

Recreational Programs Guide

For Pickleball Program Providers





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Introducing Pickleball

Community Pickleball Party (Families, Adults & Seniors)

Pickleball Parties can be utilized for a variety of purposes including facility grand openings, promotional events, product demo days, and as a kickoff event for a new season. Additionally, the events should be leveraged to recruit new USA Pickleball members and to reward existing members. It is recommended that these events be offered for free for USA Pickleball members and for \$10.00 for non-members.

Using the recommended Party Plan below, players at all levels can be accommodated at a Pickleball Party.

Introductory Energizer “Ups Survivor”

Players must bump the ball up from their paddles without it touching the ground. The player that is the last one remaining wins.

Note: If players are more advanced, after a minute, have them stand on one leg until one player remains. For new players, allow them to bounce the ball in between hits.

Dinking Survivor (Option): Have players partner up on the courts for a dinking contest using the non-volley lines. The last team to survive without making an error wins a prize (e.g., hat, shirt, balls).

Court Rotations (90 Minutes)

Divide people into equal sized groups and have them rotate through the following court activities every 15 - 25 minutes.

Note: Paddle companies could sponsor a court and allow people to use their paddles and balls for the games below.

Instructional Court: This can be for new players or for improving players. Themes could include serving, returning, dinking, transitioning, etc.

Supervised Play Court: Organize players of different levels to play matches on 1 - 2 courts. The court supervisor can fill in and play to even out levels. If there are more players than courts, use the following game options:

- **Squirrel:** Four players on opposite sides of the net play out a point. If a player makes an error, they are replaced "bumped out" by another player waiting near the post. The game can be played using the non-volley zone ("kitchen") as the boundaries or full court with baseline and net play.
- **Play & Switch:** Players are divided evenly on both sides of the court. Two players from each side play against each other. Every player gets a chance to serve. Players play out four points and rotate out with their teammates. All points earned by each side count towards the overall team score. Play games to 7 or 11.

Community Pickleball Party (Families, Adults & Seniors)

- **Survivor:** Players set up on both sides of the court. Additional players line up at the net post. Players play two out of three points against each other. The winners stay on the court and the players waiting at the net posts rotate in to challenge the Champs.
 - **Beat the Pros (Option):** Instructors or Advanced Players can serve as the Champs and players attempt to dethrone them by winning 2 out of 3 points.
- **Tag Team Doubles:** Players are divided up and placed in two lines on both ends of the court (two lines per side). One end starts the rally and as soon as a player hits the ball, they quickly rotate out to the end of their side. Players only rotate out to the back of their side if they have hit the ball or if they make an error. Anytime a team makes an error, a point is awarded to the other team. Play games to 11.
 - **Pass the Paddle (Option):** Teams can be given only two paddles per side that have to be shared and passed on to their partners when rotating in and out of points.

Match Exhibition (10 minutes)

Recruit some high-level players to play a match for everyone to watch. Have an emcee commentate on the action and strategies being used during play.

Wrap-Up Contest & Hit for Prizes (15 minutes)

Set up targets on a court such as buckets, hoops, or the actual prizes for people to try and hit to win a prize. Try to get prizes donated from a sponsor or equipment manufacturer.

Playing music and having refreshments for the participants adds another dimension of fun to the party. Additionally, the lead organizer should be a good “Party Host” making sure everyone is getting a chance to play, socialize, and enjoy the facility. Be sure to promote programs at the facility and the benefits of being a member of USA Pickleball.

It is recommended that Pickleball Parties are conducted for 1 ½ - 2 hours to ensure it can fit into most people’s schedules and allow for a critical mass of folks to attend at one time for a more dynamic event. A Pickleball Open House can be offered as an alternative over a longer period of time (i.e., half day or full day) to allow people to try out the sport, play on the new courts, get instruction, or demo the latest paddles at their leisure.

Introductory Pickleball Clinic

Activity #1: Jog, Juggle & Dribble. Each participant has a ball and begins jogging in place while alternating juggling the ball between the hands five times and dribbling the ball on the ground five times. Have participants begin moving through the activity area while alternating juggling and dribbling. This creates a dynamic warm-up and improves hand-eye coordination needed for pickleball.

- **Variation:** Participants can pass the ball around their waist, under each leg, let it bounce, do a 360, or clap several times before catching the ball, all while jogging in place. For large clinics, have players trade balls with each other as they move through the activity area.

Activity #2: Partner Ball Toss. Participants stand several feet away from their partner with a target in front of each player. One partner begins by stepping forward with their opposite foot and tossing the ball with their dominant hand towards the target spot or line. Their partner catches the ball after it bounces. The tossing practice will prepare players for rallying and serving.

Rally Right Away Progression: The following progression is ideal to players ready to rally over a net in just a few minutes.

