



# INTERNATIONAL

## OFFICIAL REFEREE CASEBOOK 2023

August 2023

The "*USA Pickleball Official Rulebook - International Edition 2023*" is a translation, made with the permission of USA Pickleball in collaboration with Pickleball Canada, of the original English version of the "*USA Pickleball Official Rulebook - International Edition 2023*" (v4-1) published by USA Pickleball.

**In the event of problems of interpretation, the English version shall prevail.**

The masculine form assigned to text or functions is used to indicate the neuter gender and refers to both men and women.

*Translation Isabelle Gauthier, editing Pierrette Guitard and René Lord*

# USA PICKLEBALL - OFFICIAL RULES

---

## INTERNATIONAL EDITION

*USA Pickleball Association (USA Pickleball)* was founded to foster the growth and development of pickleball both locally and internationally. *USA Pickleball* has made this 2022 international edition of the rules available to all its partner countries and is committed to fostering the growth and development of pickleball among all players.

The purpose of these rules is to introduce players to the rules to be used in recreational leagues and tournaments. In addition, certain sections are designed to help sanctioned tournaments run smoothly. A player who participates in such a tournament will be awarded a national and/or international ranking.

These rules may also be used as guidelines for non-sanctioned tournaments. However, the directors of such events may choose to apply them flexibly in order to adapt them to the level of play, age or diversity of the players. *USA Pickleball* and its partners encourage the holding of such tournaments in order to raise awareness of the sport and stimulate its growth, while promoting the enjoyment of pickleball.

*USA Pickleball* published the first official rules in March 1984.

**USA Pickleball Association (USA Pickleball)**  
**Website: [usapickleball.org](https://usapickleball.org)**

Cover design and photo credits: Steve Taylor, Digital Spatula

*2010, revised 2023*

## MAIN CHANGES FOR 2023

---

### ***Effective August 14, 2023 - Correcting a server, catcher or position error (rule 4.B.9)***

Fault caused by a server, catcher or position error has been abolished. The referee now corrects this type of error before announcing the score. Rule 4.B.9. is the main rule clarifying this notion, but several other rules have been modified to ensure consistency throughout the rules.

### ***Clothing (Rules 2.G.1. & 2.G.4.)***

The notion of "inappropriate" in terms of clothing now includes a component relating to its color. Any garment whose color is similar to that of the ball may be deemed inappropriate. The tournament director has the authority to ask a player to change his or her clothing (if necessary during a time-out not charged to the player). Section 1 of these rules now specifies this new orientation.

### ***Service - Spin effect (Rules 4.A.5.)***

Manipulating the ball to give it a spin before hitting it to serve is not permitted. A natural spin of the ball is acceptable as long as it is not created by the server before the racket makes contact with the ball. This rule applies to both spoon and rebound serves.

### ***Resumption of service or service fault (4.A.9.)***

The referee has the authority to stop play and demand a restart if he suspects that one of the rules specifying the criteria for service has not been respected. The referee will, however, immediately call a foul if one of these rules has clearly been violated.

The intention is to force players to modify their service so that it visibly and indisputably meets all requirements.

***Questions from players about the server, the receiver or the position (Rule 4.B.8.)***

Players retain the right to ask questions - before serving - to validate the correct server/receiver or position. A generic question asked by the serving team, such as "Am I good? (*Am I good?*)" is considered to encompass both elements: server and position. The referee must answer both parts of the question. In a non-refereed match, a player may ask his opponent the same questions, but the latter must answer correctly.

***Wrong score announced (rule 4.K.)***

If the wrong score has been called, the referee - or any player - may stop play before the return of serve to make or request a correction. It is a fault if a player stops play after the return of serve, or if a player stops play when there is no error.

***Equipment downtime (Rule 10.D.)***

A player is not required to use a regular time-out to deal with an equipment problem necessary for the fair and safe continuation of play. The referee will grant an equipment time-out of reasonable duration.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

FOREWORD	III
MAIN CHANGES FOR 2023	V
TABLE OF CONTENTS	VII
SECTION 1 - DESCRIPTION OF THE SPORT	1
SECTION 2 - LAND AND EQUIPMENT	4
SECTION 3 - DEFINITIONS AND GLOSSARY	13
SECTION 4 - SERVICE, SERVICE SEQUENCE AND SCORING	21
SECTION 5 - SERVICE AND SIDE SELECTION	34
SECTION 6 - LINE CALL	36
SECTION 7 - FAULTS	40
SECTION 8 - DEAD BALLS	42
SECTION 9 - NO-FLY ZONE (NFL)	43
SECTION 10 - DOWNTIME	45
SECTION 11 - OTHER RULES	50
SECTION 12 - SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS	55
SECTION 13 - TOURNAMENT MANAGEMENT AND REFEREEING	64
APPENDIX A	79
INDEX	82
NOTES	87





## SECTION 1 - DESCRIPTION OF THE SPORT

---

Pickleball is a racket sport played with a perforated ball on a 6.09-metre (20 ft.) by 13.41-metre (44 ft.) court with a net similar to that used in tennis. The court is divided into two sides with three zones: the right/pair service zone, the left/odd service zone and the no-volley zone. [See figure 2.1]

The ball is served diagonally over the net and must land in the opponent's service area using a movement that complies with these rules. It is then struck on either side of the net until no player is able to return it in compliance with the rules.

Only the serving team can score points, in this case when it wins the rally following a winning shot or an opponent's fault. The server continues to serve, alternating zones with each serve, until the rally is lost.

Usually, the first player to score eleven points, leading by at least two, wins.

Pickleball can be played in singles or doubles.

### THE PLAYERS

Pickleball is a sport that demands complicity and courtesy. Excellent sportsmanship, including giving your opponent the benefit of the doubt, is also essential to maintaining the sport's fundamental principles of fun and healthy competition.

- Every exchange is important, whether it's the first or the last of the match.

- Each player on a team can make a call, including a line call. There is no reason for a player to call out his partner and say, "That was my call, not yours."
- Players must make their call quickly in order to eliminate any ambiguity. For example, a player cannot claim to have suffered a disturbance (e.g., a ball that has rolled onto the court) after hitting the ball out of bounds. In fact, by choosing to continue play, he has given up the possibility of invoking the disturbance.
- When faced with a situation that is contentious or not covered by the present rules, players strive to come to an agreement. They have a few options: resume the exchange, maintain the exchange or, in extreme cases, ask for a referee to intervene and resolve the dispute.
- Wherever possible, the rules have been designed to meet the needs of players with certain disabilities.
- Players should avoid wearing clothing that matches the color of the ball.
- A player must not question or comment on the call made by an opponent, however any player may appeal to the referee before the next serve.

## UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

**The two-bounce rule.** At the start of each rally, each team must wait for the ball to bounce before hitting it. After these two compulsory bounces, the players can volley the ball.

**The no-volley zone.** It extends 2.13 meters (7 ft.) on each side of the net, across the entire width of the court. As its name implies, unlike the rest of the court, a player is not allowed to volley.

player in contact with the non-volley zone to volley the ball.

**Wheelchair.** A player in a wheelchair may let the ball bounce twice before hitting it. The second bounce may be inside or outside the court.

## SECTION 2 - LAND AND EQUIPMENT

---

**2.A. Field specifications.** The dimensions and measurements for a pickleball court are : [See figure 2-1]

2.A.1. **Dimensions.** The court is a rectangle 6.10 metres (20 ft.) wide and 13.41 metres (44 ft.) long, for both singles and doubles matches.

2.A.2. **Measurements.** Measurements must be taken outside the field lines and the non-volley zone lines. All lines must be 5.08 centimetres (2 in.) wide, of the same color and contrasting sharply with the playing surface.

2.A.3. **Playing surface.** The recommended minimum playing surface is 9.14 metres (30 ft.) wide by 18.29 metres (60 ft.) long. A strip of 3.05 metres (10 ft.) all around the pitch gives a total surface area of 12.19 metres (40 ft.) by 19.51 metres (64 ft.). The following table shows recommendations for different uses.

<i>Usage</i>	<i>Width - meters (ft)</i>	<i>Length - meters (ft)</i>
New construction	10,36 m (34')	19,5 m (64')
Tournament	10,36 m (34')	19,5 m (64')
Wheelchair	13,41 m (44')	22,56 m (74')
Championship field	15,24 m (50')	24,38 m (80')

2.A.4. **Playing surface for wheelchairs.** The recommended minimum playing surface for wheelchair play is 13.41 metres (44 ft.) wide by 22.55 metres (74 ft.) long. For a championship pitch, the playing surface should be 15.24 metres (50 ft.) by 24.38 metres (80 ft.).

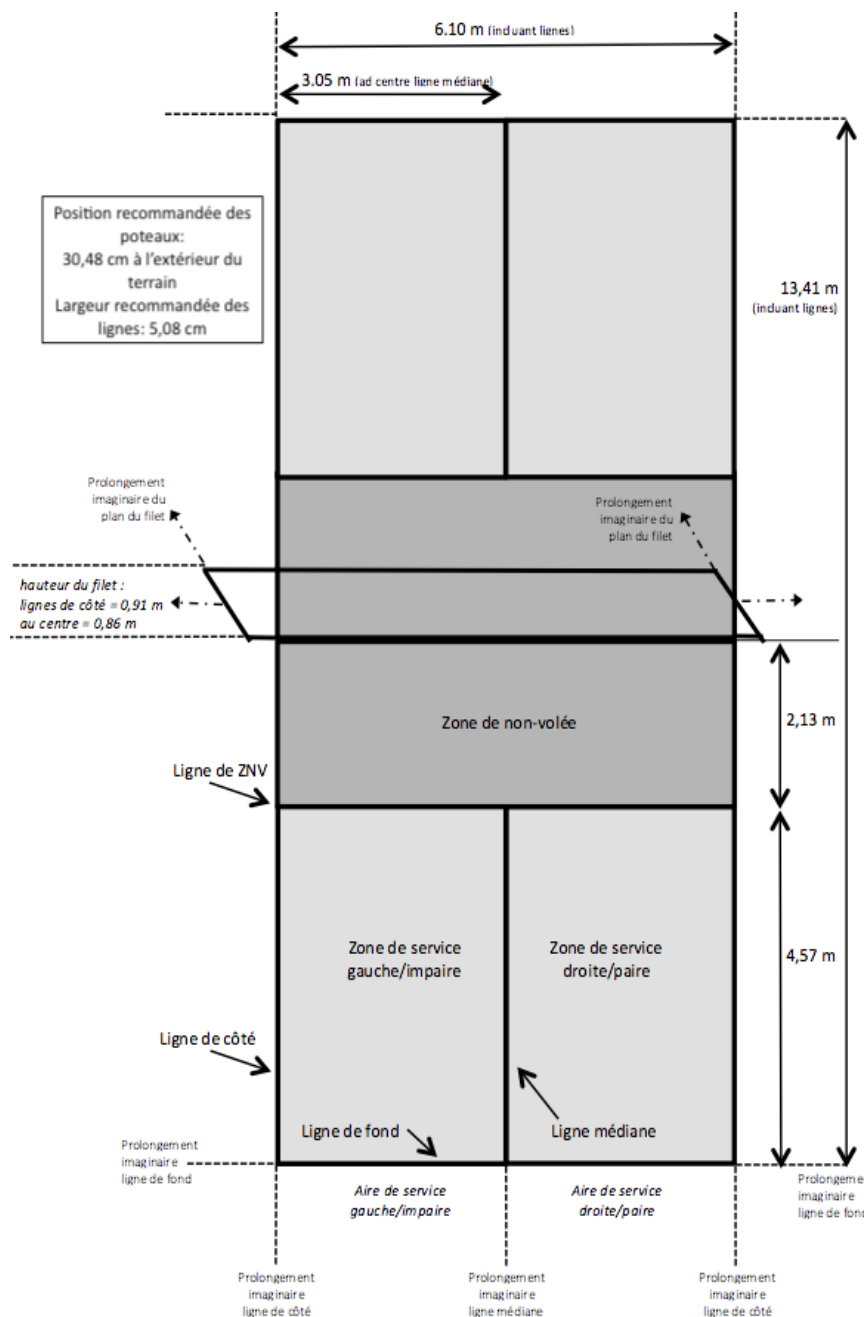


Figure 2-1

**2.B. *Lines and zones.*** The lines and zones of a regular pickleball court are : [See figure 2-1]

- 2.B.1. **Back lines.** Lines parallel to the net at each end of the court.
- 2.B.2. **Side lines.** Lines perpendicular to the net on each side of the court.
- 2.B.3. **Non-Volley Zone (NVZ).** The area of the court on either side of the net bounded by a parallel line 2.13 meters (7 ft.) from the net and the two side lines. All lines are part of the non-volley zone.
- 2.B.4. **Service area.** The area of the court beyond the no-volley zone, on either side of the center line, including the baseline, center line and sideline.
- 2.B.5. **Median line.** Line in the center of the court, on either side of the net, which divides the part of the court between the no-volley zone and the baseline into two service zones (right/even and left/odd).
- 2.B.6. **Right/pair zone.** Service area on the right of the court when the player is facing the net.
- 2.B.7. **Left/odd zone.** Service area on the left side of the court when the player is facing the net.

