

2019 EDITION



Pickleball 101

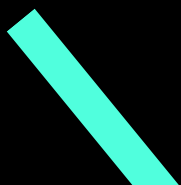


A BEGINNER'S GUIDE



Overview

- Pickleball is a doubles game with teams of 2 on each side of the net.
- There is a serving team and a returning team.
- The serving team serves the ball to the returning team and that team must return the ball back to the serving team.
- Players on each side must let the ball bounce once before a volley can take place.
- A volley is a ball that is hit in the air before it touches the ground.
- To prevent easy “spiking or “smashing”, there is a 7 foot no-volley zone on each side of the net. This is also referred to as the “kitchen”.
- The server on the serving team continues to serve, alternating sides until he or she loses the serve. The first side to score 11 points and to lead by 2 points wins the game.



The Serve



- The serve must be hit diagonally to the returner always starts on the right-hand square.
- Therefore the server must serve to the diagonal square on the returners side. From your side, that would be the left service box on their side of the court.
- The serve must clear the 7 foot no volley zone and land in the diagonal service box for it to be legal.
- The serve **MUST** be hit underhanded and the paddle **MUST** be below the waist or waist level when contact is made.
- The ball must be served in the air without it bouncing. Like tennis, you must toss the ball to yourself and hit the ball in the air.
- There is no bouncing and hitting on the serve.
- The no-volley zone line is **OUT**. This is the only time any line on the court is **OUT**.



DIAGONALLY

UNDERHANDED

NO BOUNCING



NO-VOLLEY
ZONE IS OUT

The Serve

- If the ball hits the net on a serve and lands in the no-volley zone or out, then the server loses that serve.
- If the server hits the net on a serve and it lands inside the diagonal box of the returner, then they may play a “let” or a “redo”.
- The server must keep the feet behind the line when serving.
- 1 serve attempt is allowed. In case of a “let” like we have already covered, the server may have another try.
- At the start of a game, the serving team is only allowed 1 server. After that one server loses serve, the opposing team gets the ball and then both members of that team will have the opportunity to serve. Remember this rule is ONLY at the START of the game.
- After they lose the serve, each team will have 2 servers from the rest of the game on.
- You will always start on the right hand side of the court when serving.
- You will alternate sides if you win.
- When player 1 loses their serve, they will hand the ball to player 2 to serve WITHOUT switching sides.

