



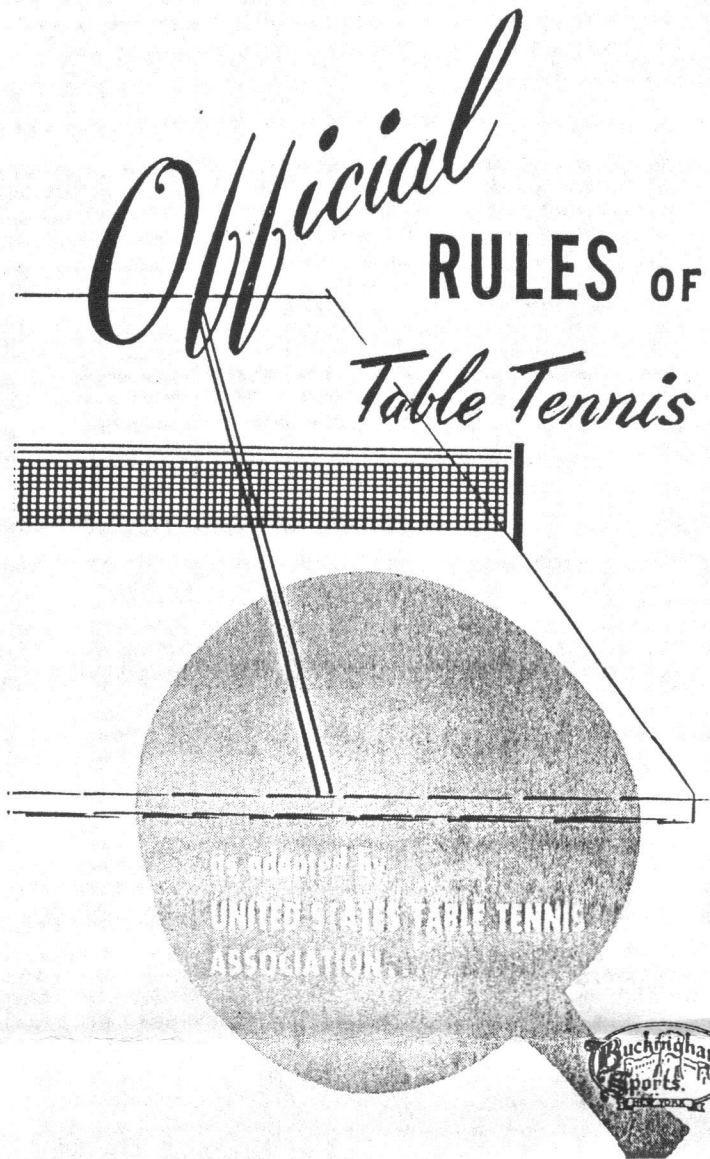
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LAWS OF TABLE TENNIS

(Adopted by the ITTF and USTTA for international competition, together with 3 Close Laws adopted by the USTTA for events sanctioned by it and its affiliates.)

SINGLES

1. **THE TABLE.** The table shall be in surface rectangular, 9 ft. in length, 5 ft. in width; it shall be supported in such a way that its upper surface shall be 2 ft. 6 ins. above the floor, and shall lie in a horizontal plane.

It shall be made of any material and shall yield a uniform bounce of not less than 8 ins. and not more than 9 ins. when a standard ball is dropped from a height of 12 ins. above its surface.

The upper surface of the table shall be termed the "playing surface," it shall be non-reflecting, of a dark color with a white line $\frac{3}{4}$ in. broad along each edge.

The lines at the 5 ft. edges or ends of the playing surface shall be termed "end lines." The lines at the 9 ft. edges or sides of the playing surface shall be termed "side lines."

2. **THE NET AND ITS SUPPORTS.** The playing surface shall be divided into two courts of equal size by a net running parallel to the end lines and 4 ft. 6 ins. from each. The net and its suspension together shall be 6 ft. in length; its upper part along its whole length shall be 6 ins. above the playing surface; its lower part along the whole length shall be close to the playing surface. The net shall be attached at each end to an upright post 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins. high; the outside limits of each post shall be 6 ins. outside the sideline on the same side. (Note: The USTTA approves only nets suspended by a cord.)

3. **THE BALL.** The ball shall be spherical. It shall be made of celluloid, pale in color; it shall not be less than 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ ins. nor more than 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ ins. in circumference; it shall not be less than 37 grains (2.40 grammes) nor more than 39 grains (2.53 grammes) in weight. (37-41 grains in U. S. See USTTA Close Law 2.)

4. **THE RACKET.** The racket may be any material, size, shape or weight.

5. **THE SCORING OF POINTS.** A game shall be won by the player who first wins 21 points, unless both players shall have scored 20 points when the winner of the game shall be he who first wins two points more than his opponent.

