

GEL Pickleball

Basic Rules for Weekly Pickleball Competition

Game Setup

1. **Court Dimensions:** GEL Pickleball is played on existing badminton court dimensions. The court is divided into right/even and left/odd service courts and non-volley zones.

Scoring

2. **Point Scoring:** Points are scored only by the serving side when the server or the server's team wins the rally, or the opposing side commits a fault.
3. **Winning the Game:** The first side scoring 11 points and leading by at least a 2-point margin wins the game. Games can be played as singles or doubles.

Serve

4. **Serve Requirements:** The serve must be made diagonally cross-court and must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court. The server must have at least one foot behind the baseline and cannot step on or over the baseline until after the ball is hit.
5. The serve must clear the net and the Kitchen. If the serve touches the net but still lands in the correct service court, it is a valid serve.
6. **Serve Position:** The server must serve from behind the baseline and within the sideline boundaries. The serve must be made underhand with the paddle contacting the ball below the server's waist level. The server must drop the ball straight down without adding spin to the ball.
7. **Losing Serve:** It is a loss of serve if the served ball lands outside the correct serving area, if the server's foot touches the baseline or court inside it, or if the serve does not clear the net.
8. **Service Sequence in Doubles:** In doubles, each team member serves until each player loses a serve, after which the serve passes to the opposing team. The server alternates service courts after each point. The first server in a game continues to serve until a loss of serve is committed by their team, then the second server on the team serves until a loss of serve, at which point the serve passes to the opposing team.

Playing the Game

9. **Two-Bounce Rule:** The receiving team must let the serve bounce, and the serving team must let the return of serve bounce before playing it. After the ball has bounced once on each side, both teams can either volley the ball or play it off the bounce.
10. **Volley Rules:** A volley is when the ball is hit in the air without first bouncing. Players cannot volley the ball while standing within the Kitchen, which is the area within 7 feet on both sides of the net. A loss of serve occurs if player volleys while standing in the kitchen and/or their momentum causes them to step into or touch the Kitchen line. If the receiving team does the same as above a point is awarded to the serving team.
11. **Kitchen:** Players cannot enter the Kitchen to hit a volley. They must establish both feet outside the Kitchen before playing a volley and not allow their momentum to carry them into the kitchen after hitting the ball.

12. **Player Positioning:** Players must wait for the ball to cross the net before hitting it. They cannot reach over the net to hit the ball. However, if the ball has bounced on their side, they can follow through over the net.
13. **Line Calls:** Balls that land on any part of the line are considered in. Players are responsible for making calls on their side of the court, and the opponent must accept all calls unless there is a clear error.

Errors/Loss of Serve

14. **Common Errors:** An error or loss of serve is any action that stops play because of a rule violation. Common errors include hitting the ball out of bounds, not clearing the net, stepping into the Kitchen, and volleying the ball, and double hits.

Player Conduct

15. **Sportsmanship:** Players should conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner, respecting opponents, referees, and spectators. Unsportsmanlike conduct can result in penalties or disqualification.

Time-Outs and Breaks

16. **Time-Outs:** Each team is allowed two time-outs per game, each lasting up to one minute. Additional breaks are allowed between games.
17. **Injury Time-Outs:** In case of injury, a player can take an injury time-out for up to 3 minutes. If the player cannot resume play after the time-out, their team forfeits the game.