

# SKILL RATING DEFINITIONS FOR PICKLEBALL PLAYERS

**Reminder:** These skills and abilities should reflect your average day of play, not your best day of play. Your rating should be a reflection of your consistent performance.

## 2.5 Skill Level

- New Player with limited experience
- Getting the hang of keeping score and where to stand at the beginning of each point
- Able to sustain a short rally with players of like skill level
- Typically get 60% of their serves in bounds but lacking depth and accuracy
- Is more comfortable with forehand and avoids backhand- lacks consistency and accuracy with ground strokes
- Is able to volley with moderate consistency

## 3.0 Skill Level

- Able to answer yes to all of the 2.5 skill level requirements
- 100% on the basic rules and knowing where to stand each point
- Able to hit forehands with medium pace and some direction. Avoids backhand and lacks control
- Knows what a 3rd shot drop is but rarely attempts it. More comfortable with a 3rd shot drive
- Serves and returns are getting deeper and more consistent
- Approaches the non volley zone rather than stay back
- Aware of dinking and will dink occasionally but lacks control on height and placement of dinks
- Able to hit a medium paced volley but still lacks in direction and consistency
- Starting to compete in tournaments at a 3.0 level

## 3.5 Skill Level

- Able to answer yes to all of the 3.0 skill level requirements
- Has a deeper knowledge of the rules beyond the basics (including net rules, net post issues, NVZ, etc.)
- Able to hit forehands with moderate level of control and direction. Backhand is improving and becoming more consistent
- Serves and returns are deep and consistent
- Beginning to strategize and work together with their partner to build the point
- Able to sustain medium length dink rallies and developing dinking consistency
- Beginning to implement the 3rd shot drop into their game but lack consistency and control
- Able to hit volleys with control and direction
- Developing accuracy in my shots and starting to utilize this in strategies
- Developing a variety of shots in their arsenal both fast and slow shots
- Competed in tournaments and consistently won or placed in the top 3 teams in 3.0 Skill Brackets

## 4.0 Skill Level

- Able to answer yes to all of the 3.5 skill level requirements
- Has a broad knowledge of the rules of the game
- Utilizing both forehand and backhand with control and consistency
- Places high majority of serves and returns in with varying depth and speed
- Able to sustain dink rallies with varying height and depth of shot
- Able to change from power shots to soft shots and vice versa to create advantage
- Able to stack and know when and how to use it effectively
- Consistently executes 3rd shot drops and drives using them to create advantage but with inconsistent results
- Can identify opponents weaknesses and formulate strategy to attack weaknesses
- Developing the block to return fast, hard volleys
- Understands which balls are attackable and those that are not in a dink rally
- Competed in tournaments and consistently won or placed in the top 3 teams in 3.5 Skill Brackets

## 4.5 Skill Level

- Able to answer yes to all of the 4.0 skill level requirements
- Has a high level of consistency with both forehand and backhand
- Serves and returns with power, accuracy and depth
- Able to dink with accuracy, variety, and consistency with offensive intent
- Recognizes and attempts to hit attackable dinks
- Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to opponents strengths and weaknesses
- Easily stacks court positions and understands the strategy of using it
- Consistently executes 3rd shot strategies, both drop and drive, that are not easily returned for advantage
- Able to block/reset hard volleys consistently
- Comfortable hitting swing volleys and overheads with accuracy and finish the point
- Is proficient in moving laterally, backward and forward with partner
- Competed in tournaments and consistently won or placed in the top 3 teams in 4.0 Skill Brackets

## 5.0 Skill Level

- Able to answer yes to all of the 4.5 skill level requirements
- Hits all shot types at a high level of ability with both forehand and backhand with touch, spin and pace to set up offensive situations
- Has developed touch from all court positions
- Has developed a very high level of variety, depth and pace of serves
- Able to move opponents with shot placements and exhibits patience during rallies while creating opportunities to attack
- Is successful in turning defensive shots into offensive shots
- Easily and quickly adjusts style of play and game plan according to opponents strengths and weaknesses
- Mastered the dink and drop shots
- Mastered 3rd shot choices and strategies to create opportunities for winning points Can drop and drive from forehand and backhand with high level of consistency
- Able to block consistently, execute attacks and counter attacks consistently with swing volleys and speed ups
- Mastered pickleball strategies and can vary strategies and styles of play in competitive or tournament matches
- Rarely makes unforced errors
- Competed in tournaments and consistently won or placed in the top 3 teams in 4.5 Skill Brackets