

Tips for Winning at Pickleball (Converted from negative version of how to Lose)

Don't Serve really hard. First priority is to get it in; should miss one serve a month.

Stand 1 foot behind the playing area to receive a serve....but be on your toes and ready to run up, if the serve is hit short or at a sharp angle.

Return the serve soft and deep so your opponents have to let the ball drop before they can hit it and you can get to the volley line and actually win the volley. If you return serves hard this causes lots of hits to go into the net or over the end line and gives you less time to get to the non-volley line so you're still trying to move in when the ball gets back to you. You get lots of chances to hit balls at your feet this way.

Use a softer shot toward the side lines but nearer the middle of the court instead of aiming a "kill" shot at the side lines.

Make controlled shots instead of rushing your shots, which causes all kinds of mistakes. Your paddle will make consistent contact with the ball at the same angles.

Stand in center of your half so that you don't take a good shot away from your partner and you leave the outside area of your court uncovered and you will not leave the center open for the dreaded center-line shot.

On overhead slams, use a nice follow-through to control the ball instead of snapping your wrist.

Avoid Poaching. Though a good shot at times, this leaves your part of the court open for return shots to the space you just vacated. Your opponents will drool over all that open space.

Avoid putting lots of spin on a lot of shots standing in one place and admire that crazy bounce.

Return the ball where opponent has to reach for it, instead of playing catch and hitting it right back to the opponent who hit it to you.

Keep your eyes on the ball. Avoid lifting your eyes as you swing at balls near your feet; A common fault that makes it more difficult to get your paddle at the correct angle, or even make contact.

Avoid "watching" where you are going to hit the ball. Like the item above, this adds a third element to hand-eye coordination and greatly reduces the probability of making a good shot plus your opponents will know where you're trying to hit it.

Be leaning forward on your toes, ready to move forward or side-step. . Avoid back peddling, to return a hard hit toward your feet. No one can consistently make controlled shots when moving backwards.

Get to a set position before the ball gets to you. You can hit the ball with more control when you are stationery.

Hold your paddle high, above the waist, so you don't have to raise it quickly

Be patient at the non-volley line with a dinking game. If you try to end the rally quickly you are more likely to commit a fault by hitting the ball into the net. Wait for a ball above the net to put away...inside the lines.