6. **THE CHOICE OF ENDS AND SERVICE.** The choice of ends and the right to be server or striker-out, in every match shall be decided by toss, provided that, if the winner of the toss choose the right to be server or striker-out, the other player shall have the choice of ends, and vice-versa, and provided that the winner of the toss may, if he prefer it require the other player to make the first choice.

7. **THE CHANGE OF ENDS AND SERVICE.** After five points the striker-out shall become the server, and the server the striker-out, and so on after each five points until the end of the game or the score 20 all. At the score 20 all the striker-out shall become the server, and the server the striker-out, and so on after each point until the end of the game. The player who served first in a game shall be striker-out first in the immediately subsequent game, and so on until the end of a match.

The player who started at one end in a game shall start at the other in the immediately subsequent game, and so on until the end of the match. Where the match consists of only one game, or where it consists of more than one game, in the deciding game of the match, the players shall change ends at the score 10.

8. **OUT OF ORDER OF ENDS OR SERVICE.** If a player serve out of his turn, the player who ought to have served shall serve as soon as the mistake is discovered, unless a group of five services shall have been completed before such discovery, when the service in the subsequent groups of services shall continue in the same order, as if the sequence had not been discontinuous. In any circumstances, all points scored before the discovery shall be reckoned.

If the players shall not have changed ends when ends should have been changed, the players shall change ends as soon as the mistake is discovered, unless a game shall have been completed since the error, when the error shall be ignored. In any circumstances, all points scored before the discovery shall be reckoned.

9. **THE ORDER OF PLAY.** The server shall first make a good service, the striker-out shall then make a good return and thereafter server and striker-out shall each alternately make a good return.

10. **A GOOD SERVICE.** The service shall be delivered by the server releasing the ball by hand only, without imparting of spin. The ball shall then be struck so that it touch first the server's court and then, passing directly over or around the net, touch the striker-out's court.

At the moment of the impact of the racket on the ball in service, both shall be behind the end line of the server's court and between an imaginary continuation of the side lines.

11. **A GOOD RETURN.** A ball having been served or returned in play shall be struck by the player so that it pass directly over the net or round the net and touch directly the opponent's court; provided that, if the ball, having been served or returned in play, returns with its own impetus over the net or round the net, it may be struck, while still in play, by the player so that it touch directly the opponent's court.

12. **A LET.** The rest is a let:

(a) If the ball served in passing over the net touch it or its supports, provided the service either be otherwise good or be volleyed by the striker-out.

(b) If a service be delivered when the striker-out is not ready, provided, always, that he may not be deemed to be unready if he attempt to strike at the ball.

(c) If either player be prevented by an accident, not under his control, from serving a good service or making a good return.

(d) If either player lose the point, as provided in Law 13 (c), (d), (e), or Law 14 owing to an accident not within his control.

13. **A POINT.** Either player shall lose a point:

(a) If he fails to make a good service, except as provided in Law 12.

(b) If a good service or a good return having been made by his opponent, he fail to make a good return, except as provided in Law 12.

(c) If he, or his racket, or anything that he wears or carries, touch the net or its supports while the ball is in play.

(d) If he, or his racket, or anything that he wears or carries, move the playing surface while the ball is in play.

(e) If his free hand touch the playing surface while the ball is in play.

14. **A POINT.** Either player shall lose the point:

(a) If, before the ball in play shall have passed over the end lines or side lines, not yet having touched the playing surface on his side of the table since being struck by his opponent, it come in contact with him or anything that he wears or carries.

(b) If at any time he volley the ball, except as provided in Law 12 (a).

15. **IN PLAY.** The ball is in play from the moment at which it is projected or dropped from the hand in service until:

(a) It has touched one court twice consecutively.

(b) It has, except in service, touched each court alternately without having been struck by the racket intermediately.

(c) It has been struck by either player more than once consecutively.

(d) It has touched either player or anything that he wears or carries, except his racket or his racket hand below the wrist.

(e) On the volley it come in contact with the racket or the racket hand below the wrist.

(f) It has touched any object other than the net, supports, or those referred to above.

16. FURTHER DEFINITIONS. The period during which the ball is in play shall be termed a rest.

A rest the result of which is scored shall be termed a point.

A rest the result of which is not scored shall be termed a let.

The player who first strikes the ball during the rest shall be termed the server.

The player who next strikes the ball during the rest shall be termed the striker-out.

If the ball, in passing over the net, or round the net, touch it or its supports, it shall, nevertheless, be considered to have passed directly, except as referred to in Law 12 (a).

If the ball in play comes in contact with the racket or racket hand, not yet having touched the playing surface on one side of the net since last being struck on the other side, it shall be said to have been volleyed.

