

Table Tennis Rules

A game is started when one player (server) makes a service before the receiver makes the return.

DEFINITIONS-

A rally- Is the period during which the ball is in play.

The ball is in play from the last moment at which it is stationary on the palm of the free hand before being intentionally projected in service until the rally is decided as a let or a point.

A let- Is a rally of which the result is not scored.

A point- Is a rally of which the result is scored.

The racket hand is the hand carrying the racket.

The free hand is the hand not carrying the racket; the free arm is the arm of the free hand.

A player strikes the ball if he or she touches it in play with his or her racket, held in the hand, or with his or her racket hand below the wrist.

A player obstructs the ball if he or she, or anything he or she wears or carries, touches it in play when it is above or travelling towards the playing surface, not having touched his or her court since last being struck by his or her opponent.

The server is the player due to strike the ball first in a rally.

The receiver is the player due to strike the ball second in a rally.

The umpire is the person appointed to control a match.

The assistant umpire is the person appointed to assist the umpire with certain decisions.

The end line shall be regarded as extending indefinitely in both directions.

THE SERVICE- Service shall start with the ball resting freely on the open palm of the server's stationary free hand. The server shall then project the ball near vertically upwards, without imparting spin, so that it rises at least 16cm after leaving the palm of the free hand and then falls without touching anything before being struck.

As the ball is falling the server shall strike it so that it touches first his or her court and then touches directly the receiver's court; in doubles, the ball shall touch successively the right half court of server and receiver.

From the start of service until it is struck, the ball shall be above the level of the playing surface and behind the server's end line, and it shall not be hidden from the receiver by the server or his or her doubles partner or by anything they wear or carry.

As soon as the ball has been projected, the server's free arm and hand shall be removed from the space between the ball and the net. The space between the ball and the net is defined by the ball, the net and its indefinite upward extension.

It is the responsibility of the player to serve so that the umpire or the assistant umpire can be satisfied that he or she complies with the requirements of the Laws, and either may decide that a service is incorrect.

If either the umpire or the assistant umpire is not sure about the legality of a service he or she may, on the first occasion in a match, interrupt play and warn the server; but any subsequent service by that player or his or her doubles partner which is not clearly legal shall be considered incorrect.

Exceptionally, the umpire may relax the requirements for a correct service where he or she is satisfied that compliance is prevented by physical disability.

THE RETURN- The ball, having been served or returned, shall be struck so that it touches the opponent's court, either directly or after touching the net assembly.

THE ORDER OF PLAY- In singles, the server shall first make a service, the receiver shall then make a return and thereafter server and receiver alternately shall each make a return. In doubles, except as provided in 2.8.3, the server shall first make a service, the receiver shall then make a return, the partner of the server shall then make a return, the partner of the receiver shall then make a return and thereafter each player in turn in that sequence shall make a return. In doubles, when at least one player

of a pair is in a wheelchair due to a physical disability, the server shall first make a service, the receiver shall then make a return but thereafter either player of the disabled pair may make returns.

A LET- The rally shall be a let: if in service the ball touches the net assembly, provided the service is otherwise correct or the ball is obstructed by the receiver or his or her partner; if the service is delivered when the receiving player or pair is not ready, provided that neither the receiver nor his or her partner attempts to strike the ball; if failure to make a service or a return or otherwise to comply with the Laws is due to a disturbance outside the control of the player; if play is interrupted by the umpire or assistant umpire; if the receiver is in wheelchair owing to a physical disability and in service the ball, provided that the service is otherwise correct, after touching the receiver's court returns in the direction of the net; comes to rest on the receiver's court; in singles leaves the receiver's court after touching it by either of its sidelines.

Play may be interrupted to correct an error in the order of serving, receiving or ends; to introduce the expedite system; to warn or penalise a player or adviser; because the conditions of play are disturbed in a way which could affect the outcome of the rally.

A POINT- Unless the rally is a let, a player shall score a point if an opponent fails to make a correct service; if an opponent fails to make a correct return; if, after he or she has made a service or a return, the ball touches anything other than the net assembly before being struck by an opponent; if the ball passes over his or her court or beyond his or her end line without touching his or her court, after being struck by an opponent; if the ball, after being struck by an opponent, passes through the net or between the net and the net post or between the net and playing surface; if an opponent obstructs the ball; if an opponent deliberately strikes the ball twice in succession; if an opponent strikes the ball with a side of the racket blade whose surface does not comply with the requirements of and if an opponent, or anything an opponent wears or carries, moves the playing surface; if an opponent, or anything an opponent wears or carries, touches the net assembly; if an opponent's free hand touches the playing surface; if a doubles opponent strikes the ball out of the sequence established by the first server and first receiver; as provided under the expedite system if both players or pairs are in a wheelchair due to a physical disability and his or her opponent does not maintain a minimum contact with the seat or cushion(s), with the back of the thigh, when the ball is struck; his or her opponent touches the table with either hand before striking the ball; his or her opponent's footrest or foot touches the floor during play. if, where an opposing doubles pair includes at least one player in a wheelchair, any part of the wheelchair or a foot of a standing player crosses an imaginary extension of the center line of the table

