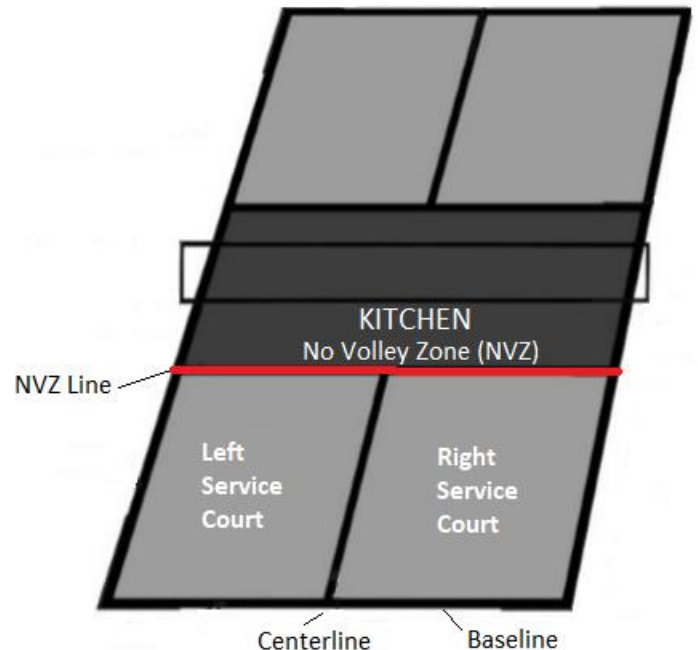


## Overview

- The sport was first invented in 1965 in Washington, and is governed by the USA Pickleball Association. <https://www.usapa.org/docs/ifp/USAPA-Rulebook.pdf>.
- The rules of the game more closely resemble table tennis or badminton than traditional tennis.
- The game ends at 11, and must be won by 2 points.
- Points are only scored on a serve. If you cannot serve, you will not win!
- Serve and side-out sequencing in doubles play is unique to Pickleball. For doubles play, both players will serve (try to obtain points) before the ball is returned to the other team to serve.

## Terms/Definitions

- **Volley:** hitting a ball in the air before it hits the ground.
- **Dink:** the ball drops just over the net
- **Service let:** when the ball hits the net on a serve but still lands in the proper service court. If a service let occurs then the serve is repeated without any penalty.
- **Side out:** change of serve to the other team.
- **No Volley Zone (NVZ):** also known as the **Kitchen** has special fault rules. You are allowed to stand in the zone, but the rules make it so that you do not want to (more details to follow below).
- **Fault:** a loss of point when the rules of play are broken.



## Faults

- Like most sports there are fault rules, here is a quick summary to get us started;
  - Failing to clear the net (ball lands on your side of the net).
  - Hitting the ball out of bounds (IMPORTANT: all lines are considered in play, except for the NVZ line on a serve).
  - Failing to land in the cross court, or not clearing the NVZ line during a serve.
  - Not following the two-bounce rule during a serve (volleying the ball before it has bounced on a serve, or the first serve return).
  - Hitting a volley while in the No Volley Zone (Kitchen).

## Score Keeping

- Always call the score before serving; first, you are letting the other team know you are ready to serve, second, it helps everyone remember the score.
- Scores consist of three numbers; servers score, receivers score, the server number\* (1 or 2).
- The server number (1 or 2) applies for that service turn only. Whoever is on the right side 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.

## PICKLEBALL 101

### Score Keeping (continued)

- \*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, the “even” player) 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.
- Line Calling - Line calling is based on the honor system and good sportsmanship. All questionable calls should be made in favor of your opponents. If you and your partner cannot agree on if the ball was in or out the call is always “in” because that is resolving the line call in favor of your opponents.

## Serving

- To properly serve the ball, the player must serve from behind the baseline, aiming at the service court located diagonally across the court, and clearing the NVZ line.
- All serves must have an underhand swing, striking the ball below the waist.
- During a serve, both sides must allow the pickle ball to bounce first before hitting it with the paddle, known as the two-bounce rule. After the first set of returns, players then may resume normal play.
- After a side-out, service will always begin on the right side.
- After scoring a point, the server re-positions to serve to the other court for the next serve (in doubles, partners will change places).

### Singles:

- If the player’s score is even (0, 2, 4 ...), the serve must be made from the right/even serving area and be received in the right/even service court by the opponent.
- If the player’s score is odd (1, 3, 5 ...), the serve must be made from the left/odd serving area and be received in the left/odd service court by the opponent.
- After the server loses the rally or faults, a side out will occur and service is awarded to the opponent.

### Doubles:

- Both players on a team will serve before a side out is declared, except at the start of each game.
- At the start of each side out, service begins in the right serving area.

*TIP: When a team’s score is even, the player who served first at the start of the game must always end up in the right side court after a side-out. 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.*

- The receiving team does not alternate positions when a point is scored by the serving team. The receiving team may switch positions once the ball is in play, but after the rally is over, the receiving team must return back to their positions.

## No Volley Zone (Kitchen)

- You are allowed to stand in the kitchen, but the rules make it so that you do not want to.
- You cannot hit a ball out of the air while in the kitchen, you must let the ball bounce in the kitchen before hitting it.
- Be aware that on a volley your momentum cannot carry you into the kitchen.
- Both feet must be in contact with the playing surface outside of the kitchen before hitting a volley.
- If the ball bounces in the kitchen on a short dink, you can enter the kitchen to play it. Remember to not just stand in the kitchen, as your opponent could take advantage of this with a volley. You can stay in the kitchen as long as needed, but you will want to get out of there quickly.

## PICKLEBALL 101

### Equipment

- Paddles – typically are made from wood, composite, or graphite.
- Balls - The one with larger holes, is customarily used for indoor play, and the ball with smaller holes is customarily used for outdoor play. Colors may vary. All approved balls are acceptable for indoor or outdoor play.



### Court Positioning Strategy

- Because of the two-bounce rule, both serving partners are positioned near the baseline. Remember the serve and the return of serve have to bounce before the ball can be volleyed.
- The person receiving the serve should position themselves deep in the service area the serve must bounce before it is returned. Receiver's partner should be positioned forward at the NVZ line. Reminder: Receiver's partner, who is forward at the NVZ, should assist their team by turning to watch if the serve is outside of the service area.
- After returning the served ball Receiver should immediately move forward to the NVZ line.

The serving team members, once the second bounce and return shot has occurred, should also both move right up to the NVZ line. Reminder: avoid staying in the mid-court area ["no man's land"] – this is where the ball usually is hit at your feet and is extremely difficult to return.