- **Step 1: Self-Rally/"Selfie."** The player alternates bumping the ball up from the paddle (eye-high) and letting it bounce on the ground. Players should hit the ball "palm up to the sky." A target spot can be used to gauge success or use as a game. Once players are successful self-rallying the ball, progress to Step 2.
- **Step 2: Center Target Rally with Partner.** Players place one ball or a rubber spot on the ground between them as a target. Players take turns bumping the ball up and trying to land it on the target. Remind players to keep the rally "eye-high" and allow players to "calm" the ball to control the rallies. **Note: "Calming the ball" means to get the ball under control by self-rallying the ball ("selfies") as much as needed to stabilize the rally.**
- **Step 3: Target to Target Dink Rally.** Players stand several feet apart with a target in front of them (rubber lines or spots can also serve as targets). Allow and encourage players to "calm" the ball to keep rallies under control. Rallies can be done with one player hitting the ball off the bounce and one player taking the ball out of the air with a volley stroke.
- **Step 4: Dink Rally Over a Net.** Have players practice dinking a ball over a net. Targets can be placed in front of each player near the non-volley lines. Points are earned each time a ball hits a target. Dinking Contest: Give players one minute with a partner to see how long they can dink over the net successfully. The two players with the greatest number of rallies wins!
- **Step 5: Dink Rally Over a Net with Volley.** Have players dink the ball back and forth trying to hit each other's target ("guard the nest"). Players are allowed to guard their targets by volleying balls out of the air. Volley Contest: Have players try and volley as many times as possible in one minute. The two players with the most volleys win!

Introductory Pickleball Clinic

Net Games

Youth Activity:

- **Pickleball Four Square:** Divide the backcourt of the Pickleball court with a line of painter's tape to create four boxes. Begin by establishing a sequence from the lowest square to the highest square. Extra players wait on-deck and rotate in. Play starts with the player in the lowest square serving the ball into any of the squares. Rallies continue until an error is made. The player that makes the error rotates out to the on-deck spot and all other players advance one spot closer to the top square.

Adult Activity:

- **Squirrel:** Four players on opposite sides of the net play out a point. If a player makes an error, they are replaced "bumped out" by another player waiting near the post. The game can be played using non volley zone as the boundaries, 3/4 court using rubber throw down lines, or full court with baseline and net play. **Note: Shortening the court with a strip of painter's tape allows for players to develop rally skills on a three-quarter court before playing full court.**

Play Pickleball: Explain the scoring for Pickleball and let players play a game with instructor assistance. Younger players can attempt to play a game of doubles pickleball on the Four-Square court.

Wrap-Up Game: Serving Challenge. Set up hula-hoops or buckets on the ground as targets and have players attempt to serve a ball into the hoops. Players and/or teams can challenge each other for number of successful hits. A prize can be given to the player who has the highest score.

Cool Down: Do a few light stretches while reviewing the activities that were covered. Be prepared to discuss equipment questions, etiquette, and options for continued play including drop-in sessions, additional clinics, round robins, etc.

Technique Tips

Ready Position: The paddle is held out in front with the player standing on the balls of their feet (like a shortstop in baseball). Players should get their paddle down and back for ground strokes and down and forward for dinking as soon as they recognize which side the ball is coming to (forehand or backhand) and get back to ready position after each hit.

Forehand: To achieve the correct grip, have players hold the paddle with their dominant hand as if they were hammering a nail. Players should always keep the dominant hand on the bottom of the paddle and get the paddle down and back (for ground strokes) and down and forward (for dinking).

Backhand: The dominant hand stays at the bottom of the paddle. Just like forehands, players should get their paddle down quickly and aim their paddle faces toward their target with a short, controlled swing.

Volley: Instruct players to place the paddle in front of the ball as if they are catching the ball with a glove ("reach and catch") or high fiving a friend. More advanced players can push the paddle forward to create more power.

Serve: Have players use a forehand stroke for serving. The motion is similar to tossing a bean bag or bowling a ball with a long follow through towards the target.

Demos & Exhibitions

Getting Players Started with an Instant Pickleball Progression

The beauty of pickleball is that it is very easy to learn and play. It's important not to overcomplicate it for players, especially new players trying for the first time to learn the sport. Below is an "Instant Pickleball" progression that can be used to get new players playing within minutes. Note: More time can be spent on each progression based on skill level.

1. Hand players a paddle and show them how to hold it – "hammer a nail" (30 seconds)
2. Dink and volley at non-volley zone (1 minute)
3. Move people back to $\frac{3}{4}$ court and have them continue to rally/volley (1 minute)
4. Move people back to the full baseline and rally (1 minute)
5. *Start Playing!

*Use rally scoring and switch servers after every point. Once players are hooked, teach them traditional scoring. Pickleball is meant to be played – don't overwhelm players with too much information at first. Let them learn as they go! Refer to the "Introductory Clinic Recipe" for a more in-depth instructional progression.

Pickleball Demo/Exhibition

An effective way to introduce kids, adults, and families to the sport is to set up one or more pickleball nets at a community event, school open house, corporate event, or even as part of a meeting or conference presentation. The focus is to allow people to play pickleball and learn the basic rules strategies, and techniques as they are playing.

Below are games that can be played to allow multiple people a chance to experience pickleball as part of an interactive demo. Be sure to take new players through the "Instant Pickleball Progression" above.

