

# Cambridge Area Pickleball Association

## Pickleball Rules and Game Handout

### 1. Basic Rules

- 1.1 Line Calling All lines are good, except the NVZ line on the serve
- 1.2 Each team is responsible for calling the lines on their side of the court, they can not call the lines on the opponent's side of the court
- 1.3 Line calling is based on the honor system and good sportsmanship. Be a model player
- 1.4 Do not question another player's call unless asked; when an opponent's opinion is requested, that opinion must be accepted
- 1.5 All questionable call (line calls and other fault calls) are made in favor of your opponents
- 1.6 If you and your partner cannot agree on if the ball was in or out the call is always "in" because that is resolving the line call in favor of your opponents
- 1.7 Make sure the call is made immediately if the call is out
- 1.8 The ball is not out until it bounces on the court. Never let the ball hit you or catch it in the air
- 1.9 Players should help each other to make the lines calls by turning their heads to watch the ball including on the serve to see if it lands in or out
- 1.10 A player can call a ball "out" as their partner is hitting the ball as long as the call is made immediately. If you want to tell your partner not to hit the ball, yell "bounce it", "let it go", or "no". Yelling out could be confusing to your opponents.

### 2. Faults

- 2.1 Each team is responsible for calling faults on themselves; faults can not be called by the opponents
- 2.2 It is a player's responsibility to watch their partner during the serve and the volleys at the non volley zone and call faults on their partner when the occur

- 2.3 If the ball hits you or a partner on the serve prior to bouncing on the court it is a fault on the person hit by the ball
- 2.4 If a ball touches you prior to bouncing, even though you are out of bounds, it is a fault
- 2.5 If your serve hits either of the opponents, it is a point for your term
- 2.6 If a let serve hits the partner of the person receiving the serve it is a let serve and the server gets to replay the serve
- 2.7 Serve reminders; Feet must be inside the imaginary sideline extension, behind the baseline with one foot on the ground at impact Paddle head below the wrist, below the waist swinging with an upward motion

### **3. NonVolley Zone [NVZ]**

- 3.1 Can not volley the ball when standing in the NVZ
- 3.2 Momentum can not carry you into the NVZ after a volley. You can reach over the NVZ lines and hit a volley as long as neither you nor anything you are wearing or carrying touches the line or falls into the NVZ
- 3.3 There is no rule against standing in the NVZ but since you can not volley the ball while in the NVZ it is best to stand outside the NVZ.
- 3.4 You can go into the NVZ to hit a ball that bounces in the NVZ. If you see that a ball is going to land in the NVZ you can go into the NVZ and wait for it to bounce and then hit it
- 3.5 It is not a fault if any ball has bounced elsewhere on the court and your momentum causes you to enter the NVZ
- 3.6 The NVZ does not extend outside the sidelines of the court. Lines are part of the NVZ

### **4 Scorekeeping**

- 4.1 Games are normally played to 11
- 4.2 Must win by two points
- 4.3 Only the serving team can score points

- 4.4 You must always call the score before serving for two reasons: First, you are letting the other team know you are ready to serve and they need to be ready; Second, it helps everyone remember the score thereby avoiding arguments
- 4.5 If the server fails to call the score before serving, the receiver of the serve has three options:  
  
They can let the serve go past without playing the ball; They can catch the ball and return it to the server; or They can play the ball as if the score had been called. In the first two examples there is no fault and the serve is considered a let serve and the server gets to serve again after properly calling the score
- 4.6 For the team that starts the game only one person serves and that team only gets one fault. The person who starts serving serves until their team fails to score a point. Then the other team serves. Thereafter each team gets two faults. That is each teammate serves until they fault (fail to score a point)
- 4.7 To help in keeping track of the score, think of each time you get the ball to serve as a sequence
- 4.8 Calling the score consists of three numbers: The first number is the score of your team; The second number is the score of your opponents; The third number is which server you are during that sequence (either server one or server two)

## 5. Serving Sequence

- 5.1 The first person to serve is always the person standing on the right hand side of the court
- 5.2 After scoring a point the server always repositions to serve to the other court (changes places with partner) for the next serve. You never serve to the same person or serving box twice in a row.
- 5.3 The person to start the game calls the score as “zero, zero, two” or “zero, zero, Start”. This means their team has no points, the opponents have no points, and they are the only server for this first sequence
- 5.4 After losing the “Start” serve the serve transfers to the other team [Side Out] to begin their service sequence. The person standing on the right side of the court is designated as the first server and calls the score. Example “zero, zero, one”. Remember that the partner of the server is responsible for calling any foot or serving faults on the server.

5.5 The Two Bounce Rule: The serve and the service return must be allowed to bounce before striking the ball. That is each side must play a groundstroke on their first shot following the serve. After the initial ground strokes have been played, play may include volleys.

## 6 Basic Player/Court Positioning

- 6.1 Because of the “Two Bounce” rule both serving partners are positioned near the baseline. Remember that both the serve and the return of serve have to bounce before the ball can be volleyed.
- 6.2 The person receiving the serve should be positioned deep in the service area because the serve must bounce before it is returned. The receiver’s partner should be positioned near NVZ line. Reminder: The receiver’s partner, who is forward at the NVZ line, should assist the team by turning to watch if the serve is outside the service area.
- 6.3 After returning the serve Receiver should move forward to the NVZ line
- 6.4 The serving team members, once the second bounce and the return shot has occurred, should also both move right up to the NVZ line. Reminder: Avoid staying in the mid-court area [“no man’s land”] this is where the ball usually is hit at your feet and is extremely difficult to return