the ground (except on a serve) but only if the referee determined that the ball was affected by the draped net. This rule, and Rule 11.L.5.b for temporary nets, now call for a replay without qualification. A determination that the ball was affected by the draped net is now not required in officiated or non-officiated play.

### Catch or Carry Ball on the Paddle (7.L)

Rule 7.L now makes catching or carrying a ball on the paddle a fault without having to determine that the catch or carry was deliberately done.

### Conceding a Rally (13.E.4/13.E.5)

Rule 13.E.5 calls for a replay when a player overrules to their detriment a line judge's 'out' call as 'in.' The player or team may now choose to concede the rally to their opponent if they determine they would have been unable to return the 'in' ball.

Similarly, Rule 13.E.4 calls for a replay when the referee overturns a line judge's out call as in. The player or team who benefitted from the referee's ruling may now choose to concede the rally to their opponent if they determine they would have been unable to return the 'in' ball.

### Medical Time-Outs (10.B.2.c)

A player is now allowed to use available standard time-outs after the 15-minute medical time-out has expired to allow more time before the player must retire from the match.

*NOTE related to medical time-outs: Case 5-23 in the USAP Casebook establishes how and when a player can rescind a requested medical time-out, and that the medical time-out would not be charged to the player. The ruling has been revised to require that the requested medical time-out be charged to the player.*

### Paddle Specifications (2.E.2/2.E.5.a/2.E.5.c)

Paddle specifications have been updated to address new and emerging paddle technology and features and to clarify the alterations that players are allowed to make to certified paddles.

### Mini-Singles (12.O)

Mini-singles is currently an approved format. The specific rules governing mini-singles are now incorporated in the Rulebook.



## THE GAME

Pickleball is a paddle sport played using a special perforated ball on a 20-foot-by-44-foot court with a tennis-type net. The court is divided into right/even and left/odd service courts and non-volley zones.

The ball is served diagonally across the net to the opponent's receiving court using an approved motion. The ball is struck back and forth across the net until a player fails to return the ball in accordance with the rules.

Points are scored only by the serving side when the server or the server's team wins the rally, or the opposing side commits a fault. The server continues to serve, alternating service courts, until the serving side loses the rally or commits a fault.

Typically, the first side scoring 11 points and leading by at least a 2-point margin wins. Pickleball can be played as singles or doubles.

## THE PLAYERS

Pickleball is a game that requires cooperation and courtesy. A sense of fair play from giving the opponent the benefit of any doubt is essential in maintaining the game's underlying principles of fun and competition.

To that end:

- All points played are treated the same regardless of their importance; the first point of the match is as important as match point.
- Either partner in doubles can make calls, especially line calls; there is no place in the game for one partner telling another, "That was my call, not yours."
- Prompt calls eliminate the 'two chance option.' For example, a player cannot claim a hinder from a ball rolling on the court after they hit a ball 'out;' they gave up their ability to call the hinder by choosing instead to hit the ball.
- Players strive to cooperate when confronted with a situation not covered by the Rulebook. Possible outcomes can be a replay, allowing the rally to stand, or in extreme cases, asking for a referee to resolve a dispute.
- Where possible, rules accommodate players with various adaptive needs
- Players avoid wearing clothing that closely matches the ball color.
- Players should not question or comment on an opponent's call, although any player may appeal a rally-ending line call to the referee before the next serve occurs.

## UNIQUE FEATURES

**Two-Bounce Rule.** After the ball is served, each side must make one groundstroke prior to volleying the ball.

**Non-Volley Zone (NVZ).** An area that extends 7 feet from the net on each side, within which a player is not allowed to strike the ball without it first bouncing. More specifically, the whole court from net to baseline is the same and can be freely used for all play with one exception: volleying. The first seven feet, the non-volley zone, cannot be used for volleying.

## SERVING

**Call the Score.** The entire score must be called before the ball is served.

**Placement.** The server must serve to the correct service court (the court diagonally opposite the server). The serve may clear or touch the net and must clear the NVZ and the NVZ lines. The serve may land on any other service court line.

If the serve clears the net or contacts the net in crossing and then touches the receiver or the receiver's partner, it is a point for the serving team.

The moment the ball is served:

- At least one foot must be on the playing surface behind the baseline.
- Neither of the server's feet may touch the court on or inside the baseline.
- Neither of the server's feet may touch the playing surface outside the imaginary extension of the sideline or centerline.
- (Wheelchair) Both rear wheels must be on the playing surface behind the baseline and may not touch the court on or inside the baseline or outside the imaginary extensions of the sideline or centerline.