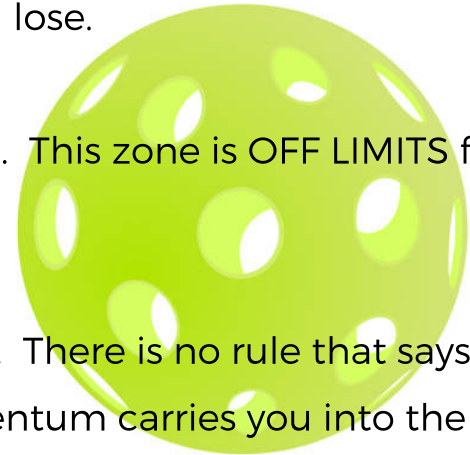


The Volley

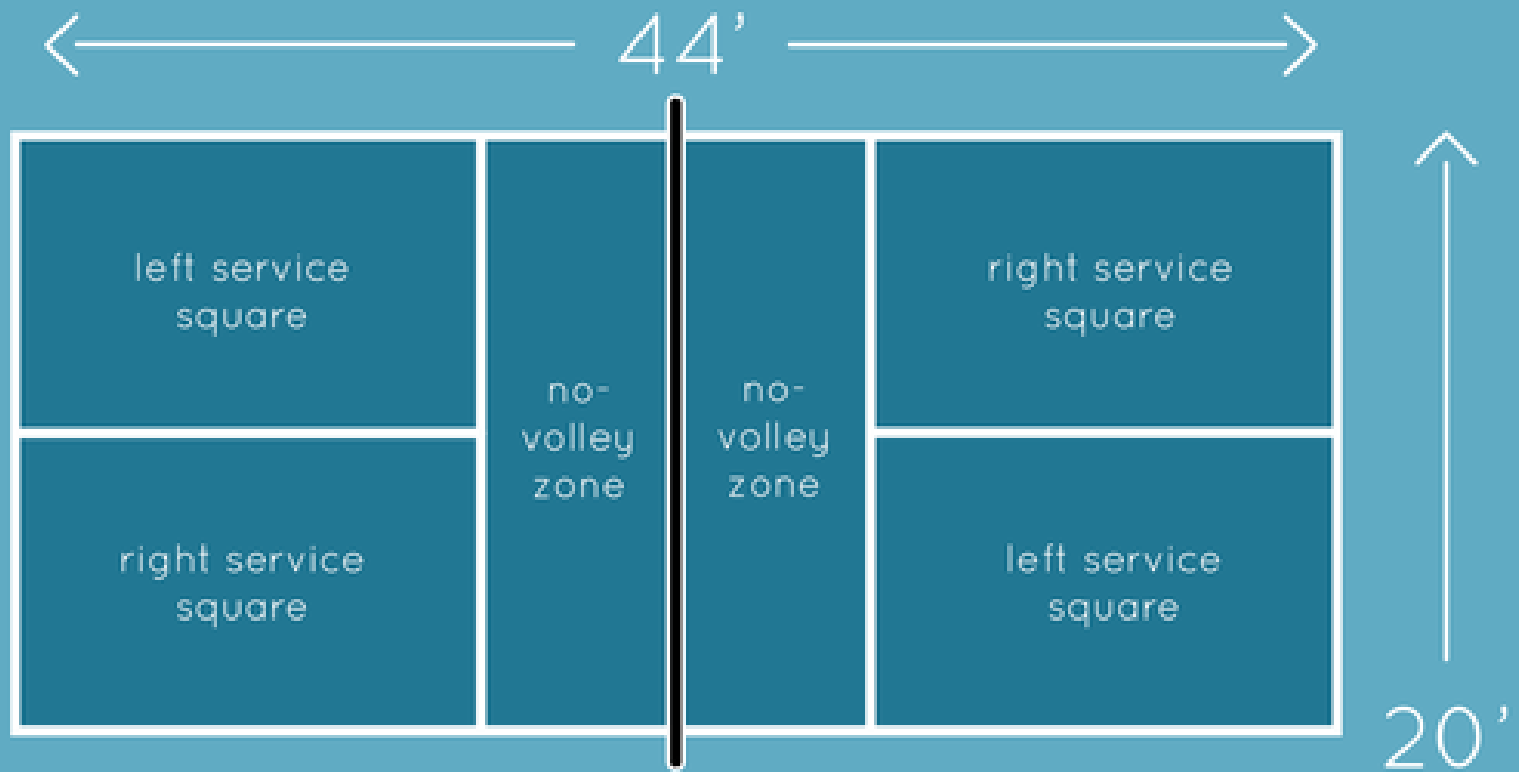
- The volley is a shot that is hit out of the air without the ball touching the ground. Just like in tennis, a volley usually happens when at the net. In pickleball, the volley is a shot that is hit very often.
 - No player may volley until the ball bounces at least once on their side of the court. There are no exceptions.
 - If I am the server on the serving team, the returner must let the ball bounce before hitting it. Then they can hit the next ball as a volley if they chose.
 - As the server, I must let their return bounce and then I can hit the next shot. After the third shot bounces, I can choose to play a volley on the next shot if I wanted to.
 - This rule applies to all players. Just because I am serving doesn't mean I am the only one who has to let the ball drop. My teammate also has to let the ball drop.
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No-Volley Zone

- The no-volley zone is exactly what it sounds like. NO VOLLEY!
- You cannot volley from inside of the NO-VOLLEY ZONE EVER. If you do, you automatically lose.
- If you step on the line of the NO-VOLLEY ZONE to hit a volley, you lose.
- If you step in the NO-VOLLEY ZONE after you hit a volley, you lose. This zone is OFF LIMITS for all VOLLEYS.
- But remember, it is only illegal if you step INSIDE to hit a VOLLEY. There is no rule that says I can't volley from OUTSIDE of the NO-VOLLEY ZONE. If your momentum carries you into the NO-VOLLEY ZONE after a volley, that is illegal.



Also, there is no rule to where you can step inside of the NO-VOLLEY ZONE and hit a shot after it BOUNCES. If you have been reading up to this point, you know a volley is a shot hit out of the air. If the shot bounces, then it is completely legal to step into the NO-VOLLEY ZONE and hit the shot necessary. I would suggest as soon as you step in to hit the shot off the bounce, get right back out!



The Scoring



- A TEAM CAN ONLY SCORE A POINT WHEN SERVING.
- A server will continue to serve until the serving team loses a point.
- Once that server loses the point, then the servers partner serves until they lose a point.
- Once both players lose their serve, its called a “SIDEOUT”.
- After the sideout, the opposing team will both serve until they lose.
- The game is played to 11 and the winning team must win by 2 points. Usually in a match, the winning team must win 2 out of 3 games to 11 win by 2. So notice the difference between a “game” and a “match”.

Here is where it can get confusing:

Scoring is broken down into 3 numbers when playing doubles.

The serving team is going to call out the score before every serve. This is a general rule in how to call the score. Granted all players should be aware of the score for discrepancies, responsibility falls on the serving teams shoulders to call out the correct score before every serve.





Scoring Continued

The **first** number in a score will be the **serving teams score**.

The **second number** in a score will be the **opposing teams score**.

The **third number** in a score will be the **serve number of the serving teams server**.

Read all 3 of those scores and picture them in your mind. Here is what it would look like:

1-1-1

If you have clearly read the definition of the numbers I have given, then you can understand how these numbers read. Let's go over them.

The first (1) is the **serving teams score**. They have 1 point. Hence the reason they call their score first when serving.

