

## Pickleball On-Court Safety and Etiquette

### On-Court Safety:

1. Number One Rule: Don't backpedal or run backwards.
2. Good footwork
  - a. Move to the ball before hitting
  - b. Don't try for a ball that is too far away to reach while maintaining safe balance; move the feet so the head and torso are always centered
  - c. Try to hit the ball within your "comfort zone", which is about one foot in front of your body and one foot on either side
  - d. Leaning forward stresses the back and can cause strains. Stretching sideways stresses the upper leg muscles, hips and knees, planting the heels stresses the feet and ankle tendons. Shoulder pulls are common injuries also caused by reaching and twisting instead of moving to the ball. Avoid overreaching in any direction.
3. If you can't avoid falling, attempt to tuck and roll rather than extending the hands to break the fall.
4. Wear proper court shoes to prevent ankle/knee injury.
5. Protective eyewear is recommended for both indoor and outdoor play. A strike in the eye by a ball can cause serious injury and potentially loss of eyesight.
6. Individuals should choose a paddle that is right for them and has an appropriate grip size (i.e. one finger width between palm and fingers).
7. **Ball on Court:** Stop play immediately if a ball from another court enters your playing surface. Point is replayed following this "hinder" call. Likewise, if a ball is hit into another court, players should immediately yell "BALL!" to warn those players. Do not follow a ball onto another court to return it or retrieve it until the play on that court has ceased.
8. In double, partners need to communicate, especially when there is a question about who should hit the ball. Call "Yours" or "Mine" to avoid collisions or getting hit by the partner's paddle.
9. Walking behind the court while a ball is in play is dangerous and distracting. Wait for the play to stop and then ask permission to cross.
10. Warm up muscles before play and stretch before and after play to avoid injury.
11. Stay hydrated: Drink water before feeling thirsty; preserve electrolytes through eating proper snacks an/or drinks before and after play.

## Pickleball On-Court Safety and Etiquette

### Pickleball Etiquette:

1. Players should introduce themselves before beginning a game or greet those they already know.
2. After rally, the player closest to the ball should retrieve it and gently return it to the proper server, preferably by tossing by hand or hitting with a paddle in a controlled manner, rather than kicking it under the net. The server should raise his/her hand while moving to the serving position to indicate to whom the ball should be directed.
3. In a game with no referee, if partners disagree on whether the ball is “in” or “out”, the proper call is “in”. This is not only a rule but good sportsmanship.
4. If a ball is so close to call, the benefit of the doubt goes to the opponent.
5. Avoid questioning an opponent’s line call. In most cases the opponents are closer and have a better angle to see where the ball hits the surface. If you are not sure of the call on your side of the net to may ask the other team, but in that case their call should be accepted.
6. In a game without referees, players should call foot faults on themselves. While it is within the rules to call foot faults on your opponents, and hopefully this would be received as helping to improve their game, be sensitive to the particular situation before choosing to exercise this prerogative.
7. In open recreational play, when the players on the opposing team are unequal in skill, avoid always playing the weaker player just to score points. Also, play the stronger player equally or he/she may get bored and not want to play with your team in the future. In addition, your game will improve by playing the better player.
8. In open recreational play, individuals are often of diverse skill levels. Exhibit patience and tolerance. As a stronger player, practice your shot accuracy: as a weaker player, use the opportunity to improve your game.
9. After the game, come to the net and touch paddles, bump fists, whatever is the local custom. Say something positive to acknowledge opponents and partner. If it was a particular bad game and “good game” seems hollow, at least say, “Thanks for playing”.
10. When others are waiting, relinquish the court or offer to rotate (e.g. two-out, two-in; four-off, four-on) when no local rules cover the court usage.
11. As frustrating as play can be, never use foul language or denigrate another player; apologize immediately if something inappropriate slips out.
12. Avoid anger and/or confrontation; it is ***only*** a game.