- **Play & Switch:** Four player are positioned on the court. Each player gets a chance to serve one point. After four points are completed, the four players leave their paddles on the court, and four new players rotate in from the challenging line.
- **In & Out:** Four players start a match. Once a player makes an error on either side of the court, the first person waiting in line of challengers fills in for that person, who goes back to the end of the challenging line and waits for their turn. If the challenging line is short, allow two errors before rotating out.
- **Team Doubles:** One team plays against another team with extra players rotating in for their teammates. If a pleyer makes an error, a teammate waiting on-deck comes in and replaces them. Points won for either side count for the overall team score.
- **Survivor:** A team of Champions plays against a team of Challengers two out of three points. The team that wins stays in and the losing team leaves their paddles on the court and rotates back to the challenging line. The Challengers get to serve each of the points and should have a ball ready to go before their turn.

Tips

- It helps to have a volunteer supervising each court to ensure safety and maximize participation
- It is recommended that indoor or high bounce recreational pickleballs be used to ensure success
- Players can share paddle to maximize available equipment needed



Fun Play Formats

Fun Play Formats

There are several play-based events and programs ideal for getting people into the game and playing more frequently. These formats can easily adapt to a person's busy work schedule and allows maximum flexibility based on availability to play. These formats also support an inclusive and welcoming culture that has made pickleball so popular.

Open Play/Drop-In Formats

Paddle-in-Line or “Paddle Saddle” – When players show up, they lean their paddle against the wall or fence or place them in a “paddle saddle” located near the court/s in order of players arriving. Once a court opens up, the next four players pick up their paddle and go to that open court. The remaining paddles are moved forward to the front of the line. After players finish their match, they return their paddles to the end of the line or return them to the “paddle saddle” depending on the system used at that location (paddle saddles, placing against the fence, etc.).

Challenge Court – Players fill the courts and begin their matches. Winning teams stay on and players wanting to challenge a particular team wait near the court and replace the team that loses. Players can rotate and challenge on different courts based on ability. Winning teams can stay on for a maximum of three matches and then must rotate off the court if additional players and teams are waiting to play.

Bump Out – This works well when there are 5-6 players or friends waiting for just one court. Four players fill the available court and extra players wait on-deck to rotate in. When a player makes two errors, they are replaced with a player waiting on-deck. This helps alleviate long delays for players waiting for a complete match to finish and allows friends to socialize and share the court.

Note: Pickleball players are encouraged to follow the established guidelines of the pickleball facility for open play and be willing to play with all ages and abilities in the spirit of good sportsmanship. Refer to sample facility guidelines in the appendix section.



Fun Play Formats

Pick-Up Pickleball (Youth)

The beauty of pickleball is how easy it is to “pick-up and learn.” Similar to drop-in programs offered around the country at parks and facilities, Pick-Up Pickleball is a recommended format for kids that gets them playing quickly and socializing with other youth.

Similar to skate parks, which are extremely popular with youth, Pick-Up Pickleball emphasizes pure play, with an adult that provides supervision and ensures that kids have a paddle to use and other players to play with.

Specific play times should be arranged and set aside at facilities specifically for supervised Pick-Up Pickleball. Programs should be promoted as including access to borrowed equipment and basic instruction on how to rally and score.

Below are some adaptations for kids to ensure success.

- Consider creating a shorter court with painter’s tape placed halfway between the non-volley line and baseline. As players improve, they can play full court.
- Have players play Four Square with paddles and balls using the space between the non-volley line and baseline divided with painter’s tape.
- Let kids play with indoor or high bounce recreational outdoor balls at first to develop a comfort level rallying the ball back and forth consistently.
- Have players hit and capture the ball back and forth before progressing to a traditional rally.
- Allow more than one bounce or hit to get the ball over the net. Eventually wean kids to one bounce/one hit.
- Allow more than one serve at the beginning to get points underway. If necessary, have players toss the ball into the court to start the rally.
- Take away the net (if portable) and play over a line or use net tape. If the ball goes under the net, continue the point.

Essentially, do whatever it takes to help kids be successful and develop the ability to rally and play without too much technical advice. Technical instruction and drills can be reserved for pickleball classes, but Pick-Up Pickleball is meant for kids to be more self-directed and experience pure play without too much adult intervention.

If kids can teach each other to do difficult maneuvers on skateboards without an adult showing them how, then they should be given the opportunity to experience pickleball in a similar manner of guided discovery. Kids will be more engaged, will play more often, and will be more likely to share the experience with their friends.

Fun Play Formats

Round Robin Formats

It is recommended that round robin events are half day in length and completed within 2-4 hours. Refreshments and prizes can be provided. Below are some options for Round Robin Play:

Choose Your Partner - Players sign up with a partner and play based on skill level. Teams are put in brackets and each doubles team plays every other team in their bracket. After matches are completed, a final round can be included in which teams play against other teams in brackets of similar skill level based on how they finished.

Random Draw - Doubles pairings are formed by pulling names out of a hat. Pairings can stay the same for the event or be changed after every round. The player with the highest number of games earned after all the matches wins!

Musical Courts - Have players find an open court and begin play. Use music to start and stop activities. As soon as the music stops, players find a new court and partner.

Hello/Goodbye - Have players play matches on each of the courts. When time is called or when a match is finished (i.e. games to 7 or 11), the winning team moves up a court and the losing team moves down a court. When moving up or down, players split and play with a new partner.

