

Pickleball

Revised November 2019

Refer to the 55+ BC Games 'General Rules Book' for additional general rules that apply to all sports.

1. Age Categories

Men 55-64, 65+

Women 55-64, 65+

Predetermined rated skill levels 3.0, 3.25, 3.5, 3.75, 4.0, 4.5+

2. Events (for **all age categories** and skill levels as indicated)

- Men's singles 3.5, 3.75, 4.0, 4.5+ levels only
- Women's singles 3.5, 3.75, 4.0, 4.5+ levels only
- Men's doubles (all skill levels)
- Women's doubles (all skill levels)
- Mixed doubles (all skill levels)

3. Participation

- A maximum of 8 participants per event per rated skill level **per age category** per zone for singles events, a maximum of 12 participants (6 teams) per event per rated skill level **per age category** per zone for doubles events
- Participants may enter a maximum of three events
- Participants age **75+ can move down one skill level.**
- Participants may not play down below their rated skill level, unless events are combined at the discretion of the Host Society Sport Chair due to lack of numbers. Participants can play down in age category as per the General Rules Book.**
- Participants may only enter one level in the same event. (e.g. 3.25 playing in the mixed event cannot also play in the 3.5 mixed event)
- Gold medal winners in an event must move up one skill level in that particular event only, even if they are not playing with the same partner. The exception is if they are age 75 or older.

4. Competition

- International Federation of Pickleball rules **for general play shall apply with 55+ BC Games exceptions.**
- The Host Society Sport Chair will post schedules, draws and results at the venue throughout the competition. The format of the tournament will also be posted at the venue.**
- Tournament games will be played first to 11 wins the game. Playoffs will be **15 points**, win by 2 points with a **cap at 19, then first to 19.**
- All participants play, **where possible**, a minimum of five games per event using a round robin process, but give the Host Society Sport Chair leeway to adjust if necessary.
- Balls to be determined by the Host Society Sport Chair, subject to approval by the Rules Committee Chair.
- The Host Society Sport Chair will determine the pools/flights that will be used in a specific event as well as the best size of the pools/flights for the round robin format. The Host Society Sport Chair will determine how many teams from each pool/flight will advance to the playoff and medal rounds to determine the overall Gold, Silver and Bronze medal winners for the event.

- g) If a team or individual does not show after the final schedules are posted their opponents will receive a score of 11-0 and a win.
- h) The Host Society Sport Chair will have the prerogative to move participants up a skill level, or to combine two skill levels after contacting the participants, to ensure adequate games are played by participants
- i) The Host Society Sport Chair will attempt to have a participant play only one event in one day.
- j) Pickleball will be scheduled to be played from Wednesday to Saturday.
- k) **Where possible, all games should be refereed. Medal and playoff games must be referred, Gold medal games to have 1 referee and 4 linespersons (level of referee as determined by Pickleball BC)**

5. Medals

- a) Gold, Silver and Bronze medals will be awarded to the top three participants in all events and **in all age categories.**

6. Zone Playdowns

- a) Zone playdowns will be held in all events and skill level categories where sufficient numbers make this necessary.

7. Rating Descriptions **(adapted from International Federation of Pickleball)**

a) 3.0 Skill Rating

- Forehand – ability to hit a medium paced shot. Lacks directional intent and consistency.
- Backhand – avoids using a backhand. Lacks directional intent and consistency.
- Serve/return – able to hit a medium pace shot. Lack depth, direction and consistency.
- Dink – not able to consistently sustain a dink rally. Not yet developed the ability to control this shot.
- 3rd shot – generally hits a medium paced ball with little direction.
- Volley – able to hit a medium paced shot. Lacks direction/inconsistent.
- Strategy – understands fundamentals. Is learning proper court positioning. Knows that fundamental rules and can keep score and is now playing tournaments.

b) 3.25 Skill Rating

- Beginning to understand the strategy of the game such as:
 - i. Not necessary to hit hard shorts all the time
 - ii. Hit to open spaces
 - iii. Generally keep ball in middle of court
 - iv. Play to opponents weaknesses
- Understand to usually return ball deep
- Understand to use a variety of shots to keep opponents on the defensive
- But have difficulty in consistently following the two above points.

c) 3.5 Skill Rating

- Forehand – improved stroke development with moderate level of shot control.
- Backhand – learning stroke form and starting to develop consistency but will avoid if possible.
- Serve/return – consistently gets serve/return in play with limited ability to control depth.

- Dink – Increased consistency, with limited ability to control height/depth. Sustains medium length rallies. Starting to understand variations of pace.
- 3rd shot – developing the drop shot in a way to get to the net.
- Volley – is able to volley medium-paced shots thereby developing control.
- Strategy – moves quickly towards the non-volley zone (NVZ) when opportunity is there. Acknowledges difference between hard game and soft game and is starting to vary own game during recreation and tournament play. Can sustain short rallies. Is learning proper court positioning. Basic knowledge of stacking and understands situations where it can be effective.

d) 3.75 Skill Rating

- Have good but inconsistent directional control
- Can hit to depth occasionally but too infrequently
- Rallies are long and athletic
- Short games (dinks and drop shots) are an integral part of game strategy – not always executed properly, but attempted.

e) 4.0 Skill Rating

- Forehand – consistently hits with depth and control. Is still perfecting shot selection and timing.
- Backhand – has improved stroke mechanics and has moderate success at hitting a backhand consistently.
- Serve/return – places a high majority of serves/returns with varying depth and speed.
- Dink – increased consistency with moderate ability to control height/depth. May end dink rally too soon due to lack of patience. Is beginning to understand difference between attackable balls and those that are not.
- 3rd shot – selectively mixing up soft shots with power shots to create an advantage with inconsistent results.
- Volley – able to volley a variety of shots at different speeds. Is developing consistency and control. Starting to understand the block/re-set volley.
- Strategy – aware of partners' position on the court and is able to move as a team. Demonstrates ability to change direction in an offensive manner. Demonstrates a broad knowledge of the rules of the game. Has a moderate number of unforced errors per game. Solid understanding of stacking and when and how it could be used in match play. Beginning to identify opponent's weaknesses and attempts to formulate game plan to attack weaknesses. Beginning to seek out more competitive play.

f) 4.5 Skill Rating

- Forehand – high level of consistency. Uses pace and depth to generate opponents' error or set up next shot.
- Backhand – can effectively direct the ball with varying depth and paces with good consistency.
- Serve/return – serves with power, accuracy, and depth and can also vary the speed and spin of the serve.
- Dink – Ability to place ball with high success at changing shot types while playing both consistently and with offensive intent. Recognizes and attempts to hit attackable dinks.
- 3rd Shot – consistently executes effective 3rd shot strategies that are not easily returned for advantage. Able to intentionally and consistently place the ball.

- Volley – able to block hard volleys directed at them and can consistently drop then in the NVZ. Comfortable hitting swinging volleys. Hits overhead shots consistently, often as putaways.
- Strategy – has good footwork and moves laterally, backward, and forward well. Uses weight transfer for more efficient footwork. Able to change direction with ease. Very comfortable playing at the no-volley zone. Communicates and moves well with partner – easily ‘stacks’ court positions. Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to the opponent’s strengths and weaknesses and court position. Limited number of unforced errors.