

Rules - Ping Pong tournament

1. A MATCH IS PLAYED IN 3 GAMES

A match is played in 3 games: 2 simples and 1 double. The winner is the best 2 of 3 games.

2. THE PLAYERS FOR THE 3 GAMES SHOULD BE DIFFERENT

The players for the singles must be different. Unless impossible, the players for the double should be different from those for the singles.

3. GAMES ARE PLAYED TO 21 POINTS

A game is played to 21 points. A game must be won by two points.

4. FLIP A COIN TO KNOW WHO SERVES FIRST

To know who serve first, the players toss a coin. Who wins the toss choose to serve first or not.

5. ALTERNATE SERVES EVERY TWO POINTS

Each side of the table alternates serving two points at a time.

EXCEPTION: After tied 20-20 ("deuce"), service alternates at every point. Can you lose on a serve in ping pong? Yes! There is no separate rule for serving on game point.

6. TOSS THE BALL STRAIGHT UP WHEN SERVING

How do you serve the ball in ping pong? Hold the ball in your open palm, behind your end of the table. Toss straight up, and strike it on the way down. It must hit your side of the table and then the other side.

NOTE: Once the ball leaves the server's hand it is in play, and so counts as the receiver's point if the ball is missed or mis-hit.

7. THE SERVE CAN LAND ANYWHERE IN SINGLES

There is no restriction on where the ball lands on your side or your opponent's side of the table. It can bounce two or more times on your opponent's side (if so, that's your point), bounce over the side, or even hit the edge.

8. DOUBLES SERVES MUST GO RIGHT COURT TO RIGHT COURT

The serve must bounce in the server's right court, and receiver's right court (NOTE: landing on center line is fair). Doubles partners switch places after their team serves twice.

9. A SERVE THAT TOUCHES THE NET ON THE WAY OVER IS A "LET"

Can the ball hit the net in ping pong? Yes, during a RALLY, if it touches the top of the net and then otherwise lands as a legitimate hit. BUT not when serving. If a served ball hits the net on the way over and otherwise legally bounces in play, it's a "let" serve and is done over. There is no limit on how many times this can happen.

10. ALTERNATE HITTING IN A DOUBLES RALLY

Doubles partners must alternate hitting balls in a rally, no matter where the ball lands on the table.

11. VOLLEYS ARE NOT ALLOWED

Can you hit the ball before it bounces in ping pong? No, this results in a point for your opponent.

NOTE: When your opponent hits a ball that sails over your end of the table without touching it and then hits you or your paddle, that is still your point.

12. IF YOUR HIT BOUNCES BACK OVER THE NET BY ITSELF IT IS YOUR POINT

If you hit the ball in a rally or on a serve and it bounces back over the net after hitting your opponent's side of the table (due to extreme spin), without your opponent touching it, that is your point.

13. AN "EDGE" BALL BOUNCING OFF THE HORIZONTAL TABLE TOP SURFACE IS GOOD

An otherwise legal serve or hit may contact the top edge of the horizontal table top surface and be counted as valid, even if it bounces sidewise. The vertical sides of the table are NOT part of the legal playing surface.

14. HONOR SYSTEM APPLIES TO DISAGREEMENTS

If no referee is present during a match and the players disagree on a certain call, the "honor system" applies and the players should find a way to agree, or play the point over. Ping pong carries a tradition of fierce but fair play. Help us keep it that way!