Team Doubles – When court availability is limited and there are many people to accommodate for match play, consider creating teams of 3 to 4 players each that play against other teams of 3 to 4 each using a Team Doubles rotation. Two players from team A begin the match against two players from Team B. When a player makes a mistake, they rotate off the court and one of their teammates immediately fills in for them. The match continues to 11 or 15 with teammates rotating in and out for each other (like players coming in and off the bench in basketball) based on winning and losing points. A complete round robin schedule can be created with different Team Doubles teams playing against each other with total games won determining the overall winner.

Team Round Robin - League Teams can be entered into brackets to play against other teams of similar skill level using USA Pickleball suggested league play formats for match play.

Fun Play Formats

League Models

In addition to Open Play and Round Robin events, there are several successful league models across the country ranging from local facility leagues to city and state-wide leagues. **Note: USA Pickleball encourages League Organizers to emphasize a welcoming and inclusive culture for league play that focuses on maximum player involvement, fun, and camaraderie.**

See the league examples below and steps on how to organize these and other matches based on league type and available courts. These easy-to-implement league formats can be adapted to smaller and larger facilities.

Traditional League Model

Steps for Forming a Traditional League

- Establish league type (e.g., Women's Daytime Pickleball, Friday Evening Mixed Pickleball, etc.,).
- Utilize skill level divisions as a guide for play (i.e. 3.0/3.5/4.0+) Note: USA Pickleball offers skill level descriptions and sample videos to help players determine their approximate rating. [Click here for more information](#).
- Utilize USAP approved software providers to help manage your league, capture results, and communicate with captains, players, etc. [Click here for more info](#).
- Determine size of league based on number of courts available (e.g., 4 teams, 8 teams, 16 teams, etc.).
- See the following page for a variety of formats based on the number of courts available.

Keeping It Friendly

If particular league divisions or categories gravitate towards being overly competitive and controversial, it is recommended that an "open play" or drop-in league model be instituted in which team composition changes each week. An open play league is an extension of open play formats found in facilities nationwide and provides more structured matches that people can plan for with a designated start and stop time. Names can be drawn out of a hat to form teams that day based on who can attend and flighted by ability with no particular team elevated in league standings based on overall win/loss record. This allows for players of all levels to participate in a league format that can also be comprised of players representing a combination of abilities.

As an example, a recommended format would include a team having a 3.0 & Below flight, 3.5 flight, and a 4.0+ flight. This fosters friends and family being able to play in the same league at the same times regardless of skill level.

Host a fun open play event, per skill level, in which everyone plays with all other players, not just their team. Offer snacks/pizza/lunch for everyone. Use a queuing system to rotate on/off the courts.

Fun Play Formats

League Models

Traditional League Formats

Rosters: Typically range from 4-12 players deep based on the number of courts available for each match

Matches: Two hours in length. Each round is a game to 11 or 15

Courts: Format options vary with two teams per every one court, two courts or three courts.

Schedule: Matches are scheduled based on available courts. Each day can be designated for a certain league format or skill level to play their matches with one, two, or three courts assigned for each team versus team match based on the models listed below.

Season Length: (Examples below)

- 8-week season includes seven regular season games with one playoff week
- 7-week season , no playoff week, use standings from the seven games to determine winners

Format Options Depending on Number of Courts

One Court Format: (Two Teams)

- Play three games (11 or 15) on one court (Team A1 vs. Team B1; two players per team) or,
- Share the court and play one game (11 or 15) at a time (A1 vs. B1, A2 vs. B2; four players per team taking turns two players playing at a time) or,
- Pairings from each team play each other, one game (11 or 15) at a time (more social & more play).
 - Round 1: A1 vs. B1
 - Round 1: A2 vs. B2
 - Round 2: A1 vs. B2
 - Round 2: A2 vs. B1

Two Court Format: (Two Teams)

- Play three games (11 or 15) each on both courts (A1 vs. B1, A2 vs. B2) or,
- Pairings from Team A play one round each against the other pairings from Team B
 - Round 1: A1 vs. B1 (court 1), A2 vs. B2 (court 2)
 - Round 2: A1 vs. B2 (court 1), A2 vs. B1 (court 2)

Three Court Format: (Two Teams)

- Play three games (11 or 15) against the same pairing per each court (A1 vs. B1, A2 vs. B2, A3 vs. B3) or,
- Play one game (11 or 15) against each different pairing
 - Round 1: A1 vs. B1 (court 1), A2 vs. B2 (court 2), A3 vs. B3 (court 3)
 - Round 2: A1 vs. B3 (court 1), A2 vs. B1 (court 2), A3 vs. B2 (court 3)
 - Round 3: A1 vs. B2 (court 1), A2 vs. B3 (court 2), A3 vs. B1 (court 3)

Fun Play Formats

League Models

Co-Ed/Mixed League Formats:

Team Size: Teams can be as few as two men and two women or as many as four men and four women to complete the required matches.

Matches: Two hours in length. Each round is a game to 11 or 15. Teammates cheer on their friends in a social atmosphere.

Courts: Co-Ed Pickleball Leagues can be played on one court, two courts, or three/four courts for each team vs team match. It fits all facility sizes. For one and two court situations, matches are played in rounds.

