

Recreational Pickleball

Pickleball Canada rules shall be applied whenever possible, unless otherwise indicated.

Revised June 2025

General Intramural Sports Regulations:

- There is no warmup equipment provided.
- Games that start late will finish on time. Games will be shortened to accommodate the scheduled end time. There will be no extra time added.
- Team rosters are to be submitted and completed online by the team captain (individual who registered the team) prior to the league schedule & documents release date. To complete your roster, you will need to know each player email address that is associated with their Active Living profiles. All players who do not have a profile must contact Client Services at 403-220-7749 to request one. Students your UCID is your profile. Do not have players create a new one.
 - Input your roster online at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/activeliving/> (Click on your name, drop down to 'My Teams', add players email).
- All players must be added to the roster no later than 24hrs before league play commences. Players may be added after at the coordinator's discretion.
- Captains are expected to:
 - a. Function as the exclusive point of contact for all communication between IMS and players
 - b. Appoint an alternate captain, who will function as a second contact if the captain is unavailable.
 - c. Contact Active Living Client Services with any playing preferences or requests prior to their sports registration deadline. Requests will not be accepted after the registration deadline.
 - d. Share the League Introduction email and all relevant documents with your team.
 - e. Review all documents, resources, and policies related to their sport in detail.
 - f. Complete the captains quiz (found in the league introduction email) 24h prior to the league start date.
 - g. Ensure that all teammates are aware of all IMS policies and rules relating to their sport.
 - h. Ensure that all teammates are registered and have their online waivers signed.
 - i. Maintain control of your team and spectator behavior in terms of conduct, safety, and sportsmanship before, during, and after all matches.
 - j. Ensure that any player(s) or spectator(s) exit the vicinity if they are ejected or otherwise asked to leave.
- All players **must complete an online waiver before they are allowed to play**. Instructions on how to sign online waivers can be found at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/activeliving/how-to-register> (Click on shopping cart next to name, waivers).
- All players who have not signed their waivers prior to league play **will be removed** from their rosters.
- All players **must provide photo identification** to the supervisor before they may begin their matches.
- In Competitive Leagues, to be eligible for playoffs, a player must:
 - Be in the team roster.
 - Sign the online waiver.
 - Compete in at least (1) regular season match.
- Teams must meet the Fair Play requirements (3.5 average) to be eligible to compete in playoffs.
- **Suspended players may not be present during scheduled games, if so, the entire team shall be suspended indefinitely.**

- Any games that end after 30 minutes or 1 half of play of scheduled playing time will be considered a completed game and will not be rescheduled.
- Intramural Sports has a **Zero-Tolerance policy** for **fighting** and **abuse** of staff and other intramural participants. This will be strictly enforced.
- Ineligible players include but are not limited to:
 - Currently intercollegiate varsity athletes while in season (in the same or similar sport)
 - Current professional athletes (in the same or similar sport)
 - Current national team/Olympic athletes (in the same or similar sport)
 - Individuals under the age of 18 and not currently enrolled at the University of Calgary
 - Suspended and or delinquent participants.

For a complete list, see [Intramurals policies and procedures](#)

Defaults:

- A default will occur when a team fails to appear or fails to have the minimum two (2) (for doubles) players on the court within ten (10) minutes of the start time of the game. Failing to do so will result in a default.
- Defaults will result in the loss of the \$100 Default Bond and a second \$120 bond will be due before the next match. A second default will result in the loss of this second bond and removal from the league.
- Defaults will be recorded as a 3-0 loss, resulting in 0 Fair play Points, and are -1 points in the standings.
- Teams that give Intramural Sports a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours' notice that they will not be able to field a team will not be charged with a default, the game will be declared a forfeit.
- Forfeits will be recorded as a 3-0 loss; fair play rating will be awarded at the coordinator's discretion.
- If a team falls below the minimum number of players (due to penalties, injuries, etc.) throughout the game, it will be canceled. Games that are cancelled after 30 minutes or 1 half of play of scheduled playing will be considered a completed game and the score will be upheld. If the game is cancelled 30 minutes or 1 half of the scheduled play, it will be considered a forfeit.

