

PICKLEBALL STUDY GUIDE

The strategy of the game is in ball placement not on strength or size of the player.

The winner of the game is the player/team that first reaches 11 points. A player/team must win by 2 points.

EQUIPMENT

Whiffleballs the size of a baseball or softball are used (3 inches in diameter). The smaller the ball the faster the speed of the game.

The paddle used in pickleball is made of hardwood or plywood. The head of the paddle is squared off and should not exceed 8 inches wide or 15 1/2 inches in length. A cord is attached to the butt of the paddle and the wrist should be inserted through the cord to ensure the paddle does not come off.

A badminton net is hung 36 inches high at the posts and 34 inches high in the center of the net.

This game is played on a badminton court. A pickleball court has a non-volley zone 7 feet deep on each side of the net. The court is 20 x 44 feet for both doubles and singles.

BASIC RULES

Service is determined by tossing a coin or rallying the ball until a fault is made. The winner of the toss or rally has the option to serve first or receive.

A player must keep one foot behind the back line of the court when serving. The serve is to be made underhand and the paddle must pass below the waist of the person serving. The ball must be hit in the air on the serve (not out of the server's hand). You may not bounce the ball before the serve.

The serve is to be made diagonally in the opposing teams court and must clear the non-volley zone. Only one serve attempt is allowed unless the ball touches the net on the serve and lands in the proper service court. If this happens, you may serve again. Players switch courts (right and left hand sides) only after a point has been scored.

At the start of each new game, only one fault is allowed before giving up the service to the opponents. After this first serve, then both members of a team serve and fault before the service is turned over to the opposing team. When the receiving team wins the serve, the player in the right hand court will always start play with the serve. The player serving continues to do so until a fault is made by his/her team (no point is scored). The next player in rotation then gains service.

All volleying (hitting the ball in the air without letting it first touch the ground) must be done with the player's feet behind the non-volley zone line. It is considered a fault if the player steps over the line on his/her volley follow-through.

A ball landing on any line is considered good.

Double bounce rule - each team must play their first shot off of the bounce. Example - The receiving team must let the serve bounce and the serving team must let the return of the serve bounce before playing it. After the two bounces have occurred, the ball may either be played off of a bounce or volleyed.

Faults - The following are considered faults:

- a. hitting the ball out-of-bounds
- b. not clearing the net
- c. stepping into the non-volley zone and volleying the ball
- d. volleying the ball before it has bounced once on each side of the net

Scoring

A point is scored only by the serving team.

The game is played to 11 points.

A team must win by 2 points.

SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES

Serve - When serving, the paddle must pass below the waist, the ball must be dropped and hit out of the air, and one foot must remain behind the back line.

Two types of serve:

- (1) drive - the ball has a flat arc over the net. It will land deep in the opponent's back court which will force the player away from the volley zone.
- (2) lob - a defensive technique to keep the opponents in the back court area. This high arcing serve will tend to bounce higher and keep the opponent in a defensive mode.

PLAYING STRATEGIES

- *Serves are most effective when hit into the far back court and into the corners. Vary the serve.
- *Return the service in the back court and the corners. Vary placement.
- *Force your opponent to move from side-to-side and up and back.
- *Take control of the net by forcing your opponents to hit shots from the back line.
- *Hit the ball down the center of the court occasionally - this forces opponents to make choices which sometimes puts them out of position to hit the return.
- *Use lob shots occasionally once you have drawn your opponent to the net.
- *If you and your partner are near the net, use a lob as a defensive technique to allow you time to get back into position on your court.

VOCABULARY

Approach shot - shot hit inside the baseline while approaching the net

Backcourt - area near the non-volley zone and baseline

Backhand - stroke hit on the opposite side of the hand holding the paddle

Baseline - end line of the pickleball court

Down-the-line - shot hit near a sideline which travels close and parallel to the same line from where it was initially hit

Drive - low shot that is hit near the opponent's backcourt

Drop shot - ground stroke hit in such a way that the ball drops just over the net into the non-volley zone

Error - a mistake made by a player during competition

Fault - serve which lands out of bounds or court area

Foot fault - failure on the server's part to keep at least one foot behind the baseline during the serve

Forehand - shot hit on the right side of a right-handed player

Game - when one side has reached 11 points (a team must win by 2)

Half-volley - ball hit only inches from the court surface after the initial bounce

Let - any point that must be replayed

Let serve - serve that touches the top of the net and falls in the proper service court (it may be replayed)

Lob - ball hit very high to pass over the reach of an opponent that falls within the court

Non-volley zone - 7 foot area on either side of the net in which a player may not step into to play a ball before it bounces or on the follow-through of a stroke

Pace - speed of the ball

Passing shot - shot which passes beyond the reach of the net player and lands inbounds

Placement - shot hit inbounds and untouched by an opponent

Poach - to cross over into your partner's territory to play a ball normally played by your partner

Serve - lob or drive stroke used to put a ball into play at the beginning of the point. Must use an underhand motion

Smash - shot hit forcefully from above the player's head

Volley - to hit the ball in the air before it bounces on the court

PICKLEBALL COURT

