

Basic Rules of Ping Pong

THE AIM OF THE GAME IS SIMPLE; HIT THE BALL OVER THE NET ONTO YOUR OPPONENT'S SIDE. A POINT IS WON BY YOU IF YOUR OPPONENT IS UNABLE TO RETURN THE BALL TO YOUR SIDE OF THE TABLE (E.G. THEY MISS THE BALL, THEY HIT THE BALL BUT IT MISSES YOUR SIDE OF THE TABLE, OR THE BALL HITS THE NET), OR IF THEY HIT THE BALL BEFORE IT BOUNCES ON THEIR SIDE OF THE TABLE.

SCORING

The winner of a game is the first to 11 points. There must be a gap of at least two points between opponents at the end of the game though, so if the score is 10-10, the game goes in to extra play until one of the players has gained a lead of 2 points. The point goes to the player who successfully ends a rally, regardless of who has served. A match can consist of the number of games you like, just make sure you agree this in advance!

SERVING; SINGLES

A player takes two serves before the ball switches to the opponent to serve, except during periods of extra play where it changes each time. The first person to serve at the start of the game can be determined in many different ways, we'll leave that up to you to decide! Service can be diagonal or in a straight line in singles

SERVING; DOUBLES

Service must be diagonal, from the right half court (marked by a white line) to the opponent's right half court. Service changeover in Doubles is as follows:

At the start of a game, the serving team will decide which player will serve first. The first player to serve is A1 and; A1 serves to B1 (2 services); B1 then serves to A2 (2 services); A2 then serves to B2 (2 services); B2 serves to A1 2 services) Repeat... At the end of game 1 and the start of game 2, team B will take the first serve; B1 must serve to A1. A1 then serves to B2 and so on.

SERVICE RULES YOU MUST OBEY

The ball must first bounce on your side and then in your opponents. Your opponent must allow the ball to hit their side of the table before trying to return this.

The ball must pass cleanly over the net – if it 'clips' the net and goes over, it is a 'let' and the serve is retaken. If it hits the net and doesn't go over, the point goes to the other player/team. There are no second serves.

SERVICE RULES YOU CAN IGNORE IF YOU WANT TO

For service, the ball rests freely on the open palm of the hand. The hand holding the ball must be above the level of the table. The ball should be projected upwards (at least 16 cm). The ball should be struck when it is falling and behind the table.

ROTATION RULES FOR DOUBLES

In doubles, you should alternate hitting the ball with your partner. So, for example, A1 serves the ball to B1, who returns the ball. A2 then hits the ball and B2 returns this. A1 hits and B2 returns, A2 hits and B1 returns...and so on.

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