

How To Determine Your Pickleball Rating

When you don't have to think about which shot to hit,
you just naturally hit it, **you are a 5.0**

When you don't have to think about which shot to hit,
but you can't successfully hit it 2,000 times in a row, **you are a 4.5**

When you have to think about which shot to hit,
and when you figure it out, you can successfully hit it, **you are a 4.0**

When you have to think about which shot to hit,
but then still hit the wrong shot, **you are a 3.5**

When you have to think about which shot to hit,
but by the time you decide on the correct shot it's too late to hit it,
so you just go with trying to get it back over the net, **you are a 3.0**

When you don't bother to think about which shot to hit,
and most of the time don't hit it in the court anyhow,
you are a 2.5 and guaranteed to be having a lot of fun.

IFP Rating Descriptions

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The IFP Rating System has been created to help describe differences in the various skill levels.

Rating	Rating Description
1.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New and have only minimal knowledge of the game and the rules.
1.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited to some rallies.• Learning how to serve.• Developing a forehand.• Fails to return easy balls frequently and occasionally misses the ball entirely.• Played a few games and is learning the court lines, scoring, and some basic rules of the game.
2.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sustains a short rally with players of equal ability.• Demonstrating the basic shot strokes – forehand, backhand, volley, overhead and the serve, but has obvious weaknesses in most strokes.• Familiar with court positioning in doubles play.
2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Makes longer lasting slow-paced rallies.• Makes most easy volleys and uses some backhands, but needs more work on developing shot strokes.• Beginning to approach the non-volley zone to hit volleys.• Aware of the “soft game.”• Knowledge of the rules has improved.• Court coverage is weak but improving.
3.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More consistent on the serve and service return and when returning medium-paced balls.• Demonstrates improved skills with all the basic shot strokes and shot placement but lacks control when trying for direction, depth, or power on their shots.• Beginning to attempt lobs and dinks with little success and doesn't fully understand when and why they should be used.
3.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrates improved stroke dependability with directional control on most medium-paced balls and some faster-paced balls.• Demonstrates improved control when trying for direction, depth and power on their shots.• Needs to develop variety with their shots.• Exhibits some aggressive net play.• Beginning to anticipate opponent's shots.• Learning about the importance of strategy and teamwork in doubles.
4.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consistent and dependable strokes, including directional control and depth on both forehand and backhand shots.• Reliable serves, lobs, overheads, approach shots and volleys and can use spin shots with some success.

- Occasionally can force errors when serving.
- Rallies may be lost due to impatience.
- Uses the dink shot and drop shots to slow down or change the pace of the game.
- Demonstrates 3rd shot strategies – drop shots, lobs, and fast-paced ground strokes.
- Aggressive net play and teamwork in doubles is evident.
- Fully understands the rules of the game and can play by them.

4.5

- Beginning to master the use of power and spin, can successfully execute all shots, can control the depth of their shots, and can handle pace.
- Beginning to master the dink shots and drop shots and their importance to the game.
- Beginning to master 3rd shot choices.
- Displays sound footwork and moves well enough to get to the non-volley zone whenever required.
- Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to the opponent's strengths and weaknesses and court position.
- Serves with power and accuracy and can also vary the speed and spin of the serve.
- Understands the importance of "keeping the ball in play" and the effect of making errors.
- Making good choices in shot selection.
- Anticipates the opponent's shots resulting in good court positioning.

5.0

- Mastered all the skills – all shot types, touch, spin, serves, with control and can use them as weapons.
- Excellent shot anticipation, extremely accurate shot placement and regularly hit winning shots.
- Forces opponents into making errors by "keeping the ball in play."
- Mastered the dink and drop shots.
- Mastered the 3rd shot choices and strategies.
- Uses soft shots, dinks and lobs to set up offensive situations.
- Mastered pickleball strategies and can vary strategies and styles of play in competitive or tournament matches.
- Dependable in stressful situations as in tournament match play.
- Athletic ability, quickness, agility, and raw athleticism are also qualities that are sometimes what separates the top players from those near the top.