**2.C. *Thread specifications.***

- 2.C.1. **Material.** The net can be made of any intermeshed material, provided that the ball cannot pass through.
- 2.C.2. **Posts.** The distance between the inside of the posts must be 6.71 metres +/- 0.0 m. (22 ft.) and their diameter must not exceed 7.62 centimetres (3 in.).

- 2.C.3. **Dimensions.** The net must be at least 6.63 metres (21 ft. 9 in.) long between posts and at least 0.76 metres (30 in.) high from its base to its upper limit.
- 2.C.4. **Edging.** The upper part of the net must be delimited by a white border of 5.08 centimetres (2 in.) through which a cord or cable passes to support the net.
- 2.C.5. **Center ribbon and height.** The installation of a ribbon is recommended in the center of a permanent net to facilitate adjustment of its median height to 86.36 centimeters (34 in.). The top of the net should be 91.44 centimetres (36 in.) from the side lines.
- 2.C.6. **Bottom of the net.** When the bottom of the net extends onto the court without the situation having been corrected by the tournament organizers, the rally is resumed if the referee judges that the ball's movement has been disturbed by this portion of the net.

## 2.D. **Ball specifications.**

- 2.D.1. **Design.** The ball must have a minimum of 26 circular holes, but a maximum of 40. The spacing between holes and the overall design of the ball must conform to the flight characteristics. The name or logo of the manufacturer or supplier must be printed or embossed on its surface.
- 2.D.2. **Homologation.** The tournament director selects the ball to be used in the tournament. A ball must be on *USA Pickleball's* official list of sanctioned balls to be used in a sanctioned tournament. [List available on *USA Pickleball website*].

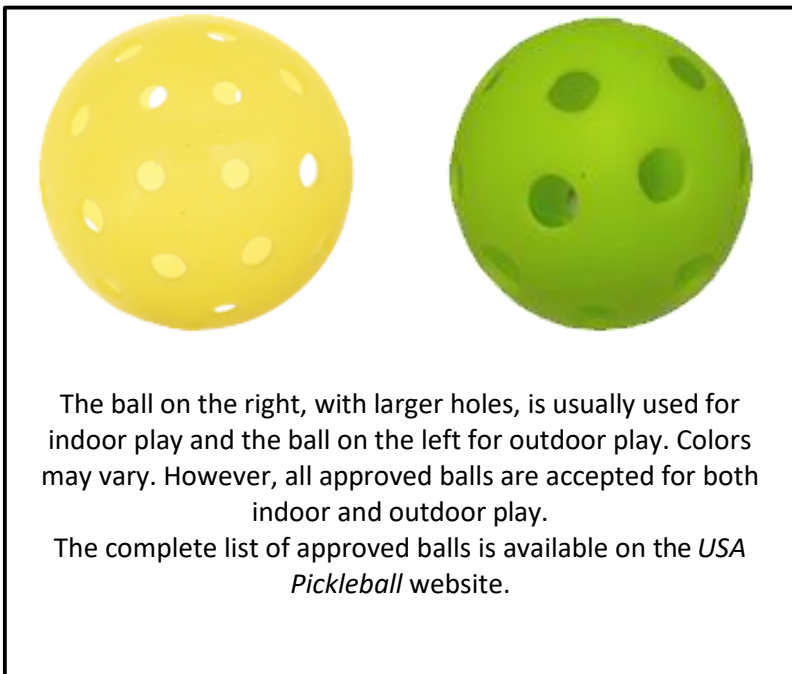


Figure 2-2

2.D.3. **Construction.** The ball must be made of durable molded material and have a smooth, texture-free surface. Its color must be uniform, except to allow for identification marks. It may have a slight ridge in the center as long as this does not affect its flight characteristics (see figure 2-2).

**2.E. Snowshoe specifications.**

2.E.1. **Material.** The snowshoe may be made of any material deemed safe and not prohibited by these rules. The snowshoe must be relatively rigid and constructed of a material



that meets *USA Pickleball's* criteria.

- 2.E.2. **Surface.** The racket's striking surface must be free of delamination, holes, indentations or cracks that alter its texture or membrane finish.
  - 2.E.2.a. **Reflection.** The surface of the racket must not be so reflective as to have the potential to impair the opponent's vision.
- 2.E.3. **Size.** Total length combined with width, including any cap, edge protector or other, must not exceed 60.96 centimetres.  
(24 in.). The length of the snowshoe may not exceed 43.18 centimetres (17 in.). There are no restrictions on snowshoe thickness.
- 2.E.4. **Weights.** There are no weight restrictions for a racket.
- 2.E.5. **Modifications.** Modified snowshoes must meet all of the following specifications:
  - 2.E.5.a. The only modifications that can be made to a commercial snowshoe are to the handle (diameter or ribbon). The addition of a ribbon or lead tape on the edge, or a name tag on the surface of the snowshoe, is also permitted.
  - 2.E.5.b. **Labels and ribbons.** Labels or ribbons may not extend more than 2.54 centimeters (1.0 in.) above the top of the handle or more than 1.27 centimeters (0.5 in.) from the edge of the racket or, if the racket has a protector on the top of the handle, more than 1.27 centimeters (0.5 in.) from the edge of the racket.

the edge, at more than 1.27 centimetres (0.5 in.) from the inside edge of the cover.

2.E.5.c. Handwritten inscriptions (drawing or writing) are permitted on the surface of the snowshoe as long as they do not alter the texture and are in good taste. No form of graphics may be added to a commercial snowshoe, with the exception of handwritten pencil inscriptions.

2.E.6. **Elements not permitted on the surface and prohibited mechanical properties:**

2.E.6.a. Non-slip paint or paint textured with sand, rubber particles or any other material that can increase the ball's spin.

2.E.6.b. Rubber and synthetic rubber.

2.E.6.c. A material with characteristics similar to those of sandpaper.

2.E.6.d. Moving part that can increase the power of the racket's swing.

2.E.6.e. **Removable parts.** The only removable parts allowed are to adjust the handle or to add lead tape to the edge of the racket.

2.E.7. **Brand and model designation.** The manufacturer must clearly identify the brand and model name, or model number, on the racket. This information can be shown on a sticker affixed by the manufacturer.

## **2.F. Equipment approval and certification.**

2.F.1. **List of *USA Pickleball* approved racquets. It is the player's responsibility to ensure that the racquet he/she is using is listed as "Pass" on the *USA Pickleball* List of Approved Racquets. [List available on *USA Pickleball website*].**

2.F.1.a. **Violation.** If at any time during a tournament it is determined that a player is using a racquet that violates any of the specifications or is not listed on the *USA Pickleball* Approved Racquets List, the following penalties apply:

2.F.1.a.1. If the violation is identified before the start of the match, the player may, without penalty, change to an approved racket.

2.F.1.a.2. If the violation is discovered after the match has started, the player or team will forfeit the match in progress.

2.F.1.a.3. If the violation is discovered after the match, but the score sheet has been reported to the operations office, the result remains unchanged.

## 2.G. **Clothing.**

- 2.G.1. **Safety/distraction.** A player may be asked to change clothes if they are deemed inappropriate or if the color matches that of the ball used in the tournament.
- 2.G.2. **Design.** Designs, logos, photos and inscriptions on garments must be in good taste.
- 2.G.3. **Shoes.** Shoes must have soles that do not mark or damage the court surface.
- 2.G.4. **Violation.** The tournament director has the authority to require a player to change clothing. In such a case, no downtime will be charged to the player who must change clothes during a match. If a player refuses to comply with the rules relating to clothing, the Tournament Director may forfeit the match.

## SECTION 3 - DEFINITIONS AND GLOSSARY

---

**Translator's note:** *The French version follows the alphabetical order dictated by the English version of the regulations. The numbering is therefore attached to the English words or terms to facilitate comparison with the English version, where necessary. Some French terms have been added at the end of this section to clarify their definition.*

### 3.A. **Definitions.**

- 3.A.1. **Carry - To** strike the ball so that it travels along the racket surface rather than bouncing off it.
- 3.A.2. **Coaching** - Communication of any information - verbal, non-verbal, electronic or other - from someone other than a player's partner that can be used to gain an advantage or avoid breaking a rule.
- 3.A.3. **Terrain (court)** - The area inside the outer limits of the baselines and sidelines.
- 3.A.4. **Cross-court** - Part of the opponent's court diagonally across from where the ball was struck.
- 3.A.5. **Dead ball** - A ball that is no longer in play.
- 3.A.6. **Distraction (distraction)** - Action by a player which is "not inherent in the game" and which, in the opinion of the referee, interferes with the opponent's ability or concentration to hit the ball. Examples include, but are not limited to: making a lot of noise, stamping one's foot, waving the racket, etc.

to disturb the opponent or create interference to harm him.

- 3.A.7. **Double bounce** - A ball that bounces twice to one side before being returned.
- 3.A.8. **Double hit** - Hit the ball twice before returning it.
- 3.A.9. **Disqualification (ejection)** - Occurs as a result of unacceptable misconduct that justifies the tournament director disqualifying a player. The player may remain on site, but is no longer allowed to play any matches.
- 3.A.10. **Expulsion (expulsion)** - Occurs as a result of totally unacceptable misconduct that justifies the tournament director banning a player from playing in all current and future tournament categories. In addition, the player must leave the site immediately and not return for the duration of the tournament.
- 3.A.11. **Fault** - Violation of a rule that results in a dead ball and/or the end of the rally.
- 3.A.12. **First server (premier serveur)** - In doubles, the player who, depending on his team's score, must serve from the right/pair service area after the side change.
- 3.A.13. **Forfeit (forfeit)** - Victory in a game or match is awarded to the opponent as a result of a player's unacceptable behavior or an accumulation of technical warnings and/or technical fouls.
- 3.A.14. **Groundstroke** - A shot struck after the ball has bounced.

- 3.A.15. **Disturbance (*hinder*)** - Any item or one-off event not caused by a player that has an undesirable impact on play, excluding permanent objects. Examples include, but are not limited to: a ball, a flying insect, any object, a player or an official from a neighboring field who, in the opinion of the referee, has disturbed a player during play.
- 3.A.16. **Imaginary extension (*Prolongement imaginaire*)** - Term used to define the trajectory of a line that would extend beyond its current end. Players and officials must visualize the extension of a line as if it did not stop at the field boundary.
- 3.A.17. **Left/odd court** - The area on the left when the player is facing the net. In doubles, the starting server (or singles server) should serve from the left/odd court service area when his score is odd.
- 3.A.18. **Line call** - Word(s) spoken aloud by a player or linesman to indicate to the referee and/or players that the ball in play has not landed within the required area. The recommended term for a line call is "Out". A distinctive hand signal may be used in conjunction with a loud line call. Other terms include "No", "Out", "No good" or "Long" are also acceptable.
- 3.A.19. **Jeu/balle en jeu (*live ball/in play*)** - Moment that coincides with the precise moment when the referee, server

or the server's partner (under rule 4.D.1.), begins the score announcement.

- 3.A.20. **Momentum** - Momentum is the complete sequence of actions generated by a moving body (such as a player continuing to move after hitting the ball). The action of hitting a volley generates momentum, which ends when the player regains balance and control of his or her movement, or stops moving towards the non-volley zone.
- 3.A.21. **Zone de non volée (ZNV) (*non-volley zone*) [In Quebec: Zone d'action contrôlée, ZAC]** - An area of the court measuring 2.13 meters by 6.09 meters (7' X 20') adjacent to each side of the net. Only a foul associated with the ZNV committed in the ZNV on its own side of the court can be charged to a player. The ZNV includes all the lines that border it. It is only two-dimensional and does not rise above the surface of the court. [See figure 2-1 and rule 2.B.3.]
- 3.A.22. **Paddle grip adjustment (*Ajustement de la poignée*)** - A non-mechanical piece of equipment that modifies the diameter of the grip or stabilizes the hand on it.
- 3.A.23. **Paddle head** - The paddle, excluding the handle.
- 3.A.24. **Permanent object (*objet permanent*)** - Any object on or near the field, including those hanging over the field, that may interfere with play. Permanent objects include ceilings, walls, fences, lighting systems, posts, post legs, grandstands and seats for spectators, referees, linesmen, etc.



