



**PRIDE SPORTS USA**

# **PICKLEBALL**

**OFFICIAL RULEBOOK**

## **NATIONAL TOURNAMENT RULES**

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## INTRODUCTION

**Pride Sports USA** is an adult sports organization consisting of all genders, sexualities, and races ranging from 21 to 80 years old.

Our National Tournaments consist of two teams of 2–3 players per team, sweatbands, tube socks, and short shorts :)

For the enjoyment of the game, proper respect and sportsmanship are required of all participants. Fighting is not tolerated. There is zero tolerance for discrimination toward race, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, or any protected characteristic.

All participants, officials, and spectators must respect our zero-tolerance policies and obey all rules and regulations in this official rulebook.

**First Rule of Pride Sports USA – Pickleball is to HAVE FUN!**

## 1. GAMES AND MATCH

Round Robin Games:

- Matches are 30 minutes.
- No new games may begin after 25 minutes.
- Play as many games as possible within the time limit.
- Games are played to 11 points (no need to win by 2).
- Non-rally scoring applies (points may only be scored while serving).

Match Start:

- Two players must be ready at the scheduled start time.
- If two players are not ready, the match will be recorded as a 3–0 forfeit.

When Time Expires:

- Finish the current point.
- The team leading receives the game win.
- If tied, no point is awarded.
- Report total games won (Example: 3–1).

Bracket Play:

- Double elimination, best 2 out of 3 games to 11.
- No need to win by 2.
- Third game (if needed): First to 7, rally scoring (point scored every serve), no need to win by 2.

## **2. SERVING**

- Points may only be scored by the serving team (except tie-breaker games).
- Both feet must remain behind the baseline until contact.
- Serve must be underhand and contacted below the waist.
- Serve must land diagonally in the correct service court.
- No lets on serves.
- Spinning the ball on the serve is NOT allowed.

Double Bounce Rule:

- The serve must bounce.
- The return of serve must bounce.
- After both bounces, volleys are allowed.

Who Serves?

- At the beginning of the match, captains will play rock, paper, scissors to determine serve or side.
- Serve and side will switch after each game.
- If a third game is played, teams will return to the sides they started the Match on, and the team that served first in Game 1 will serve first in Game 3.

## **3. KITCHEN (NON-VOLLEY ZONE)**

- Volleys must be made with both feet behind the kitchen line.

- Momentum into the kitchen is a fault.
- Players may enter the kitchen only after the ball bounces there.

Faults include (but are not limited to):

- Serving into an incorrect area.
- Hitting the ball out of bounds.
- Volleying before the double bounce requirement is met.
- Hitting the net with paddle or body.
- Stepping into or on the kitchen line during a volley.

#### **4. TEAM SIZE**

- Teams may have 2 or 3 players.
- If your team has 3 players, the 2 players who start the game must finish that game, unless there is an injury.
- The serving team must choose their 2 starting players before the opposing team selects theirs for that game.

#### **5. SCORING**

- Round Robin: Report total games won (Example: 4–1).
- All games use non-rally scoring except tie-breakers.
- Forfeits are recorded as 3–0.

#### **6. UNIFORM RULES**

- All players must wear the official tournament shirt provided.
- The shirt must be worn as the outermost layer on both tournament days.

A few weeks before the tournament, we will send out an email with a link to purchase an additional shirt if you'd like to not wear the same shirt both days.

- Sleeves may only be cut where nothing is printed.
- Anything already printed on the shirt may NOT be cut, altered, or removed.
- No additional alterations are allowed.
- Players can not draw or print anything on their shirt.

## **7. RATINGS (DIVISION PLACEMENT)**

- Division A – 4.0+ (Advanced)
- Division B – 3.0–3.9 (Intermediate)
- Division C – 2.0–2.9 (Beginner)
- If you do not have a rating, please self-rate.

## **8. PICKLEBALL RULES**

- If not listed in this rulebook, please follow USA Pickleball Rules.

## **9. RATINGS**

- Please use our Ratings Document below that can help you know which division to sign up if you are new to our Tournaments.

## **10. WINNING TEAMS**

- If a team wins Gold (First Place) in any division other than Division A, all team members must move up to the next division for the next tournament.

# PRIDE SPORTS USA

# PICKLEBALL RATINGS

I know where to stand at the beginning of each point.  
I usually get my serves "in."  
I usually let the return of serve bounce.  
I am getting the hang of keeping score.  
I can often keep the ball in play.  
I know what a dink shot is.

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Beginner  
**2.0-2.5**

I have the basic rules down.  
I am working on getting my serves and returns of serve deeper.  
I am working on getting my dinks shallower/lower.  
I am capable of hitting a few dinks in a row.  
I can usually hit backhand shots when I need to.  
I'm trying to add more power or softness to my game.