The serve shall be made with only one hand releasing the ball. While some natural rotation of the ball is expected during any release of the ball from the hand, the server shall not impart manipulation or spin on the ball with any part of the body immediately prior to the serve. Exceptions: Any player may use their paddle to perform the drop serve (see Rule 4.A.8.a). A player who has the use of only one hand may also use their paddle to release the ball to perform the volley serve.

In officiated matches, the server's release of the ball must be visible to the referee and receiver. In matches without a referee, the server's release of the ball must be visible to the receiver. There is no fault if the release is not visible to the referee or receiver.

**The Volley Serve.** The volley serve is made by striking the ball without bouncing the ball off the playing surface and can be made with either a forehand or backhand motion. A proper volley serve includes the following elements:

- The server's arm must be moving in an upward arc at the time the ball is struck with the paddle.
- The highest point of the paddle head must not be above the highest part of the wrist (where the wrist joint bends) when the paddle strikes the ball



## SCORING IN A GAME OF PICKLEBALL

### SINGLES SCORING

- Singles scoring is very similar to doubles except that there is no second server.
- The serve is always done from the right side when the server's score is even and from the left side when the server's score is odd.
- It is the server's score that determines serving position, not the score of the receiver.
- The receiver lines up on the right or left side according to the server's score.
- The score is called simply as: server score, receiver score.

### DOUBLES SCORING

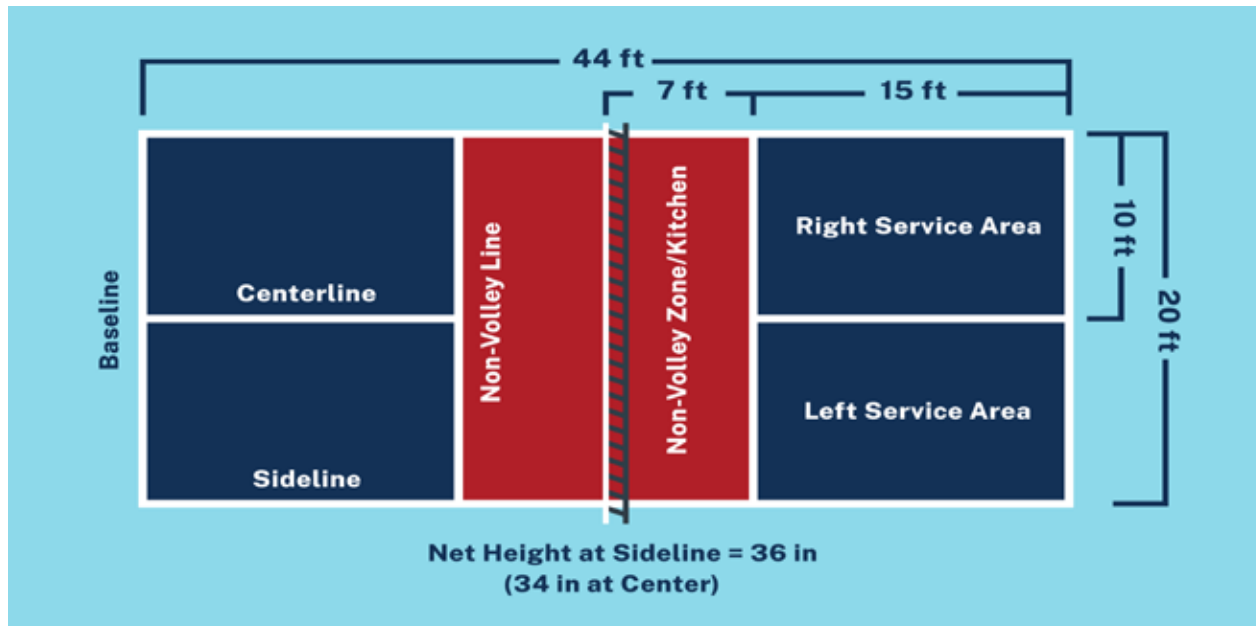
- Points are scored only on the serve; the receiving side cannot score a point.
- At the start of the game, the player on the right side (even court) serves to the diagonally opposite court.
- If a point is scored, the server moves to the left side (odd court) and serves to the diagonally opposite court.
- Players on the serving side continue to move from the right to left or left to right each time a point is scored.
- Players on the serving team do not alternate sides unless a point is scored. The receiving side never alternates sides.
- The first server continues to serve until the serving team loses a rally by committing a fault; then the serve passes to the second server on the team. [See \* below for an exception]
- When the second server loses the serve, the serve goes to the other team and the player on the right serves first. That pattern continues throughout the game.