One Court Format: (Two Teams)

Requires a minimum of two men and two women to play or a maximum of three men and three women.

- Round 1: Men's Doubles
- Round 2: Women's Doubles
- Round 3: Mixed Doubles

Two Court Format: (Two Teams)

Requires a minimum of two men and two women per team or a maximum of four men and four women per team.

- Round 1: Men's Doubles (court 1) and Women's Doubles (court 2)
- Round 2: Mixed Doubles (court 1) and Mixed Doubles (court 2)

Three/Four Court Format (Two Teams)

Requires four men and four women to play per team. Matches are completed more quickly than the one and two court formats because of the extra courts.

- Round 1: Men's Doubles (court 1), Women's Doubles (court 2), Mixed Doubles (court 3) & Optional Mixed Doubles (court 4)

Potential League Income Model:

- **Income:** \$200 - \$500+ per team x # of teams + sponsor dollars & in-kind donations
- **Expenses:** ~\$50 - \$100+ per team (court rental, awards, balls, player prizes, kick-off/wrap-up event)
- **Net Revenue:** ~\$150 - \$400+ per team

Fun Play Formats

League Models

Flex Leagues: Players/teams sign up for a particular skill division and format (e.g. Men's Doubles) and are given a schedule of teams to play each week within their bracket. Teams schedule matches based on their availability.

- Brackets can be as small as 4 teams with four-week seasons (1 match per week and 1 makeup week) and as large as 8 teams with an 8 week season (1 match per week and 1 makeup week)
- Teams are responsible for coordinating with each other to find a time and place to complete the scheduled match for the week.
- Players are responsible for applicable court/guest fees
- Results are submitted using online software or reported to a league commissioner
- Teams with the best record can receive an award or prize (i.e., gift card)
- Teams can be charged \$20 - \$50 each and gift card payouts can be given to the top teams in each bracket

Ladder Leagues: Similar to flex leagues, ladder leagues involve players/teams being placed in brackets.

- Each player/team plays all the other players/teams in the bracket to establish an initial ranking. Once rankings have been established, players/teams can then challenge other players/teams on the ladder
- Players/teams can only challenge one spot above them every other week in order to allow challenges from players/teams below
- Matchplay can be designated on a specific day and time at a facility or left up to the players to coordinate completion of matches
- League Ladder software can be utilized to rank teams based on results
- A tournament can be held at the end of a season with seeding based on ladder results with awards, prizes and refreshments

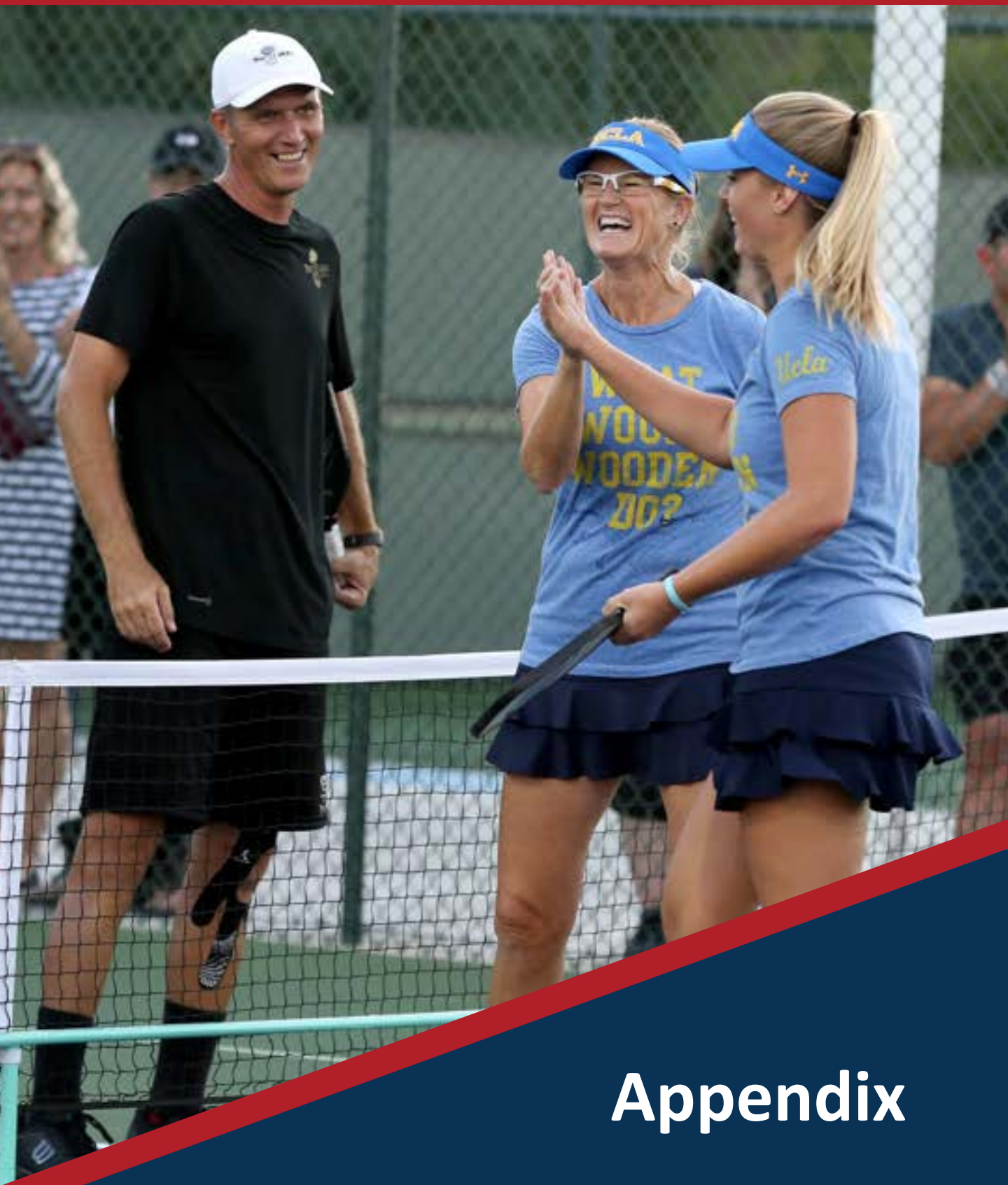
Income Model for Flex & Ladder Leagues:

