

PICKLEBALL RULES

The ball is served underhand (without a prior bounce) from behind the baseline. It must land in the diagonally opposite court behind the no-volley zone; it may not be volleyed. If the ball lands outside the receiving court, the serve normally passes to the server's teammate or, if both teammates have served, to the opponents (but see the exception below).

There is no "second serve." A ball that hits a boundary line is fair. A player whose foot touches the baseline during a serve loses the serve. A player whose foot touches the no-volley line while hitting the ball, or whose momentum carries him/her into the no-volley zone while hitting the ball, loses the rally.

The return of service must bounce (anywhere within bounds) before it can be hit; like the serve, it may not be volleyed (the "two bounce" rule). Any subsequent return may be volleyed, provided the volleyer is behind the no-volley zone. (You can stand in the no-volley zone at any time, though there is little advantage to doing so.)

When the game starts, the initial server serves from the right-hand court. The server continues to serve until he/she loses, but shifts courts from right to left to right, etc. When the initial server loses, the serve passes to the opponents. (Limiting the initial serve to one player helps offset the scoring advantage that naturally accrues to the team that serves first.)

When the opponents win the serve, the serve again starts from (their) right-hand court, with the server shifting sides as rallies are won. When a serve is out or a rally is lost, the serve passes to the server's partner, who starts in his/her current court and follows the same procedure.

If a serve hits the net and goes over, landing in the proper receiving court, it is a "let" (as in tennis) and must be played over. Other than the serve, a ball that hits the net and drops inbounds is in play.

Points are won only by the serving team. Before serving, the server should announce the score. This is done by giving the serving team's score, then the receiving team's score, and finally a third number—1 or 2, indicating whether the serving team's first or second server is serving.

A game is nominally 11 points, but must be won by two points.