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Beginner  
**3.0**

I know most of the rules (including net rules, net post issues, NVZ, etc.).  
My serves and returns are almost always deep.  
I sometimes try to hit a third-shot drop.  
I try to be strategic about how and where I hit the ball.  
I have a wide variety of shots in my arsenal.  
I actively work with my partner to win the point.

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Intermediate  
**3.5**

I can often anticipate my opponents' shots.  
I often finish the point when my opponent gives me an opening.  
I am usually consistent with drop shots and dink shots.  
I almost always play at the non-volley line.  
With a good partner, I can cover almost any shot.  
I try to be patient and wait for the opening.  
I can consistently convert a hard shot to a soft shot.  
I am almost always patient and wait for the opening.

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Advanced  
**4.0**

I rarely make unforced errors.  
I consistently use power and finesse to my advantage.  
I can easily sustain a rally of 40 or more shots.  
I have competed and/or won in tournaments at the 4.5 level or higher.

Advanced  
**4.5-5.0**

## PRIDE SPORTS USA, LLC CODE OF CONDUCT

1. **Purpose and Values.** For purposes of this Code of Conduct (the “Code”), “Pride Sports” means Pride Sports USA, LLC, and “League” means Pride Sports, together with the recreational sports leagues, divisions, programs, games, events, tournaments, practices, social events, and other activities organized, operated, sponsored, or sanctioned by Pride Sports, whether conducted on a seasonal or one-time basis.

Pride Sports is committed to fostering an athletic and social environment that is inclusive, respectful, safe, and welcoming. The League exists to bring people together through recreation and community, and to affirm the dignity and value of every participant and attendee.

All participants, volunteers, officials, spectators, and guests are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that supports these values. Conduct that undermines the inclusive purpose of the League, even if not intended to cause harm, may be inconsistent with this Code.

Participation in League activities is a privilege, not a right, and is conditioned on compliance with this Code. Participation in any League activity is at all times revocable and may be suspended, restricted, or terminated by Pride Sports at any time, with or without cause, notice, explanation, or formal process.

Pride Sports reserves the right to refuse registration, admission, or participation to any individual or team, or to remove any person from League activities, at any time and for any lawful reason, in its sole discretion.

2. **Scope of Application.** This Code applies to all League activities and to anyone participating in or attending such activities, including players, volunteers, officials, spectators, and guests. The Code may also apply to off-field or off-event conduct where such conduct has a direct or material connection to the League, including conduct that affects the safety, inclusion, or well-being of participants, interferes with League operations or activities, or undermines the League’s inclusive purpose or community environment. The determination of whether any off-field conduct falls within the scope of this Code shall be made by Pride Sports in its sole discretion.

3. **General Behavioral Expectations.** All individuals covered by this Code must, at all times:

- Treat others with respect, dignity, and courtesy.
- Act in a sportsmanlike and safe manner.
- Follow reasonable directions given by League staff or officials.
- Respect facilities, equipment, and shared spaces.
- Refrain from conduct that disrupts League activities or the experience of others.
- Comply with applicable laws, facility rules and venue policies.

Participants and attendees must comply with the directions and decisions of League staff, officials, and authorized representatives. Failure to follow such directions may result in immediate removal or other disciplinary action.

4. **Prohibited Conduct.** The following conduct is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

- a. Harassment and Discrimination. Unwelcome conduct directed at an individual or group based on actual or perceived characteristics, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, appearance, or any other protected or personal characteristic, that reasonably undermines another person’s ability to participate in or enjoy League activities.
- b. Bullying and Intimidation. Conduct that is hostile, abusive, threatening, or degrading toward another person, whether verbal, physical, or otherwise, and that reasonably interferes with a safe and inclusive League environment.
- c. Violence and Threats. Physical violence, attempted violence, or threats of violence toward any person.
- d. Unsafe or Disruptive Behavior. Any conduct that creates a safety risk, causes disruption, or interferes with League operations or the experience of others.
- e. Alcohol and Drugs. Being intoxicated, engaging in illegal drug use, or otherwise behaving in a manner related to alcohol or drugs that is unsafe, disruptive, or inconsistent with the League’s inclusive and community-focused environment.
- f. Social Media and Public Conduct. Harassing, threatening, or disruptive conduct directed at participants, staff, officials, or the League through social media or other public communications that negatively affects the League environment or operations.

5. **Participant Pledge.** As a participant in the League, each individual agrees to the following:

- a. Treat all participants, officials, staff, and spectators with respect at all times.
- b. Cooperate with other participants and officials.
- c. Refrain from profanity, obscene gestures, or abusive language.
- d. Not engage in physical violence or intentionally cause harm to any participant, official, staff member, or spectator.
- e. Follow all reasonable instructions from officials and League staff.
- f. Ask officials, in a calm and respectful manner, to explain any rules I do not understand.
- g. Respect park fields, sports equipment, and facility amenities.
- h. Participate in a sportsmanlike and safe manner at all times.
- i. Read, understand, and comply with all League rules and policies.
- j. Demonstrate good sportsmanship both on and off the field.
- k. Conduct myself in a manner consistent with the League’s values and community standards.

