

New Mexico Senior Olympics

Pickleball Rules

Revised 2-2022

Playing Format

1. Pickleball will be conducted in accordance with the USA Pickleball Association rules except as noted below. For a copy of these rules, please write to:

USA Pickleball Association	National Senior Games Association
P.O. Box 7354	P. O. Box 5630
Surprise AZ 85374	Clearwater, FL 33758
Web site: www.usapa.org	(727) 475-1187
info@usapickleball.org	www.nsga.com
2. Events will be singles, doubles and mixed doubles. Doubles must be two individuals of the same gender. Mixed Doubles must be two individuals of the opposite gender. All doubles and mixed doubles athletes must register individually and list the name of the athlete who will be their partner on the registration form. Athletes may compete with only one partner per event.
3. In case a partner becomes ill after registration, with a documented medical reason, a substitute may be made. See Partner/Team/Groups in Item H in General Rules.
4. **Equipment:** Paddles must be listed as approved paddles for USAPA tournaments. Players may provide own paddles. NMSO will provide a limited number of paddles. NMSO will provide balls.
5. Net will be 22 feet long.
6. Court size will be 20 feet wide by 44 feet long. Service courts will 10 feet wide by 15 feet long.
7. Athletes are required to check in 30 minutes prior to scheduled times.
8. Playing format will be either double elimination or round robin elimination tournaments based on the numbers of registered entrants. (Single elimination tournament will only be considered with the approval of the NMSO office.) Tournament format will be the responsibility of New Mexico Senior Olympics and established prior to Senior Olympics Summer Game competition.
9. Any game missed/forfeited during bracket play will be considered a loss.

Playing Rules

1. Listed below are Basic Playing Rules. See USAPA for complete rules.
2. Determining serving team – The ref writes down a one or a two. If the winner of the guess chooses to serve or receive first, the loser picks the starting side. If the winner chooses starting side, the loser chooses to serve or receive. The winner can defer first choice to opponent(s).
3. All serves will be underhand, without bouncing the ball off the court, and the ball is served diagonally to opponent's service zone and must clear the non-volley zone. At the beginning of the serve, both feet must be behind the baseline. At the time the ball is struck, at least one foot must be on the playing surface or ground behind the baseline and the server's feet may not touch the playing surface in an area outside the confines of the serving area.
4. The Drop Serve will be allowed. Servers must release the ball from one of the server's hands or dropped off the server's paddle face from any natural (unaided) height and hit the ball after the ball bounces. There is no restriction how many times the ball can bounce nor where the ball can bounce on the playing surface. The server's release of the ball must be visible to the referee and the receiver. In matches without a referee, the server's release of the ball must be visible to the receiver. A replay shall be called before the return of serve if the release of the ball is not visible. The rules for feet placement still apply. The ball shall not be propelled (thrown) downward or tossed or hit upward with the paddle. If the drop serve is used, the ball may be struck with either a forehand or backhand motion without any other restriction i.e., the location restrictions of the ball and paddle.

Pickleball Rules (cont.)

5. Points are scored by the serving side only and occur when the opponent faults (fails to return the ball, hits ball out of bounds, etc.)
6. Fault
 - a) Hitting the ball out of bounds
 - b) Not clearing the net
 - c) Stepping into the non-volley zone and volleying the ball
 - d) Volleying the ball before it has bounced once on each side of the net as outlined in Rule 5
7. Following serve, each side must make at least one ground stroke, prior to volleying ball (hitting it before it has bounced).
8. Scoring - A team shall score a point only when serving. A player who is serving shall continue to do so until a fault is made by his team.
8. The first side scoring eleven (11) points and leading by at least a two (2) point margin wins. For example: If both sides are tied at ten (10) points, then play continues until one side wins by two points.
9. Matches may be best two out of three games in the winners' bracket of double elimination. In the consolation bracket they are one game to 15, win by 2. Round robins have varying formats depending on the number of teams.
- 10. Non-Volley Zone:** This is a zone 7 feet long—from net back to service area. A player cannot volley while standing in this zone. To *volley a ball* means to hit it in the air without first letting it bounce.
11. Doubles Play-
 - a) Player in Right Hand court serves diagonally across court to receiver in opposite Right Hand court. The ball must clear the non-volley zone and land in the Right Hand serving court. The receiver must let the ball bounce before returning the serve. Serving team must also let the return bounce before playing it. After the two bounces have occurred, the ball may then be either volleyed or played off the bounce until a fault is made.
 - b) If the fault is made by the receiving team, a point is scored by the serving team. When the serving team wins a point, its players will switch courts and the same player will continue to serve.
 - c) During the start of the match when the serving team makes its first fault, they will stay in the same courts and turn the ball over to the other team to serve. When they make their second fault they will stay in the same courts and turn the ball over to the other team. Players switch courts only after scoring.
 - d) A ball landing on any line is considered good except when a served ball lands on the non-volley line.
12. Singles Play—All rules apply with the following exception:
When serving in singles, each player serves from the Right Hand court when his/her score is 0 or an even number, and from the Left Hand court when his/her score is odd numbered.
13. See Court Diagram on next page.

Section 2 – Court

Revised 2006 and 4/1/09 and 8/9/09

Source: <http://www.usapa.org/officialrules/pbrules.html>