### CALLING THE SCORE:

- The score should be called as three numbers.
- Proper sequence for calling the score is: server score, receiver score, then, for doubles only, the server number: 1 or 2.
- To start a match, the score will be called as: zero - zero - two\*
- The server number (1 or 2) applies for that service turn only. Whoever is on the right side (depending on the score) when the team gets the serve back is the first server for that service turn only. The next time that the team gets the serve back, it might be the other player that is on the right and is therefore the first server for that service turn only. Beginning players often mistakenly assume that the player keeps the same server number throughout the game.
- \*First Server Exception: To minimize the advantage of being the first team to serve in the game, only one player, the one on the right side, gets to serve on the first service turn of the game. Since the serve goes to the other side when that player loses the serve, that player is designated as the second server. Therefore, at the start of the game, the score should be called, "0-0-2." The "2" indicates the second server and means that the serve goes to the other side when the serve is lost.
- When a team's score is even, the player who served first in that game must be on the right (even) side of the court and on the left (odd) side when the score is odd. Or, expressed alternately, when the first server of that game is on the right side of the court, that team's score should be even. If this is not the case, then either the players are positioned on the wrong side of the court or the called score is inaccurate.



## COURT DIAGRAM



## COURT DIMENSIONS

A standard pickleball court is divided into two equal parts by its net, which runs the entire 20' width of the court and splits the 44' length of the court into 22' halves. The net is 36" tall at the posts, sagging to 34" in the absolute center of the court.

## COURT SURFACES

**ASPHALT & CEMENT COURTS:** Hard surface courts are often considered the best surfaces for pickleball. However, this may be largely influenced by tennis and pickleball's wide adoption of tennis courts. An emerging pickleball court trend is seeing other surfaces, like grass and clay, gaining popularity.

**CLAY COURTS:** Usually found in the form of Har-Tru or red clay, clay courts are gaining a lot of attention in pickleball, especially Har-Tru in the United States. Har-Tru is a greenish-grayish color, and it offers a more predictable bounce and a faster pace than the traditional red clay often found in Europe and South America.

**GRASS COURTS:** Grass is an interesting option because it deadens the bounce, making the kitchen even more challenging. This surface enables players to use strategies that don't usually work on traditional cement or asphalt.

## BALL REQUIREMENTS

Unlike sports such as baseball or football where the same ball can be used indoors and outdoors, a game of pickleball can be affected by the type of ball used. The type of pickleball you use can significantly impact your game, depending on whether you're playing indoors or outdoors, particularly when considering the climate in which you're playing.

There are several factors that determine whether a ball is better for indoor or outdoor use, including:

- The number of holes in a pickleball
- The size of the holes
- The weight of the ball
- The hardness of the ball

Regardless of whether they're designed for indoor or outdoor play, must follow certain guidelines. USA Pickleball provides guidelines regarding ball design, which set parameters for various aspects of the ball. To be added to the USA Pickleball approved ball list, pickleballs must meet the following parameters:



## BALL REQUIREMENTS CONTINUED

- Must be 2.87-2.97 inches in diameter
- Must weigh between 0.78 and 0.935 ounces
- Must have a bounce of 30-34 inches when dropped from a height of 78 inches
- A minimum of 26 and a maximum of 40 holes
- Uniform color and untextured surface

These guidelines set parameters for various aspects of the ball but leave room for the development of specialized indoor and outdoor pickleballs tailored to the specific conditions and demands of each environment.

## INDOOR BALL VS. OUTDOOR BALL



### OUTDOOR BALL

**HOLES 40 & SMALLER:** The smaller holes reduce the impact of the wind on the ball's path.

**HEAVIER & HARDER:** The extra weight helps keep the ball stable in windy conditions and ensures it travels faster than indoor balls.

**MORE DURABLE:** Constructed to withstand rougher play on outdoor surfaces, which are often harder on equipment than indoor court surfaces.

