



Pickleball for Beginners

Key Terms

"Kitchen", this is the non-volley zone (NVZ) of the court near the net. A player **cannot** touch the line or step into the NVZ to volley or just after hitting a volley (paddle and body can lean in but feet cannot step in!). A player **can** step in the NVZ to hit a ball which has bounced.

"Dink", a drop shot into opponents' kitchen/NVZ

"Two Bounce or Double Bounce Rule", when served the ball must cross the net diagonally and bounce in the area past the kitchen/NVZ, the return must then be hit back and bounce anywhere on the server's side before either side can hit a volley

"10 Second Rule", the server must announce the score and then serve within 10 seconds

"Side-Out", when both players on a team have served and lost then the serve goes to the opponents

General Play

Serving

- The server must hit the ball with an underarm motion, this can be done by dropping the ball and hitting it out of the air or after a drop-bounce (not a hard bounce which sets the ball up high)
- The serve must be hit diagonally across the net and past the kitchen/NVZ, the ball cannot touch the kitchen/NVZ line although it can touch the outer court lines
- The server must be behind the baseline when hitting the serve and it's recommended that their partner is also behind the baseline as they must let the return bounce before hitting it
- There is no second serve, if the ball doesn't go over the net, touches the kitchen/NVZ line or lands outside of the court the server loses their serve
- In doubles, both team members serve before a 'side out' and the serve goes to the opponents EXCEPT in the very beginning of the game when only one server gets to serve (see more below in Scoring)

Returning

- You must let the serve bounce before returning anywhere on the opponent's court
- It is recommended that the returner stand near the baseline as the serve may be deep but the returner's partner can stand up near the kitchen/NVZ line, which is an advantage

Objectives

- Hit your shot so that it is unattackable, ie, a dink into the kitchen, a hard drive that goes low over the net or at the opponents' feet
- Control the net!
- Attack any high ball that comes over the net – but don't step in the kitchen to volley!!

Scoring

- "Me-You-Who"** when announcing the score the server always says their score first, then the opponent's score and then whether they are the team's 1st or 2nd server of the turn. For example, let's say my team has 8 points, the opponents have 5 points and my partner has already served but hit the ball wide; I would announce the score "8-5-2"
- Your team can only score a point while serving (much like volleyball)
- When a side-out occurs the player on the right side of the court (what we would call the deuce side in tennis) starts serving for the team and is server 1 for that turn. If that team wins a point while serving then the server moves to the left side of the court and serves from that side – continuing back and forth until the team loses a point. The teammate then becomes server 2 and serves from whatever side they are currently located. When both players have lost a serve there is a side-out and you remain and play from your current position
- Games are normally played to 11 (although you can choose to play to 15 or 21) and you must win by 2 points