

## PICKLEBALL TIPS

If you're new to the game, take it easy at first, especially if you have not played tennis or racquetball for some time. You're likely to get some sore thigh muscles, as well as a sore muscle in your hitting arm and general stiffness. Stretching exercises beforehand should help. But don't chase every tough ball, and limit yourself to one or two games for awhile.

Do not play when it's windy; the ball is too light to control. Experience will teach you the level of breeze that is tolerable.

The ball does not bounce very high. In taking a ball on the bounce you'll have to get close to the bounce and hold your paddle much lower than you're accustomed to in tennis or racquetball.

The player receiving serve should play well back (near the baseline), since the serve must be allowed to bounce before it is hit. Similarly, both members of the serving team should play well back for return of service, since the return must be allowed to bounce before it is hit.

Since you may not volley from the no-volley zone, there is little advantage in positioning yourself in that zone. But there's good reason to play just outside the no-volley zone so you can get to balls that barely clear the net.

Do not back up to get to a long ball (tripping and falling backwards is a good way to get hurt). Instead, turn to your right (if you hit right-handed) and circle back to get to the ball. The ball does not move very fast and you will often get to it, either in the air or on the bounce.

After you have tried the game a bit, you may decide that you want your own paddle. You can get a paddle that is lighter or heavier than the starter paddles. If you have a largish hand, you can also get sheaths or wrapping tape to build up the diameter of a paddle's handle; tape used for tennis rackets will work fine.

Dick's Sporting Goods does not support pickleball, and you will have to order your paddle by mail or over the Internet. There are quite a few suppliers, including: [pickleball.com](http://pickleball.com) (the supplier of our starter paddles), [picketballcentral.com](http://picketballcentral.com), and [thepickleballstore.com](http://thepickleballstore.com) (which has the widest selection of the three, including some of the rather costly Pro-Lite models).

If you're interested in light weight, though, check out [pro-litesports.com](http://pro-litesports.com), the maker of Pro-Lite models, to see a broader selection of their paddles. Their paddles range up to \$50 and more and are much favored by serious players. They get their combination of strength and lightness by using a honeycomb structure as the center ply.