



2025 USA Pickleball Golden Ticket Tucson, Arizona Player Instructions

(Players: These instructions are emailed in advance in order to preserve your warm-up time.)

Please carefully read this important information in its entirety.

All Current 2025 USA Pickleball Rules Apply

Participants: It is your responsibility to have read this document as well as the Player Code of Conduct posted on the registration page of the tournament.

Schedule: Brackets will be posted the day of play. Remember that brackets are subject to change until each event starts. Please review the schedule each evening before your event play day. If any start time changes happen to your bracket, we will notify you by email.

Format: Players will play a round robin followed by a bracket for the top 4 teams/players from round robin play. These will be seeded 1 through 4 with 1 playing 4 and 2 playing 3. The winners will play for Gold/Silver and the losers will play for Bronze. In the case of a division having multiple pools, the top 2 teams/players from each pool will advance.

Warm up: The first matches of the day will begin promptly at 8:00 AM. Players are expected to have their warmup completed prior to that time. You will receive a text message when your bracket has been started and the next text message will be your court assignment. **Please report to your court, regardless of what the text may say.** For later starting times, you will have 10 minutes to warm up for your 1st match of the day. After your 1st match of the day, you have **8 minutes** following the court assignment text to get to your assigned court and warm up before your next match begins. If you are NOT on court in the allotted time, we will make a second and FINAL announcement over the PA system for you to report to the court. The first game in your match is forfeited if you are not on court ready to play in ten minutes from the original text. The entire match (2 out of 3 games to 11) will be forfeited if you are not on court ready to play in 15 minutes. The match is also forfeited if not on the court and ready to play for matches that are 1 game to 15. Avoid forfeits by being on time!

Starting server bands: Starting server bands **will be provided by your referee and must be displayed by each starting server so it is visible by opponents and the referee** - no exceptions. Failure to do so will result in a match forfeit.

Water Bottles and Bags: Players are permitted to have towels, water or sports drink bottles on the court. Bags are not allowed on the courts.

Referees and Rules: You must be familiar with the USA Pickleball 2025 Rules. A copy of the current USA Pickleball rulebook is available to download. Copy and paste the following url to your browser: <https://usapickleball.org/what-is-pickleball/official-rules/>. In addition, players must have read and understood the following: All matches will have a referee. **When you get a text message assigning you to a court, proceed to the court. However, please observe proper court etiquette. Do not cross another court while a match is underway.** The referees will use an abbreviated pre-match briefing to:

1. Check player paddles
2. Explain valid hinders or court abnormalities
3. Ensure that the starting server bands are visible to identify starting servers
4. Use a fair method of selecting serving and receiving team and side selections
5. Inform players of the remaining warm-up time available
6. Answer any rule or player instruction questions (see below)

Referees are responsible for promptly returning the scoresheet to the tournament desk at the conclusion of a match.

Player Instructions

1. Paddles will be visually inspected. It is the PLAYER'S RESPONSIBILITY to ensure their paddle is on the USA Pickleball Approved Paddle List, as only paddles on this list will be allowed for play. The approved paddle list is available at <https://equipment.usapickleball.org/paddle-list/>.
2. If the wrong score is called, the referee or any player may stop play before the return of serve to correct the score. It is a fault to stop play after the return of serve to identify or ask for a score correction. It is a fault to stop play to identify or ask for a score correction when the score was correctly called.
3. Players are responsible for calling all the lines on their end of the court with the exception of service foot faults, NVZ foot faults, and short serves, which will be called by the referee. Please make all "out" calls promptly, loud and clear... even if they are obvious.
4. Any player may appeal a line call to the referee at the end of a rally and before the next serve occurs. If there is a dispute on a line call, you may ask the referee to make a ruling. The referee will only make a ruling if they clearly saw the ball, otherwise the original call stands.
5. Referees will check to make sure that all players are ready, or should be ready, before calling the score.
6. If a team has any remaining time-outs, any player on that team may call a time-out before the next serve occurs.
7. After the score is called, the serving team has 10 seconds to serve the ball. Failure to do so results in a service fault.