The racket hand is the hand carrying the racket; the free open hand is the hand not carrying the racket.

DOUBLES

17. The above Laws shall apply in the Doubles Game except as below.

18. THE TABLE. The surface of the table shall be divided into two parts by a white line $\frac{1}{8}$ in. broad, running parallel with the side lines and distant equally from each of them. This line shall be termed the service-line. The part of the table surface on the nearer side of the net and the right of the service-line in respect to the server, shall be called the server's right half court, that on the left in respect to him, server's left half court. The part of the table surface on the farther side of the net, and the left of the service-line in respect to the server, shall be called the striker-out's right half court, that on the right in respect to the server, shall be called the striker-out's left half court.

19. A GOOD SERVICE. The service shall be delivered as otherwise provided in Law 10, and so that it touch first the server's right half court or the centre line on his side of the net, and then, passing directly over or round the net, touch the striker-out's right half court or the centre line on his side of the net.

20. THE CHOICE OF ORDER OF PLAY. The pair who have the right to serve the first five services in any game shall decide which partner shall do so, and the opposing pair shall then decide similarly which shall first be striker-out.

21. THE ORDER OF SERVICE. The first five services shall be delivered by the selected partner of the pair who have the right to do so, and shall be received by the selected partner of the opposing pair. The second five services shall be delivered by the striker-out of the first five services and received by the partner of the server of the first five services. The third five services shall be delivered by the partner of the server of the first five services and received by the partner of the striker-out of the first five services. The fourth five services shall be delivered by the partner of the striker-out of the first five services and received by the server of the first five services. The fifth five services shall be delivered as the first five services. And so on, in sequence, until the end of the game or the score 20 all, when the sequence of serving and striking-out shall be uninterrupted, but each player shall serve only one service in turn until the end of the game.

In a one game match, or in the deciding game of a match of more than one game, the pair that served the first five services have the right to alter their order of striking-out or that of their opponents at the score 10.

22. OUT OF ORDER OF STRIKING-OUT. If a player act as a striker-out out of his turn, the player who ought to have acted as striker-out shall be striker-out as soon as the mistake is discovered, unless a group of five services shall be completed before such discovery, when the order of striking-out shall continue in the subsequent group of services as if the sequence had not been discontinued. In any circumstances, all points scored before the discovery shall be reckoned.

23. THE ORDER OF PLAY. The server shall first make a good service, the striker-out shall then make a good return, the partner of the server shall then make a good return, the partner of the striker-out shall then make a good return, the server shall then make a good return, and thereafter each player alternately in that sequence shall make a good return.

24. FURTHER AMENDMENTS AND ADDITIONS:

Law 6--Alter "server," and "striker-out," "winner," "he" to their respective plurals; alter "player" to "pair."

Law 7--Delete first two sentences of first paragraph. In the third sentence, first paragraph, and in the second paragraph, alter "player" to "pair," "players" to "pairs," "striker-out" to "strickers-out."

Law 12 (b)--Insert "or his partner" after "striker-out"; "they" in place of the first "he"; the "striker-out" in place of the second "he."

Law 12 (c)--Insert "any" in place of "either."

Law 12 (d)--Insert "pair" in place of "player"; "their" in place of "his."

Law 13--Insert "pair" in place of "player."

Law 13 (a) Insert "the server" instead of "he."

Law 13 (b) Insert "one of their opponents in proper sequence" in place of "his opponent"; "they" in place of "he."

Law 13 (c) Insert "either partner" in place of the first "he."

Law 13 (d) Insert "either partner" in place of the first "he."

Law 13 (e)--Insert "of either partner" after "hand" and delete "his."

Law 14--Insert "pair" instead of "player."

Law 14 (a)--Insert "their" in place of the first "his"; "one of their opponents in proper sequence" instead of "his opponent"; "either partner" instead of "him."

Law 14 (b)--Insert "either partner" in place of "he."

Law 15 (c)--Insert "any" in place of "either"; add "or by any player out of proper sequence except as provided in Law 22."

Law 15 (d)--Insert "any" in place of "either."

Add as Law 15 (g)--"In service it has touched the server's left half court or the striker-out's left half court."

APPENDIX TO LAWS

(Knotty Points: Decisions of Rules Committee)

1. EDGE BALLS. The phrase, "Table Surface" is to be interpreted as including the top edges and corners of the table-top, and a ball in play which strikes these latter is therefore good and still in play; though if it strikes evidently the side of the table-top below the edge, it becomes dead and counts against the last striker.

2. BALL RETURNED WITH EMPTY HAND. If a player drop his racket, he cannot return the ball with empty hand. (See definition, the racket hand is the hand holding the racket.)

