

PICKLEBALL SKILL LEVELS

NOVICE

- I have the basic rules down
- I am working on getting my serves and deeper
- I am working on getting my dinks shallower / lower
- I am capable of hitting a few dinks in a row
- I'm working on my backhand shots more
- I'm trying to add more power or softness to my game

INTERMEDIATE #1

- I'm keeping more balls in play with medium-paced strokes
- My serves and returns are regularly in and where planned
- Dinking rallies last longer as I start to control height and depth and mix in a little pace
- I'm trying to use the third shot drop to help me reach the kitchen and set up the point
- My volleys are at a medium pace and feel manageable as I develop softer hands and simple resets

INTERMEDIATE #2

- My serves/returns are purposeful, varying speed and depth to set up the next ball
- I can execute a third shot drop and soft game control
- I have strategic court positioning
- I can execute shot selection and game awareness a lot of the time
- I am able to communicate with my partner
- I can often anticipate my opponents' shots

Advanced

- I'm hitting with a lot of depth and control
- Dinks are steadier with growing patience
- I'm able to recognize and attack attackable dinks
- I'm mixing drops and drives on the third ball to gain advantage and get to the NVZ
- I'm able to block, reset, and volley a wider range of speeds; overhands are more decisive
- With a good partner I can cover almost any shot
- I try to be patient and wait for the opening

PREMIER

- I can consistently convert a hard shot to a soft shot
- I can create offense with varied serves, heavy returns, and purposeful first-ball patterns.
- I rarely make unforced errors
- I can easily sustain a rally of 40 or more shots
- I consistently use power and finesse to my advantage
- In battles I can block, reset, or counter on command; overhands and swing volleys and finish points