- spectators (when they are in the designated areas) and all other objects around and above the pitch.
- 3.A.25. **Plan du filet (*plane of the net*)** - The imaginary extensions of the vertical plane and all other planes of the net beyond its frame.
- 3.A.26. **Playing surface (*surface de jeu*)** - Designated playing surface comprising the pitch and the surrounding area.
- 3.A.27. **Profanity - A** word, phrase or gesture, common or otherwise, that is normally considered inappropriate in polite society or in front of children.
- 3.A.28. **Rally** - Multiple continuous returns of the ball that occur after service and before a fault.
- 3.A.29. **Receiver** - A player positioned diagonally across from the server to return the ball. Depending on his team's score, the player who returns the serve may turn out to be the wrong receiver.
- 3.A.30. **Replay** - An exchange that is restarted for any reason without the award of a point or a change of server.
- 3.A.31. **Retirement** - Decision by a player/team to stop the match and concede victory to the opponent.
- 3.A.32. **Zone droite/paire (*right/even court*)** - Zone on the right when the player is facing the net. In doubles, the starting server (or the server in singles) should

serve from the right/even service area of the court when its score is even.

- 3.A.33. **Second serve** - In doubles, the term used to identify the loss of the first of two serves awarded to a team.
- 3.A.34. **Second server** - In doubles, the partner of the first server. The second server serves after the first server has lost his or her serve.
- 3.A.35. **Service (serve)** - The first stroke of the racket on the ball to start the rally.
- 3.A.36. **Server** - The player who starts the rally. Depending on his team's score, the player who serves may turn out to be the wrong server.
- 3.A.37. **Service zone (short serve)** - The zone to the left or right of the center line when the player is facing the net. It includes the center and side lines as well as the baseline, but excludes the no-volley zone.
- 3.A.38. **Serving area** - The playing area behind the baseline and on or between the imaginary extensions of the center line and either side line.
- 3.A.39. **Side out** - Awarding of service to the opposing player/team after a singles player or team has lost service. [*The term is also used at mid-game, when players switch from one side of the net to the other (end change) as soon as a team reaches a score of 6 (3rd game of a 2-of-3), 8 (15-point match) or 11 (21-point match).*]

- 3.A.40. **Starting server** - In doubles, the player designated to take the first serve of his or her team's match or game. In a tournament, each team's starting server must wear the identification accessory chosen by the tournament director.
- 3.A.41. **Technical foul** - Referee's penalty for unacceptable behavior. A technical foul results in a point being deducted from the offending player/team, unless the score is zero, in which case a point is awarded to the opponent. A technical foul must be imposed when a second technical caution is given to the same player/team during the match or, in the referee's judgment, a player/team's behavior warrants it.
- 3.A.42. **Technical warning (*avertissement technique*)** - A sanction given by the referee to a player/team for inappropriate behavior. A technical warning has no effect on the score.
- 3.A.43. **Verbal warning (*avertissement verbal*)** - A warning from the referee for inappropriate behavior. A team may receive only one verbal warning per match.
- 3.A.44. **Volley (*volley*)** - During a rally, to hit the ball in flight before it bounces.
- 3.A.45. **Wheelchair player** - Any player, with or without a disability, who plays in a wheelchair. The wheelchair is considered part of the player's body.

- 3.A.46. **Withdrawal** - Request from a player/team to be withdrawn from all scheduled matches in a specific category.
- 3.B. Other definitions (French version only)**
- 3.B.1. **Accessoire d'identification (form of identification)**  
- An accessory of some kind (usually a wristband), which is easily visible to all - players and officials - and which serves to identify each team's starting server.
- 3.B.2. **Follow-through** - Movement of the racket after contact with the ball.
- 3.B.3. **Net system** - The net and all the parts (rope, tape, etc.) that hold it in place.

## SECTION 4 - SERVICE, SERVICE SEQUENCE AND SCORING

---

### 4.A. **Service.**

- 4.A.1. The full score must be announced before the server hits the ball to serve.
- 4.A.2. **Placement.** The server must send the ball into the correct service zone, i.e. the opponent's zone diagonally opposite his position. The service ball must pass over the net, or may touch the net, and then fly over the no-volley zone (including its lines). It can land on any line of the regulation service zone.
- 4.A.3. If the service ball passes over the net, or touches the net before crossing, and then hits the receiver or his partner, it's a point for the serving team.
- 4.A.4. At the precise moment when the server hits the ball to serve:
  - 4.A.4.a. At least one of his feet must touch the playing surface behind the end line.
  - 4.A.4.b. None of his feet may touch the pitch or the end line.
  - 4.A.4.c. None of his feet may touch the playing surface outside the imaginary extension of the halfway line or the sideline.
  - 4.A.4.d. **Wheelchair.** Both rear wheels of the wheelchair must be on the playing surface.

behind the end line. In addition, they may not touch the pitch or playing surface outside the imaginary extension of the halfway line or the sideline.

- 4.A.5. The ball must be released with one hand. Although some natural rotation of the ball is tolerated, the server must not use any part of his body to manipulate the ball in order to create a spin immediately before the serve. Exceptions: A server may drop the ball from his racket if he is using the rebound service [ See rule 4.A.8.a.]. A server who has the use of only one hand may use either his hand or his racket.
- 4.A.6. The referee and the receiver must be able to see the release of the ball as the server prepares to serve. In a non-refereed match, the receiver must see the ball drop. It is not a fault if the referee or the receiver did not see the ball drop.
- 4.A.7. **Volley serve.** The spoon serve is executed by hitting the ball without letting it bounce. It can be done with a forehand or a backhand. To be legal, it must meet the following requirements:
- 4.A.7.a. The server's arm must move in an upward arc (from bottom to top) as the racket touches the ball. The serve can be made from the backhand or the forehand. [See figure 4-3]

4.A.7.b. The highest point of the racket head must not be above the wrist joint when the racket hits the ball. [See figures 4-1 and 4-2]

4.A.7.c. Contact with the ball must not be above waist level. [See figures 4-1 and 4-3]

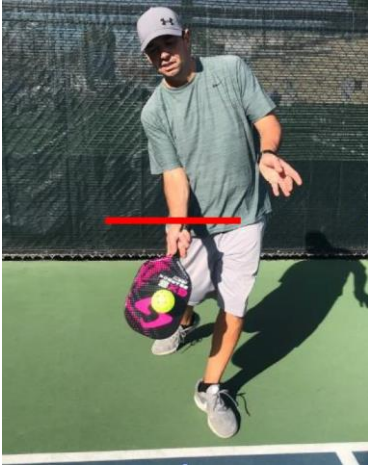


Figure 4-1 (legal service)

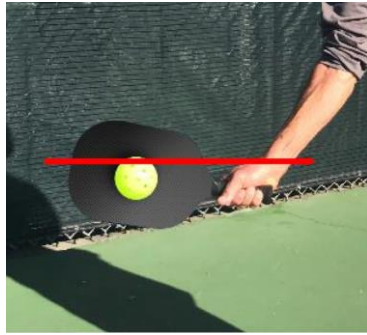


Figure 4-2 (illegal service)

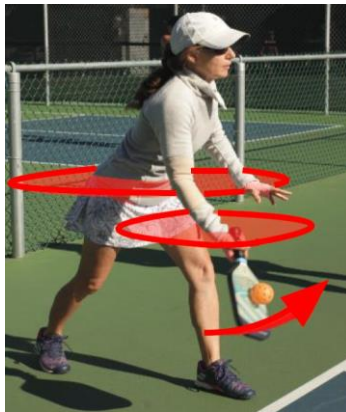


Figure 4-3 (legal service)

*(Photos and figure design courtesy of Steve Taylor, Digital Spatula)*

- 4.A.8. **Drop serve.** The drop serve is executed by hitting the ball after it has bounced on the playing surface. It can be done with a forehand or a backhand. To be legal, it must meet the following requirements:
- 4.A.8.a. The server must drop the ball with one hand or from the surface of his racket from any height (unassisted) and hit it after it has bounced.
  - 4.A.8.b. The ball must not be thrown downwards, launched or hit upwards with the racket before bouncing on the ground.
  - 4.A.8.c. The restrictions on spoon service defined in rule 4.A.7. do not apply to service with rebound.
- 4.A.9. **Resumption or fault.** The match referee may require the service to be resumed if he suspects that one or more of the requirements for the different types of service have not been met. The restart must be announced before the service returns. The referee has the authority to call a foul if he is convinced that one or more of the requirements, with the exception of rule 4.A.6, has not been met. In a non-refereed match, if the receiver determines that the ball has been spun, or if he has not seen the ball drop, he may request, before the return of the service, that the service be resumed. In an unrefereed match, the receiver does not have the authority to call a fault or request a restart in the event of a rule violation in connection with the service movement.



4.A.9.a. Consequences of violating service requirements :

	ARBITRATED MATCH		MATCH NOT ARBITRATED
	Referee <b>suspects</b> violation	Referee <b>certain</b> of violation	Receiver <b>certain</b> of violation
<b>SPOON SERVICE</b>			
4.A.7.a. No upward arc movement	Reprise	Fault	No
4.A.7.b. Head of the racket above the wrist	Reprise	Fault	No
4.A.7.c. Contact point above the waist	Reprise	Fault	No
4.A.5 Rotation effect	Reprise	Fault	Reprise
4.A.6. Ball release not visible	Reprise	Reprise	Reprise
<b>SERVICE WITH REBOUND</b>			
4.A.8.A. Release of ball not made with one hand or racket or from an unauthorized height	Reprise	Fault	No
4.A.8.b. Ball thrown upwards or downwards	Reprise	Fault	No
4.A.5 Rotation effect	Reprise	Fault	Reprise
4.A.6. Ball release no visible	Reprise	Reprise	Reprise

**4.B. Player positions.**

- 4.B.1. **Server and receiver.** The correct server and receiver, and their respective positions, are determined by the score and starting position of each player at the start of the match.
- 4.B.2. At the start of each game, the starting server serves from the service area corresponding to his team's score.
- 4.B.3. Each player retains the service until he or his team loses the rally or a fault is called against them.
- 4.B.4. As long as the server keeps his serve, he changes service area after each point won. He serves alternately from the right/even service area and the left/odd service area.
- 4.B.5 **Singles.**
- 4.B.5.a. If the server score is even (0, 2, 4 ...), the serve must be made from the right/pair service area and the ball must land in the opponent's right/pair service area.
- 4.B.5.b. If the server's score is odd (1, 3, 5 ...), the serve must be made from the left/odd service area and the ball must land in the opponent's left/odd service area.
- 4.B.5.c. After the server has lost the rally or a fault has occurred on his side, the serve is awarded to the opponent.
- 4.B.6. **Doubles.** Both players on a team must serve before there is a change of side, except at the beginning of each game when only the starting server serves.

can serve, and is therefore designated "second server" for scoring purposes. In this specific case, the side change takes place as soon as the starting server's team loses the rally or commits a fault, and the service is then awarded to the opposing team.

4.B.6.a. After each side change, the serve is made from the right/pair service area.

4.B.6.b. If the team score is even (0, 2, 4...), the starting server serves from the right/even service area. If the team score is odd (1, 3, 5...), the team's starting server serves from the left/odd service area.

4.B.6.c. After each side change, the serve is made from the right/pair service area by the player correctly positioned on the court according to his team's score. This player is designated "first server" and his partner "second server".

4.B.6.d. The first server puts the ball into play, alternating from one service area to the other after each point won, until his team loses the rally or commits a fault.

4.B.6.e. When the team has lost the rally or committed a fault, the second server serves from his or her correct position, alternating from one service area to the other.

as long as his team is scoring points.

- 4.B.7. **Partner positions.** In doubles, with the exception of the server's position when serving [See rule 4.A.4] There are no restrictions on the position of players as long as they are on their team's side of the pitch. They can be positioned inside or outside the court. The correct server must serve from the correct service area and the correct receiver must receive the service ball.
- 4.B.8. Before serving, any player can ask the referee what the score is, who is the correct server or receiver, what is the correct position. A generic question asked by the serving team, such as "Am I good? (*Am I good?*)" is considered to encompass both elements (server and position). In an unrefereed match, a player can ask his opponent these questions, but the latter must answer with the correct information.

**Add new rules 4.B.9., 4.B.9.a. and 4.B.9.b.**

- 4.B.9. The referee ensures - and corrects if necessary - that all players are in their correct positions and that the correct server has the ball in his possession before announcing the score.

