



Special Olympics *Iowa*

Pickleball Rules

Basic Rules Overview

Singles – 1 Special Olympics Athlete

Doubles – 2 Special Olympics Athletes – same gender or mixed

Unified Doubles – 1 Special Olympics Athlete & 1 Unified Partner

Court Size/Equipment

USAP approved regulation court measures 20'x44' and is used for both singles and doubles play with a 7' no-volley zone, (kitchen), in front of the net. The net must rest at 36' on both ends and 34' in the middle. Standard paddles should be used (see below).

Paddles/Balls

Standard USAP approved paddles constructed of wood, graphite, or composite. Indoor or outdoor balls may be used based on playing location.

Start of Game

A coin toss or random number selection conducted by the referee will determine which player or team has first choice of side, service, or receive. Other team gets choice of Side OR Service.

The Serve

- The serve must be made underhand.
- Paddle contact with the ball must be made below the server's waist (navel level).
- The ball can bounce one time before contact is made during the serve.
- The serve is initiated with two feet behind the baseline; neither foot may contact the baseline or court until after the ball is struck.
- The serve must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court.
- Two service attempts are allowed

Service Sequence

- The first serve is made from the right side of the service court.
- Server changes side of service after every point that is won.
- In doubles, when starting the game, the server will serve until a point is lost, then the opposing team will have their first serving opportunity until a point is lost.
- Serve will then continue to go into normal rotation (Server 1 Team A → Server 2 Team A → Server 1 Team B → Server 2 Team B)
- The second server continues serving until his team commits a fault or loses a point to the opposing team.
- Once the service goes to the opposition (at side out), the first serve is made from the right/even court and both players on that team have the opportunity to serve and score.
- Unified and Traditional Doubles Modification – Serve changes after 3 consecutive service wins, regardless of who started serving and goes to the other side.
- Unified Doubles – The athlete starts the competition on the right side.

Return of Serve

- Ball must be returned after a single bounce on the receiving team's side. The serving team must allow the ball to bounce once before contact can be made.

Rally

- Ball can be returned either in the air, if behind the no-volley zone, (kitchen), or after a single bounce on the receiving teams side.
- Wheelchair participants may allow the ball to bounce twice before contact is made.

Faults

- A fault by the receiving team results in a point for the serving team.
- Two faults by the serving team result in the server's loss of serve or side out.
- All faults are defined by the USAP

Line Calls

- A ball contacting any line is considered "in". The only exception is during a serve, the ball may not make contact with the white no-volley zone (kitchen) line. This will be considered a fault serve.

No-Volley Zone

- The no-volley zone, "the kitchen" is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.
- Volleying is prohibited within the no-volley zone. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone. Players may not stand in this zone.
- A player may step into the non-volley zone if their momentum carries them after hitting the ball below the waist behind the line. If momentum carries the player into the no-volley zone from a hit that is at or above the waist, it will be considered a fault.

Scoring

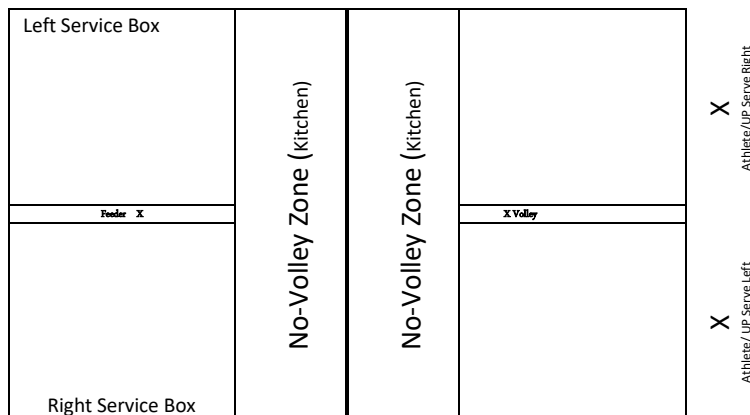
- Points are scored **only** by the serving team.
- Games are played first to 9 points wins.

Competition

- Best 2 out of 3 games wins a match
- Tie Breakers will be determined in order of Head-to-Head competition, total points for, total points against. If still tied after those three, a single match to 5 points will be played.
- 30 Minute time limit per match
- A coach may only talk to their athletes during a changeover

End of game: All players approach the net (as in tennis) and shake hands.

