

International Federation of Pickleball

Rating Descriptions

Revised November 1, 2012

The IFP Rating System has been created to help describe differences in the various skill levels.

Rating	Rating Description
1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New and have only minimal knowledge of the game and the rules.
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited to some rallies. • Learning how to serve. • Developing a forehand. • Fails to return easy balls frequently and occasionally misses the ball entirely. • Played a few games and is learning the court lines, scoring, and some basic rules of the game.
2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustains a short rally with players of equal ability. • Demonstrating the basic shot strokes – forehand, backhand, volley, overhead and the serve, but has obvious weaknesses in most strokes. • Familiar with court positioning in doubles play.
2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes longer lasting slow-paced rallies. • Makes most easy volleys and uses some backhands, but needs more work on developing shot strokes. • Beginning to approach the non-volley zone to hit volleys. • Aware of the “soft game.” • Knowledge of the rules has improved. • Court coverage is weak but improving.
3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More consistent on the serve and service return and when returning medium-paced balls. • Demonstrates improved skills with all the basic shot strokes and shot placement but lacks control when trying for direction, depth, or power on their shots. • Beginning to attempt lobs and dinks with little success and doesn’t fully understand when and why they should be used.
3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates improved stroke dependability with directional control on most medium-paced balls and some faster-paced balls. • Demonstrates improved control when trying for direction, depth and power on their shots. • Needs to develop variety with their shots. • Exhibits some aggressive net play. • Beginning to anticipate opponent’s shots. • Learning about the importance of strategy and teamwork in doubles.

4.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent and dependable strokes, including directional control and depth on both forehand and backhand shots. • Reliable serves, lobs, overheads, approach shots and volleys and can use spin shots with some success. • Occasionally can force errors when serving. • Rallies may be lost due to impatience. • Uses the dink shot and drop shots to slow down or change the pace of the game. • Demonstrates 3rd shot strategies – drop shots, lobs, and fast-paced ground strokes. • Aggressive net play and teamwork in doubles is evident. • Fully understands the rules of the game and can play by them.
4.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beginning to master the use of power and spin, can successfully execute all shots, can control the depth of their shots, and can handle pace. • Beginning to master the dink shots and drop shots and their importance to the game. • Beginning to master 3rd shot choices. • Displays sound footwork and moves well enough to get to the non-volley zone whenever required. • Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to the opponent's strengths and weaknesses and court position. • Serves with power and accuracy and can also vary the speed and spin of the serve. • Understands the importance of "keeping the ball in play" and the effect of making errors. • Making good choices in shot selection. • Anticipates the opponent's shots resulting in good court positioning.
5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastered all the skills – all shot types, touch, spin, serves, with control and can use them as weapons. • Excellent shot anticipation, extremely accurate shot placement and regularly hit winning shots. • Forces opponents into making errors by "keeping the ball in play." • Mastered the dink and drop shots. • Mastered the 3rd shot choices and strategies. • Uses soft shots, dinks and lobs to set up offensive situations. • Mastered pickleball strategies and can vary strategies and styles of play in competitive or tournament matches. • Dependable in stressful situations as in tournament match play. • Athletic ability, quickness, agility, and raw athleticism are also qualities that are sometimes what separates the top players from those near the top.