



# RULES OF PLAY

## THE SPORT OF PADEL

BELOW YOU WILL FIND THE OFFICIAL RULES OF PLAY

The following Rules of Play have been obtained from the International Padel Federation (FIP) and translated into the English language - Any corrections have been administered by British Padel

THE PADEL ASSOCIATION  
TRADING AS 'BRITISH PADEL'

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# SCORING

## SCORE IN A GAME

THE POINT SYSTEM IS THE SAME AS TENNIS:

The first point won will be called, “15”,

The second point won “30”, the third point “40” and the fourth “game”.

Except, if each pair have equally won three points, at which time will be called, “deuce”. GAME:

The following point won will be called, “advantage” and if the same pair wins the next point they have won the game. If the point is lost the score will return to “deuce”. And so on until one side has won the two consecutive points which are needed to convert into a game.

SET: The first pair to win 6 games, always with a minimum advantage of 2 clear games, will convert into a set. In the case of a tie (draw) at 5 games the players will have to play two more games, to win by two clear games, example 7-5. However, if there is a tie at 6 games a “tie- break” independent point system will be implemented.

MATCH: The match is the best of three sets. Two out of three sets need to be won in order to convert into a match. If there is a tie at one set each, and always previously established, the third set may be played without a “tie-break” so, if there is a tie at six games in the third set, the pair who convert a two game difference win.

## RULES OF THE “TIE-BREAK”

During a tie-break, the point system is numeric.

The first side to reach 7 points, with a 2-point clearance needed at 5-5 and so on to win the “tie-break” and convert the set. A set ending in a tie-break decision will be won by 7-6.

The first player to commence serve in the tiebreak is according to the order of serve followed in the set. For the first point of the tiebreak, this player will only serve one point from the right side of the court. The players of the opposing team (respecting the previous order of service) will then serve the following two points with their first point being from the left side of the court. After this the players will serve two consecutive points always serving from the left side of the court, until the end of “the tie-break” always respecting the aforementioned order of service.

A “tie-break” set will be won by 7-6. The player of the pair that did not begin serving in the “tie-break” will commence servicing in the next set.

## ALTERNATIVE SCORING METHODS

The “no advantage” (gold point) may be used as an alternative scoring method when the score is deuce. This is a sudden death scenario and is used as a way of speeding up a match result.

The receiving pair will choose whether to receive the service on the right or the

left side of the court. The receiving pair cannot change positions to receive the deciding point. The pair that wins the point wins the game.

In mixed doubles matches however, the receiver must be of the same sex as the server. The receiving players cannot change positions to receive serve.

### **ALTERNATIVE PRO-AM SET (Best of 9 games)**

The first pair to win FIVE games wins the set. Upon a pair achieving five games, the Pro-Am set (9 games) must at all times be completed. Example scores: 9-0, 8-1, 7-2, 6-3, 5-4.

This scoring method is commonly used for league games, un-official tournaments, and/or Pro-Amateur events.

Pro-Amateur events: When professionals/competitors partner an amateur/club player to compete together against other teams of the same setup.

### **ALTERNATIVE THIRD TIE-BREAK GAME (10 points)**

When the score is tied at one set all, a tie-break game can be played to decide the winner. This tie-break is final and replaces the last set.

The first pair to win ten points wins the tie-break and the match, again with a 2-point clearance.

This option for the third set must be mentioned before the commencement of the match and agreed by all players.

Balls will not be changed at the start of the this tie-break, even if a ball change is due.

# TIMES

## TIME DELAYS

- The tournament referee will award a walk over (WO) if a player arrives 10 minutes after the official start time of the match.
- Before the start of the match, there will be an obligatory 5-minute knock up between players.
- After the first game of each set and during a tie-break, play will be continuous and the players must change ends without a rest period.
- A maximum; of twenty (20) seconds is allowed between points.
- A maximum; of ninety (90) seconds will be granted for changing ends.
- A maximum; of twenty (20) seconds will be granted for changes of end in a tie-break.
- A maximum rest period of one hundred twenty (120) seconds will be granted at the end of each set.
- When scheduling matches one after the other - The start of the following match must be considered to be at least 20 minutes after the end of the previous one unless players agree otherwise.

