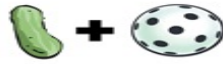


# Pickleball Study Guide



**PICKLEBALL:** A fast paced game involving volleys at the net and ground strokes similar to tennis. Anyone, any age can play and compete well since strategy is key! Be creative--Mix up your shots using overhead smashes, drives, lobs, and drop shots.



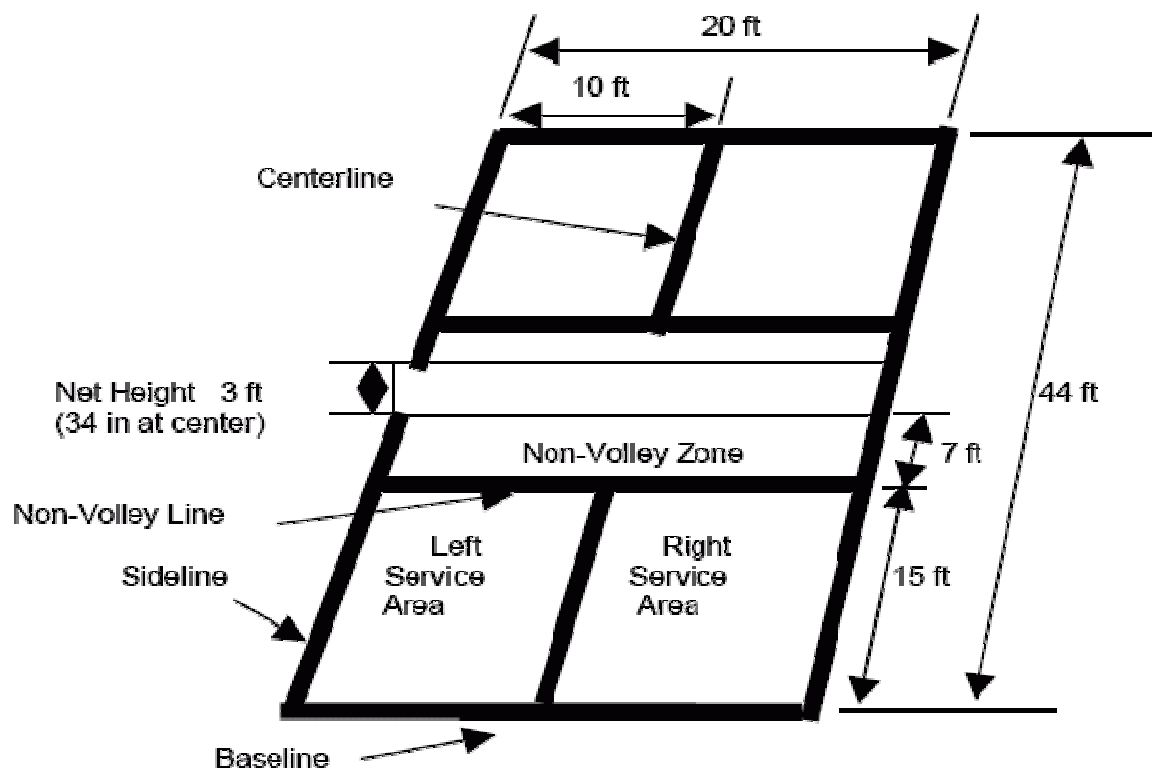
**Paddles:** paddles are made of plywood. The head of the paddle is 8" wide. Most paddles have a short cord attached to the butt of the handle for safety purposes and should be wrapped around your wrist during play. We have plenty without, so please do not remove the cord if you prefer not using it.



## **Balls:**

Seamless, plastic "whiffleball" type. If the ball happens to crack during play, simply bring it over and we'll replace it.

**Courts:** Official court is 20' x 44'. Singles and doubles are played on the same size court. (see diagram). The non-volley zone is 7' officially. You will notice we modified that in class so we could use pre-existing lines on the floor.



**History:** The only sport named for a dog was created by two families from Bainbridge Island, Washington, out of desperation.

One Saturday afternoon in the summer of 1965, when their children were complaining that there was nothing to do, Bill Bell and Congressman Joel Pritchard decided to teach them how to play badminton.

There was an asphalt-surfaced badminton court at Pritchard's home, but it hadn't been used in some time. The men set up the net and dug out some rackets, but they couldn't find a usable shuttlecock, so they decided to use a 3-inch whiffle ball instead.

But the ball proved too big for the rackets. Undaunted, Bell and Pritchard made four paddles of solid wood, which worked pretty well. The next step was allowing players to hit the ball on the bounce instead of having to volley, as required in badminton.

Badminton with a whiffle ball became tennis with a whiffleball the next day, when the net was lowered from 5 feet above the court to about 3 feet, allowing players to hit hard, low drives.

The following weekend, Bell and Pritchard introduced the new game to a friend, Barney McCallum, and the three of them devised the first set of rules. They started with the rules of badminton, incorporating some changes to meet the needs of the sport and the court. Because a player at the net had an immense advantage, they created a non-volley zone in front of the short service line, where volleying was not allowed. They also added a rule that each side had to hit at least one shot after the ball had bounced before any volleying was permitted during a rally. And, because a tree in one corner of the court might obstruct the server's delivery, they adopted a rule that a player could have one foot in front of the baseline when delivering a serve.