4.B.9.a. If the referee or a player stops a rally to correctly identify a server/receiver/position error, the rally will be restarted. A player who stops a rally to incorrectly identify a server/receiver/position error commits a fault. If the referee stops a rally to incorrectly identify a

server/receiver/position error, the exchange will be resumed.

4.B.9.b. If the server/receiver/position error is identified after the end of the exchange, the exchange result is maintained.

**Delete existing rules 4.B.9. and 4.B.10.**

~~4.B.9. — When the wrong player receives or serves, or the player serves from the wrong position (wrong service area), the referee immediately stops play and identifies the fault(s).~~

~~4.B.10. **Wrong server or position.** When a fault of wrong server or wrong position (server or receiver) is discovered after a rally, game or match, the team at fault may be put at fault until the next service or before the score sheet has been returned to the operations office. A point scored by the offending team during this rally will not be counted. Points won during previous exchanges will be retained despite the server or position error. After the end of a match, a fault related to a wrong player or position cannot be imposed after the score sheet has been returned to the operations office.~~

**4.C. *Not ready.*** Any player may signal that he is "not ready" before the start of the scoring announcement.

- 4.C.1. One of the following signals must be used by a player to indicate that he is "not ready":
- 1) raise the racket above his head;
  - 2) raise the hand not holding the racket above the head;

3) turn your back to the net.

- 4.C.2. A "Not ready" signal notified after the start of the score announcement will be ignored unless there is a disturbance. The fact that a player or team is not in position does not constitute a disturbance.
- 4.D. *Announcement of the score.*** The announcement of the score must begin when the server and receiver are (or should be) in position and all players are (or should be) ready to play.
- 4.D.1. In a non-refereed match, the server is responsible for announcing the score. However, if the server is unable to do so, his partner can announce the score for him. However, the same player must announce the score throughout the match.
- 4.E. *10-second delay.*** Once the score has been announced, the server has 10 seconds to serve.
- 4.E.1. A fault will be called against the server if he exceeds the 10-second time limit before serving.
- 4.E.2. If the serving team changes service area after the score has been announced, the referee must stop play, allow time for all players to reposition themselves, then re-announce the score and restart the 10-second countdown. In an unrefereed match, the server must grant the same privilege to the opponent and must also re-announce the score and restart the 10-second countdown.
- 4.F. *Scoring a point.*** A player, or a team, scores a point only when he/she serves. A point can also be

awarded to a player/team when a technical foul is called against the opponent whose score is zero.

- 4.G. **Point.** A point is scored when the player or team serving wins the rally.
- 4.H. **Win the match.** The first player or team to score the winning point wins the match.
- 4.I. **Announcing the score in singles matches.** Two numbers are used to announce the score. The correct sequence is: the server's score followed by the receiver's score. (e.g. "1 - 0").
- 4.J. **Score announcement in doubles matches.** The score is announced using a three-digit sequence. The correct sequence is: the serving team's score, the receiving team's score and the server's number (one or two) (e.g.: "0 - 1 - 1"). At the start of each new game, the score will be announced as follows: " 0 - 0 - 2 ".
- 4.K. **Wrong score announced.** If the wrong score has been announced, the referee or any player may stop play before the return of serve to notify an error and/or request a correction. The rally is resumed after the correct score has been announced. After the return of serve, the rally must continue until the end. Correction of the score will be made before the next service. After the return of service, a player who stops play to notify an error and/or request a correction commits an error and loses the rally. A player who stops play, at any time, to notify an error and/or request a correction when there is no error commits an error and loses the rally.
- 4.L. **Foot fault when serving.** During the service, when the ball makes contact with the racket, the server's feet :

- 4.L.1. Must not touch the ground outside the imaginary extension of the side line.
- 4.L.2. Must not touch the ground on the wrong side of the imaginary extension of the halfway line.
- 4.L.3. Must not touch the pitch, including the end line.

**4.M. Server faults.** During the service, a fault against the server results in the loss of the service if :

*Delete existing rules 4.M1. and 4.M.2:*

- 4.M.1. ~~The server runs the service from the wrong service area.~~
- 4.M.2. ~~The wrong player serves.~~
- 4.M.3. The service ball touches any permanent object before hitting the ground.
- 4.M.4. The service ball touches the server or his partner, or if it touches anything that the server or his partner is wearing or carrying.
- 4.M.5. The service ball lands in the non-volley zone or on one of the lines in the non-volley zone.
- 4.M.6. The service ball lands outside the regulation service area.
- 4.M.7. The service ball touches the net and lands in the non-volley zone or on one of the lines in the non-volley zone.
- 4.M.8. The service ball hits the net and lands outside the regulation service area.
- 4.M.9. The server serves illegally when using the spoon serve [See rule 4.A.7.] or when using the rebound serve [See rule 4.A.8.].



- 4.M.10. The waiter or his partner asks for a break after the service.
- 4.M.11. The server hits the ball to serve while the score is being announced.
- 4.M.12. The server does not comply with one of the requirements listed in rule 4.A.4.

**4.N. *Fouls by the receiver.*** When there is a fault against the serving team, a point is awarded to the serving team. A fault occurs if :

***Delete existing rule 4.N.1:***

- 4.N.1. ~~The wrong player returns the serve.~~
- 4.N.2. The catcher or his partner is touched or interferes with the flight of the ball before it bounces.
- 4.N.3. The receiver or his partner asks for a time-out after the service.

## SECTION 5 - SERVICE AND SIDE SELECTION

---

### 5.A. *Select side, serve, receive serve or give up your choice.*

- 5.A.1. Any fair method (e.g., writing "1" or "2" on the back of the score sheet) may be used to determine which player or team has the first choice of side, serve or receive serve. The winner may also cede his or her first choice to the opponent. If the winner decides to serve or receive, the loser then chooses which side to start the match on. If the winner chooses the side, the loser will have the choice of serving or receiving. Once the choice has been made, it cannot be changed.
- 5.A.2. In doubles, a team may change its starting server between games and must inform the referee, or the opposing team when there is no referee. The starting server for the game is the one wearing the identification accessory. There is no penalty or foul if the team fails to do so. If the referee finds that there has been a change of starting server after the start of the game, he will correct his score sheet after the end of the rally.
- 5.A.3. The starting server of each doubles team must visibly wear the identification accessory determined by the tournament director.

### 5.B. *Change sides.*

- 5.B.1. After each game, the teams change sides and the starting service alternates from one team to the other.

- 5.B.2. A maximum of two minutes is allowed between games. However, play may be resumed earlier if all players agree. The referee will follow the procedure described in rule 10.A.5. to resume play.
- 5.B.3. In a match of two of three 11-point games, the teams change sides during the third game when the first team reaches a score of six (6). The serving player retains the serve.
- 5.B.4. In a 15-point game, the mid-game side change is made when the score reaches eight (8). The serving player keeps the serve.
- 5.B.5. In a 21-point match, the mid-game side change is made when the score reaches eleven (11). The serving player retains service.
- 5.B.6. **Time-out for side change.** One minute is allowed for a mid-game side change. The referee will follow the procedure described in rule 10.A.5. to resume play.
- 5.B.7. Once the point that triggers the mid-game side change has been scored (6, 8 or 11 depending on the type of match) by the serving team, the side change remains in effect even if the serving team loses a point due to a technical fault.
- 5.B.8. In a three-way match of five 11-point games, the teams change sides during the fifth game when the first team reaches a score of six (6). The serving player retains the serve.

## SECTION 6 - LINE CALL

---

- 6.A. A service ball is in play ("*in*") if it flies over the no-volley zone and lands in the regulation service area or on one of the regulation service area lines.
- 6.B. With the exception of the service ball, a ball is considered to be in play. The ball is "*in*" as long as it touches the pitch or any line on the pitch.
- 6.C. A ball that lands on the playing surface completely outside the field is "*out*".
- 6.D. **Code of ethics for line calls.** Pickleball is played according to specific rules. There is also a code of ethics for line calls when this is the responsibility of the players.

Players' responsibility for line calls is different from that assigned to referees or linesmen. Officials make impartial decisions, taking into account the interests of all players. When making line calls, players should strive for accuracy and respect the principle that all doubtful calls should be resolved in favor of the opponent.

The basic elements are as follows:

- 6.D.1. Players are responsible for line calls on their side of the court (with the exception, if there is an umpire, of faults for serving too short, foot faults on serve and faults from the no-volley zone). If a player makes a line call, but then asks for the referee's or opponent's opinion, and one of them can, beyond doubt, declare the ball in play. If the referee makes an "*in*" or "*out*" call, this call is valid. If neither the referee nor the opponent can make the call with

In this case, the player's original appeal is upheld. An appeal made by the opponent can always be contested with the referee in order to obtain a final decision.

- 6.D.2. When there are line judges, a player may only call from the center line when serving.
- 6.D.3. The benefit of the doubt is in the opponent's favor for line calls. Any ball that cannot be called "out" will be considered "in". A player may not claim a replay on the grounds that the ball has not been seen or that there is doubt as to its validity. A player who has not made a call because he or she did not clearly see where the ball landed may ask the referee to make a ruling. If the referee is unable to make the call, the ball is "in". The moment the player/team who received the ball refers to the referee, he loses his right to make any subsequent "in" or "out" call for that exchange.
- 6.D.4. Spectators must never be consulted about line calls.
- 6.D.5. The player/team who received the ball may ask the opponent to make the line call for him/her. When requested to do so, the decision of the opponent, who may, beyond any doubt, declare the ball "in" or "out", is final.  
The "out" ball must be accepted. If the opponent is unable to declare the ball "in" or "out", it must be considered "in". The moment the player/team who received the ball asks for his opponent's opinion, he loses his right to make any subsequent "in" or "out" call for that rally. He

may also ask the referee for a ruling. If the referee is unable to do so with certainty, the appeal made by the opponent determines the outcome of the appeal.

- 6.D.6. A player must not call a ball *"out"* unless he can clearly see a gap between the line and the ball as it touches the ground.
- 6.D.7. All *"out"* ball calls must be made before the opponent hits the ball or before it is dead.
- 6.D.8. In doubles, if one player calls the ball *"out"* and his partner calls it *"in"*, the ball is considered to be *"in"*. *The referee calls "in" when there is a disagreement.* Any player may appeal to the referee. If the referee has not seen the ball, it is considered *"in"*.
- 6.D.9. An *"out"* line call must be promptly signalled aloud and/or with a hand signal. [See rule 13.E.2.]
- 6.D.10. Shouting *"no"*, *"out"* or using any other term while the ball is in flight to indicate to your partner that it will be *"out"* should be considered as communication between players, not a line call.
- 6.D.11. An *"out"* call made after the ball has bounced is a line call. The ball is dead and play must stop. However, it is a foul against the player or team who made the call if the referee, after being asked, reverses the *"out"* call. Exception: when there are line judges, they are responsible for calls concerning the baseline and side lines. [See rule 13.E.2.]

- 6.D.12. After the end of the rally, a player may reverse to his disadvantage the line call made by his partner, as well as the "in" call made by the opponent or a member of the officials' team.

## SECTION 7 - FAULTS

---

A foul (i.e. a dead ball) occurs in the following circumstances:

- 7.A.** A service or service return ball has not bounced before being hit.
- 7.B.** A ball stops in the net on the side of the player who has just hit it without first crossing to the opponent's side. Note: The ball is dead and the fault occurs when the ball touches the ground.
- 7.C.** A ball is struck under the net or between the net and the net post.
- 7.D.** A player hits a ball that lands first outside the court or inside his own side of the court.
- 7.E.** A player may not hit the ball until it has bounced twice on his side of the court. A player in a wheelchair must hit the ball before its third bounce.
- 7.F.** Violation of any of the rules of Sections 4, 9 and 11.
- 7.G.** A player, what he is wearing/carrying, or his racket touches the net frame, the net posts or the court on the opponent's side when the ball is in play.
- 7.H.** After the serve, a ball in play touches a player or anything he or she is wearing or carrying with the exception of the racket or the hand(s) (under the wrist) in contact with the racket. The ball remains in play if the player is in the process of changing hands or attempting a two-handed shot and the ball touches one of the hands (under the wrist), provided it is in contact with the racket. The fault is attributed to the player who is hit by the ball.