**COLOR:** Usually a smooth, bright color such as yellow or neon green to ensure good visibility in natural light.

### INDOOR BALL

**HOLES 26 & LARGER:** Larger holes mean the ball moves slower and is easier to control, which can lead to longer rallies and a more strategic game.

**SOFTER & LIGHTER:** Indoor balls are generally softer and lighter. This is because they don't need to combat outdoor elements like wind or rocks.

**LESS BOUNCE:** Gym floors and other indoor surfaces are harder than many outdoor surfaces, so a ball with less bounce is preferable to keep the gameplay consistent.

**COLOR:** Often, indoor balls are colored to stand out against the typically light-colored floors and bright lighting of indoor courts. Instead of being yellow, they can be purchased in dark green, blue, or red, for example.



**OUTDOOR:**  
**40 HOLES**  
 Smaller holes & spacing  
 Heavier weight for wind  
 Lighter color  
 Extra durable for concrete



**INDOOR:**  
**26 HOLES**  
 Larger, more spaced holes  
 Slightly lighter weight  
 Darker color  
 Great for indoor gyms



## ETIQUETTE & SPORTSMANSHIP

Pickleball was created to be a fun, competitive, and highly social sport. Since its inception, it has embodied an ethic of good sportsmanship that includes respect, fair play, and graciousness in winning and losing.

### **TREAT ALL PLAYERS, OFFICIALS, VOLUNTEERS, STAFF, AND SPECTATORS WITH COURTESY & RESPECT.**

- Introduce yourself to any players you do not know.
- Never use foul language or obscene gestures. Never denigrate another person.
- At the end of each game, meet the other players at the net to acknowledge them in a positive manner. In officiated matches, thank the referee.
- Accommodate players with adaptive needs when possible.

### **KNOW THE OFFICIAL RULES**

- Apply them fairly and cooperate in any situation that is not expressly covered by the rules.

### **PRACTICE GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP WHEN MAKING LINE CALLS.**

- Respect your opponents' right to make all calls on their end of the court.
- Call your own shot "out" if you see that it is out. Do not call a ball "out" unless you see it clearly and are certain.
- If you question an opponent's call, do so respectfully and do not argue.
- If you defer a line call to your opponents, accept their call graciously.
- Promptly correct any wrong call your partner may make.
- Resolve any uncertainty in favor of your opponents.

### **CALL A FAULT ON YOURSELF OR YOUR PARTNER, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER YOUR OPPONENTS ARE AWARE OF THE FAULT.**

- Watch your own and your partner's feet for service or NVZ foot faults.
- Accept your opponent's and partner's fault calls graciously.
- Admit if the ball hits you or your paddle on the way out of bounds.

### **CLAIM A REPLAY ONLY IF A HINDER AFFECTS YOUR TEAM'S ABILITY TO PLAY THE BALL.**

### **IN SOCIAL PLAY, ROTATE ON AND OFF COURTS FAIRLY, COURTEOUSLY, AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH LOCAL PRACTICE.**

- Don't jump ahead of others who are waiting to play.
- Don't invite someone else forward in line or rearrange paddles so they can move up to play with you; move yourself back instead.
- Don't call a lower score or start a second game to avoid leaving the court.
- Be prepared to play when it is your turn.
- If you must cross over or behind an active court, wait until play is stopped and cross quickly in a single group to minimize disruption of that game.

### **MAKE SAFETY A PRIORITY WHILE USING COMMON SENSE.**

- If a ball strays onto your court, make eye contact with the correct person and roll or toss it back to them without disrupting play on other courts.
- If your ball enters another court, immediately warn any players whose safety may be in jeopardy by loudly calling "ball" or some other warning. If the ball is rolling behind their court and does not present a danger to players, do not interrupt play but wait until play stops to retrieve it or ask for its return.
- Never throw your paddle or strike the ball in anger or frustration.

### **AS A STRONGER PLAYER IN SOCIAL PLAY, BE KIND TO OTHER PLAYERS.**

- Avoid hitting excessively to a weaker player.
- Do not slam the ball directly at other players.

### **BE CONSIDERATE ABOUT PLAYING UP AND PLAYING DOWN.**

- Be willing to play sometimes with less-skilled players.
- Do not demand to play with more skilled players; ask them nicely if you wish to play with them.

### **BE A RESPECTFUL AND SUPPORTIVE PARTNER.**

- Avoid criticism and negative non-verbal communications.
- Provide coaching and advice only when requested.



Established 1964

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