



# LEAGUE REGULATIONS

*Updated March 1, 2026*

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## LEAGUE SUMMARY

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### What is Play TEAM Pickleball?

A fun way to experience pickleball competition with your friends! Represent your club or join a public team to get weekly, skill-based competition.

Matches will be held at local facilities & clubs who have agreed to host PlayTeamPickleball matches. A season-long team championship will be held in each division in addition to postseason play for local championship winners.

### League Format

- Each local league will consist of multiple divisions of organized pickleball play.
- All play will adhere to the Official Rulebook for USA Pickleball & International Federation of Pickleball where not modified in the attached league regulations.
- A team registration deadline and player registration deadline will be provided for each local league.
- Each season will consist of at least 6 to 7 team matches. Most divisions will feature a Championship match.
- A final regular season match day will be set by league coordinator and all matches, including make-up matches and games, must be made up by this date. Unresolved matches will result in default or double-default.

### Regular Season League Championship Determination

- If a round-robin Championship format is not utilized, two or four teams are identified for the Championship match(es) based on league size. This is announced with the official schedule prior to the start of the league.
- Tie-breaker: The top teams will be determined by the number of team matches won. If team matches total is tied, the head-to-head winner (Team Match Record first, then number of courts won in head-to-head matchups 2<sup>nd</sup>) of these two teams will determine the advancing team. If still tied, the team with the highest percentage of games won during the season will advance. If still tied, a coin flip will occur to determine the advancing team.
- A player must play at least 3 games (each team match features 3 games) to be eligible to participate in the Championship Match or postseason play.

### Team Format

- Each team consists of a minimum of 6 and a maximum number of players set by each local league, typically 14.
- Each team match consists of 3 doubles pairs.
- Players must be registered on [playteampickleball.com](http://playteampickleball.com) prior to the start of a league match to participate. Any player whose registration is not timestamped prior to the scheduled match time will be defaulted for all games this player participated in.

### Fees, Refunds & Player Removals

- A league fee will be set to participate, including a \$3 non-refundable processing fee for all registrations.
- Additional fees for court access or guest fees may be charged by the host facilities for each match based on specific local league guidelines.

- Refund requests, by the player only, are only accepted **prior** to their team’s first scheduled team match. Once a team has played a match, all players are ineligible for a refund. This includes disqualified players. A player may be removed from a roster after the first match only if they have not participated in a league match for that team but forfeit their league entry fee. The entry fee is not transferable to another player.
- Once the official league or championship schedule is released, no refunds will be provided for teams wishing to cancel their participation.

## DIVISIONS OF PLAY

The divisions of play are selected by the local coordinator and based on self-rated players competing in different skill categories. As the league continues to grow and more facility access becomes available, new divisions or sub-divisions will be developed to ensure fun, fair, and competitive league play.

- Championship Divisions for a league typically consist of the following:

DIVISIONS *	ESTIMATED SKILL LEVEL	AGE DIVISIONS	DIVISION OPTIONS
Advanced	4.0+	18+ & 50+	Open, Women, Men, Mixed
High Intermediate	3.6 – 3.9	18+ & 50+	Open, Women, Men, Mixed
Low Intermediate	3.1 – 3.5	18+ & 50+	Open, Women, Men, Mixed
Novice	3.0 & Under	18+ & 50+	Open, Mixed

- Players may play in multiple age or gender divisions in the same season. A player’s self-rating must conform to the skill level minimum and maximum for the division.
- A player must be 18 years of age at the time of registration to register. For the 50+ league, age eligibility is based on the players age as of December 31st of the competition year.
- Open divisions may be comprised of any combination of men and women for team make-up and match lineup.
- Mixed divisions require that each individual game played feature one man and one woman pair.