\$30 - \$60 per player/team (10 players = ~\$300 – \$600+ per bracket)

\$150 - \$300 for awards/prizes/refreshments

Net income: ~50% of proceeds

Conclusion: All league formats, Single Gender, Mixed, Flex, and Ladder options vary per facility and should be adapted based on available space, time, and participants. Be protective of players being excluded from play based on ability or other factors or formats becoming overly competitive and filtering people away from social team play. USA Pickleball encourages facility leaders and program organizers to provide many options for fun and social play to keep the pickleball ecosystem fun and welcoming for all that love this great sport!



Appendix

Basic Rules Summary

The following is an abbreviated form of the rules to give a quick overview of how the game is played. A complete copy of the official rules can be found on the USA Pickleball website at usapickleball.org. If there is a conflict between this summary and the official rules, the official rules prevail.

Basic Rules Overview

- ▶ 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

The Serve

- ▶ The server's arm must be moving in an upward arc when the ball is struck.
- ▶ Paddle contact with the ball must not be made above the waist level.
- ▶ The head of the paddle must not be above the highest part of the wrist at contact.
- ▶ A 'drop serve' is also permitted in which case none of the elements above apply.
- ▶ At the time the ball is struck, the server's feet may not touch the court or outside the imaginary extension of the sideline or centerline and at least one foot must be behind the baseline on the playing surface or the ground behind the baseline.
- ▶ The serve is made diagonally crosscourt and must land within the confines of the opposite diagonal court.
- ▶ Only one serve attempt is allowed per server.

Service Sequence

- ▶ Both players on the serving doubles team have the opportunity to serve and score points until they

- ▶ As subsequent points are scored, the server continues switching back and forth until a fault is committed and the first server loses the serve.
- ▶ When the first server loses the serve the partner then serves from their correct side of the court (except for the first service sequence of the game*).
- ▶ The second server continues serving until his team commits a fault and loses the serve to the opposing team.
- ▶ Once the service goes to the opposition (at side out), the first serve is from the right-hand court and both players on that team have the opportunity to serve and score points until their team commits two faults.
- ▶ In singles the server serves from the right-hand court when his or her score is even and from the left when the score is odd.

*At the beginning of each new game only one partner on the serving team has the opportunity to serve before faulting, after which the service passes to the receiving team.

Scoring

- ▶ Points are scored only by the serving team.
- ▶ Games are normally played to 11 points, win by 2.
- ▶ Tournament games may be to 15 or 21, win by 2.
- ▶ 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-side court when serving

Basic Rules Summary

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.
- ▶ 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).
- ▶ The two-bounce rule eliminates the serve and volley advantage and extends rallies.

Non-Volley Zone

- ▶ The non-volley zone is the court area within 7 feet on both sides of the net.
- ▶ Volleying is prohibited within the non-volley zone. This rule prevents players from executing smashes from a position within the zone.
- ▶ It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the non-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them or anything they are wearing or carrying to touch the non-volley zone including the associated lines.
- ▶ It is a fault if, after volleying, a player is carried by momentum into or touches the non-volley zone, even if the volleyed ball is declared dead before this happens.
- ▶ A player may legally be in the non-volley zone any time other than when volleying a ball.
- ▶ The non-volley zone is commonly referred to as "the kitchen."

Line Calls

- ▶ A ball contacting any line, except the non-volley zone line on a serve, is considered "in."
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ A fault occurs when:
 - ▶ A serve does not land within the confines of the receiving court
 - ▶ The ball is hit into the net on the serve or any return
 - ▶ The ball is volleyed before a bounce has occurred on each side
 - ▶ The ball is hit out of bounds
 - ▶ A ball is volleyed from the non-volley zone
 - ▶ A ball bounces twice before being struck by the receiver
 - ▶ A player, player's clothing, or any part of a player's paddle touches the net or the net post when the ball is in play
 - ▶ There is a violation of a service rule
 - ▶ A ball in play strikes a player or anything the player is wearing or carrying
 - ▶ A ball in play strikes any permanent object before bouncing on the court

Determining Serving Team

- ▶ Any fair method can be used to determine which player or team has first choice of side, service, or receive. (Example: Write a 1 or 2 on the back of the score sheet.)