- 7.I.** A player stops a ball in play before it is dead (e.g.: catches the ball in flight). The fault is imputed to the player who stopped play.
- 7.J.** After the serve, a ball in play hits any permanent object before bouncing back onto the court.
- 7.K.** A player strikes the ball in play before it crosses the net.
- 7.L.** A player deliberately carries or catches the ball on his racket while serving or during a rally.
- 7.M.** A player calls a disturbance which is declared invalid by the referee.
- 7.N.** In a non-refereed match, a player may carry one or more extra balls, but they must not be visible to the opponent. It is a foul if one of these balls falls onto the playing surface during play.

## SECTION 8 - DEAD BALLS

---

- 8.A.** A ball is dead after any action that stops play.
- 8.B.** A ball is dead when the referee, or a player, calls a foul or as soon as a player commits a foul.
- 8.C.** A ball is dead when the referee or a player calls for a fault. The referee will determine whether the disturbance called by the player is valid. A valid disturbance results in a restart of the rally.
- 8.D.** A ball is dead when it hits a permanent object after bouncing on the opponent's side of the court. The player who hit the ball wins the rally.

### *Revision of existing rule 8.E. :*

- 8.E.** With the exception of faults related to the no-volley zone, a fault is only committed when the ball is in play. The fault is usually called at the moment it occurs (e.g. ~~wrong position,~~ ~~wrong server/receiver,~~ double bounce, distraction, etc.), but it can also be called at any time before the next serve.

## SECTION 9 - NO-FLY ZONE (NFL)

---

- 9.A.** All volleys must be struck outside the non-volley zone. The front (small) wheels of a wheelchair player's chair may be in contact with the non-volley zone when the volley is struck.
- 9.B.** It is a foul if a player, or anything in contact with or carried by the player, touches the non-volley zone while hitting a volley. The front (small) wheels of a wheelchair player's chair may be in contact with the non-volley zone while he is hitting his volley.
- 9.B.1. The action of hitting the ball on the fly includes the swing, the *follow-through* and the follow-through generated by the complete action sequence (*momentum*).
- 9.B.2. It's a fault if the racket of a player hitting a volley touches the non-volley zone, either before or after touching the ball.
- 9.C.** It is a foul if a player hitting a volley, or what he is carrying/carrying, touches anything in contact with the non-volley zone, including his partner, at any time during the entire sequence of action (*momentum*) related to his volley. The front (small) wheels of a wheelchair player's chair may be in contact with the non-volley zone.
- 9.C.1. This is a foul even if the ball is dead before the player has touched the non-volley zone.
- 9.D.** It is a foul if a player who has touched the non-volley zone for any reason strikes a ball on the fly before both feet have made full contact with the ball.

playing surface outside the non-volley zone. A maneuver such as touching the non-volley zone, hitting a volley by jumping and then landing outside it is not permitted. It is a foul if one or both of the (large) rear wheels of the wheelchair player's chair have touched the non-volley zone and he hits a volley before both rear wheels are in contact with the playing surface outside the non-volley zone.

- 9.E.** A player may enter the non-volley zone at any time, unless that player volleys the ball.
- 9.F.** A player may enter the no-volley zone before or after hitting a bounced ball.
- 9.G.** A player may remain within the non-volley zone to return a bounced ball. It is not a foul if a player does not leave the non-volley zone after hitting a bounced ball.
- 9.H.** A player may, without penalty, return the ball while his partner is in the no-volley zone.

## SECTION 10 - DOWNTIME

---

- 10.A. Regular time-out.** A player or team is entitled to two regular time-outs in an 11- or 15-point match. In a 21-point match, each team is entitled to three regular time-outs.
- 10.A.1. Each downtime period can last up to one minute.
  - 10.A.2. If all players are ready, play may resume before the scheduled end of the stoppage time.
  - 10.A.3. If a team has time-outs, any player on that team may request a time-out before the next serve.
  - 10.A.4. There is no penalty if a player requests a time-out when he has none left, as long as he does so before the service.
  - 10.A.5. The referee warns the players when 15 seconds of stoppage time remain. When the time is up, he announces "Play on" followed by the score when all players are ready or should be ready to play.
- 10.B. Medical time-out.** A player who requires medical attention during a match must request medical time-out from the referee. Once medical time-out has been requested, the following guidelines must be followed:
- 10.B.1. The referee must immediately ask the medical team to come to the field, or the tournament director if there is no medical team, to assess the situation and provide first aid.

- 10.B.1.a. The referee must start a 15-minute countdown when the medical team or tournament director arrives on the scene.
- 10.B.2. If the medical team, or the tournament director if there is no medical team, confirms that there is a valid medical condition, the player is granted a medical time-out of up to 15 minutes.
  - 10.B.2.a. Downtime must be continuous and may last up to 15 minutes. If the 15 minutes are not used, the remaining minutes are forfeited and no further medical downtime is available to the player during that match.
  - 10.B.2.b. It's a forfeit when the player is unable to resume play after the 15-minute medical break.
- 10.B.3. If the medical team, or the tournament director if there is no medical team, assesses that there is no valid condition for a medical time-out, the player or team will be given a regular time-out (if available) and a technical warning will be issued.
  - 10.B.3.a. If a regular stop time is not available, a technical fault will be issued.
  - 10.B.3.b. This player no longer has access to his medical downtime for this match.

10.B.3.c. A player may only request one medical time-out per match.

10.B.4. The procedure described in rule 10.A.5. is followed to resume play after a medical time-out.

10.B.5. **Presence of blood.** If there is blood on a player or on the pitch, play may not resume until the bleeding has been controlled and the blood cleaned up.

10.B.5.a. Procedures for cleaning or checking blood are considered referee downtime.

10.B.5.b. The procedure described in rule 10.A.5. is followed to resume play.

**10.C. Pace of play.** Play must be continuous, but players are allowed to drink or sponge quickly between exchanges as long as, in the referee's opinion, the pace of play is not compromised. The referee must announce the score when play is to resume.

**10.D. Time out for equipment.** Players are required to keep their clothing and equipment in good playing condition. If the referee deems that a change of equipment or an adjustment is necessary for the fair and safe continuation of the match, he may grant an equipment time-out of reasonable duration. The procedure described in rule 10.A.5. is followed to resume play. In a non-refereed match, the players will agree between themselves on a reasonable arrangement in the event of an equipment problem.

10.D.1. Clothing and equipment adjustments that can be made quickly between

exchanges are permitted (e.g. tying shoelaces, cleaning glasses, adjusting hats, etc.).

**10.E. *Delay between games.*** The time between games in a match is usually two minutes. The procedure described in rule 10.A.5. is followed to resume play.

10.E.1. Players may use one or both time-outs from the next game to extend the time between games in a match. They must inform the referee or their opponent when there is no referee. If the player/team is ready to play before one (or both) of the reserved time-outs has started, the time-out (or both) will again be available for the game. The two-minute delay between games must elapse before a time-out is used.

**10.F. *Delay between matches.*** The usual delay between matches is 10 minutes. However, the match can start earlier if all players are ready.

10.F.1. **Final match with tie-break match.** If the winner of the consolation draw beats the winner of the main draw, a 15-point tie-break match must be played to determine the winner. The usual delay between the championship match and the tie-break match is 10 minutes.

**10.G. *Suspended match.*** A match suspended due to unforeseen circumstances must be resumed with the same server, the same score and the same number of available downtimes as when it was interrupted.



## 10.H. *Other rules concerning downtime.*

- 10.H.1. **Before a match or between games.** No regular or medical time-outs may be used before the start of a match. A match may not start until all players are present and the starting score has been announced. One or two time-outs may be used before the start of the second game - or subsequent games - of a multi-game match.
- 10.H.2. **Exceptional circumstances.** The referee may request a time-out due to an exceptional circumstance requiring a prolonged interruption of play.
- 10.H.2.a. In the interest of everyone's safety, if the referee judges that a potential medical condition exists (e.g. exhaustion, heat stroke, etc.), and the player is unable or unwilling to request a medical time-out, the referee has the authority to request a referee time-out and summon the medical team or tournament director. Medical time-out requested by the referee will not be charged to the player.
- 10.H.2.b. The presence of active bleeding must be managed in accordance with rule 10.B.5.
- 10.H.2.c. Debris, water, other liquids or harmful elements on the site must be removed or cleaned.
- 10.H.2.d. The procedure described in rule 10.A.5. is followed to resume play.

## SECTION 11 - OTHER RULES

---

- 11.A. *Double strike.*** The ball may be hit twice, but this must be unintentional, during a continuous, unidirectional swing and by only one player. It is a fault if a player deliberately hits a stroke that is not continuous or unidirectional, or if the ball is hit by a second player while executing his or her stroke to serve or during the rally.
- 11.B. *Changing hands.*** A player may change hands with his racket at any time during the game.
- 11.C. *Two-handed blows.*** Two-handed blows are permitted.
- 11.D. *Attempted strike.*** Attempting to hit the ball and missing does not result in a dead ball. The ball remains in play until it bounces twice or any other fault occurs.
- 11.E. *Cracked or broken ball.*** After the serve, the rally must continue to the end even if a player suspects that the ball is cracked. When the match is being refereed, a player may ask the referee, before the serve, to check whether the ball is damaged, broken, soft, cracked or broken. If the referee judges that the breakage or crack has had an impact on the outcome of the rally, he will call for the rally to be restarted with a new ball.

If both teams agree that the ball is damaged, broken or soft, it will be replaced, but there will be no resumption of the rally. In a non-refereed match, if both teams agree that the ball is damaged, soft, cracked or broken, it will be replaced before the next serve. The rally will only be restarted if all players agree that the cracked ball has had an impact on the outcome of the rally.

However, the outcome of the exchange remains unchanged if the

players are not of the same opinion about the impact of the cracked ball.

- 11.F. *Injury during an exchange.*** The exchange continues until its conclusion, despite the injury to one of the players.
- 11.G. *Problem with a player's equipment.*** The rally must not be stopped if a player drops or breaks his racket or drops a personal object, unless this results in a foul.
- 11.H. *Objects on the pitch.*** The ball remains in play when anything a player is wearing or carrying falls within his side of the court, even if the ball touches the object. On the other hand, it is a foul if the object falls into the non-volley zone following a volley.
- 11.I. *Crossing the plane of the net.*** It is a fault to cross the plane of the net before hitting the ball. However, a player (or anything carried or transported) may cross the plane of the net after legally hitting the ball. The player may not touch any part of the net frame, the court on the opponent's side or the opponent before the ball is dead.
- 11.I.1. **Exception.** If the ball bounces on the court on the opponent's side and has enough spin (or is pushed by the wind) to cross the plane of the net on the side of the player who has just hit it, the player who has just received the ball may also cross the plane of the net (above/below the net or around the post) to hit the ball. However, it's a foul if this player (or anything he or she carries) crosses the plane of the net before the ball. This player may not touch any part of the net frame system, the court on the opponent's side or the opponent before the ball is dead.

**11.J. *Distraction.*** A player must not distract the opponent when the latter is about to hit the ball. If the referee judges that a player has caused a distraction, he will immediately call a foul against the offending player or team.

**11.K. *Net posts.*** Posts (including wheels, arms or other structures) are positioned outside the court. It is a foul if a player hits a post while the ball is in play.

11.K. 1The ball remains in play if it comes into contact with the net, cable or rope between the posts.

**11.L. *Net.***

11.L.1. The net and the cables or ropes holding the net in place are positioned (mainly) on the court. Consequently, the ball remains in play if it hits the top of the net, cable (ribbon) or rope and falls back on the other side within the regulation limits of the court.

11.L.2. It's a foul against the player who hit the ball if it passes between the net and the net post.

11.L.3. After hitting the ball, the player is allowed to go around the net and cross the line of the imaginary extension of the plane of the net, as long as the player or any object carried or carried by the player does not touch the court on the opponent's side. It is a foul if the player goes around the net and crosses the line of the imaginary extension of the plane of the net, without having hit the ball.

11.L.4. A ball is dead if it passes over the net and, after bouncing on the court on the opponent's side, crosses the plane of the net again and rebounds.

a second time before being touched by the opponent. The player who hits this ball wins the rally.

11.L.5. **Net frame system with horizontal bar, central foot or both.**

11.L.5.a. It's a foul if the ball touches the horizontal bar or the center leg before crossing the net.

11.L.5.b. On any shot other than the serve, the rally will be restarted if the ball passes over the net and then hits the center foot or any part of the horizontal bar, or gets stuck between the net and the horizontal bar, whether or not it has bounced once on the court on the opponent's side.

11.L.5.c. When serving, it's a fault if the ball hits the center leg or any part of the horizontal bar, or gets stuck between the net and the horizontal bar after passing over the net.

11.L.5.d. Any problem with the net's reinforcement system should be treated as a malfunction.

