



*Join One of the Fastest Growing Sports In America!*

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## **RULES SUMMARY**

The following is an abbreviated form of the rules to give a quick overview of how the game is played. **A complete copy of the official rules can be found at [usapa.org](http://usapa.org).**

The Serve

TWO OPTIONS

Traditional/Standard

- The server's arm must be moving in an upward arc at the time the ball is struck and may be made with either a forehand or backhand motion.
- The highest point of the paddle head must not be above the highest part of the wrist (where the wrist joint bends) when it strikes the ball.
- Contact with the ball must not be made above the waist level (Waist is defined as the navel level).

A Drop/Bounce serve is permitted.

**Servers must release the ball from one of the server's hands or dropped off the server's paddle from any natural (un-aided) height and hit the ball after the ball bounces on the playing surface. Before bouncing on the ground, the ball shall not be propelled (thrown) downward or tossed or hit upward with the paddle. Failure to drop the ball properly will result in a fault**

Using a Drop/Bounce Serve You DO NOT have to meet the requirements of the "Traditional/Standard" serve (upward arc, not above waist, paddle head not above wrist). So, cuts, spins, etc....are permitted.

During your serving sequence may switch from one type of serve to the other at any time as many times as you like.



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Serving (cont.)

- The entire score must be called before the server begins the service motion.
- Neither foot may contact the baseline or court until after the ball is struck.
- The serve is made diagonally crosscourt and must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court. **Not in the NVZ and lines of NVZ.**
- Only one serve attempt is allowed.
- **Serving LET Ball (Ball hitting top of net-tape is PERMITTED (Playable))**

### Service Sequence

- Both players on the serving doubles team have the opportunity to serve and score points until they commit a fault \*(except for the first service sequence of each new game).
- The first serve of each side-out is made from the right/even court.
- If a point is scored, the server switches sides and the server initiates the next serve from the left/odd court.
- As subsequent points are scored, the server continues switching back and forth until a fault is committed and the first server loses the serve.
- When the first server loses the serve the partner then serves from their correct side of the court (except for the first service sequence of the game\*).
- The second server continues serving until his team commits a fault and loses the serve to the opposing team.
- Once the service goes to the opposition (at side out), the first serve is from the right/even court and both players on that team have the opportunity to serve and score points until their team commits two faults.
- In singles the server serves from the right/even court when his or her score is even and from the left/odd when the score is odd.

**\*At the beginning of each new game only one partner on the serving team has the opportunity to serve before faulting, after which the service passes to the receiving team.**



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### Scoring

- Points are scored only by the **serving team**.
- Games are normally played to 11 points, win by 2.
- Server responsibility to call out score BEFORE serving.  
**3 NUMBERS-serving team score/opponents team score/whether 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> sever.**
- When the serving team's score is even (0, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10) the player who was the first server in the game for that team will be in the right/even court when serving or receiving; when odd (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) that player will be in the left/odd court when serving or receiving.

### Two-Bounce Rule

- When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning, and then **the serving team must let it bounce before returning, thus two bounces**.
- After the ball has bounced once in each team's court, both teams may either volley the ball (hit the ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce (ground stroke).
- The two-bounce rule eliminates the serve and volley advantage and extends rallies.

### No-Volley Zone (Also AKA-KITCHEN)

- The no-volley zone is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.
- Volleying is prohibited within the no-volley zone. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone.
- It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the no-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the no-volley zone including the associated lines.
- It is a fault if, after volleying, a player is carried by momentum into or touches the non-volley zone, even if the volleyed ball is declared dead before this happens.
- A player may legally be in the no-volley zone any time other than when volleying a ball.



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## Line Calls

6.A. A served ball that clears the no-volley zone and lands in the correct service court or on any **correct service court line is in.**

6.B. Except the serve, any ball in play that lands in the court or **touches any court line is in.**

6.C. A ball contacting the playing surface **completely outside of the court is "out".**

6.D.1. Players are responsible for calling the lines on **their side of the court (excluding service foot faults and all non-volley-zone lines.**

6.D.3. The opponent gets the benefit of the doubt on line calls made. Any ball that cannot be called "out" will be considered "in."

**6.D.4. Spectators should not be consulted on any line call.**

6.D.6. A player/team may ask the opponent's opinion to make a line call on the player's side of the court. If requested and the opponent makes a clear "in" or "out" call, it must be accepted. If the opponents cannot make a clear "in" or "out" call, then the ball is considered "in"

6.D.8. All "out" calls must be made **"promptly"**; otherwise, the ball is presumed to still be in play. "Promptly" is defined as calling "out" prior to the ball being hit by the opponent or before a dead ball is declared.

6.D.9. In doubles play, if one player calls the ball "out" and the partner calls it "in," then doubt exists and the team's call will be **"in."**

6.D.10. "Out" line calls should be promptly signaled by voice and may include a hand signal may call faults on themselves or line calls to their disadvantage during or after the completion of a rally.

**Players should not call the ball "out" unless they can clearly see a space between the line and the ball as it hits the ground.**



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## Faults

A fault is any action that stops play because of a rule violation.

- A fault by the receiving team results in a point for the serving team
- A fault by the serving team results in the server's loss of serve or side out.

7.A. If the serve or service return does not bounce before the ball is struck.

7.B. Hitting the ball into the player's side of the net without the ball crossing over to the opponent's side. Note: The play is dead, and the fault occurs the moment the ball hits the ground.

7.C. Hitting the ball under the net or between the net and the net post.

7.D. A player hitting a ball that lands out of bounds or onto their own side of the court.

7.E. Failure to hit the ball before it bounces twice on the receiving player's court.

7.F. Violation of any service rule. (LET BALLS PERMITTED/PLAYABLE)

7.G. A player, a player's apparel, or a player's paddle contacting the net system or the net posts when the ball is in play.

7.H. The ball in play contacts a player or anything the player is wearing or carrying, except the paddle or the player's hand(s) in contact with the paddle and below the wrist. If the player is in the process of changing hands with both hands on the paddle or is attempting a two-handed stroke and either hand is hit below the wrist, the ball is still in play.

7.I. A live ball that is stopped by a player before it becomes dead. (e.g., catching or stopping a ball in flight before it makes contact with the court.)

7.J. A ball in play contacting any permanent object before bouncing on the court.

7.K. Violation of the non-volley-zone rules. (Section 9)

7.N. Once the ball is in play, a player hitting the ball before it passes the plane of the net.

7.O. A player **deliberately** carrying or catching the ball in play on the paddle.

7.P. A player **deliberately** touching the ball with the paddle more than once (i.e., double hit).

**NOTE: A BALL PLAYED AROUND THE POST (ATP) (Not on Serve) AND LANDS IN OPPONENTS COURT IS NOT A FAULT. BALL DOES NOT HAVE TO GO OVER THE NET.**

## Determining Serving Team

In Social Play-No set routine unless facility has one in place.

**For additional clarifications visit [usapa.org](http://usapa.org)**