The aforementioned rest time starts from the moment one-point finishes until the following point begins with the serve. Note. If due to unforeseen circumstances a players clothing, shoes or equipment needs to be replaced an additional period of time (within reason) will be allowed for the player to solve the problem. If a match has to be suspended due to rain, lack of light, accidents, etc. when the match restarts the players have the right to a warm up in agreement with the following:

- a) 0 to 5-minute suspension = No knock up
- b) 6 to 20-minute suspension = 3-minute knock up
- c) Over 21-minute suspension = 5-minute knock up

In the case of injury or a treatable medical condition the player will be granted one 3-minute break for treatment, which may be repeated in the following two changes of side but within the change-of-end regulation time. Medical attention will only be given once to each player and may not be ceded to his or her companion. In case of an accident as an indirect result of the game, but which affects one of the players, the tournament umpire may use their discretion to grant a period of time for treatment not in excess of 15 minutes. If a player has a bleeding wound, they will not be able to continue the match.

# POSITIONS

## POSITION OF THE PLAYERS

Each pair of players will be on either side of the net at either end of the court. The player who is serving (server) puts the ball in play diagonally and the opposing player (returner) positioned diagonally will return the ball.

The player who receives can be in any part of their side of the court, as can their partner and the servers partner.

All players must be within the court surroundings positioned on their side of the court for the point to commence.

## CHOICE OF ENDS & SERVICE

The choice of ends, who serves first and who receives should be decided by the toss of a coin. The pair who wins the toss may choose between:

- a) Serving or receiving first. In which case the other pair will choose which an end of the court.
  
- b) End of the court for the first game. In which case the other pair may choose to serve or receive.
  
- c) Request that the opponents choose first.

Once the order of serve and the ends have been decided, both pairs tell the umpire who will be the first to serve and receive.

## CHANGE OF ENDS

Players must change ends after the 1st, 3rd and every subsequent odd game in the set.

In the tiebreak, players will change ends after every 6 points. If case of error and the players do not change ends, the correction should be made as soon as the mistake is discovered, following the correct order. All points won before the error was discovered are valid. In the case that the mistake is discovered after a faulty first serve is taken, the server will be able to repeat their first serve.

# THE SERVE

All points begin with the service. If the first service is not valid the server is allowed a second service:

- Both feet must be behind the service line at all times, and between the imaginary prolongation of the central line of serve and the sidewall (service box) and must remain there until the ball has been served.
- The server must bounce the ball on the ground within the service box in which they find themselves to carry out the serve.
- The server may not touch the service line with their feet, nor the imaginary central line.
- The height of the ball being served must be at or below the waist level at the moment of striking, and the player must have at least one foot in contact with the ground.
- The serve must be hit diagonally across the net and bounce within the lines that limit the receiver's box. The return of serve is played and the ball is in play until one side wins the point. The following service is taken from the left and served diagonally to the right and so on alternatively.
- A player may not walk, run or jump while serving.
- Small foot movements, which do not affect the adopted service position, will be accepted.
- At the moment contact is made with the ball, or in an intentional attempt to hit the ball, it will be considered a serve.
- Before starting each set the players may choose which one of them will serve first during the set. Once the order has been established it may not be changed until the beginning of the following set.
- If a player serves out of turn, the player who should have served must do so as soon as the error is discovered. All points won before the error, are valid.
- The server will not serve until the player receiving is ready. However, the player receiving will adapt within reasonable to the rhythm of the server and will be ready to receive the service when the server is ready

to serve.

- It will not be possible to allege a `not ready` call if an attempt has been made to return the serve.

## SERVICE FAULTS

- The server misses the ball when trying to hit it.
- The ball bounces outside the receiver´s box (the lines are counted as good).
- The ball hits the server, his companion or any object worn or carried by either.
- The ball bounces in the receiver´s box and touches the metallic fence around the court before the second bounce.
- The ball bounces in the receiver´s box and bounces out of court directly through the gates of a court, without a safety zone and therefore with no out of court plays authorized.