Playing Rules:

- All necessary equipment will be provided by the participants. Intramurals will have limited equipment available.
- All rules may be overseen by the shift supervisor.
- Substitutions are unlimited but must be made when the shuttle is dead.
- The matches shall consist of a best 2 of 3 games. The first two games are to 11 and the win by 2 rule is in effect. The third game is played to 15 points, win by 2. Full sets must be played, no partial sets.
- If the first 2 games reach 29-29, the first to get to 30 points wins. In the 3rd game, if tied 14-14 the first to get to 15pts wins.
- No set will start with 10 minutes left of the scheduled playing time. This is at the discretion of the on-site supervisor.
- Matches are allotted 1 hour 15 minutes, which includes a 5-minute warm-up. Matches are best of 3 games, with games to 11. In the event of a game being finished well under the allotted time, teams may play additional friendly games until their next game. These additional games DO NOT count towards a team's record.
- The ball is served diagonally across the net to the opponent's receiving court. The ball is struck back and forth across the net until a player fails to return the ball in accordance with the rules.

- A served ball that clears the non-volley zone and its lines and lands in the correct service court or on any correct service court line is in. Any other ball in play that lands in the court or touches any court line is in. A ball contacting the playing surface completely outside of the court is "out." A served ball that lands in the opponent's non-volley zone, including on the non-volley zone lines, is "out".
- Points are scored **only by the serving side** when the serving side wins the rally, or the opposing side commits a fault. The server continues to serve, alternating service courts, until the serving side loses the rally or commits a fault. After the server loses the rally or faults, a side out will occur, and service is awarded to the opponent.
- The first side scoring 11 points and leading by at least a 2-point margin wins the game. The first team to win two out of three games wins the match.
- Two-Bounce Rule: After the ball is served, each side must make one groundstroke (strike the ball after it bounces) prior to being able to volley the ball (strike the ball in the air before it has bounced).
- Non-Volley Zone (NVZ): The area extending 7 feet from the net on each side, within which a player is not allowed to strike the ball without it first bouncing. It is a fault if the volleying player or anything that has contact with the volleying player while in the act of volleying touches the non-volley zone. The act of volleying the ball includes the swing, the follow-through, and the momentum from the action.

Serving

- The entire score must be called before the ball is served. Once the score has been called, the server is allowed 10 seconds to serve the ball.
- The proper sequence for calling the score in singles matches is server score, then receiver score as two numbers. (e.g., "one – zero"). The score is called as three numbers in doubles matches. The proper sequence for calling the score is: serving team's score – receiving team's score – the server number (one or two), (e.g., "zero – one – one"). To start each game, the score will be called as "zero – zero – two."
- The starting server in doubles or the singles server should be positioned on the right/even court when their score is even. The starting server in doubles or the singles server should be positioned on the left/odd side of the court when their score is odd.
- In doubles, a team is allocated two serves while they are in possession of the ball. Thus, there is a First Server and a Second Server. After the First Server's team loses a rally or faults, the Second Server will serve from the correct position and will alternate serving positions as long as the serving team continues to win points. Both players on a team will serve before a side out is declared, except at the start of each game, when only the starting server will serve. The starting server of each game is therefore designated as "Second Server".
- The server must serve to the correct service court (the court diagonally opposite the server). The service court includes the area on the correct side of the centerline, including the centerline, sideline, and baseline, excluding the NVZ and its lines. The serve may clear or touch the net.
- The moment the ball is served, at least one foot must be in the serving area. The serving area is the area behind the baseline and on and between the imaginary extensions of the court centerline and each sideline. Neither of the server's feet may touch the court on or inside the baseline. Neither of the server's feet may touch the playing surface outside the imaginary extension of the sideline or centerline.
- The serve shall be made with only one hand releasing the ball. This can be done via volley serve (strike the ball without bouncing the ball off the playing surface) or drop serve (strike the ball after it bounces on the playing surface). There is no restriction how many times the ball can bounce nor where the ball can bounce on the playing surface when performing a drop serve.
- As long as the server holds serve, after each point, the server will alternate serving from the right/even and left/odd sides of the court.
- Examples of service faults include, but are not limited to:
 1. The served ball lands in the non-volley zone, including the NVZ lines.