3. RACKET THROWN AT BALL. If in returning the ball the racket leave the player's hand, it is a good return only if it were still in his hand at the moment of contact with the ball (see Law 11, a ball . . . shall be struck), and if it does not touch the net or move the table surface (Law 13 (c), (d) before the ball is out of play.

4. HAND SPIN IN SERVICE. Any form of spin in service imparted by any agency but the racket is prohibited. The umpire shall, in any case of doubt, in the first instance in each match warn the server, declaring a "let" and recommend him to serve with serving hand open and flat, fingers straight and together, thumb free. In any subsequent case of doubt, arising through failure of the server to do so, the umpire shall award the point to the striker-out.

5. MISSED SERVICE. If a player in attempting to serve miss the ball altogether, it is a lost point (Laws 10 and 15) because the ball was in play from the moment it left the server's hand, and a good service has not been made of the ball already in play.

6. VOLLEYED NET SERVICE. A net service is a let not only if otherwise good but also if volleyed by the striker-out. (See Laws 12 (a) and 14 (b)).

7. BALL FRACTURED IN PLAY. If the ball split or become otherwise fractured in play, affecting a player's return, the rest is a let (Law 12 c). It is the umpire's duty to stop play, recording a let, when he has reason to believe that the ball in play is fractured or imperfect, and to decide those cases in which the faulty ball is clearly fractured in actually going out of play, and in no way handicaps the player's return, when the point should be scored. In all cases of doubt, however, he should declare a let.

8. FIXTURES. A moving spectator, a neighboring player, a sudden noise, i.e., any neighboring object in movement (except a partner) should be regarded as an accident not under control (Law 12 c), interference from which implies a let. A stationary spectator, fixed seating the umpire, the light, a nearby table, a continuous sound of even volume, i.e., any relatively constant or motionless hazard, should not be so regarded, and complaint against interference from it during play should be regarded as void.

USTTA CLOSE LAWS

The USTTA has adopted the following 3 Close Laws, which shall apply to all sanctioned play in the U. S.:

1. EXPEDITE RULES. Use of one of the three following rules is mandatory in all sanctioned play. Refer to tournament regulations governing selection of rule to be applied.

A. Whenever in any game, the style of play is considered uninteresting to the spectators, or threatens to upset the schedule of other matches, in the opinion of the umpire, referee or referee's committee, it shall be the duty of the umpire to call a let and notify the players before the next service that that particular game will proceed under the following rule:

The server shall be permitted to hit the ball 12 times excluding the service stroke and if all such strokes are safely returned by the opponent one point shall be scored for the opponent.

Service shall alternate after each point when this rule is in force.

B. The Referees' Committee, referee or umpire shall have the power to stop any match which it considers detrimental to the game. A match in which both players fail to use offensive strokes and both continue to return the ball using chop, slow topspin or block shots, is considered detrimental to the game. When a match has been considered DETRIMENTAL TO THE GAME the same umpire will continue to keep score as before but a "Committee Judge" appointed by the Referee's Committee will call the points against the offending player.

If a player has been using defensive tactics during a game, the Committee judge will warn him that he must apply offensive strokes during his service. The server is responsible for the offensive play of the game and if his opponent uses offensive tactics he may combat them with defensive measures. **SHOULD HIS OPPONENT, HOWEVER, RESORT TO DEFENSIVE PLAY, HE MUST IMMEDIATELY RESUME AN OFFENSIVE GAME.**

The initiative and burden for offensive play is on the server. Failure to take such initiative will result in the loss of the point.

This rule will be in effect during an entire game, but not the entire match, unless invoked again by the Committee Judge.

C. Where a game be unfinished 20 minutes after its commencement, the umpire shall award the game to the player (or pair) leading, unless the two players (or pairs) shall be at equality, when he shall announce without interrupting play: "Five minutes more—the next point wins" and award the game to the player (or pair) scoring the next point.

If no further point shall have been scored, and the score thus remains at equality after the further five minutes' period thus permitted, the umpire shall terminate the game, awarding it to neither player (or pair).

In the case of a game being terminated by the time limit as above, where this is not a deciding game, the match shall continue with the next game.

The match shall be decided by the majority of games won, games awarded to neither player (or pair) being disregarded. In the case of the award of games to neither player (or pair) resulting in no majority of the allotted number of games for the match being won by either player (or pair), both players (or pairs) shall be disqualified in that event, if it be an individual event, in that tie, if it be a team event, and shall further be liable individually to such penalties as may be decided by the jury sitting as a disciplinary committee.

2. BALL WEIGHT. The ball shall weigh not less than 37 grains and not more than 41 grains.

3. TIME OUT. (a) Play shall be continuous, under penalty of forfeit, except that a player may claim five minutes' time out between the 3rd and 4th games only. (b) In case of incapacity due to accident the umpire may grant an emergency time out.