*\* Local league divisions may be combined or altered at the discretion of the league coordinators with the approval of PlayTeamPickleball. Any teams advancing from modified divisions must compete at the highest division applicable based on the maximum rating set for the modified division.*

## RATINGS

In the absence of a comprehensive, unified pickleball rating system for players, the following guidelines will be used to assign and evaluate player ratings for official PlayTeamPickleball leagues. PlayTeamPickleball will evaluate player performance at the end of each calendar year to promote fun, fair, and competitive pickleball league play. A further explanation is available on the [PlayTeamPickleball website here](#).

- A players initial self-rating is based off the official “[Definitions of Player Skill Ratings](#)” as set forth by USA Pickleball.
- Players who have a playing history with PlayTeamPickleball will be assigned a “Minimum Player Rating” at the end of each calendar year which represents the lowest self-rating they may assign themselves for league play in the next year.
- A PlayTeamPickleball “Minimum Player Rating” is not an official rating, only a floor by which you can judge your skillset to be below when self-rating for future seasons.
- Any player, including with a PlayTeamPickleball “Minimum Player Rating” who under self-rate and outperform their level may be disqualified and moved to the next level within the season (See Disqualification Section).

- For new players, a rating with DUPR or UTR-P can be used to **assist** in self-rating for PlayTeamPickleball. Due to the instability and differing data used to calculate ratings, a DUPR rating will be considered as a supplemental metric during this process. PlayTeamPickleball does not report or work directly with DUPR or UTR-P currently and no PlayTeamPickleball match data is reflected in their rankings making direct equivalence between their rankings and the PlayTeamPickleball minimum rating unreliable at this point.
- A player or competitor may appeal or file a grievance on a player's self-rating by using the [PlayTeamPickleball Appeal Form](#) found on the league website.
- Grievances for new players' self-rating must be received in the first two weeks of the competition season (or within two weeks of the players' registration for the league).

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## MATCH FORMAT

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### Match Games & Round Structure

- Each team match consists of 9 individual un-ranked doubles games, with each round being a game of doubles with rotating opponents.
- Players play with the same partner for each round during a team match.
- Matches may be played on 2 or 3 courts.
- For matches played on 3 courts ([View Sample Scoresheet](#)), the home team will remain on the same court for each round. The rotation is as follows:
  - Round 1 – Game #1 is Home 1 vs Visiting 1, Game #2 is Home 2 vs Visiting 2, Game #3 is Home 3 vs Visiting 3
  - Round 2 – Game #1 is Home 1 vs Visiting 2, Game #2 is Home 2 vs Visiting 3, Game #3 is Home 3 vs Visiting 1
  - Round 3 – Game #1 is Home 1 vs Visiting 3, Game #2 is Home 2 vs Visiting 1, Game #3 is Home 3 vs Visiting 2
- For matches played on 2 courts ([View Sample Scoresheet](#)), the 5 round rotation is as follows (a match from the next round should start immediately as a court opens. Both matches from the previous round DO NOT have to be finished to start the next round. Either match in a round can be the first to go on.):
  - Round 1 – Home 1 vs Visiting 1 (Game #1), Home 2 vs Visiting 2 (Game #2)
  - Round 2 – Home 3 vs Visiting 3 (Game #3), Home 1 vs Visiting 2 (Game #4)
  - Round 3 – Home 2 vs Visiting 3 (Game #5), Home 3 vs Visiting 1 (Game #6)
  - Round 4 – Home 1 vs Visiting 3 (Game #7), Home 2 vs Visiting 1 (Game #8)
  - Round 5 – Home 3 vs Visiting 2 (Game #9)
- Each game is played to a set number set by the league coordinator, typically 15, win by 2, side-out scoring. Game length may be modified by league coordinator with approval.
- The team that wins the most games is the winner of the team match

### Match Play Rules

- All play will adhere to the [Official Rulebook for USA Pickleball & International Federation of Pickleball](#) unless modified in this document.
- Home Team **serves first** in each game
- Serve must meet 2023 USAPA/IFP rules including: 1. Service lets are played provided the ball clears the no-volley zone; 2. Drop serve is a legal service option; 3. Applying spin or manipulation of the ball with your hand is illegal.
- Visiting team will have a **choice** of side to start the match.
- Teams switch sides when the first team reaches 8 points for a 15-point game or 6 points for an 11-point game.
- Each team will get up to a 5-minute warm-up at the start of the match & a 3-minute break between each round.
- No warm-up between rounds is allowed on the competition courts **that delays** the start of play.