Pickleball Assessment



A. Equipment: Pickleball court, 2 paddles, 1 indoor/outdoor ball, individual assessment sheets, clip board and pencil

B. Roles: Recorder, Feeder, Athlete/Unified Partner

C. Assessed Tasks

1. **Serves-** The Athlete/UP stands behind baseline beginning on the rightside. The Athlete/UP receives 12 underhand service attempts, **6 rightside** and **6 leftside**. The serve must be a **diagonal** underhand serve with paddle below the waist and no higher than the highest part of the wrist and be hit prior to bouncing. **Serves can be a one bounce serve.** Balls landing in the correct box receive 1 point. If player steps on or over the baseline, it is considered a foot fault and shall receive 0 points. Balls landing in the no-volley zone (kitchen) shall receive 0 points. A missed attempt is 0 points and will not be replayed unless it was a let serve. Served balls landing on a line shall be considered good except No-Volley Zone line. Coach or volunteer demonstrates the serve for Level 1 & 2.

- 2. Return of Serve** - The Athlete/UP stands in the Right Service Box, the Feeder/Server (*using appropriate Level balls*) shall serve 6 balls to the Right Service box - 3 balls to the Forehand side and 3 balls to the Backhand side with the Athlete/UP to return each serve. The point is not played out. Next same process is repeated to the Left Service Box. The Athlete/UP shall receive 1 point for each return of serve that lands over the net and within the court boundaries. Balls landing on lines are considered good. The server's pace of serve should be appropriate for the players level.
- 3. Volleys** - The Athlete/UP stands 1 meter behind the No-Volley Line on center line. The feeder stands on opposite side of net, 1 meter from the No-Volley Line on center line with a basket of 12 Level appropriate balls. The ball is paddle fed to the Athlete/UP alternating Forehand /Backhand, twelve attempts (6 Forehands and 6 Backhands). Each Volley hit landing inbounds across the net receives 1 pt. Any ball landing on a line is considered good. If the the feeder makes an error in feeding, the feed shall be refed 1 time. If an Athlete/UP misses a Volley, that attempt shall receive 0 points.
- 4. Dinks** – The Athlete/UP stands on the base line. The feeder stands on the opposite side of the net, 1 meter from the No-Volley Line on the center line with a basket of 12 regulation competition balls. The feeder paddle feeds each ball. The Athlete/UP shall receive 6 attempts to dink the ball over the net to the target located in the “Kitchen”. Each ball landing inbounds in “Kitchen” area receives 2 points. Any ball landing on a line is considered good. If the the feeder makes an error in feeding, the feed shall be refed 1 time. If an Athlete/UP misses a dink attempt, that attempt shall receive 0 points.
- 5. Rally** - The Athlete/UP shall receive 6 rally attempts. The Athlete/UP will serve (alternating Right then Left sides for each rally) to a like ability Athlete/UP/Feeder. **The Two-bounce rule is in effect, (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 two bounce rule is fulfilled, every hit counts as 1 pt. until an error ending the rally is made. (Ex. Athlete/UP serves, ball bounces and receiver returns the ball then after the ball bounces the server hits ball and rally continues until a mistake was made after the 4th hit. The score for that attempt would be 4 points.) If the two bounce rule was not met, that rally attempt shall receive 0 Pts.
- 6. Dink Rally** – The Athlete/UP shall receive 6 dink rally attempts. The Athlete/UP will serve (alternating Right then Left sides for each rally) to a like ability Athlete/UP/Feeder. **The Two-bounce rule is in effect, (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 two bounce rule is fulfilled, each hit must be a dink hit. All dinks must be in consecutive hits to score points for each attempt. If the hit is not a dink, then that attempt ends. For each attempt, 1-2 dinks = 1 point; 3-4 dinks = 2 points; 5 or more dinks = 3 points. (Ex. 2 bounce rule was fulfilled, 2 dinks and then a deep hit occurred. This attempt ended with the deep hit and 1 point shall be scored for this attempt because 2 dinks were hit in succession). If the two bounce rule is not been met, that rally attempt shall receive 0 Pts.