2. The served ball lands outside the service court.
3. The served ball hits the net and lands outside the service court, or in the NVZ.
4. The server hits the ball to make the serve while the score is being called.

Selection of end, serve, receive, or defer

- Any fair method shall be used to determine which player, or team has first choice of end, serve, receive, or defer (e.g., flipping a coin). If the winner chooses to serve or receive first, the loser chooses the starting end. If the winner chooses the starting end, the loser chooses to serve or receive. Once a selection has been made, it cannot be changed.

Change of ends

- Teams switch ends and initial service upon the completion of each game. In game three, the teams will switch ends when the first team reaches a score of 6. Serve remains with the player holding serve. Exception: If the first game of such match was forfeited due to late arrival, the teams will not switch ends during game three.

Line Call Rules

- The player, when calling lines, must strive for accuracy and operate under the principle that all questionable calls must be resolved in favor of the opponent.
- Players are responsible for calling the lines on their end of the court. If a player makes an initial line call and then asks for the opponent(s) opinion, if the opponent can make a clear "in" or "out" call, the clear call will stand. If no clear call can be made, the initial line call by the player will stand. If the receiving team makes no initial line call, and the opponents cannot make a clear "in" or "out" call, then the ball is ruled as being "in" on the receiving team. The moment the receiving player/team asks for the opponent's opinion, they lose their right to make any subsequent "in" or "out" call for that rally.
- The opponent gets the benefit of the doubt on line calls made. Any ball that cannot be called "out" will be considered "in." A player cannot claim a replay because the ball was not seen or there is uncertainty.
- Players shall not call a ball "out" unless they can clearly see a space between the line and the ball as it hits the ground.
- While the ball is in the air, if a player yells "out" or any other words to communicate to their partner that the ball may be out, it shall be considered player communication only and not considered a line call.
- After the completion of a rally, players may overrule a partner's line call, their own line call, or an opponent's "in" call to their own disadvantage.

Fault Rules

1. Examples of faults (and resulting dead balls) include, but are not limited to:
 1. The serve or service return does not bounce before the ball is struck.
 2. Hitting the ball into the player's side of the net without the ball crossing over to the opponent's side.
 3. Hitting the ball under the net or between the net and the net post.
 4. A ball hit by a player that first lands out of bounds or onto their own side of the court.
 5. Failure of a player to return the ball before it bounces twice on the receiving player's side of the net.
 6. A player, a player's apparel, or a player's paddle contacting the net system, the net posts, the opponent, or the opponent's court, when the ball is live.
 7. A player carrying or catching the ball on the paddle while performing the serve or during a rally.

Time-Out Rules

1. A player or team is entitled to two time-outs for 11-point games. Each time-out period may last up to 1 minute.
2. The standard time between games is two minutes.

Other Rules

1. Balls can be hit twice, but this must occur during a continuous, single-direction stroke by one player. Otherwise, it is a fault.
2. A paddle may switch from hand to hand at any time.
3. Two-handed shots are allowed.
4. Crossing the plane of the net prior to striking the ball is a fault. After striking the ball, a player or anything the player is/was wearing or carrying may cross the plane of the net.
5. If the ball strikes the top of the net or the top net cable or rope that is between the net post and the net and lands inbounds, it remains in play.
6. Except on the serve, a replay will occur if the ball goes over the net and hits the center base or any part of the horizontal bar or gets caught between the net and the horizontal bar. On the serve, if the ball hits the horizontal bar or the center base or gets caught between the net and horizontal bar after going over the net, it is a fault.
7. A player must have possession of the paddle when the paddle contacts the ball. A violation of this rule is a fault.