**11.M. Shot around the post.** A player can return a ball by passing it around the outside of a post.

11.M.1 The ball doesn't need to cross the net again.

11.M.2 There are no restrictions on the height of the return. A player can therefore return the ball from the outside

of the post even if it is below the height of the net.

**11.N. *Only one racket.*** It is a foul if a player uses or carries more than one racket during a rally.

**11.O. *Having the racket in hand.*** It is a fault if a player does not have his racket in hand when his racket touches the ball. [Exception see rule 11.H.]

**11.P. *Electronic accessory.*** A player may not wear headphones or earphones during a tournament. Exception: hearing aids are permitted.

## SECTION 12 - SANCTIONED TOURNAMENTS

---

### 12.A. *Event categories* :

- Men: singles and doubles
- Women: singles and doubles
- Mixed: double
- Wheelchair: single and double

12.A.1. In the categories described by gender, only players of this gender are allowed to play.

12.A.2. **Mixed doubles.** A mixed doubles team must consist of one man and one woman.

12.A.3. A wheelchair user playing doubles (men's, women's or mixed) may have a standing or wheelchair partner.

**12.B. *Match types for tournaments.*** The recommended match type for tournaments is two of three 11-point games, won by a two-point margin. Other match types are also possible: a three of five 11-point games, a 15-point match or a 21-point match. The latter must also be won by a two-point margin. A round robin can use 11-point matches, won by a two-point margin, as long as the category has six or more players/teams.

**12.C. *Tournament formats.*** There are five different tournament formats. The choice of format is usually made by the sponsor or tournament director.

12.C.1. **Single elimination with consolation.** The first player/team to obtain the required number of points by a margin of at least two points wins the match. The losers of all the matches in the main draw enter the consolation draw.

are eliminated after a second defeat. The winner of the consolation table is awarded the bronze medal (third place). The last two players/teams in the main draw play for the gold (first place) and silver (second place) medals.

**Add a new rule 12.C.2. and renumber subsequent existing rules. :**

- 12.C.2. **(Pro and senior pro categories) Single elimination without double elimination.** The first player/team to obtain the required number of points by a margin of at least two points wins the match. The last two teams to compete in the main draw play for first place (gold medal) and second place (silver medal). The final ranking of the remaining players/teams is at the discretion of the tournament director.
- 12.C.3. **Double elimination.** The first player/team to obtain the required number of points by a margin of at least two points wins the match. The loser is entered in the consolation table. A player/team is eliminated after a defeat in the consolation table. The winner of the consolation draw then plays the winner of the main draw to determine the winner of the tournament. If the winner of the consolation draw beats the winner of the main draw, a 15-point tie-break match will then be played. The winner will be awarded the gold medal and the loser the silver medal. The bronze medal is won by the loser of the consolation table final.



12.C.4. **Round robin tournament.** All players/teams play against all other players/teams in their round. Matches may be of any approved type [See rule 12.B.]. The winner is determined by the number of matches won. If two or more players/teams have won the same number of matches, the tie is broken by applying rules 12.C.3.a. to 12.C.3.e. Once an initial tie has been broken, each subsequent tie is broken successively by repeating the process from 12.C.3.a. until a winner is determined.

12.C.4.a. **Withdrawal.** A player/team who has withdrawn from a round is not eligible for a tie-break. Only the number of matches he/she has won will be taken into account to determine his/her position. (e.g.: Teams A, B and C each have three wins. Team C has withdrawn from its last match, so only the results of teams A and B will be taken into account for the tie-break. Team C's three wins will only be counted after the tie-break. Team A's victory over Team B means it takes first place. Second place goes to Team B and Team C takes third place).

12.C.4.b. **First tie-break.** The player/team who has won the match against the opponent who has won the same number of matches as him/her wins the tie-break.

- 12.C.4.c. **Second tie-break.** Standings are determined by the cumulative differential score of all games. [e.g.: Team A wins the first game (11-8, 11-4), for a differential score of +10. It wins the second (11-9, 2-11, 11-6), for a differential score of -2. Team A accumulates a differential score of +8 for this round].
- 12.C.4.d. **Third tie-break.** The player/team who won the match against the opponent with the same differential score wins the tie-break.
- 12.C.4.e. **Fourth tie-breaker.** The differential score of the game each player/team played against the player/team just above them in the standings. (e.g.: If two teams are tied for second place, use the differential score from the game each played against the team in first place).
- 12.C.5. **Pool system.** Participants are divided into two or more pools of players. Each pool plays a round robin to determine the players who will then compete in the finals in a single-elimination or double-elimination format.
- 12.C.6. **Hybrid system.** Teams are seeded according to the results of a round-robin tournament and then play a medal round in a single or double elimination format in games of two of three 11-point games or matches.

of 15 or 21 points. Each match must be won by a two-point margin.

**12.D. *Drawing and classification.*** A draw and classification committee must be appointed by the tournament director to classify players and teams and to set up a fair draw system for each category.

**12.E. *Match schedule.*** *It* is the responsibility of each player to consult the posted schedules for the time and place of their matches. If a change is made to the schedule after the initial posting, the tournament director or his designated representative will inform the players.

**12.F. *Abandonment and withdrawal.***

12.F.1. **Withdrawal.** The only option a player or team can use to stop playing before the end of the match for which the initial score has been announced is to give up.

12.F.2. During a match, a player/team will be given a forfeit if he/she is unable to resume play immediately after a 15-minute medical break.

12.F.3. A player/team who abandons a match must notify the referee or the opposing player/team.

12.F.4. A player/team who has withdrawn from a match, or who has been forfeited as a result of the application of a rule, will have his final score recorded in accordance with the procedure for recording scores in the event of withdrawal. [See rule 12.F.6.a.]

12.F.4.a. If applicable, a player/team is still eligible for the next match in the same category after withdrawing from a previous match.

12.F.4.b. A player/team may withdraw from all subsequent matches in the category.

12.F.5. **Withdrawal.**

12.F.5.a. A player/team may withdraw its participation in one or more categories as long as a person mandated by the tournament organizer has not started any matches in the category(ies) concerned.

12.F.5.b. A player/team may withdraw from all subsequent matches in a category if he/she has already completed a match in that category. The withdrawal request must be made before the initial score of the next match is announced.

12.F.5.c. The player/team must submit its withdrawal request to the tournament director, the head referee or a person mandated by the tournament organization.

12.F.5.d. The player/team will be withdrawn from all subsequent matches in the category concerned.

12.f.5.e. A player/team will have his final score recorded according to the procedure for recording scores in the event of a withdrawal. [See rule 12.F.7.]

12.F.6. **Procedure for recording scores following a withdrawal, forfeit, expulsion or disqualification.**

12.F.6.a. **Withdrawal.** A player/team who withdraws from a match retains his/her score. His opponent will be awarded the

victory and will obtain the number of  
points which

corresponds to the match format (with a two-point difference if necessary). Example: in the first game of a two-of-three match, the withdrawing team leads 10 - 5. The final score will be recorded in favor of the opponent 12 - 10, 11 - 0.

**Forfeit, expulsion or disqualification.**

After a forfeit, expulsion or disqualification, the score will be recorded as follows in favour of the opponent:

- ◆ Match two of three games:  
11 - 0, 11 - 0
- ◆ Three of five games: 11 - 0, 11 - 0, 11 - 0
- ◆ 15-point match: 15 - 0
- ◆ 21-point match: 21 - 0

12.F.6.b. If a player/team has chosen to withdraw from a match or has been forfeited (and the withdrawal option has not been chosen), he/she may continue to play subsequent matches in the category concerned.

12.F.6.c. The scores of all matches completed before abandonment, forfeit or disqualification are maintained.

**12.F.7. Procedure for recording the score of subsequent matches following a withdrawal.**

- 12.F.7.a.
- ◆ Match two of three games:  
0 - 0, 0 - 0
  - ◆ Three of five games: 0 - 0, 0 - 0, 0 - 0

- ◆ 15-point match: 0 - 0
- ◆ Match of 21 points: 0 - 0

12.F.7.b. The scores of all matches completed prior to the withdrawal request are retained.

### **Revision of existing rule 12.G. :**

**12.G. *Minimum of two matches.*** In all sanctioned tournaments, each player will be entitled to participate in at least two matches per category in which he/she is registered.

Exception: Only one match per category is guaranteed to a player taking part in an event where the format is single elimination without double elimination.

**12.H. *Match scheduling.*** A player is not allowed to register in several categories scheduled on the same day at the same time or with overlapping schedules.

**12.I. *Doubles play.*** A doubles team consists of two players who meet the classification requirements for participation in a particular category of play.

12.I.1. In a match based on *rating*, the player with the highest rating determines the ranking. In tournaments for adults (aged 19 and over) where classification is by age group, the age of the youngest player on the team determines the team's classification. Players may play in a younger category, unless prohibited by the organization responsible for senior tournaments.

12.I.2. Junior players (18 and under) may enter any junior category for which they are age-qualified. If the junior category is absent or does not receive sufficient entries, the tournament director

may grant permission to these players to register in the 19 and over category.

**12.J. *Change of partner.*** A change of partner may be made before the start of the first match of the category with the permission of the tournament director, provided that the change is due to injury, illness or circumstances beyond the player's control.

12.J. 1 Under no circumstances may a change of partner be made after the partners have started their first match of the tournament.

**12.K. *Court changes.*** The Tournament Director, or his representative, may decide to make pitch changes after the end of any game if such changes would benefit spectators or playing conditions.



## SECTION 13 - TOURNAMENT MANAGEMENT AND REFEREEING

---

- 13.A. *Tournament Director.*** The Tournament Director is in charge of the tournament. The Tournament Director is responsible for appointing officials and their responsibilities.
- 13.A.1. A player may appeal to the Tournament Director, or his representative, to contest a decision made by an official. The Tournament Director has the final authority to apply the rule in accordance with these *Official Rules*.
- 13.A.2. The tournament director must provide each team's starting server with an identification accessory for each match. This identification accessory must be visible to everyone on the court during the match. Refusal to wear it will result in forfeiture of the match.
- 13.A.3. The tournament director must ensure that he has sufficient support staff (first aid, volunteers, etc.).
- 13.A.4. The tournament director has the power to expel a player from the tournament for misconduct.
- 13.B. *Pre-tournament information.*** Prior to the tournament, the tournament director must inform players and referees of any peculiarities, abnormal local conditions or hazards associated with the site. Information may include, but is not limited to, uneven clearance around the grounds (such as the distance between the baseline and the fence), low ceilings, the presence of obstacles, repairs or damage to the grounds that could affect play or the ball. Wherever possible, players should receive this information in writing at the same time as other pre-tournament information. Referees must be

informed on arrival at the site by the tournament director or his representative.

13.B.1. The Tournament Director may not adopt or impose any rules that do not appear in the *Official Rules*. Any exceptions to the rules he wishes to impose or modify due to physical limitations of the field or other local conditions must be approved in advance by the National Director of Officials.

**13.C. Referee's responsibilities.** The referee is responsible for all decisions relating to procedure and the adjudication of appeals during the match. A player may appeal to the tournament director, or his representative, to contest any decision taken by the referee.

13.C.1. The referee calls faults in the no-volley zone, faults for serving too short and faults for footwork on the serve.

13.C.2. Players may ask the referee to rule on a line call made by a player or linesman. If the referee cannot rule, the player's or linesman's call stands. If the doubles partners disagree with each other and the referee cannot rule, the ball is declared "*in*". Note: A player may choose to reverse a line call if it is to his disadvantage. [See rule 6.D.13.]

13.C.2.a. Spectators cannot be consulted under any circumstances.

13.C.3 Before the start of each match, the referee must :

- 13.C.3.a. Check that the pitch is in order: cleanliness, lighting, net height, lines and potential hazards on and around the pitch.
- 13.C.3.b. Check the availability and conformity of accessories required for the match, such as balls, scorecard, pencils and stopwatch.
- 13.C.4. Before the start of each match, the referee must meet the players on the pitch to :
  - 13.C.4.a. Inspect snowshoes for irregularities.
  - 13.C.4.b. Submit approved changes to these rules and any special conditions relating to the field. Examples include, but are not limited to: items that have an impact on safety, repairs or cracks, unusual clearance of pitch boundaries from the fence, location of spectators and their seats.
  - 13.C.4.c. Inform the players about the role of the linesmen, the referee and the players with regard to line calls. Note: Information given before the tournament by the tournament director may exempt the referee from this obligation.
  - 13.C.4.d. Use a fair method to determine the initial selection to serve, receive, choose the side or yield the choice to the opponent.