8. The server may not serve the ball until the entire score is called. Serving before the completion of the score being called results in a fault. Serving before the score has begun to be called is a replay.
9. The referee will confirm and correct, if necessary, that all players are in the correct position and the correct server has the ball before calling the score.
10. If the referee or a player stops a rally in progress to correctly identify a player/position error, the rally shall be replayed.
11. If a player stops a rally and incorrectly identifies a player/position error, it is a fault on the player who stopped the rally. If the referee stops a rally in progress and incorrectly identifies a player/position error, the rally shall be replayed.
12. If a player/position error is identified after the rally has played out, the rally shall stand.
13. The referee will pay close attention to each player's Serve. Be sure that your serve complies with the USA PICKLEBALL Rule Book requirements.
14. HINDERS and BALLS ON COURT: **Unless the referee deems it a SAFETY ISSUE, the referee will not automatically stop play due to a possible ball in the playing area.** Players may call "hinder" or "ball on court" the moment they are distracted by a ball/player/object coming onto their playing area. Hinders, deemed to be valid by the referee, including those created or called by adjacent court players, will result in a replay.
15. Each team has two 1-minute timeouts per 11-point or 15-point game and three timeouts in games to 21.
16. There is a maximum of a 2-minute break between games.
17. In games to 15 or 21, and in the third game of a 2-out-of-3 match, and the fifth game of a 3-out-of-5 match, teams have 1 minute to change ends of the court. This is a referee time-out and players may hydrate, talk with their partner, and receive coaching from others, during the changing of ends.
18. Please exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. Unsportsmanlike behavior, in all of its forms, will not be tolerated. Issues such as profanity, paddle throws, disrespectful or disparaging comments directed toward opponents, spectators, or referees will be swiftly dealt with. The Tournament Director, at their discretion, may immediately remove any player from the tournament for any behavior, on or off the court, deemed to be unsportsmanlike or disrespectful to any person or persons.
19. Any action deemed by the referee to be unsportsmanlike will result in a technical warning (TW) or a technical foul (TF). A TW plus a TF will result in a game forfeit. Two technical fouls will result in a match forfeit. Profanity is prohibited. Depending upon the severity, a Verbal Warning (VW) may be issued, but only once per match. Additional profanity warrants a TW or TF.
20. Any action that results in the presence of blood is an automatic referee timeout at the end of the rally. Play will resume after any needed medical attention and clean-up of the blood.
21. USA Pickleball Concussion Protocol will be followed in the event of a player sustaining a head injury or displaying any signs or symptoms of a concussion. In accordance with the USA Pickleball Concussion Protocol, such a player must be immediately removed from play and not

permitted to return until a written release from a licensed healthcare professional is provided to the tournament director. To view USA Pickleball's Concussion Protocol, copy and paste this url to your browser: <https://usapickleball.org/what-is-pickleball/concussion-protocol/>

22. Requests for medical timeouts are granted by the referee. The referee will summon medical personnel or the TD to assess if the medical need is valid. If medical personnel (or the TD) determine that the request is NOT valid, the player or team will be charged a timeout, if available, and issued a technical warning. If a standard time-out is not available; a technical foul will be issued.
23. Players may request the Head Referee/Tournament Director to the court to challenge a referee's decision or ruling. **If you lose the challenge, an additional technical warning and loss of 1 time-out will be assessed.** If you have no time-outs remaining, a Technical Foul shall be assessed. In certain situations, this may result in a match forfeit.
24. Players are strongly encouraged to download and practice the UTR APP prior to the tournament. Players should check to assure that their correct contact information is on file as this is the only way that the Tournament Desk can contact you.
25. If you are the match winner, please confirm both your scores and names with your referee to assure that the correct information is entered into Tournament software.
26. If you have any questions, please ask your referee or the Head Referee before the start of your match.

We look forward to welcoming you in Tucson, AZ.

Competition Team
2025 USA Pickleball Golden Ticket – Tucson, AZ

