



## Pickleball Backgrounder

Pickleball is a fun court sport played on a badminton-sized court with the net lowered to 34 inches at the center. It is played with a perforated plastic ball similar to a whiffle ball and wood or composite paddles about twice the size of ping-pong paddles. It can be played indoors or outdoors, is easy for beginners to learn – but can develop into a fast-paced, competitive game for experienced players. In addition to being fun, the game has developed a reputation for its friendly and social nature.

Pickleball can be played as singles or doubles. New players can learn the game quickly in a single session. No special apparel is needed – just something comfortable and appropriate for a court sport. Equipment is inexpensive and easily portable. The game can be played by all ages and is particularly popular in school P.E. programs and senior citizen hangouts.

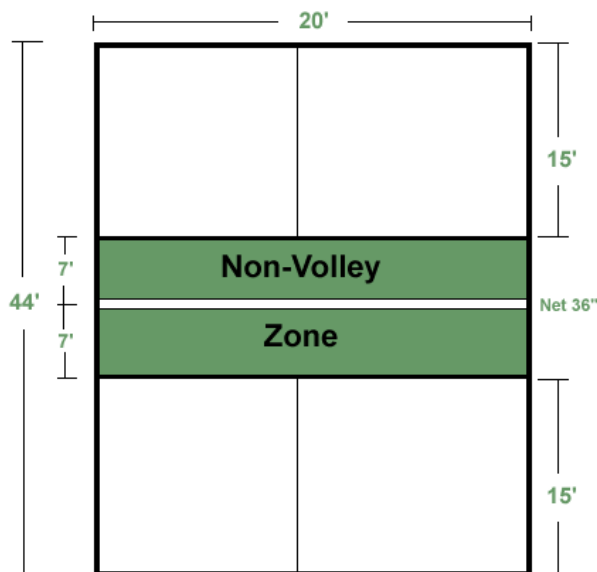
The sport is governed by the USA Pickleball Association (USAPA), which maintains the rules, promotes the sport, sanctions tournaments, and provides player rankings.

### History

Pickleball was invented in 1965 on Bainbridge Island, a short ferry ride from Seattle, by three dads – Joel Pritchard, Bill Bell, and Barney McCallum - whose kids were bored with their usual summertime activities. It evolved from the original handmade equipment and simple rules into a popular sport throughout North America and now taking off in India, Singapore and New Zealand.

The name pickleball came from the co-inventors' family cocker spaniel who chased stray balls and hid them in the bushes.

### The Court



A pickleball court is 20' x 44' for both singles and doubles. The net is hung at 36" at the ends and hangs 34" in the middle. A non-volley zone extends 7' back from the net on each side.



**The Equipment**

The paddles used in pickleball are usually constructed of wood or a high-tech composite. The paddles range in cost from \$20-99. The combined length and width of the paddle may not exceed 24 inches. There are no restrictions on paddle thickness or weight.



An official pickleball is made of plastic and is between 2 7/8 inches to 3 inches in diameter and weighs between .08 and 1.02 ounces. There are no color restrictions

The USAPA has sanctioned the Cosom, Jugs, Easton, Mach-Z, Rawlings and Dura 40/56 balls for official tournament play.



**Places to Play**

Virtually every state and Canadian province has multiple places to play pickleball. Senior residence communities, YMCAs, local community recreation centers, schools and parks are just some of the places likely to have pickleball courts.





See <http://usapa.org/ptp/index.php> for comprehensive listings of places to play.

## **Tournaments**



The USAPA supports and sanctions tournaments throughout the United States.

See <http://usapa.org/schedule/index.php> for a current list of upcoming pickleball tournaments.

In 2009, the USAPA inaugurated the first National Pickleball Tournament held in Buckeye Arizona. Over 400 players participated in divisions for all ages.

In 2011, the National Pickleball Tournament will once again be held in Buckeye Arizona. See <http://usapa.org/nationals/> for detailed information.

## **The USAPA**

The USAPA was created in 2005 to promote the sport. It maintains the official rules, sanctions tournaments, provides player rankings and produces the annual National Pickleball Tournament. It is run by a volunteer board of directors and supported by thousands of dues paying members.

The USAPA provides assistance through programs such as:

- Ambassadors – over 300 regional and local ambassadors promote the sport at a local level, providing information and training.
- Training Grants - The 2010 USAPA Grant program will provide funds to subsidize training programs for school students, local residents, organizations or individuals who are novices to Pickleball and do not belong to a Pickleball club or other organized group.
- Pickleball 4 All – This program pairs USAPA volunteers with PE teachers, juniors and adults to mainstream pickleball as a lifetime sport.



**Useful USAPA Links**

About the USAPA - <http://usapa.org/aboutUSAPA/index.php>

USAPA Official Rules - <http://usapa.org/officialrules/>

The History of Pickleball - <http://usapa.org/aboutUSAPA/history.php>

The USAPA Newsletter - <http://usapa.org/news/index.php/nl/>

Places to Play Pickleball - <http://usapa.org/ptp/index.php>

Pickleball Tournament Schedule - <http://usapa.org/schedule/index.php>

USAPA Memberships - <http://usapa.org/memberships/index.php>

Local and Regional Ambassadors - <http://usapa.org/ambassador/>

Pickleball Promotional Video - [http://usapa.org/whatis\\_pball/video\\_promo.html](http://usapa.org/whatis_pball/video_promo.html)

Contact the USAPA - <http://www.usapa.org/aboutUSAPA/index.php#contact>

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