A GAME- A game shall be won by the player or pair first scoring 11 points unless both players or pairs score 10 points, when the game shall be won by the first player or pair subsequently gaining a lead of 2 points. 2

A MATCH- A match shall consist of the best of any odd number of games.

THE ORDER OF SERVING, RECEIVING AND ENDS- The right to choose the initial order of serving, receiving and ends shall be decided by lot and the winner may choose to serve or to receive first or to start at a particular end. When one player or pair has chosen to serve or to receive first or to start at a particular end, the other player or pair shall have the other choice. After each 2 points have been scored the receiving player or pair shall become the serving player or pair and so on until the end of the game, unless both players or pairs score 10 points or the expedite system is in operation, when the sequences of serving and receiving shall be the same but each player shall serve for only 1 point in turn. In each game of a doubles match, the pair having the right to serve first shall choose which of them will do so and in the first game of a match the receiving pair shall decide which of them will receive first; in subsequent games of the match, the first server having been chosen, the first receiver shall be the player who served to him or her in the preceding game.

In doubles, at each change of service the previous receiver shall become the server and the partner of the previous server shall become the receiver. The player or pair serving first in a game shall receive first

in the next game of the match and in the last possible game of a doubles match the pair due to receive next shall change their order of receiving when first one pair scores 5 points. The player or pair starting at one end in a game shall start at the other end in the next game of the match and in the last possible game of a match the players or pairs shall change ends when first one player or pair scores 5 points. OUT OF ORDER OF SERVING, RECEIVING OR ENDS- If a player serves or receives out of turn, play shall be interrupted by the umpire as soon as the error is discovered and shall resume with those players serving and receiving who should be server and receiver respectively at the score that has been reached, according to the sequence established at the beginning of the match and, in doubles, to the order of serving chosen by the pair having the right to serve first in the game during which the error is discovered. If the players have not changed ends when they should have done so, play shall be interrupted by the umpire as soon as the error is discovered and shall resume with the players at the ends at which they should be at the score that has been reached, according to the sequence established at the beginning of the match. In any circumstances, all points scored before the discovery of an error shall be reckoned.

THE EXPEDITE SYSTEM- Except as provided in the expedite system shall come into operation after 10 minutes' play in a game or at any time when requested by both players or pairs. The expedite system shall not be introduced in a game if at least 18 points have been scored. If the ball is in play when the time limit is reached and the expedite system is due to come into operation, play shall be interrupted by the umpire and shall resume with service by the player who served in the rally that was interrupted; if the ball is not in play when the expedite system comes into operation, play shall resume with service by the player who received in the immediately preceding rally. Thereafter, each player shall serve for 1 point in turn until the end of the game, and if the receiving player or pair makes 13 correct returns in a rally the receiver shall score a point. Introduction of the expedite system shall not alter the order of serving and receiving in the match, as defined in. Once introduced, the expedite system shall remain in operation until the end of the match.

The Server should:

- start with the ball resting freely on an open palm.
- project the ball near vertically upwards, without imparting spin, so that it rises at least 16cm.
- strike the ball so that it touches first his/her court and then, after passing over the net assembly, touches directly the receiver's court. In doubles, the ball must touch successively the right half court of server and receiver.

Once the ball has been served, both players are to make returns until a point is scored. In doubles, each player on the same team must take turns to make the return.

After 2 points have been scored, the receiving player/pair shall become the serving player/pair and so on until the end of the game.

Scoring

A set is when one of the players or pairs first score 11 points. In the event that both players/pairs score 10 points, a set is be won by the first player/pair to gain a 2-point lead. A full match is won when a player or pair wins the best of any odd number of sets (3,5,7).

A point is scored when:

1. an opponent fails to make a correct service,
2. an opponent fails to make a return,
3. the ball touches any part of an opponent's body,
4. an opponent strikes the ball twice in succession,

5. if an opponent, or anything an opponent wears, touches the playing surface or net during play,
6. if a doubles opponent strikes the ball out of the sequence established by the first server and first receiver.

Have Fun!