Sample Etiquette for “Open Play”

Adapted with permission of the City of Bartlett, TN

If you are new to the sport, you can learn more about pickleball as well as download the official rules by visiting [USAPickleball.org](https://www.usapickleball.org). Etiquette "rules" on the other hand are generally unwritten yet equally as important. To promote fair and equitable play please follow these guidelines:

- When somebody inadvertently hits a ball onto your court from an adjacent court, retrieve it and toss them that same ball that they hit onto your court.
- When retrieving a ball from an adjacent court, make eye contact with someone from that court and then directly toss or hit them the ball. Don't just hit the ball back onto their court without looking.
- Don't cross the court behind a match until play has stopped. It's not only rude but it can be very dangerous as well.
- Don't play "keep away" from the best player on the other team during rec play just so you can win - they want to play, too!
- If you are obviously the weakest player on the court, thank the other players for playing with you after the game. However, don't take advantage of their graciousness by staying on the court for an indefinite period of time.
- If you are asked to play with a group that is obviously of a lower skill level than you, graciously accept and play a game or two with them. They will likely appreciate your graciousness and understand that you want to get back to similarly skilled players after the game.
- If you are obviously the strongest person in your foursome, tone down the competitiveness and hit your opponent's balls that they can return. Work on a new skill - perhaps it's a great time for work on that third shot drop!
- In rec play, don't exploit someone's physical limitations just so you can "win."
- If you and your partner can't determine if the ball was in or out or if you disagree with your partner on a line call - the benefit of the doubt goes to your opponent.
- Remember: Be fair, have fun, enjoy the fellowship, and be a good sport!



BARTLETT PICKLEBALL COURTS



PLAYER & COURT ROTATION

- Court use will be first-come, first-serve unless otherwise designated for a special program, activity, or event.
- During peak time when courts are full and players are waiting to play:
 - Court time will be shared equally.
 - NO SINGLES.
 - Waiting players will place their paddle in the "Paddle Saddle" (Left-to-Right)
 - Court time limited to two games to 11, win by 1.
 - Exit court immediately - return to waiting area outside the courts.
 - Play again - place your paddle in first available opening in the "Paddle Saddle" (L-R)
 - Next-up when court is open - next paddles from (L-R).
 - Less than 4 players waiting, the suitable number of players will stay on the court to fill the court with 4 players.
 - Limit warm up time to no more than 5 minutes.

ETIQUETTE

- Please remain in the spectator area while you are waiting your turn to play. Do not clutter the alley.
- When your turn to play arrives, please wait until players have exited the alley prior to entering the courts.
- DO NOT MOVE THE PADDLES!

**Be Fair - Be a Good Sport - Have Fun
Enjoy the Fellowship!**



BARTLETT PICKLEBALL COURTS



SAFETY & COURTESY

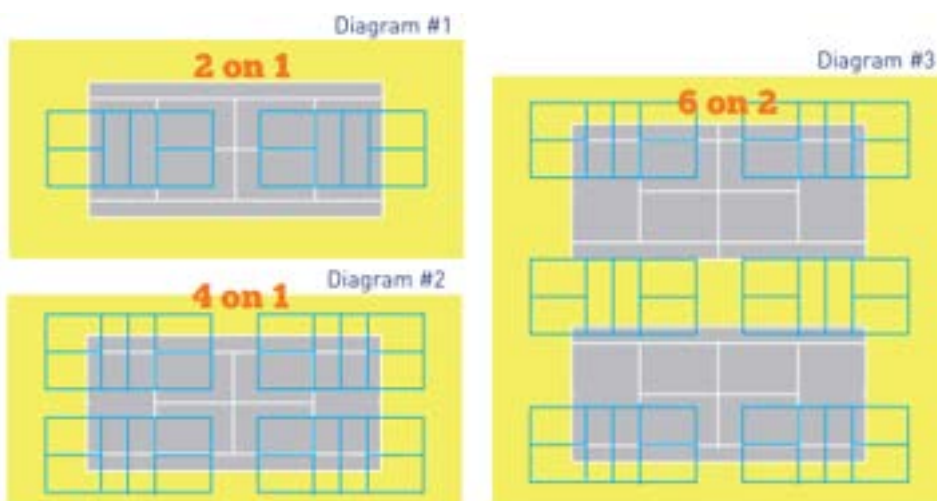
- Courts are ONLY for pickleball play - no bikes, skateboards, inline/roller skates, baseball or softball, frisbee, hockey, soccer, etc.
- Non-marking rubber sole court shoes only.
- No Food or Gum allowed within the complex.
- Please keep the courts and seating area neat and clean - place all trash and waste in appropriate receptacles.
- Player bags should remain out of the playing area.
- No pets on the courts at any time.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct will NOT be tolerated.
- Report any maintenance concerns to Parks Administration: (901) 385-5590

COURT SCHEDULING

The Athletics Division of the Bartlett Parks & Recreation Department manages use of this community facility. In order to serve the growing demand for access to pickleball venues scheduling will include a balance of Open Play, Clinics, Private Lessons, and Special Events and Tournaments. For more information call (901) 385-5599, 8am-5pm Monday-Friday.

