

# Abbreviated Pickleball Rules

## The Serve

- The serve must use an upward motion, the ball must be struck below the waist and the paddle must be below the wrist. The serve must land in the diagonal back court. If the ball hits the net but is otherwise good, the serve is replayed. All lines are in except for the Non-Volley Zone (NVZ) line. The NVZ is also called the kitchen.
- The server must be behind the baseline and in between the imaginary extensions of the sideline and the center line. The foot cannot touch the court or the court lines until after the ball is struck.
- The server on the right serves first and continues to serve until their team has a fault. After each point the server and their partner change sides of the court. For each turn of serve both partners get to serve except for the first service of the game. When both servers have faulted, the serve goes to the other team. On the first service of the game, the team has only one server.

## Striking the Ball

- The person receiving the serve must let the ball bounce before it can be struck.
- The team serving must let the return of serve bounce before the ball can be struck. After that the ball can be struck in the air or after the first bounce.
- The ball cannot be hit in the air if:
  - o The player is touching the NVZ
  - o The player is touching any NVZ line
  - o The player's momentum carries them into the NVZ or onto any NVZ line.
  - o For the avoidance of doubt, momentum never ends: i.e. even if you hit the ball and it has legally bounced twelve times and is run over by a truck, if your momentum has taken you into the NVZ you have faulted

## Scoring

- You only score points when you serve.
- The score has three elements: servers score, opponents score, number of server. The score should be announced before each point so that any disagreement can be resolved. The game is won by the first team reaching 11 points but winning by at least 2 points.

## **Miscellaneous**

- If the ball touches you before legally touching the court, you have faulted. This is true even if you are catching a ball in the air that would clearly be out or if you are the server's partner and the serve hits you.
- All lines are in except the NVZ line on the serve.
- The ball can be struck more than once as long as the paddle is in a continuous motion.

## **Basic Pickleball Strategy**

1. Serve deep to the opponents weakest side
2. Return serves deep . As you return the serve rush to the NVZ line but in control.
3. If serving, both players stay near the baseline as they have to let the return of serve bounce.
4. If you are the partner of the person receiving serve, start the point at the NVZ line.
5. Put serves in play. Any advantage gained in trying to force mistakes on the serve is surely lost in serves that are faults.
6. The serving team should go to the NVZ line as soon as they can. The best way to do this is to hit the "third" shot just over the net. But if opponents leave any opening, hit for the opening instead.
7. Always squarely face the opponent hitting the ball.
8. Keep your racquet in the ready position, especially when at the NVZ line.
9. Keep your eyes on the ball especially from your opponent's racquet to your racquet.
10. Never, never move backwards, unless you are trying to catch up to a lob over your head.
11. Dink as soon as you can and be patient while dinking. (Dinking is hitting the ball just over the net so that it bounces below the height of the net.)
12. Communicate with your partner especially on balls that are hit in the middle between you.