

# PICKLEBALL

## Overview

Pickleball is an individual recreational game played indoors or outdoors on a court similar to a badminton court. It is played with a short handled paddle and a regulation pickleball (whiffle ball). The game may be played in singles or doubles and is won by scoring eleven points.

The object of the game is to score points by hitting the ball over the net into the proper court in a way that opponents cannot return the ball.

## Safety/Etiquette

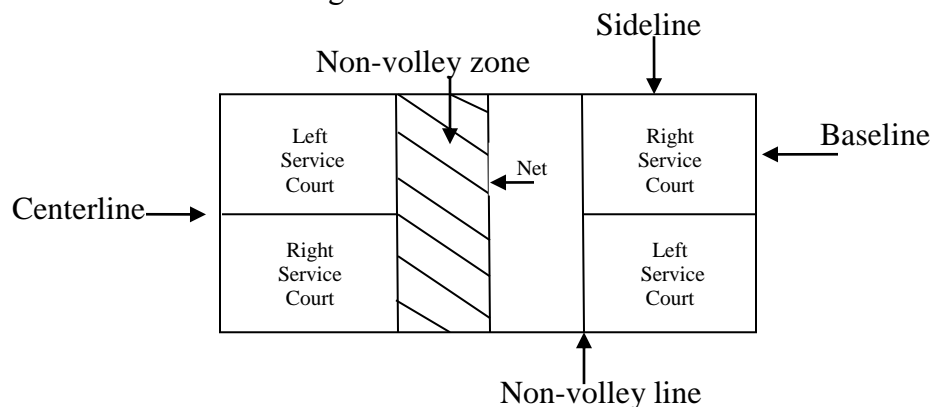
1. Wear the paddle string around your wrist at all times during the game.
2. When finished with a game, players should walk around the courts where games are still in progress.
3. Make sure your opponent is ready before beginning the serve.
4. Proper body awareness and control should be utilized during game play so players do not run into the net, poles or walls.

## Care of Equipment

1. Paddles are to be returned to the appropriate rack after class.
2. Strike **ONLY** the ball with the paddle, nothing else. Avoid walls and floors by keeping the body under control while playing.
3. Call plays when playing doubles to avoid clashing paddles.

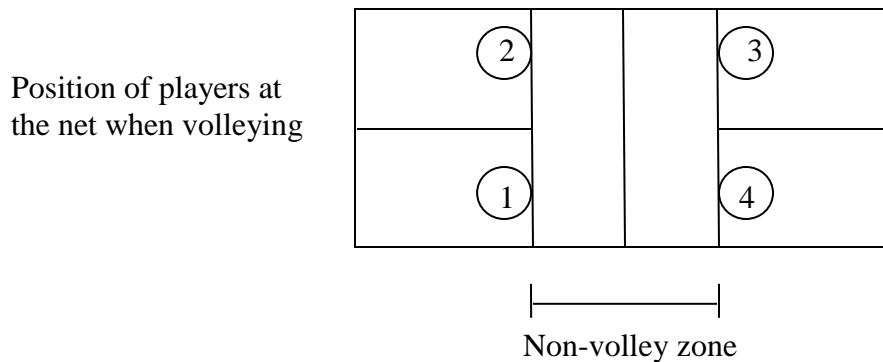
## Rules & Game Play

1. **Court** – the size of the court is 20' x 44' for both doubles and singles. The net is hung at 36" on the ends and hangs 34" in the middle.