The second (1) is the **returning teams score**. They also have 1 point.

Hence the reason we call their score second when serving.

The third (1) is the **server number of the serving team**.

There are only 2 players per team. So therefore the only other number than 1 can be 2. Because its impossible to have more than 2 servers serve on a team.



Scoring Continued



Here is what another score could look like:

9-10-2

This one looks a whole lot more complicated than 1-1-1. But is it actually more complicated? Looks can be deceiving. Lets put our understanding and methodology of scoring to the test.

The first number (9) is the serving teams score.

The second number (10) is the returning teams score.

The third number (2) is the server number of the serving team.






What do we know about this score?

The serving team is definitely losing. They call their score first.

What this score also shows us is that they are on their second server. If they win this point, then the score becomes 10-10-2. If they lose this point, then the score becomes 10-9-1 for the other team.

Since they are on the second server, if they lose they have to give the ball back to the returning team for them to serve. This is a critical point that can swing the game either way.



Read the Scoring Thoroughly:

- For the first 2 numbers in the score, there is no maximum that they can be. Meaning it can be 100-101.
- For the 3rd number in the score, there can only be 2 numbers: 1 or 2. Why? Because in doubles, there is a maximum of 2 players on a team.
- The serving team who starts the beginning of the game only gets to have 1 server.





Confused Yet?


How do we call the score? Well when starting we both know each teams score is zero. And we know that there is only one server that can serve in the beginning.

Here is what the correct score to start a game is. 0-0-2. I want you to look at the scoring in the beginning of a game like this:

- Since there is only 1 server on the serving team to start the game, they are the absolute last server on the team. Therefore, the server number they acquire in the beginning is automatically 2. If during the game you were playing and the serving team was on their second server and lost the point, would that team then hand you the ball to serve?

The answer is yes they would. Would they hand you the ball after they served only once?

The answer is no they wouldn't. That is why we don't call the score in the beginning of the game 0-0-1. Simply because that would imply that the serving team would get another serve.





So there is no confusion, the side that serves 1st at Old Hawthorne is always the parking lot side.



Strategy - Serving Team



- The serving team must both be back to start the point. Should we stand behind the back line? My answer is simple: Stand in a place to where you don't have to move BACKWARDS.
- The serving team will serve and stay back. Remember they cannot volley the ball in the air until after the return from the opposing team bounces.
- The strategy is to serve and stay back until the ball bounces so we can hit the next shot over. This is done as a team. Just because I'm serving doesn't mean I am the only one to stay back. My partner does as well.



PICKLEBALL



Strategy - Returning Team

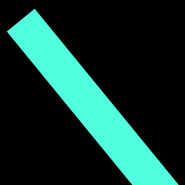

- This positioning will be 1 up and 1 back. If you are a tennis player this will seem very normal to you.
- The person returning the ball is back.
- The partner who isn't returning is at the no-volley zone. Why are they already up there you ask? No wasted movements. The goal of the returning team is to hit & come in. So if the returners partner is already in, that's half the battle won.
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- The returner must let the serve bounce since they cannot volley the first ball. After it bounces, they should return & come up to the no-volley zone. Where should the returner stand?
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Look at it this way. The server has the whole diagonal box they can serve to. If I am standing in front of the line, that means if they hit a deep serve to the line I will have to move back. I don't want to move back. So I should be standing behind the line to return a serve. If you find your opponent hitting short serves, move in a step. But calculate that at your own discretion.





Back to the Serving Team

- The serving team's goal is to hit the 3rd shot into the no-volley zone. Why the no-volley zone? The answer is simple. It neutralizes the power & ability of the team that already has the upper hand.
 - Just like in tennis, the closer you are in the court, the more offensive you can be. Winning and losing is done at the net. The serving team's job is to somehow get to the no-volley zone with our opponents without getting crushed.
 - If the serving team can manage to get the ball inside the no-volley zone, move forward to the no-volley zone as well.
 - If the serving team cannot get the 3rd shot to drop into the no-volley zone, then do your best to manage the point as well as you can.
 - The goal in pickleball is to have all 4 players up at the no-volley zone to rally and play out the point.
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Are there other ways to hit the 3rd shot besides aiming for the no-volley zone?

ABSOLUTELY!

- You can drive your 3rd shot with power.
- You can lob over your opponents head.
- But the high percentage play is to try to get the 3rd shot into the no-volley zone. It won't be easy. But give it a shot. That's what practice is all about. If it doesn't work, then you can explore other options.





Dink

a dink is a soft shot you are hitting after the ball bounces into your no-volley zone back into the opponents no-volley zone. It is a soft shot with touch and control.

3rd Shot Drop

3rd shot drop is term we use when after serving to the returning team and they have returned the ball back to the serving team, the serving team is trying to “drop” the 3rd shot into the no-volley zone to get up to the net and play the point. This is considered the toughest shot to master in the game.





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with any questions!



Come Play!