## Balls

- Home Team provides balls for the match. The same type of ball should be used during each game and match when available. If a ball breaks, it is to be replaced by the same type of ball, if available. Any change in ball must be approved by both teams in the game.
- The Selkirk Pro S1 ball is the official ball of Championship play & the preferred ball for league play. The DuraFast 40, Lifetime Pro 48 and Franklin X-40 are also options. If an alternate ball is used, it must be approved by the opposing captain.

## Coaching & Rules Disputes

- Coaching is not allowed. Spectators or other team members may not assist in line calls or on-court disputes.
- Team captains may be consulted for rules questions. If a captain is summoned to a court, a member of each team must be present to discuss the issue for resolution per [USAPA/IFP rules](#). If a resolution cannot be reached, the point should be replayed.

## Time-Outs / Leaving the Court

- Each team may take **1** time-out per game.
- Players should not leave the court unless to use the restroom or a medical timeout
- Players are allowed 5 minutes for a medical timeout and must return to play. If the player is unable to return to play at that time, the game is considered a default. The player is eligible to return for the next round.

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# SCORECARD & DEFAULTS

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## Scorecard Exchange

- Each captain (or acting captain) will print out the [official league scorecard](#) prior to the match
- The captain will list the three teams playing by game and submit them to the opposing captain when all players are present and ready to play, no later than the scheduled match start time.

## Results Submission

- The HOME team's captain will be responsible for submitting the match results via the PlayTeamPickleball website. All captains will be provided with a login to enter results. If a captain has issues with the web portal, they should submit a photocopy of the match scorecard to the league coordinator.
- Scores must be posted within 48 hours of a match, or the league coordinator has the right to default both teams.
- The VISITING team captain can enter the score and may also dispute the match results entered to the league coordinator through the PlayTeamPickleball website.

## Court Defaults

- If a team does not have six rostered players available for a match, they will "default" all games that the 3<sup>rd</sup> doubles team were scheduled for and begin the match down 0-3. Being a round robin format, all 6 players from the opposing team must come to the match to play. Each of the two remaining teams will play each of the 3 opponent teams to determine the winner of the 6 games and the team match.
- If both teams only have 4 players available for a match, each team will default game 3, 5, 6, 7 & 9. Games 1, 2, 4 and 8 will be contested to determine the match winner. If the game score is 2-2 after playing these four games, the match will be decided by the team with the most points won in the four games. If the total points won is tied, each team will select 2 of the 4 players at the match to play a best of 7, win by 2, game to determine the match winner. The winning team will list a game win of 1-0 in the Game 9 score line to denote the match win.

## **Injuries, Substitutions & Lateness**

- If a player is injured prior to the start of the team match, the team may substitute a new player who is immediately ready to play and not listed on the scorecard and may adjust their lineup at the affected position only. The substituted player is entitled to a 5-minute warm up. If no substitution is made within the 15-minute default period, the default will be awarded for these games.
- A player who is injured once the match has started is not eligible to be replaced and all games left to play by this player will be listed as defaulted if they cannot continue.
- A player who is late may participate in the first game if they arrive prior to the default interval listed below or prior to the first court in the match being assigned to a court to start the match.

## **Match Default**

- A team must be able to field a team of 4 players to contest a match. If a team fails to do so, the entire team match and nine games are defaulted.
- Any team defaulting 2 full team matches are subject to removal from the league and all matches past and present may be removed from the league record by the league coordinator.

## **Default Interval**

- Players have a 15-minute grace period after the scheduled start of the team match.
- The start time of the match is defined by the scheduled start of the match provided that a court is available for game 1 of that match. The 15-minute default interval begins when the first game is called to their court.
- If a match has not been called to the court by 15 minutes past the scheduled start time and a player arrives, they are permitted to play in that round.
- Should a player miss the default interval, their initial game is defaulted (Game 1, 2 or 3). The late player may still participate in subsequent games (Game 4 – 9) if they arrive prior to the start of each round. No additional default interval will be provided for rounds 2 or 3 in the team match.

