

Pickleball Ruler Summary

The Serve

- The serve must be made underhand. Paddle contact with the ball must be below the server's waist (navel level).
- The serve is made from behind the baseline; neither foot may contact the baseline or court until the ball is struck.
- The serve is made diagonally crosscourt and must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court.
- Only one serve attempt is allowed, except in the event of a let (ball touches the net on the serve and lands on the proper service court; let serves are replayed).

Service Sequence

- Both players on the serving doubles team have the opportunity to serve and score points until they commit a fault *(except for the first service sequence of each new game).
- The first serve of each side-out is made from the right-hand court.
- If a point is scored, the server switches sides and the server initiates the next serve from the left-hand court.
- As subsequent points are scored, the server continues switching back and forth until a fault is committed and the first server loses the serve.
- When the first server loses the serve the partner then serves from their correct side of the court (except for the first service sequence of the game*).
- The second server continues serving until his team commits a fault and loses the serve to the opposing team.
- Once the service goes to the opposition (at side out), the first serve is from the right-hand court and both players on that team have the opportunity to serve and score points until their team commits two faults.
- In singles the server serves from the right-hand court when his/her score is even and from the left when it is odd.

*At the beginning of each new game only one partner on the serving team has the opportunity to serve before faulting, after which the service passes to the receiving team.

Scoring - Points are scored only by the serving team. Games are normally played to 11 points, win by 2.

Double-Bounce Rule

- When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning, and then the serving team must let it bounce before returning, thus two bounces.
- After the ball has bounced once in each team's court, both teams may either volley the ball (hit the ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce (ground stroke).
- The double bounce rule eliminates the serve and volley advantage and extends rallies.

Non-Volley Zone

- The non-volley zone (kitchen) is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.
- Volleying is prohibited within the non-volley zone. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone.
- It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the non-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the non-volley zone including the associated lines.
- It is a fault if, after volleying, a player is carried by momentum into or touches the non-volley zone, even if the volleyed ball is declared dead before this happens.
- A player may legally be in the non-volley zone any time other than when volleying a ball.

Line Calls - A ball contacting any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, is considered "in." A serve contacting the non-volley zone line is short and a fault.

