

Basic Pickleball Rules Summary – usapickleball.org

The Serve:

- Serve executed underhand and server must keep both feet behind the baseline and imaginary extension.
- The server's arm must be moving in an upward arc when the ball is struck.
- Paddle must contact the ball below the waist level (navel level).
- The head of the paddle must not be above the highest part of the wrist at contact.
- Server can drop the ball and serve off bounce. NO arm/paddle/wrist restrictions will apply.
- The serve is made diagonally crosscourt and must clear the "kitchen" or non-volley zone (NVZ). If serve touches NVZ line, serve is deemed a fault. Only one serve attempt is allowed. In the event of a "let" (the ball touches the net on the serve and lands in the proper service court) serve is GOOD.

Service Sequence:

- Both players on the serving doubles team can serve and score points until they commit a fault *(except for the first service sequence of each new game). You MUST serve to score.
- 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. Server continues switching back and forth until a fault is committed, then the partner serves until a fault is committed.

*At the beginning of each new game only one partner on the serving team can serve before faulting, after which the service passes to the receiving team. **First score of every new game is always "0-0-2"**

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. 2-bounce rule eliminates the serve and volley advantage and extends rallies.
- 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).

Non-Volley Zone (NVZ):

- The NVZ is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net (also known as "the kitchen").
- Volleying (hitting ball out of air) is prohibited within the NVZ. This rule prevents players from smashes inside the NVZ.
- A fault occurs if a player volleys in the NVZ (includes stepping on the line). A fault also occurs if a player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the NVZ including the associated lines.
- A player may legally be in the NVZ any time other than when volleying a ball.

Scoring:

- Points are scored **only** by the serving team. You must serve to score. First score of new game is always "0-0-2".
- Server calls their score first and opponent's score next. 3rd # always 1 or 2 (1st or 2nd server). Games are normally played to 11 points, win by 2. If time is factor, some sites play games to 9 points, win by 1.
- 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.

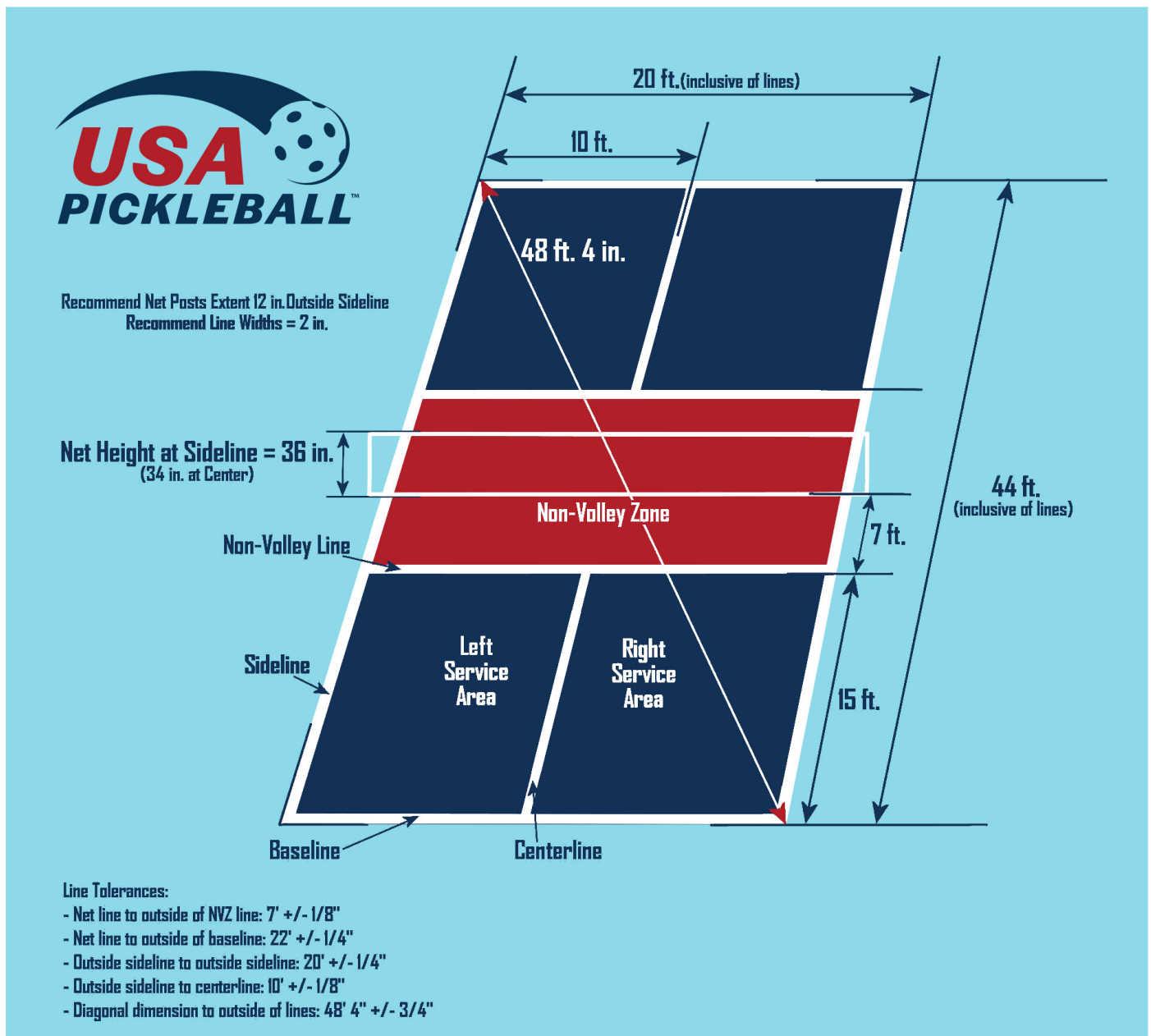
Line Calls:

- A ball contacting any part of any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, is considered "in." **You MUST clearly see space between ball and line to make an "out" call.**
- A serve contacting the non-volley zone line is short and a fault.

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.

Pickleball is played either as doubles (two players per team) or singles. Doubles is most common. The same size playing area and rules are used for both singles and doubles. In singles, the server serves from the right side when his score is even and from the left side when his score is odd.



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