

# BASIC PICKLEBALL RULES

## The Court

- At MainPower stadium we use the Badminton courts (white lines) for Pickleball
- Use the outer lines of a badminton court for both singles and doubles Pickleball
- Use the badminton service line 2.1m from the net to designate the “No-Volley” zone (AKA: the “Kitchen”)
- There is a white line through the middle of the service area which defines left and right service areas (this line is black on the middle badminton court)

## Serving

- The server must serve with both feet behind the base line of the correct service area.
- The server hits the ball underhand on the diagonal into their opponent’s service area (R-R or L-L). The ball must clear the No-Volley Zone and bounce ONCE before it is returned.
- Serves can be either forehand or backhand and ball must be hit below waist level with hand higher than paddle.
- Server can throw the ball up and hit on the full, or do a “Drop Serve” where the ball is dropped so it bounces before being hit. On a Drop Serve the ball cannot be propelled up or down before bouncing. If server wants to spin the ball it can only be done with the hand.
- The server is only allowed ONE service attempt on each rally (no service faults as in tennis). If the ball is hit out or into the net on the serve that rally is over.
- If the ball hits the net and lands in correct service area then play continues. If ball hits net and lands out or in the Kitchen then that rally is lost.

## Two-Bounce Rule

- When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning, and then the serving team must let it bounce before returning, thus two bounces.
- After the ball has bounced once in each team’s court, both teams may either volley the ball (hit the ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce (ground stroke).

## Singles Serving and Positioning

- First serve in a game is made from the RIGHT service area
- If the server wins the rally the next serve is from the LEFT service area
- If the server loses the rally it is “Side Out” and service goes to their opponent.
- From then on the service side is determined by the server’s points. If the server is on EVEN points (0, 2, 4 etc) they serve from the R side. If server’s score is on ODD number (1, 3, 5 etc) they will serve on the L side.

## Double Serving and Positioning

- At the beginning of the game each team determines which player will be their first server. This player will stand in their respective RIGHT side serving area.
- From then on that first server will serve or receive based on the team's score. If that team has EVEN points, the first server will be on the RIGHT side of the court to serve or receive. If the team has an ODD score the first server will be on the LEFT side to serve or receive.
- The first serve of each Side Out is made from the RIGHT side by the player currently holding that position (team's first server if score is EVEN, their team mate if score is ODD).
- If the serving team wins the rally the serving team's players will swap sides with the same server now serving on the LEFT. The receivers do not change sides.
- If the serving team loses the rally that team's second server takes over from the side they are holding. When the team loses a second rally it is "Side Out" and serve goes to their opponents.
- The only time this pattern changes is at the start of a game when only the serving team's first server has a turn at serve – so when they lose their first rally serve immediately transfers to their opponents.
- The player who is NOT serving or receiving can stand anywhere in the playing area.

## Scoring

- Points are scored only by the serving team when they win a rally.
- Games are normally played to 11 points. Tournament games may be to 15 or 21, win by 2.
- Change of ends at the end of each game. In a best of 3 games to 11 points, players change ends in the third game when the first player/team reaches 6 points. (8 points if game is first to 15 / 11 points if game is first to 21).
- To call the score in doubles, first call the server's score, followed by the receiver's score and then what server the serving team is up to (first or second). For example if the score is 5-4 and the serving team's first server has just lost a rally, the score would be called "5, 4, 2".

## Non-Volley Zone (AKA "The Kitchen")

- The non-volley zone is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.
- Players must not step into the non-volley zone to play a volley shot. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone.
- It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the non-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the non-volley zone including the associated lines.
- It is a fault if, after volleying, a player is carried by momentum into or touches the non-volley zone, even if the volleyed ball is declared dead before this happens.
- A player may legally be in the non-volley zone any time other than when volleying a ball. For example a player may step into the non-volley zone if the ball bounces.

## Line Calls

- A ball contacting any part of any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, is considered "in."
- A serve contacting the non-volley zone line is short and a fault.
- Players should make line calls honestly and to the best of their ability. If in doubt play on.
- Make your OUT call as soon as possible – any delay and play should be allowed to continue.