



Table Tennis Rules

General Rules Adapted for Intramural Play.

1. **Choice of end or service:** The choice of end and the right to serve or receive is decided by tossing a coin (or some other random method). If the winner of the toss decides to serve or receive first, the loser has the choice of end or vice versa. The winner of the toss may require the loser to choose first.
2. **Change of ends:** Players change ends after each game until the end of the match. They also change ends in the third game when a player scores 6 points. If the players are playing from the wrong ends, they must change ends as soon as the error is discovered, but all points scored since the errors are counted.
3. **Serving:** The ball is placed on the palm of the free hand, which must be stationary, open, and flat, with the fingers together and thumb free. Keeping the free hand above the level of the playing surface, the ball is then thrown, without imparting spin, so that it rises within 45 degrees of the vertical. The ball is considered in play when it ceases to be stationary on the palm of the hand. On descent, the ball is struck to touch the server's court first and then, passing directly over or around the net, to touch the receiver's court. At the moment of striking, the paddle must be behind the end of the table or imaginary continuation of it. If, in attempting to serve, a player fails to strike the ball while it is in play, his/her opponent will receive one point.
4. **Returning a service:**

A return is considered good if:

 - 1.) The ball is struck so that it passes directly over or around the net and touches the opponent's court.
 - 2.) The ball, in passing over or around the net, touches the net or its supports.
 - 3.) The ball bounces in such a way as to return to the side of the net where it was last hit and is then hit directly to touch the opponent's court.

A return is not considered good if:

 - 1.) The ball is allowed to bounce twice before the return is made.
 - 2.) The ball is volleyed, struck before it touches the playing surface of that player's court and is still in play.
 - 3.) The ball is struck so it touches the striker's court before passing over or around the net.
 - 4.) The ball passes over or around the net but fails to touch the opponent's court.
 - 5.) The ball becomes out of play once it has touched any object other than the net, net supports, playing surface, paddle, or when the rally is otherwise ended. A stroke made with the hand alone, the paddle having been dropped, also puts the ball out of play, as does striking the ball with the paddle blade surface that does not comply with covered regulations.
5. **Change of Service:** With certain exceptions, the service passes from one player to another every odd serve. From the score of 10 all, the order of serving and receiving is unchanged, but each player serves for only 1 point in succession until the game ends. The player who served first in one game receives first in the next game. Any error in serving or receiving



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order must be corrected as soon as it is noticed; all points scored since the errors are counted.

6. **Scoring:** A “Competitive” level match consists of the best of 5 games, and a “Recreational” level match consists of the best of 3 games. Play must be continuous throughout a game, although a player may claim a one-minute rest between successive games in a match. A game is won by the first player scoring 11 points, unless both score 10 points; then the winner is the first to score two points more than the opposition. Points are scored by a player when his/her opponent:
 - 1.) Fails to make a good service/return.
 - 2.) Touches the playing surface with his/her hand when the ball is in play.
 - 3.) Anything his/her opponent wears or carries comes in contact with the ball in play before it has passed over the opponent’s end line or side lines while not having touched the playing surface on that side.
 - 4.) His/her opponent touches the net or its support or moves the playing surface while the ball is in play.

7. **Let:** A let is a rally from which no point is scored. It occurs when:
 - 1.) The ball touches the net or its supports in service, provided the service is otherwise good or has been volleyed by the receiver.
 - 2.) A service is delivered when the receiver is not ready to play.
 - 3.) A rally is interrupted to correct a mistake in playing order or ends.
 - 4.) A disturbance in conditions of play is likely to affect the outcome of a rally.

DOUBLES PLAY

1. **The Serve:** In each game of a doubles match, the pair having the right to serve first shall choose which of them will do so and in the first game of a match the receiving pair shall decide which one of them will receive first; in subsequent games of the match, the first server having been chosen, the first receiver shall be the player who served to him in the preceding game. In doubles play, the service shall touch successively the right half court of the server’s and the right half court of the receiver’s. At each change of service the previous receiver shall become the server and the partner of the previous server shall become the receiver.

Example of serving order: A-1 serves to B-1, B-1 serves to A-2, A-2 serves to B-2, B-2 serves to A-1.

2. **Hitting Order:** After the server makes a good serve and the receiver makes a good return, the partner of the server must make the next good return, and the partner of the receiver must make the next good return. The returns must be over the net but may be placed anywhere on the opponents’ court. This sequence of hitting continues in the same manner until one player fails to make a good return.