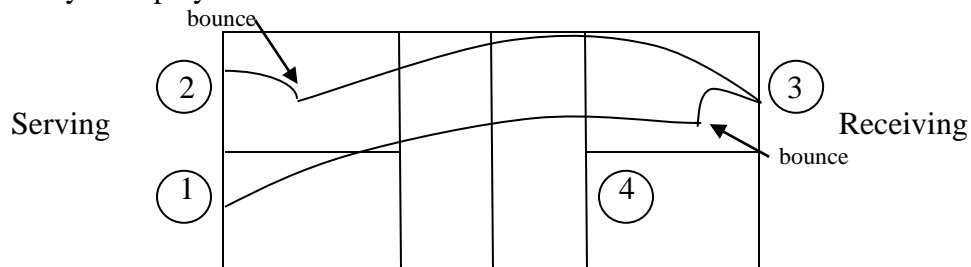


2. **Serve**
  - Players must keep one foot behind the back line of their service court when serving.
  - The serve is made underhand and the paddle must pass below the waist.
  - The server must hit the ball before it hits the ground on a serve. He/she may not bounce the ball and then hit it.
  - The service is made diagonally cross court and must clear the non-volley zone.
  - The ball must bounce in the proper service court before being returned.
  - Only one serve attempt is allowed **EXCEPT** if the ball touches the net on the serve **AND** lands in the proper service court. In this case, the serve may be taken over.
  - If the serve hits the Non-Volley Zone line it is considered a fault.

3. **Volley** – To volley a ball means to hit it in the air without first letting it bounce. All volleying must be done with the player’s feet behind the non-volley zone line. It is a fault if a player steps over the line on his/her volley to follow through.

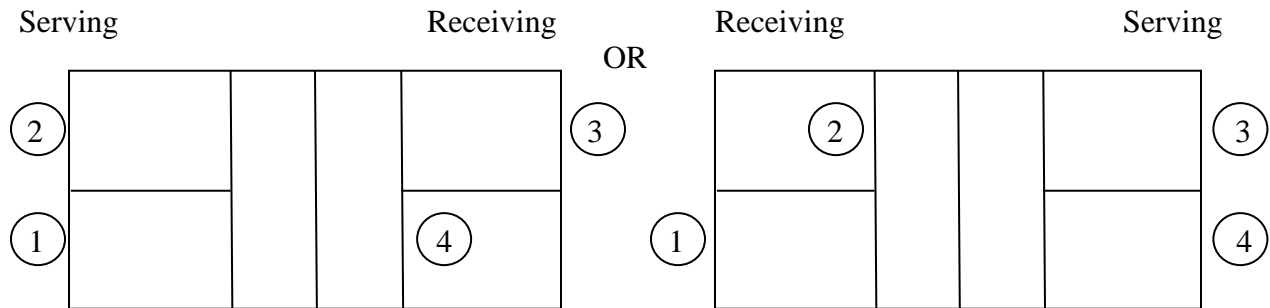


4. **Double Bounce Rule** – The receiving team must let the serve bounce in the correct service court, then the serving team must let the return of the serve bounce before playing it. After the two bounces have occurred (one on each side of the net), the ball can either be volleyed or played off the bounce.



5. **Scoring**
- Only the serving team can score points.
  - A player who is serving will continue to do so until a fault is made by his/her team.
  - The game is played to 11 points; however, a team must win by two points.
  - The score should be called out before each serve.
  - A ball that lands on any court line is good.
  - When the serving team’s score is even (0,2,4,6,8,10) the player who was the first server in the game for that team will be in the right service court when serving or receiving.
6. A **fault** occurs when:
- a. the ball is hit out of bounds.
  - b. the ball is hit into the net
  - c. a player steps into the non-volley zone and volleys the ball.
  - d. a player volleys the ball before it has bounced once on each side of the net as outlined in Rule #4.
7. **Skills**  
Skills involved include a serve, volley, groundstroke, forehand and backhand drive, smash, lob and strokes that add backspin and top spin to the ball. See terminology for descriptions.