## LET SERVICE

### LET SERVICE (NET CORD)

The service will be repeated (let) if:

- The ball served touches the net or the supporting posts (if these are within the area of play) and then lands in the receiver´s box, as long as it does not touch the metallic fence before the second bounce.
- The ball after touching the net or posts (if within the game area) hits any player or article carried or worn.
- The ball served when the receiver is not ready.
- If there is a “let” on the first serve, it should be repeated. If the “let” is on the second serve, the server will have only one more serve.

# REPEATING A POINT

## REPETITION OR LET POINT

A point in dispute is a 'let' (repeated) if:

- The ball splits during the game.
- Any element not part of the game invades the court area.
- In general, any interruption to the match due to unexpected situations unconnected to the players.
- If a player considers that according to regulation a 'let' situation has arisen they must let the umpire know immediately. If the play continues the player loses the right to a 'let'.
- Once the 'let' has been requested the Umpire decides if it is appropriate. If not the player loses the point.

# BALL IN PLAY

- Each pair of players must hit the ball alternately.
- The ball will be in play from the moment in which a valid service takes place.
- If the ball in play hits any part of the court after having bounced in the opponent's ground, it will remain in play and should be returned before it bounces for the second time.

Parts of the court as mentioned above refer to the insides of the walls, the metallic mesh fence that encloses the court, the ground, net, and net posts. The mesh and frame in its entirety will be considered as part of the fence.

# RETURN OF SERVE

- The player who receives will have to wait for the ball to bounce within their service box and hit it before it bounces on the ground for the second time.
- Each player will receive serve alternatively during the game and once the order has been decided it may not be altered during that set or tie-break but may at the beginning of a new set.
- If during a match or tie-break, the receiving order is altered by the receiving players, they will have to continue in this manner until the end of the game or tie-break in which the mistake occurred. In the following games of that set, the players will adopt the positions initially selected. - If the ball hits one of the receiving players or their padel bat whilst receiving a serve before it bounces it will be considered a point in favor of the server.

# INTERFERENCE

Interference is when a player with a deliberate or involuntary action, puts off an opponent during the execution of a shot. The umpire in the first instance will award the point to the opponent. If involuntary and the player who interfered has won the point in which case a 'let' will be called and the point repeated.

# CORRECT RETURN

The return is correct if:

- After being hit the ball is volleyed by either one of the opposing team. Or if it hits any part of the opposing team's body, clothing or even the padel bat.
- The ball after being hit bounces directly into the opposing court or hits the wall in the player's own court first and it then bounces into the opponent's court.
- The ball bounces in the opponent's court and then hits the metallic fence or one of the walls.
- As a result of the direction and force with which the ball is hit, it bounces in the opponent's court and then; goes out of court, hits the ceiling, the lights or any other object not related to the court.
- The ball touches the net or net posts, and then lands in the opponent's court.
- The ball in play hits an object located on the ground of the opponent's court not related to or part of the court (e.g. another ball).
- The ball is "scooped" or pushing the ball over the net will be considered a correct return provided the player has not hit it twice, the impact takes place during the same movement and the natural exit of the ball does not vary substantially.
- The returned ball bounces in the opponent's court in the angle where the wall joins the ground (a corner).
- Authorized out of court play. If the ball is hit from outside the court the return will be valid.

# POINT WON

If after the ball bounces in the opponent's court the ball then goes out of the court through a hole in the metallic fence, or gets stuck in the court structure.

# POINT LOST

Players will lose a point if:

- Either of the players, their padel bat or anything worn or carried touches the net, net posts, the tension cable or any part of the opponent's court while the ball is in play.
- The ball bounces for a second time before being returned.
- If a player hits the ball twice. (Double hit).
- If the player hits the ball before it has gone over the net.
- Authorized out of court play. Only if authorized, the dividing vertical post in the doors is considered a neutral zone for any of the four players; they may touch or hold on to it.
- When the ball, after bouncing, goes over the marked limit (outer perimeter) of the court (lateral or end) or through the gate.
- If a player returns the ball, either directly or hitting it off the walls of their court and without bouncing first it hits the walls of the opponent's court, the metallic fence or any element not related to or located on the ground of the opponent's court.
- If a player returns a ball, either directly or off the walls of their court and the ball hits the net or net posts and then directly onto one of the walls of the opposite court, the fence or any element not related to or located on the ground of the opponent's court.
- If the ball hits any part of the players or their equipment apart from the

padel bat after being hit by the opposing team.

