

Skills 1
Class 1 of 4
The Basics

Equipment: Ball Caddies, extra paddles, name tags

Introductions - 5 Minutes

1. Name
2. Previous sports or pickleball experience
3. Remind participants to take water breaks when needed
4. A member of the club will be here after the class to hand out membership forms and collect \$20. Students who have not filled out a form and paid \$20 will need to do so prior to the next class.

Today's Line-up - 2 Minutes

Equipment/Safety

Court layout - NVZ rules

Ready Position

Serves -Volley and Drop, Rules

Dinking Drills - Without paddle and with paddles

Dinking game incorporating how to score

Serving Drill/Practice

Games

Equipment Overview - 3 Minutes

1. Paddles - Many kinds/types, can rent from online and in local stores.
2. Balls - Few types/colors, brands, indoor/outdoor etc.

Review Safety – 5 Minutes

1. Proper shoe attire/outdoor court/no black soles
2. Sunglasses/protective eyewear/sunscreen/hat
3. Hydrate Often – Cooling towels, water bottles
4. Stop playing whenever a ball rolls on court. Yell “Ball on Court”
5. Never Run Backwards (back pedal); turn and run to the ball.
6. Play within your limitations.
7. Know the address where you are playing (posted on fences).
8. Call 911-head injury, loss of consciousness, chest pain. First aid kit in storage room by bathrooms. AED is located on the side of that building, next to the men’s restroom.

Warm-up Stretches (See separate sheet)- 5 Minutes

Rules of the Game

Let the students know that you will be going over the rules of the game as the lessons are taught. Don’t overwhelm them with too many rules the first day or all at once. As each new skill is taught, go over the rules connected to it.

Review Video – 5 Most important shots in pickleball

1. Serve
2. Return of Serve
3. Drive/Drop

4. Groundstroke
5. Volley

The Dink - Instructor to Demo – 5 Minutes

This is the time to define the Non-Volley Zone (NVZ) which is also called the kitchen. Discuss rules for stepping into the kitchen. Explain that “dinks” are unique to pickleball. A dink is an unattackable ball that lands in the opponent's NVZ. The strategy is to slow the game down.

As you demo the dink, you will model correct form, and students will mirror what you are doing. Assistants will check for proper form.

1. "Ready position" - Paddle up at 10-12 o'clock; knees slightly bent; legs about shoulder width apart. After you hit the ball, always RETURN TO READY POSITION.
2. Ball – Eyes on the ball at all times.
3. Grip – Continental grip, (Have assistant check grips) Light grip – 3 out of 10 pressure with control. The harder the grip the higher/farther the ball will go.
4. Stroke – A shoulder stroke; low to high movement; no snapping of wrist.
5. Shuffle feet side to side; NEVER CROSS-OVER STEP (can cause a trip and fall situation). Avoid planting feet wide and reaching; stay on pads of feet.
6. NVZ line - Always contact the ball in front of you. Avoid **STEPPING BACK**. Turn sideways and shuffle to avoid common falls often resulting in head injuries and broken bones.
7. Goal – To get the ball over the net and land in the opponent’s NVZ.

Dinking Drill - 20 Minutes WITHOUT paddles first, then WITH paddles

1. Place up to 6 people on the court. Without paddles, practice the tossing motion of a dink. It's like tossing a ball underhand to a child. This motion is used in other pickleball strokes. Toss the ball 5 times directly back and forth across the net to the other player. This is a cooperative drill, try tossing it directly to the person across the net.
2. Rotate in new players so that everyone has a chance to dink without a paddle.
3. Four players on the court – Toss ball 7-8 times Cross Court, then rotate positions so that everyone has the opportunity to toss from one other position.
4. REPEAT #1-3 WITH PADDLE

While students are taking water break, answer any questions about dinking. By playing the next game, the scoring of the game will be introduced and practiced.

Dinking game and Keeping Score 10 minutes-

1. Play a game in the NVZ. Show participants how to keep score and switch servers as you would in a regular game, but all players are at the NVZ line.
2. Each play must be a dink. A ball is OUT if it goes past the NVZ line. Play to 5 points, then rotate players in.
3. Have players focus on hitting the ball out in front of them and follow through with the shoulder and not the elbow.

The Serve - Instructor to Demo – 5 Minutes

The serve starts every point. Score is called before serving. For a novice player our goal is to place the ball in the service area of the court. As we advance in our play, we try to place the serve in the back third of this area. Touching any line except the NVZ line is an “in” ball.

Types of Serves – Volley and Drop Serve

Volley Serve

1. Paddle contact of the ball must be below the waist.
2. The head of the paddle must not be above the highest part of the wrist at contact.
3. The server's arm must be moving in an upward arc at time the ball is contacted.
4. Weight transfer from back to front foot.

Drop Serve

1. None of the volley serve rules apply to the drop serve.
2. Ball must be released or “**dropped**” (not thrown down) from the server’s hand, and contact is made after the ball bounces.
3. The Server's release must be visible to the receiver.
4. The ball may be hit with a forehand or backhand.

Serve Drill – 20 Minutes

6 players Per Court, Ball Caddy

1. Place the ball caddy center court behind the baseline.
2. 4 players serving on court. After 5 Volley Serves rotate one position with 2 players on and 2 players off.
3. Repeat with Drop Serve.

Play - 20 Minutes - Coach Players During Play to:

1. Court Placement – Explain where players are to be as serving and receiving side – importance of NOT CREEPING UP – ***Two Bounce Rule***
2. Paddle ready – Always! For good shots and face/chest protection.
3. Communicate – during play, talk with your partner, “mine”, “yours”, “watch”, etc. also encourage each other.

4. Feet – Stay on pads/balls and shuffle, no planting roots on court and reaching from one spot.

Review/Questions: Summary review of today's lesson, answer any questions.

Homework for the next week – Go out and play one or two times with classmates or other PB players. And handout the ½ sheet with YouTube videos.

Cool Down Stretches (See separate sheet)– 5 Minutes