All they needed now was a name for their new sport. The Pritchards' cocker spaniel, Pickles, had become an interested spectator who would run off with the ball when it left the court. In his honor, badminton-tennis with a whiffle ball was named pickle-ball.

In 1967, Pritchard built the first "official" pickle-ball court in his backyard and a few other courts were built in and around Seattle over the next several years. Since pickleball could be played on a badminton court with a lower net, some schools and colleges in the area also incorporated the sport into their intramural programs.

Bell, McCallum, and Pritchard in 1972 formed the U. S. Pickle-ball Association (USPA), copyrighted the rules, and registered the name as a trademark. (The hyphen was later dropped.)

#### Vocabulary:

**Ace-** A serve the receiver can not get to and that scores a point for the server.

**Backcourt-** The area around the baseline.

**Crosscourt shot-** Hitting the ball over the net into the diagonal court.

**Doubles-** A game played between two teams of two.

**Down the line-** Ball that travels low over the net and parallel to the sideline.

Drive- A ball hit after the bounce so it will travel to the back of the opponents court.

Drop shot- A ball hit softly so that it just clears the net and lands very close to the net in the non-volley zone.

Error: A point lost because of poor play...your mistake, not your opponent's.

Face- Hitting surface of the paddle.

Foot Fault- When the server fails to keep one foot behind the line.

Forehand- A stroke played on the paddle side of the body.

Game- Completed when one side has won 11 points and is ahead by at least 2 points.

Let- Point that must be replayed.

Let Serve- A serve that hits the top of the net but otherwise is legal. Must be re-served.

Lob- A high arching shot that lands near the opponents' baseline.

Non-volley zone- The area 7' on either side of the net; players may not step into this zone and play the ball until it has bounced; also may not step into on the follow through until the ball is down. This area must also be cleared on the serve for the serve to be legal.

Odd court- The opposite court that you started in.

Smash- A hard, over hand stroke that is hit in a sharp downward angle.

Rally- Continuous play after a serve.

Serve- The underhand stroke use to put the ball in play at the beginning of each point. Must be contacted below the waist with the paddle head down.

Singles- A game played between two players.

"Spin the paddle" done at the beginning of the game to determine who chooses: Serve, receive or side of court. Winner gets choice, non-winner gets remaining choice. We usually play ROCK PAPER SCISSORS in class.

Volley- A ball hit before it bounces.

### **Basic Rules:**

Player must keep one foot behind the backline when serving. The serve must be underhand. The paddle must pass below the waist. The server must hit the ball in the air on the serve—they are not allowed to bounce it then hit it across the net. The serve must be diagonal and must clear the non-volley zone. Only the person in the diagonal court can receive the ball. Servers are only allowed one attempt at serving unless a legal "let" has been called.

**NOTE:** At the start of the game, the first serving team is allowed only one fault before giving up the serve to their opponent. After that, both member of each team will serve until two team faults have been committed before turning the ball over to the opponent.

### **RIGHT SIDE ALWAYS SERVES FIRST!**

DOUBLE BOUNCE RULE: Each team must play their first shot off the bounce. That means the receiving team must let the serve bounce before returning it and the serving team must let the return bounce before hitting it back. After that, all balls can be volleyed or returned off the bounce. (watch out for the non-volley zone!)

**ONLY THE SERVING TEAM CAN SCORE A POINT!** Game is played to 11 points, must win by two. Server and partner switch courts after each point. Do not switch if serving team's play results in a fault. A ball that lands on the line is GOOD.

### **COMMON FAULTS (mistakes):**

- Hitting the ball out of bounds
- Serving to the wrong court
- Hitting ball before it bounces when you are in the non volley zone.
- Not following the "double bounce rule".
- Wrong person returning the serve.
- Serve not clearing the non-volley zone.

If you have the opportunity to play singles, the same rules apply, however, each player serves from the RIGHT when score is EVEN and from the LEFT when score is ODD.

### **COMMON COURTESIES, ETIQUETTE/ SPORTSMANSHIP:**

Part of playing pickleball is showing good sportsmanship. Here are some, but definitely not all, examples of being a good sport.

- Do not distract other players by walking behind their court during play. Wait until play has finished before going to your court.
- Introduce yourself to your opponent if you don't know them.
- Make sure your opponent is ready before serving.
- Do not return a ball that is obviously out.
- Make calls fairly—GIVE YOUR OPPONENT THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT on close calls.
- Retrieve balls from other courts AFTER their rally is complete.
- Return balls to other courts by tossing them or tapping them lightly to the nearest player.
- If unsure of a call, replay it without arguing.
- Recognize good play of your opponent. Also, Say "ball please" or "thank you".
- Control your emotions on the court. Trash talk is unacceptable. So are temper tantrums.
- Replace all cracked pickleballs as soon as possible.