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## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

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### **Weather In Question Prior To Match**

- If it is raining or the weather is questionable, do not assume the match is cancelled. Your team must show up ready to play unless play has been cancelled in advance by the facility. It is the captain's responsibility to check with facility and the other captain to determine court conditions.
- When teams have assembled to play, and weather and/or courts are questionable, or the match is interrupted by inclement weather, teams are required to wait 30 minutes past the originally scheduled match time, unless both teams agree to wait longer, or the site staff declares the courts unplayable. Do not assume the match is cancelled.

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## MATCH SUSPENSIONS

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### Match Suspended by Weather Prior or During First Round

- If inclement weather forces a match to be suspended prior to the completion of games 1, 2 and 3, the match is nullified. Captains should proceed under the “Rescheduling” guidance.

### Match Suspended by Weather During Second Round

- If inclement weather forces a match to be suspended prior to the completion of games 4, 5 & 6, then:
  - If the match result is determined (a team has reached 5 court wins) through completed matches, including any defaulted games (including those in Round 3), then the match is to be suspended. Teams should complete all remaining games from Round 2. All Round 3 matches are cancelled.
  - If the match result is not determined, the entire match is nullified. Captains should proceed under the “Rescheduling” guidance.

### Match Suspended by Weather in 3<sup>rd</sup> Round (Games 1 thru 6 are completed)

- If inclement weather forces a match to be suspended following the completion of Round 2, the match is considered suspended.
- Incomplete games that were in progress (first point played and beyond) must be resumed by the same players in the same positions, same side of net, same set, game score, and at the same site, (unless players have mutually agreed to play elsewhere).

\*\* If one pair does not want to make up the suspended game, they may retire from the game and the other pair is declared the winner of that game. On the scorecard, the score as of that moment should be noted with the match status listed as “Retired”. A team with lesser points won could win a game by retirement.

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## RESCHEDULING

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### Match Rescheduling

- The only matches that may be rescheduled **after** the scheduled date are those cancelled or suspended due to inclement weather.
- If both captains agree **in advance** to reschedule a match they may do so if and only if the match is completed and results submitted **prior to the originally scheduled match date**. Captains are responsible for cancelling scheduled courts and are responsible for any requisite fees if they fail to cancel properly.
- Players must contact each other to schedule their individual games and confirm make-up match date, time and location when courts are being scheduled individually.
- If a date, time, and location have been determined for a team match (or individual game), any team that cannot make the agreed rescheduled match time will default any affected games.
- Captains may change the participating players and doubles pairs for any rescheduled team match (this does not apply to resumption of suspended matches). Captains should submit a new scorecard at the start of the match.
- If captains cannot agree on a make-up day, the 14th day will be the default mandatory match date. If there is inclement weather on the 14th day, the match will be played on the 15th day or the next subsequent day as weather and court conditions permit. No matches may be played after the final league match day as set forth by the local league coordinator.

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## PLAYER DISQUALIFICATION

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### In-Season Player Disqualification Due to Illegal Self-Rating

- Any player may be disqualified from the level of play selected at registration if the player outperforms the league standard performance quotient by an established margin. **It is the player's responsibility to accurately self-rate each year** for the league upon registration, even if the minimum self-rating provided by PlayTeamPickleball is lower than that which the player knows to reflect their current level more accurately.
- Periodically throughout the season, the PTPB algorithm will evaluate all players within the league to look for players whose dynamic rating exceeds the acceptable standard for that division. Any player who exceeds the acceptable standard multiple times will be deemed to be out of level and will be disqualified. All games involving this player will be disqualified, with the result being changed to a default.
- A disqualified player can move up to a higher division to participate within the season.
- There are no disqualifications at the Advanced Level.
- A disqualified player forfeits their entry fee for the season in which the disqualification occurs.

