

Rod's Basic Seven

If you want to immediately win 25% more points, follow the seven tips outlined below.

Tip #1

Serve position

When serving, never cross the base line until the opponents have hit the return of serve. To hit a third shot drop or drive you need to be balanced with your weight on the balls of your feet, generally leaning forward and square to the net.

What I see happening is: you or your partner serve, you advance one or two steps into the court and upon the return of serve, you back up to exactly the point you were just standing. Thus, hitting your third shot from an unbalanced backward leaning position...rather than being in a balanced athletic position, with a forward leaning posture.

Tip #2

Serve Return

When you are returning serve (your partner is already at the non-volley line) your job is simple.

Return the ball in such a manner that allows you with your particular physical capabilities to get to the non-volley line "before" your opponent hits the ball. For most people that means the return of serve is deep and soft.

What I see is a majority of players returning the serve and only advancing half way to the NVL before their opponents hits the ball.

Tip #3

Never lose the point within the first three shots

Sounds simplistic, am I stating the obvious?

Go out and watch a few games and you will see that more than 50% of the points last less than four shots.

So....get your serve in (*shot one*), Return the serve soft and deep in such a manner that you can get to the non-volley line (*shot two*),

Make sure your *third shot* (drop or drive) goes over the net and lands in the court.

Tip #4

Turn and look at your partner as they are returning ball, they may not be able to get to the NVL line in time, you may have to cover.

Tip #5

Getting to the Non Volley Line

Earn your right to the NVL, don't go charging up, wait until you/partner have hit a shot that allows you to get to the NVL safely.

Tip #6

Stop and Split

Stop moving when you hit. Ideally you want to be still, with your feet split and underneath you, square to the net.

Tip #7

Red, Yellow, Green

A Red ball is one that is between the ground and your knees. Don't attack a Red ball. All Red balls should be returned as a non-attackable ball into the non-volley zone. A Yellow ball is one that is between your knees and waist. Most yellow balls should be returned as a non-attackable dink into the non-volley zone. If you have a top spin and are an advanced player than Yellow balls can be attacked. Green balls are those that are above the waist. These are the balls you are waiting for and should be attacked.

Follow these Seven Basic concepts and you will win 25% more points

The Five Shots You Need

Here are the five shots that you need to perfect.

Success and improvement comes from practicing these over and over again. Ten thousand times per shot is not an understatement.

You will never get to where you want to be by playing games. Find a drill partner and start practicing.

1. Dinks

It is essential that you become proficient at dinking from the kitchen line. We will teach you how to do it.....now go hit ten thousand forehand dinks and ten thousand backhand dinks. Every dink must be in the bucket. A high dink.....is a GREEN ball. Once you become proficient with the “lift” dink then move on to the “push” dink which is more targeted and offensive.

2. Third Shot Drop

This is a dink from the baseline, it is no more complicated than that.....once you are able to get 80% of your dinks into the kitchen than begin working on lowering the trajectory so they don't bounce as high.

3. Defense through the Transition Zone

The most significant change/advancement in pickleball over the last two years is defense. In particular, defense through the transition zone. You must be able to defend a ball at your feet in the transition zone and put it in the bucket. This allows you to make your way to the kitchen line, where the game of pickleball is played.

4. Fast Hands

Blocking, resetting and if available attacking from the kitchen line in a “fire fight”. You have to be able to defend against an offensive attack at your body.

5. Hitting the clowns feet with top spin

Driving the ball down and hitting the “clowns feet” forcing your opponent to hit the ball with an upward motion.