- If the ball is hit with a padel bat that has been launched at it, not supported at the handle by the player.
- If any player jumps over the net while the point is being played.
- If both players simultaneously or consecutively hit the ball, the point will be lost. One member of the team may only play the ball. It is not considered a double hit when a pair of players tries to hit the ball simultaneously, one hits it and the other hits their teammate's padel bat.
- If the player who hits the ball has one or both feet out of their court. Unless out of court play has been authorized.
- A player serves two consecutive faults.

Authorized out of court play. When the ball, after bouncing correctly, goes out of court over the end wall. If it goes over the sidewall or through the door the point is lost when the ball bounces for a second time or touches any element not related to the court.

## OUT OF COURT PLAY

### AUTHORIZED OUT OF COURT PLAY

The players are authorized to leave the court to play the ball whenever the court fulfills the conditions established in the section pertaining to The Court, safety area and out of court play.

# CHANGE OF BALLS

The competition organizers must announce the following in advance:

1. After an established odd number of games. The warm up period is counted as two games and the “tie break” as one, for the change of balls.
2. A ball change will not take place at the beginning of a “tie break”. In this case the change of balls will be delayed until the beginning of the second game of the following set.
3. At the beginning of a set.

In cases where ball changes should occur after an established number of games and are not, the error must be corrected when it is the turn of the team that should have served with new balls before the error occurred. After this the balls will be changed during the match as originally anticipated. When a ball is lost, broken, or sufficiently deteriorated and differs from the others the Umpire will supervise a change with a ball in the same conditions as those in play. Otherwise, a complete set of new balls will be provided.

# BEHAVIOUR

Players and teams may receive advice and instruction during a game from a properly accredited coach during competitions as long as it takes place during rest times.

The players or teams who play in the final of a match must participate in the prize giving held at the end of the competition, unless they cannot due to a verified injury, indisposition, or with reasonable cause.

A match once started must be continuous and no player may delay it without reasonable cause over and above the times permitted in Rule 2, of the Match Regulations.

Audible obscenity is defined as the use of words well known and understood to be offensive and being spoken loud enough to be heard by the Tournament Umpire, spectators and organizers of the match. Visible obscenities are defined as signs or gestures made with hands, padel bats, balls or any other part of the body that commonly have an obscene meaning or offend the general public.

The players may not throw or hit the ball violently, in any direction, out-of-bounds, or at players on the other side of the net when not in play.

Players may not at any time throw, deliberately hit any part of the court, ground, net, Umpire 's chair, walls, metallic fence or any other element of the facilities with their padel bat.

Aggressive, unsportsmanlike behavior, attitudes and gestures by players will be treated with particular gravity, when made towards the Tournament Umpire, opponents, companions, spectators or any person related to the tournament. It will be judged as verbal abuse, insults and likewise any oral expression that, without being considered insulting is contemptuous or intrinsic to belittling

behavior.

All the players must try their best to win the match in which they are participating.

Players must at all times behave in a sportsman like manner avoiding any action which goes against the sporting spirit, the competition or in general the respect of established norms or fair play.

Infraction during the course of the match of any of the aforementioned aspects will be sanctioned by the competition Judge/Umpire in agreement with the following Table of Penalties. Independent from the above the Competition Committee will be able to impose other penalties for the same infraction, as a result of the application of the Sport Discipline Regulation.

## TABLE OF PENALTIES

- First infraction: WARNING
- Second infraction: WARNING WITH POINT LOSS
- Third infraction: WARNING WITH DISQUALIFICATION
- The infractions of both players and even of the accredited coach will be accumulated.

In case of a very serious infraction (severe physical or verbal aggression) the Judge/Umpire will authorize the immediate disqualification of the player or coach who committed the fault. The disqualified player loses the match and may not continue in the competition. If an accredited technician, the captain or another player in the competition being held is disqualified they will have to withdraw from the tournament.