### Disqualification Due to Breach of the Code of Conduct

- At the discretion of the league, any player who violates the Play Team Pickleball Code of Conduct may be disqualified from the league. The player forfeits their entry fee and will not be allowed to continue play in the league for the term determined by the league coordinator.

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## WAIVER OF CLAIMS

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Players participating in the Play TEAM Pickleball leagues acknowledge the risks associated with playing competitive Pickleball, accept those risks voluntarily, and in consideration of their acceptance in the Program, assume all risk for bodily injury and illness, waive all claims for illness, injury and property damage, and release and hold harmless the Play Team Pickleball organization, Local League Coordinators and the host facility, their officials, employees, and agents with respect to any injury, illness or loss caused by negligence or otherwise to the fullest extent permitted by law.

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## REGISTRATION

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### Player Registration

- Sign-up at <https://www.playteampickleball.com>
- Players may sign up for an already created team or request to be placed on a team
- Captains will register their team online to get a unique team number for team members to register. It is the captain's responsibility to have a home court to host their teams' matches. PlayTeamPickleball will coordinate with the host professional/coordinator of the facility to schedule the team's home matches.
- Players must self-rate and adhere to the regulations presented in the "Divisions & Ratings" section above.

Questions? Contact [service@playteampickleball.com](mailto:service@playteampickleball.com)

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## POSTSEASON CHAMPIONSHIP & ADVANCEMENT REGULATIONS

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All regulations listed in the official league regulations will apply to the East Coast Championship and any additional postseason Championship or Invitational except for the following adjustments:

### Player & Team Eligibility

- **Team Construction:** Teams may only compete with players who played on their qualifying team roster only. Each player must have played in 3 games in the local league season to be eligible. A player may not play on two teams within the same division at the Championship level.
- **Player/Team Eligibility:** Any end of season championship tournament eligibility **for all divisions** will be determined by your PlayTeamPickleball Minimum Player Rating **at the time** of the championship event.

### Match Format

- **Check-In for Each Match:** Once all 6 players are ready to play and prior to the start time of your match, an official line-up card (provided at check-in) must be turned into the tournament desk. This must be done **at least 20 minutes prior** to the scheduled start of the match. At the time both teams' line-ups have been submitted, the match may be called and assigned to open courts for the match to begin.
- **Tiebreaker (\*\*Different for ECC):** After round robin play, the top teams will be determined by the number of team matches won. If the total matches won are the same for two teams, the team with the highest percentage of games won will advance. If still tied, the head-to-head winner of these two teams will determine the advancing team. If still tied, the team with the highest percentage of points won will advance. If still tied, a coin flip will occur to determine the advancing team.
- **No Practice on Tournament Courts:** Tournament courts are for match play only and no practice is allowed. A 7-minute warm-up will be provided prior to the start of each team match. Players caught on match courts, without permission from the court monitor for that pod, prior to warm-up are subject to a 2-point penalty on their first game of the next match. Additional practice courts may be available but are not guaranteed.

### Schedule Construction

- **Round Robin Format:** The primary format for each division will consist of a round robin preliminary round followed by a Championship match(es) when applicable. Each team is guaranteed 3 team matches during the competition. Many divisions will use the 11-point format for Round Robin matches before changing to the 15-point format for the Championship match(es). Exact format will be provided prior to the start of play.
- **Back-to-Back Match Mandatory Rest:** Teams playing back-to-back matches will be guaranteed a rest period between team matches. If the first match's games were played to 11, the mandatory rest period is **15 minutes**. If the first match's games were played to 15, the mandatory rest period is **30 minutes**. For example, if an 8:30 AM match ends at 9:20 AM and a team is scheduled to play again at 9:30 AM, the next match would start at 9:35 AM due to the mandatory rest period. The team playing back-to-back may elect to start the match early if they choose. The new team playing at 9:30 AM must have their warm-up completed by the new match time 9:35 AM. The court monitor will inform both captains of the official match time when the match is called.