## Position of Players for Doubles at the Start of the Game



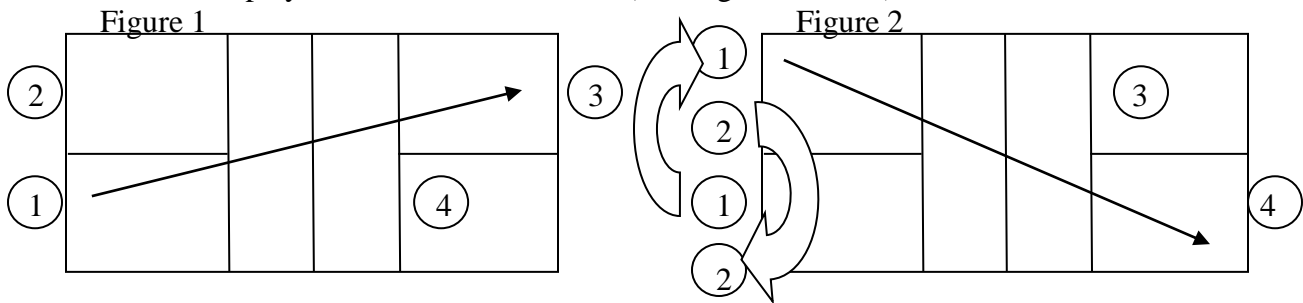
## Determining the Serving Team

Players may toss a coin or rally the ball until a fault is made. The winner of the toss or rally has the option of serving first or receiving first.

## Doubles Play

The player in the right-hand court (#1) serves diagonally across the court to the receiver (#3) in the opposite right-hand court. The ball must clear the non-volley zone and land in the right-hand serving court. The receiver (#3) must let the ball bounce before returning the serve. The serving team must also let the return bounce before playing it (Rule #4-Double Bounce Rule). After the bounces have occurred, the ball may either be volleyed or played off the bounce until a fault is made. (See Figure 1 below)

- If the fault is made by the receiving team, a point is scored by the serving team. When the serving team wins a point, its players will switch service courts and the same player will continue to serve. (See Figure 2 below)



## Doubles Serving Sequence

- At the start of each new game, the first service team is allowed only one fault before giving up the serve to the opponents.
- For the remainder of the game, both members of the serving team have the opportunity to serve and score points until they each commit a fault.
- When the receiving team wins the serve (after a side-out), the player in the right-handed court will always start play.
- If a point is scored, the server switches service courts and the server initiates the next serve from the left service court.
- When the first server loses the serve, the partner serves from the service court where he/she was just playing. Only switch service courts when a point is scored.
- The second server continues serving until his/her team commits a fault and loses the serve to the opposing team.
- Once the serve goes to the opposition, the first serve is always made from the right service court.

- The team's points will be even (0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10) when the game's starting server is on the right hand side.

## **Singles Play**

When a singles game begins, the server begins the serve on the right side. The server alternates from right to left, etc. as long as the server holds the serve. In other words, when you score a point, switch service courts. When serving in singles, each player serves from the right-hand court when his score is 0 or an even number and from the left-hand court when the score is odd-numbered.

## **Playing Strategy**

1. Both members of the serving team should be near the base line at the time of the serve so that neither will forget to let the first returned ball bounce before they return it (Double Bounce Rule).
2. After the ball is in play, lobbing it over the opponent's head can be effective strategy.
3. A ball landing on any line is considered good.
4. If a player sees that the ball is going to land in the non-volley zone and he is going to let it bounce, he may move into the zone before it bounces but must let it bounce before returning it.
5. The hand below the wrist is considered part of the paddle and shots off any part of it are considered good.

## **Terminology**

1. **Cross court**- diagonally opposite your court
2. **Dink shot**- soft shot that arcs over the net, landing in the non-volley zone
3. **Drop shot**- groundstroke that is short of your opponent's position
4. **Fault**- a violation of the rules
5. **Groundstroke**- contacting the ball after one bounce
6. **Let**- a serve that hits the net and lands in the correct service court; the serve is replayed
7. **Lob**- a return that sends the ball as high and deep as possible
8. **Non-volley zone**- area of the court adjacent to the net in which you cannot volley the ball
9. **Smash**- hard, overhand shot (spike), often used on opponents lob or high return
10. **Rally**- continuous play that occurs after the serve and before a fault
11. **Service court**- section of the court on either side of the center-line; bordered by the non-volley line, baseline and sideline
12. **Volley**- hitting the ball before it has a chance to bounce

## **Grading**

See activity unit grade breakdown, fitness grade breakdown, and final grading scale under NC/SC Grading Policy at the beginning of the study guide.

## **Technique Description/Skill Tests**

Specific skills for activity units are taught on a regular basis. In some units, demonstrated knowledge of skills may be obtained through some form of skill testing. This testing is not outcome based.