1. The City of Bartlett shall have priority use for City and/or City-sponsored activities including clinics, leagues, lessons, tournaments, and the like.
2. No individual, group, club, or organization shall occupy courts for lessons, clinics, leagues, or tournament play without prior written permission from the Athletics Department. Applications must be made at least thirty (30) days in advance of desired dates of play.
3. Only accredited teaching professionals who have been approved and authorized by the City of Bartlett as contracted instructors are permitted to conduct lessons or clinics. Anyone who desires to be an authorized instructor may contact Parks Administration.

How to Line a Court



Marking lines on multi-purpose courts.

Keep in mind that more pickleball courts equal more lines. On a standard tennis court, two pickleball courts can easily be added without greatly interfering with the line structure of the tennis court [Diagram #1]. It's possible to have as many as four pickleball courts on a tennis court, however, the space will be packed, with minimal room between courts [Diagram #2].

Tennis courts often come in pairs, so we've included the optimal layout using a 6 pickleball/2 tennis court mark-up. [Diagram #3].

Repurposing tennis courts—marking lines on courts specifically dedicated to pickleball.

While a standard two-court tennis facility can accommodate up to eight lined pickleball courts, it's more comfortable to replace the tennis pair with six pickleball courts. Again, the "6 on 2" option (Diagram #3) is ideal, as it allows ample space for a rest/waiting area. Don't underestimate the need for a shaded rest area at courtside.

It's time to mark the lines.

Here's what you'll need for both temporary and permanent lines.

Temporary Lines

- ▶ Two sets of hands, although it's possible to mark courts by yourself.
- ▶ 200 feet of green Frog Tape per court (for temporary lines)
- ▶ One 25-foot tape measure & one 50-foot tape measure
- ▶ Chalk or pencil marker

Permanent Lines

- ▶ 1 to 2 days of sunshine
- ▶ Two sets of hands, although it's possible to mark courts by yourself.
- ▶ 400 feet of green Frog Tape per court (to create line stencils)
- ▶ Line Paint
- ▶ Brush, drop cloth, painting materials
- ▶ One 25-foot tape measure & one 50-foot tape measure
- ▶ Chalk or pencil marker

When marking a multi-purpose court, it's always easier to work from the court's existing lines. For example, when working on a tennis court, use the tennis service line as a line marker for the non-volley zone line (see diagrams #1, #2 and #3). Of course, if you're working from a blank slate, you won't have lines to use as a guide.

Each new court will require a minimum of 198 feet of tape. While many people mark courts with blue painter's tape, we recommend green Frog Tape because it adheres better to the court and doesn't leave residue when removed. Also, green Frog Tape doesn't interfere with white tennis court lines; pickleball players quickly become accustomed to recognizing the green lines—the white lines will become invisible—and vice versa for tennis players. Yellow Frog Tape and blue painter's tape tend to disengage from the courts quicker. Do not use duct tape under any circumstance, as it's very expensive and can ruin the surface beneath when removed.

How to Line a Court

1. Measure a 44-foot straight line from A to B. Apply tape to the inside of your line.
2. Measure 20 feet from A to C and 48.33 feet from B to C. Mark point C where the two tape measures meet. Apply tape to the inside of your line from A to C, but not B to C.
3. Measure 44 feet from C to D and 20 feet from B to D. Mark point D where the two tape measures meet. Apply tape to the inside of your lines from C to D and B to D.
4. To create the non-volley zones and net placement, measure down lines AB and CD and draw marks at 15, 22 and 29 feet. Connect the lines, as shown, by applying tape to the inside (closer to the net) of your 15 and 29 lines. Mark 22 is the net.
5. Finally, to create the centerlines, measure down lines AC and BD and draw marks at 10 feet. Measure down the non-volley lines and draw marks at 10 feet. Connect the lines, as shown, by applying tape centered along the line.



Note: When connecting two points, one person stands on the tape at one point while the second person pulls the tape to the second point. Pull the tape firm, a few inches off the ground, then loosen the tape and gently apply it to the ground. Step every inch of the tape down onto the court.

USAPA would like to thank Pickleball Magazine for providing the information on "How to line a Pickleball Court."

Marking Permanent Lines

Standard pickleball lines are 2 inches wide. Before purchasing paints from your local supply store, go to a tennis court specialist such as California Sports Court. The white paints sold for tennis courts are extremely durable and will not be slippery when wet.

Player Surfaces

The vast majority of tennis courts and pickleball courts are asphalt because they're less expensive than concrete. When marking pickleball court lines over existing tennis or basketball courts, it's important to consider the paint and whether or not you'll use a padded surface. Companies such as California Sport Courts offer durable do-it-yourself paints for concrete and asphalt surfaces. They also sell cushioned coatings that are easier on the body, which are typically installed by professional contractors.



Overall Court Dimension
(includes lines):
44' x 20'

Net Posts: Ideally 12" outside the sidelines

Net Height: 34" at center and 36" at sidelines

Width of Lines:
Ideally 2"

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