- 13.C.4.e. Ensure that each team's starting server wears the official identification accessory. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the match.
- 13.C.5. During the match, the referee must :
  - 13.C.5.a. Recheck the height and position of the net if it has been shaken or moved.
  - 13.C.5.b. Announce the score to start each exchange. Announcing the score tells both sides that play is ready to resume.
  - 13.C.5.c. Announce "Point" after each point won.
  - 13.C.5.d. Appropriately annotate the score sheet after the end of each exchange or when a time-out is called.
  - 13.C.5.e. In doubles matches, announce "Second server" (or "Second serve") after the first server's team has lost the rally.
  - 13.C.5.f. Announce "Side change" at the appropriate moment.
  - 13.C.5.g. Apply downtime procedures. [See section 10]
  - 13.C.5.h. Ensure that players behave correctly. In a tournament, the referee has the authority to impose verbal warnings, technical warnings, technical fouls, forfeiture of a game or match following multiple technical warnings and/or technical fouls.

The referee may also recommend that the tournament director disqualify a player.

### **13.D. *Players' responsibilities regarding line calls and fouls.***

#### **13.D.1. Match not refereed.**

13.D.1.a. In the interests of good sportsmanship, a player must call his own fault as soon as he commits it, or as soon as he realizes he has committed a fault. The fault must be called before the next serve.

13.D.1.b. Players make all line calls on their side of the court, including those in the non-volley zone and foot faults when serving.

13.D.1.c. A player may call a non-volley zone fault or a service foot fault committed by the opponent. If there is disagreement between the players about the fault, the rally must be restarted.

13.D.1.d. If a player believes that the opponent has committed one of the fouls identified in Section 7 - Fouls, he must inform the opponent, but he does not have the authority to sanction it. The final decision to attribute the foul rests with the player who is presumed to have committed it.

#### **13.D.2. Refereed match.**

13.D.2.a. Players call fouls at the baseline, sidelines and halfway line on their side of the court.

13.D.2.b. In the interests of good sportsmanship, a player must call his own fault as soon as he commits it, or as soon as he realizes he has committed a fault. The fault must be called before the next serve.

13.D.3. **Match refereed by linesmen.**

13.D.3.a. Players call faults at the centre line on their side when serving.

13.D.3.b. A line call made by a player is not valid in a match with line judges (with the exception of the call concerning the median line at the moment of service), unless the player's line call reverses the call to his disadvantage. [See rule 6.D.13.] Players may appeal to the referee against a line call made by a linesman. [See rule 13.F.]

13.D.3.c. If the referee and line judges are unable to make the line call, the rally is restarted.

**13.E. Line judges.**

13.E.1. The tournament director must determine which medal matches will be assigned line judges. Line judges are recommended, but not mandatory.

13.E.2. Line judges call foot faults on serve and line faults in connection with the lines under their jurisdiction. They call faults in a loud voice ("Faute de pied" or "Out") and

also give the "out" signal (outstretched arm pointing in the out-of-bounds direction).

- 13.E.3. When a linesman makes the "blinded/obstructed view" signal (two hands covering the eyes), the referee can immediately make the call if he has clearly seen where the ball touched the ground. If he is unable to make the call, the referee should ask the other members of the officials' team if they are able to do so.
- 13.E.4 If a player requests the referee's advice and the referee reverses an "out" line call made by a line judge to "in", the rally is restarted.
- 13.E.5. If a player disagrees with the line call  
If a line judge makes an "out" call to his advantage, he may reverse this "out" line call to "in" under rule 6.D.13. The rally is resumed.

**13.F. Appeal to the referee.** The referee is solely responsible for the outcome of the appeal when a request is made to him to validate the judgement of the said appeal (line, double rebound, etc.). The referee may consult the players or linesmen before making his decision.

- 13.F.1. In a match without a line judge, if a player appeals to the referee about a line call, the referee must make the call only if he has clearly seen the ball "in" or "out". If the referee is unable to make the call, the original call stands. If no call has been made, the ball is considered "in".
- 13.F.2. The referee's decision results in either a point, a loss of service or a resumption of the rally.

### **13.G. Verbal warnings, technical warnings and technical faults.**

13.G.1. **Verbal and technical warnings.** The referee has the authority to issue a single verbal warning per player/team. He may also impose technical warnings. Gestures or behaviour that may justify a technical warning are:

13.G.1.a. Use abusive language towards another person.

13.G.1.b. Excessive profanity/swearing/culgarly (verbal or gestural) for any reason. The referee will determine the severity of any violation.

13.G.1.c. Aggressively arguing with officials, other players or spectators in a way that disrupts the pace of play.

13.G.1.d Use the ball inappropriately (by a hostile gesture, breaking it or deliberately stepping on it) or strike the ball aggressively between exchanges.

13.G.1.e. Take your time between exchanges in a way that disrupts the rhythm of the game.

13.G.1.f. Have line calls repeatedly validated in a way that disrupts the rhythm of the game.

13.G.1.g. Challenging a referee's decision or the way he applies a rule and losing that decision



challenge (i.e. the referee's decision was correct) results, in addition to the technical warning, in the loss of a time-out (the verbal warning is not applicable).

13.G.1.h. Requesting a medical time-out without the medical condition being validated by the medical team (or the tournament director in the absence of the latter) will result, in addition to the technical warning, in the loss of one time-out (the verbal warning is not applicable).

13.G.1.i. Making a gesture considered to be minor unsportsmanlike behavior, for example, but not limited to, making contentious "out" line calls which, on appeal, are overturned by the referee.

13.G.1.j. Receive coaching from anyone other than your partner, except during downtime and between games.

13.G.2. **Technical fouls.** The referee has the authority to impose technical fouls. When a technical foul is called, one point is deducted from the score of the player/team at fault, unless their score is zero, in which case one point is added to the score of the opposing player/team. Gestures or behaviors that justify a technical foul (without a technical warning being issued first) are :

13.G.2.a. Intentionally throwing a racket in an aggressive or careless manner, by

anger or frustration, regardless of the consequences, even if no one was hurt or no property was damaged.

13.G.2.b. Use extremely abusive or vulgar language or gestures (including profanity or swearing) no matter who or what they are directed at.

13.G.2.c. Make threats or attacks of any kind against anyone.

13.G.2.d. Challenge a referee's decision or application of a rule and lose the challenge (i.e. the referee's decision was correct) and there is no more time available (the verbal warning is not applicable).

13.G.2.e. Any other gesture considered to be extremely unsportsmanlike behaviour.

13.G.2.f. Request a medical time-out when there is no valid medical condition and no regular time-out is available for that player (singles) or team (verbal warning not applicable).

13.G.2.g. Deliberately throwing or hitting a ball that is no longer in play and inadvertently hitting someone, without any regard for the consequences.

13.G.3. **Effect of technical warnings and technical fouls.**

The imposition of a warning

or technical fault must be accompanied by a brief explanation.

13.G.3.a. A technical warning does not result in the loss of the exchange or the awarding of a point.

13.G.3.b. Once a technical warning has been issued, a second technical warning for any reason given to the same player/team during the match will result in the imposition of a technical foul on the player/team.

***Revision of existing rule 13.G.3.c. :***

13.G.3.c. When the referee calls a technical foul, one point is deducted from the score of the player/team at fault, unless their score is zero, in which case one point is added to the score of the opposing player/team. After the point has been deducted or awarded, the player/team whose score has been modified must reposition ~~himself~~ according to his new score.

13.G.3.d. The awarding of a technical warning or a technical fault must have no effect on a change of server or side.

13.G.3.e. A verbal warning, a technical warning or a technical foul may be imposed on a player at any time when the players are present in the playing area, whether the match is in progress or not (including the warm-up period). The game will not be interrupted, the technical foul

or a technical or verbal warning will be imposed after the end of the rally. Any behavior that would justify the imposition of a warning (technical or verbal) or a technical foul occurring after the match has ended must be brought to the attention of the tournament director.

**13.H. *Forfeiture of game.*** The referee will impose a forfeit in the following circumstances:

- 13.H.1. When a technical warning has already been issued and a technical fault described in rule 13.G.2 is allocated.
- 13.H.2. When a technical foul has already been imposed under rules 13.G.3.b. or 13.G.2. and another technical warning is issued, regardless of the reason.
- 13.H.3. For single-game matches of 15 or 21 points, a game forfeit is equivalent to a match forfeit.
- 13.H.4. In a match of two of three games (or three of five games), the referee may impose a forfeit of game on a player/team who fails to appear on the field 10 minutes after the match has been called. A game forfeit will be imposed if a player/team fails to appear 15 minutes after the game has been called. For single-game matches of 15 or 21 points, a match forfeit will be imposed if a player/team fails to appear 10 minutes after the match has been called. The tournament director may allow a longer delay if circumstances justify such a decision.

**13.I. *Match forfeit.*** The referee will impose a match forfeit in the following circumstances:

- 13.I.1. The accumulation of two technical warnings and one of the technical faults listed in rule 13.G.2.
  - 13.I.2. When a technical foul has already been imposed under rules 13.G.3.b. or 13.G.2. and another technical foul is awarded, regardless of the reason.
  - 13.I.3. Behavior that justifies forfeiture of a match that does not result from an accumulation of technical warnings or technical fouls:
    - 13.I.3.a. Making deliberately aggressive physical contact with an opponent, official or spectator.
    - 13.I.3.b. Intentionally throwing or hitting a racket or ball in an aggressive or reckless manner, out of anger or frustration, which endangers an individual or threatens the integrity of property.
  - 13.I.4. The tournament director may impose a forfeit on a player who refuses to follow tournament guidelines or those concerning the use of local facilities, or for misconduct between matches, or any other breach deemed unacceptable or non-compliance with other rules and procedures.
- 13.J. *Challenging a referee's decision.*** If a player/team disagrees with a referee's decision or application of a rule, he/she may contest this decision or application with the head referee, tournament director or his/her representative. If the referee's decision or application is correct, the player/team will lose a time-out and receive a technical warning [See rule 13.G.1.g.]. If no time-out is available, the player/team will receive a technical foul [See rule 13.G.2.d.]. On the other hand,

if the referee's decision or application is erroneous, it will be reversed and, if relevant, the rally will be restarted.

**13.K. Removal of a linesman.** The referee may remove a linesman for any reasonable reason, based on his own observation or that of the players. The referee's decision to replace the linesman is final. The players may also ask the referee to remove a linesman, provided they all agree. If the referee disagrees with the players, he must submit the request to the tournament director, who has final authority. If a linesman is removed, the tournament director arranges for a replacement.

13.K.1. **Removal of a referee.** Players may ask the Tournament Director to remove a referee, provided they all agree. The Tournament Director has final and discretionary authority. If a referee is removed, the Tournament Director will arrange for a replacement.

**13.L. Match not refereed.** Any player may request a referee or the tournament director if:

13.L.1. A player reasonably believes that a rule is constantly and intentionally violated by his opponent.

13.L.2. The players are faced with a dispute that they are unable to resolve quickly and easily.

**13.M. Disqualification and expulsion.** The Tournament Director has the authority to disqualify a player from the tournament for unacceptable and particularly prejudicial behavior which, in his opinion, has an impact on the success of the tournament. Disqualification may occur as a result of actions committed at

at any time by the player on the tournament site and may include, but are not limited to:

- 13.M.1. Sexist, religious, racial or homophobic insults.
- 13.M.2. Injury to a player, official or spectator as a result of a careless or aggressive gesture with a racket or ball.
- 13.M.3. Spit or cough in someone's direction.
- 13.M.4. Failing to perform to the best of one's ability. Examples include, but are not limited to: not showing up, forfeiting a match, not putting in the full effort during matches, whether it's in the player's own interest or not.

Note: In addition to having the authority to disqualify a player from the tournament, the tournament director also has the option of expelling him/her from the tournament site.

## APPENDIX A

---

### **Priorities and guidelines for the *USA Pickleball Official Rules***

#### ***Foreword***

The *USA Pickleball Official Rules* are without doubt the most important text published by the organization. It is the sport's founding document, and must be treated in a way that respects the ideology of its founders, as well as the work of those who have modified it over the years.

Writing rules that are objective, clear and concise is a complex exercise. It is essential to establish drafting priorities and guidelines to ensure consistency across editions, given that the individuals involved in drafting and/or ratifying the rules change from year to year, and come from different backgrounds and experience. The following priorities and guidelines have been defined to guide them in this delicate but all-important task.