Violation of this Participant Pledge may result in disciplinary action in accordance with this Code, up to and including suspension or expulsion from League activities.

6. **Enforcement and Disciplinary Authority.** Compliance with this Code is a mandatory condition of participation in any League or Activity. Pride Sports reserves the sole, absolute, and final discretion to interpret this Code, determine whether any conduct violates it, and impose any disciplinary, corrective, or preventive action it deems appropriate under the circumstances.

Pride Sports may take action at any time, with or without investigation, and based on any information it considers relevant, whether obtained firsthand or from third parties. Pride Sports’ determinations may be based solely on its judgment and are not required to meet any evidentiary or procedural standard.

Pride Sports may take disciplinary or participation action based on any information it considers relevant, including reports, observations, complaints, or other sources, and is not required to rely on formal complaints, witness statements, or physical evidence.

Disciplinary action may include, without limitation:

- Verbal or written warnings.
- Removal from a game, event, or facility.
- Temporary suspension from League activities.
- Expulsion from the League or Activity.
- Temporary or permanent restriction from future participation.
- Denial of registration or team placement.
- Any other action Pride Sports deems appropriate.

Certain conduct, including but not limited to violence, threats, harassment, discrimination, unsafe behavior, or conduct inconsistent with the League's values or community standards, may result in immediate removal, suspension, or expulsion at Pride Sports' sole discretion.

Pride Sports may also take disciplinary or exclusionary action for any conduct, whether or not expressly described in this Code, that Pride Sports determines is inconsistent with the League's values, operations, or community environment.

Pride Sports is not required to provide prior notice, warnings, investigations, hearings, explanations, or opportunities to appeal before taking disciplinary action. Disciplinary decisions may be communicated orally or by any other method, and Pride Sports is not required to provide written notice, documentation, or justification. All decisions made by Pride Sports under this Code are final and binding.

Participants acknowledge and agree that they have no right or entitlement to participate in any League or Activity, and that participation may be revoked at any time at Pride Sports' sole discretion.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, participants waive any claim, cause of action, or demand against Pride Sports arising out of or related to any disciplinary, eligibility, or participation decision.

Any disciplinary action, including suspension, removal, or expulsion, shall not entitle the participant or team to any refund, credit, or other compensation.

Pride Sports reserves the right to impose disciplinary action on an entire team, group, or organization where the conduct of one or more members creates disruption, safety concerns, or repeated violations of this Code. Pride Sports reserves the right to suspend or terminate any game, event, or activity, or remove any individual, when it determines that safety, order, or the League environment requires such action.

Pride Sports is not required to enforce this Code uniformly or to take action in every instance of misconduct, and the failure to discipline any individual or team shall not limit Pride Sports' authority to discipline others.

7. **Complaints and Reports.** Pride Sports encourages participants, volunteers, officials, and attendees to report conduct that they believe may violate this Code or otherwise undermine the safety, inclusion, or operation of the League. Complaints or reports may be submitted to Pride Sports through any method designated by the League, including in person, by email, or by any other communication channel provided by Pride Sports.

Pride Sports reserves the sole discretion to determine whether and how to review, investigate, or act upon any complaint or report. Submission of a complaint does not guarantee any particular action or result. All disciplinary and participation decisions remain subject to Pride Sports' sole and final discretion in accordance with this Code.

8. **Anti-Retaliation.** Pride Sports prohibits retaliation against any individual who, in good faith, reports a concern, submits a complaint, participates in a review, or provides information related to a potential violation of this Code. Retaliation includes any adverse action, threat, intimidation, harassment, exclusion, or other conduct that would discourage a reasonable person from reporting a concern or participating in the complaint process.

Any individual who engages in retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, expulsion, or permanent restriction from League activities, at Pride Sports' sole discretion.

9. **Relationship to Other Policies.** This Code is separate from, and in addition to, any release, waiver, or assumption-of-risk agreement required for participation in League activities. Pride Sports reserves the right to adopt, modify, or enforce additional rules, policies, or procedures at any time as it deems necessary for safety, operations, or the community environment.

10. **Severability.** If any portion of this Code is found to be invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall remain in full force and effect.

11. **Acknowledgement.** By participating in or attending League activities, individuals acknowledge that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with this Code.

I understand that Pride Sports may revise this Code of Conduct at any time, and it is my responsibility to stay informed of any updates. I also acknowledge that failure to comply with Code may result in suspension or termination of my participation in the League without refund.