#### ***Priorities***

The following three priorities should be considered as These are the "criteria" for rule modifications. Any proposed change must respect at least one of these three priorities, listed here in order of importance:

1. The first, and perhaps most important, is to respect the integrity of the sport, namely fun, cooperation, courtesy and healthy competition. This priority is a tribute to the founders of the sport, created in 1965, and to all those who have drafted and approved rule changes over the years.
2. The second priority is to promote what's best for all players. The proposed changes must enhance their experience. This



This criterion makes it possible to assess the proposed modification from the point of view of reducing litigation, while facilitating the learning, teaching and practice of the sport, but without limiting its development, both in terms of player skill and equipment innovation.

3. The third priority is to put forward what is most favourable in terms of refereeing. This criterion makes it possible to evaluate the suggested change with the aim of minimizing conflicts between players, and also between players and officials.

### **Guidelines**

The *USA Pickleball Official Rules* contain a wide variety of rules governing the field and equipment, recreational play as well as competition, with or without refereeing. The following principles are guidelines for those writing and approving rules. Wherever possible, a rule should:

1. Apply to all levels and types of player (recreational or tournament - refereed or not - amateur or professional). The modification of a rule intended for a single category of players, such as professionals, should only be approved after a thorough examination of the impact it could have on the sport as a whole.
2. Be written with a precise objective so that there is no ambiguity, i.e. "This leads to that! If something is not allowed or must not happen, the sanction (e.g. restart, foul, technical warning, etc.) must be an integral part of the rule.
3. Focus on what must not happen, not on what is allowed. Attempting to include a rule that describes what is allowed is unnecessarily time-consuming.
4. Avoid being ambiguous, relying on the good will of the players or being tied to the referee's judgment. Such a rule is

conducive to disagreement and multiple interpretations. To this end, when a key word is used in a rule, it must be defined either in the rule itself, or in the "Definition" section of the *Official Rules*.

5. Allow equipment manufacturers to innovate as long as said innovation does not replace the average player's ability to master the speed and complexity of the sport. A rule change related to equipment must be examined very closely because of the risk of setting a precedent.
6. Be based on precedent. Not "change for change's sake", to avoid frustration or risking players' confidence.
7. Be written and approved in a way that allows players to bring a certain level of innovation to the sport. The rule must, however, aim to maintain a healthy balance between innovation and the rules inherited from the past, the latter having largely contributed to the growth and appeal of the sport.
8. Preserve the unique characteristics and specific rules of pickleball, such as the no-volley zone and two rebounds, and prevent the emergence of a type of shot or game that allows the sport to be dominated.
9. Be drafted and approved to deal with a known problem or to anticipate trends and requirements in the sport.
10. Be subject to review and comment by national and international partners.

# INDEX

---

## **10 seconds 4.E**

### **Abandon 12.F**

- definition 3.A.31
- time registration 12.F.6.a
- medical stop time 10.B.2.b

### **Identification accessory**

- definition 3.B.1
- refusal to carry 13.A.2 - 13.C.4.e
- start waiter 5.A.2 - 5.A.3 - 13.C.4.e

### **Accompanying the momentum**

- definition 3.B.2
- during a flight 9.B.1

### **Electronic accessory 11.P Service area**

- change service area 4.E.2
- definition 3.A.38
- player position 4.B bad position 4.B.10 - 4.M.1

### **Handle adjustment**

- definition 3.A.22
- modification 2.E.5.a

### **Announcement of score 4.D**

- after 15-second warning 10.A.5
- referee 13.C.5.b bad score 4.K

### **Line call - Section 6**

- call made before rebound 6.D.10 call made after rebound 6.D.11
- benefit of the doubt 6.D.3 - 6.D.8 definition 3.A.18
- space between line and ball 6.D.6
- line judge 6.D.2 - 6.D.12 -- line judge 13.D.3. - 13.E
- opponent's opinion 6.D.1 - 6.D.5
- referee's opinion 6.D.1 - 6.D.5 - 6.D.8

- contact point 6.C when 6.D.7 - 6.D.9
- turn it on its head 6.D.12 - 13.E.5

### **Referee**

- call to the referee 13.F responsibilities 13.C withdrawal 13.K.1

### **Net reinforcement 3.B.3**

### **Technical warning 13.G.1**

- at any time 13.G.3.e
- consequences 13.G.3
- accumulation 3.A.41
- definition 3.A.42
- forfeit game 13.H.
- forfeit match 13.I
- interpretation rule 13.J

### **Ball in play 3.A.19 Ball**

- cracked/broken 11.E specifications 2.D

### **Dead ball - Section 8**

- definition 3.A.5

### **Extra ball 7.N**

### **Blasphemy/cursing/vulgarity**

- definition 3.A.27 verbal warning 13.G.1.b
- technical warning 13.G.1.b technical fault 13.G.2.b

### **Injury**

- during exchange 11.F

### **Side change 5.B**

- definition 3.A.39
- time-out (at 6-8-11) 5.B.6

### **Choice of serve, receive, side or yield choice 5.A**

## **Coaching**

technical warning 13.G.1.j

definition 3.A.2

earphone 11.P

## **Contesting a rule** technical warning

13.G.1.g technical fault 13.G.2.d

with tournament director 13.A.1 -

13.C - 13.J

## **11.L.3 - 11.M Forehand or backhand stroke 3.A.14**

### **Delay**

10 seconds 4.E

side change (at 6-8 or 11 points)

5.B.6

between games 5.B.2 - 10.E

between games 10.F

### **Disturbance**

definition 3.A.15

dead ball 8.C

problem with net 11.L.5.d

invalid 7.M

### **Two hands 11.C**

ball in play 7.H

#### **Second server**

definition 3.A.34

when 4.B.6.e

### **Second service**

definition 3.A.33

when 4.B.6.e

### **Disqualification**

definition 3.A.9

scoring entry 12.F.6.a tournament

director's authority 13.M

### **Distraction 11.J**

definition 3.A.6

### **Double hit**

definition 3.A.8

fault 11.A

allowed 11.A

## **Double rebound**

definition 3.A.7 foul

7.E - 11.D

wheelchair 7.E

service/service return 7.A

## **Exchange**

### **3.A.28**

## **Headphones**

### **11.P**

## **Equipment**

problem 11.G

stopping time 10.D

## **Expulsion**

definition 3.A.10

governing authority tournament

13.A.4

## **Fouls, Sections 7 and 11**

definition 3.A.11 net

plan 7.K - 11.I server

4.M

service 4.A - 4.E.1 - 4.L

receiver 4.N

no-volley zone - Section 9 non-

refereed match 13.D.1

wrong call line 6.D.11 - 6.D.12

## **Technical fault 13.G.2**

at any time 13.G.3.e

consequences 13.G.3

definition 3.A.41

## **Wheelchair** player

3.A.45 playing

surface 2.A.4 two

rebounds 7.E

service 4.A.4.d

no-fly zone 9.A to 9.D

## **Net**

reinforcement 3.B.3

other rules 11.L net

plan 3.A.25 net posts

11.K specifications

2.C

## **Package**

accessory identification 13.A.2  
definition 3.A.13  
of match 13.I of  
game 13.H  
score entry 12.F.6 racket 2.F.1.a.2  
tournament 12.F.4 -  
13.H clothing 2.G.4

## **Play/ball in play**

definition 3.A.19 Fouls  
- Sections 7 and 8

## **Line judge 13.E**

appeal to referee 13.C.2 - 13.F  
unable to appeal 13.D.3.c  
withdrawal 13.K

## **Swearing/blasphemy/vulgari**

**ty** definition 3.A.27 verbal  
warning 13.G.1.b  
technical warning 13.G.1.b  
technical fault 13.G.2.b

## **Momentum**

definition 3.A.20  
no-fly zone fault 9.B.1 - 9.C

## **Permanent object**

definition 3.A.24  
fault 4.M.3 - 7.J - 8.D

## **Net plan** definition

3.A.25 cross 11.I -  
11.L.3

## **Point**

mark 4.F - 4.G  
subtracted FT 13.G.2 - 13.G.3.c

## **Scoring**

announcement 4.D  
singles match 4.I  
doubles match 4.J  
wrong score announced 4.K

## **Players' position 4.B** wrong

position 4.B.9 question about  
4.B.8

## **First server**

definition 3.A.12  
after side change 4.B.6.c

## **Imaginary extension**

definition 3.A.16  
net 11.I - 11.L.3  
serving lines 4.A.4.c - 4.L.1 - 4.L.2

## **Questions to the referee 4.B.8**

## **Racket**

having the racket in hand 11.O  
change of hand 11.B  
homologation 2.F  
problem 11.G  
specifications 2.E  
a single racket 11.N violation  
2.F.1.a

## **Catcher** definition

3.A.29 faults 4.N  
position 4.B - 4.B.9

## **Reprise**

announcement of wrong score 4.K  
overturned linesman call 13.E.4 -5  
referee and linesmen unable to  
officiate  
to appeal 13.D.3.c  
broken/cracked ball 11.E  
horizontal bar 11.L.5.b  
bottom of the net 2.C.6  
referee decision 13.F.2  
definition 3.A.30 fault 8.C  
rule interpretation error 13.J  
ZNV/foot fault on serve if  
disagreement if no referee 13.D.1.c  
player/position error identified  
during rally 4.B.9.a.  
service release ball not seen 4.A.6

## **Withdrawal 12.F.5**

definition 3.A.46 score  
registration 12.F.7

## **Side selection 5.A Server**

definition 3.A.36  
faults 4.M

## **Start server**

accessory identification 5.A.3  
change 5.A.2  
start of part 4.B.2  
definition 3.A.40  
position 4.B.6

## **Service 4.A**

spoon (*volley serve*) 4.A.7 service  
area 3.A.38 - 4.A.4 score  
announcement 4.D  
ball in play 3.A.19  
horizontal bar with central base  
11.L.5.c  
definition 3.A.35 second  
service 3.A.33 rotation  
effect 4.A.5 double  
4.B.6  
singles 4.B.5 service  
in play 6.A  
foot fault 4.A.4 - 4.L server  
fault 4.M  
wheelchair play 4.A.4.d  
wrong player/position 4.B.9  
placement 4.A.2  
resumption 4.A.9  
service with rebound 4.A.8  
service area 2.B.4 - 2.B.6 - 2.B.7

## **Service with rebound 4.A.8**

## **Signal not ready 4.C**

## **Simple**

score announcement 4.I  
player position 4.B.5

## **Playing surface**

definition 3.A.26  
specifications 2.A.3  
wheelchair play 2.A.4 **Net**

## **reinforcement system 3.B.3**

## **Stopping time - Section 10**

before start of game/match 10.H.1  
side change (at 6, 8 or 11) 5.B.6 delay  
between games 10.E.1 - 10.H.1  
requested before service 10.A.3  
equipment 10.D  
fault if requested after  
service 4.M.10 - 4.N.3  
medical 10.B  
loss 13.G.1.g - 13.G.1.h. -  
13.G.2.d  
presence of blood 10.B.5  
regular 10.A  
hydrate 10.C  
exceptional situations 10.H.2

## **Attempted strike 11.D Terrain**

service area 3.A.38 definition  
3.A.3  
side line 2.B.2 median  
line 2.B.5 end line  
2.B.1  
objects on the field 11.H  
touching the opponent's field  
7.G specifications 2.A  
right/pair zone 2.B.6 - 3.A.32  
left/odd zone 2.B.7 - 3.A.17 non-  
volley zone 2.B.3 - 3.A.21 service  
zone 2.B.4 - 3.A.37

## **Racquet head**

definition 3.A.23  
service 4.A.7.b

## **Sanctioned tournament - Section 12**

## **Transport**

definition 3.A.1

transport voluntarily 7.L

## **Clothing 2.G**

color 2.G.1

violation 2.G.4

## **Flight**

action de jouer volée 9.A - 9.B - 9.C -  
9.D - 9.E

definition 3.A.44

momentum 9.B.1 - 9.C

object falls ZNV during flight 11.H

non flight zone - Section 9

## **Vulgarity/blasphemy/speech**

**h** definition 3.A.27 verbal

warning 13.G.1.b

technical warning 13.G.1.b

technical fault 13.G.2.b

## **Zones**

right/pair zone 2.B.6 - 3.A.32

left/odd zone 2.B.7 -3.A.17 non-

volley zone 2.B.3 - 3.A.21 service

zone 2.B.4 - 3.A.37

## **Service area** definition

3.A.37 description 2.B.4

## **No-fly zone (NFZ) - Section 9**

definition 3.A.21

foul non-refereed match 13.D.1.c

lines and zones 2.B.3

momentum of the flight 9.B.1 - 9.C.





***USA Pickleball Association (USA Pickleball)***

Find out more:  
**[usapickleball.org](https://usapickleball.org)**

*All rights reserved*

**2010, revised 2023**