

Subject Knowledge Organiser

Table Tennis – Rules, Scoring, Officials & Table Dimensions

Rules

- ❑ To start a point, the server must stand at the back of the table and can serve either forehand or backhand. The ball must be thrown up either equal to or above the height of the net before striking the ball and the ball must be thrown from an open palm to stop finger spin.
- ❑ If the ball hits the net on a serve but continues over the other side then a 'let' is played.
- ❑ Players are allowed to hit the ball around the side of the net.
- ❑ The ball must bounce on a player's side of the table before playing their shot.
- ❑ During play, competitors are not allowed to touch the table with their non-bat hand. If they do, the point is conceded.
- ❑ Players must swap ends at the end of a game, and in the final match players will switch ends after five points.

Scoring

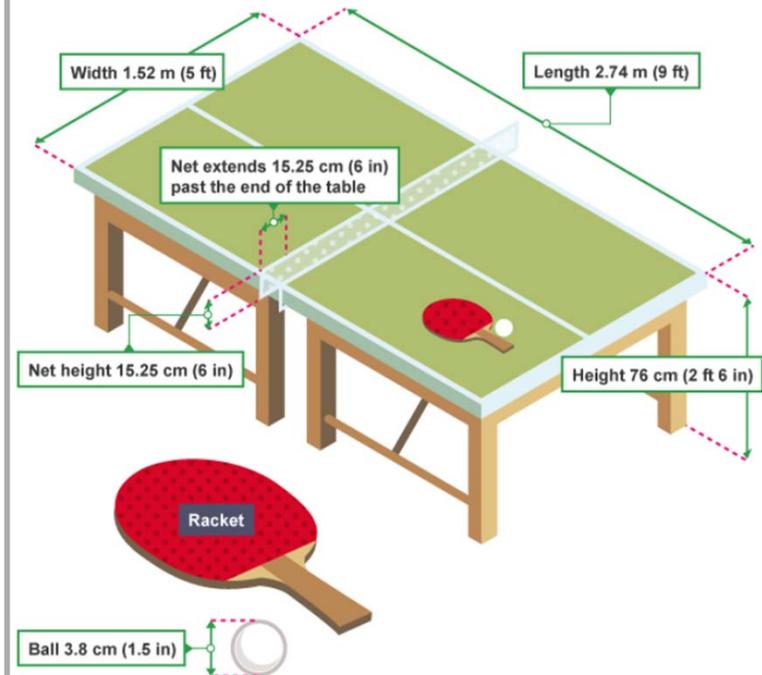
A competitive game of table tennis is played to the best of five or seven games. The first player to get to 11 points in a game is the winner. However, if a game is tied at 10-10, a player must win a game by two clear points. You do not lose service if you lose a point - each player must serve for two points in a row before handing the service over to their opponent.

Officials

For every table tennis competition, a referee is appointed with a deputy who can act on their behalf. The referee is required to be present at the venue throughout a tournament and is required to uphold the rules. During a table tennis match, an umpire is appointed to decide on the result of each point or rally. The umpire is required to use their judgement when applying the laws and regulations of the ITTF. Where the umpire is officiating alone, their decision is final and they should be seated about 2–3 metres from the side of the table and in line with the net.

Table Dimensions

A competitive table tennis table should measure 2.74 m (9 ft) long, 1.525 m (5 ft) wide and be 76 cm (2 ft 6 in) high. The surface of a table tennis table must be the same dark colour across the court and be of a matt appearance. The net is 15.25 cm (6 in) high and extends 15.25 cm (6 in) past the end of the table. A competitive table tennis ball should bounce 23 cm high when dropped from a height of 30 cm. In all competitions, the playing area for a full size table should be 8 m long by 4 m wide. This is essential to safely allow the players to chase around the table after well-placed shots.



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Table Tennis – Serve, Forehand Drive, Forehand Push, Forehand Smash & Block

Forehand Serve

The tennis serve is the shot selected to begin a point in tennis. A table tennis serve can be hit either forehand or backhand. It must be thrown up from a flat palm into the air to a minimum height of six inches and visible to their opponent at all times.

Stage one

Stand in position on the balls of your feet, with knees slightly flexed. Face sideways with your shoulder pointing towards the target. Hold the ball in front of your body with left hand, right hand held back. Body weight should be on the back foot. Keep low.

Stage two

Throw the ball gently into the air (about 6 inches) with the palm of your hand. As the ball begins to drop, hold a forward stance and strike the ball flat with a fast arm in the middle of the ball. Transfer body weight from back to front foot.

Stage three

Follow through with the bat pointing towards the intended target. Return back to ready position for the next shot.

Forehand Drive

A forehand drive in table tennis is an offensive stroke that is used to force errors and to set up attacking positions. A successful shot should land close to your opponent's baseline or side-line.

Stage one

As the ball is returned, stand in position on the balls of your feet, with knees slightly flexed. Face sideways with your shoulder pointing towards the target. Body weight should be on the back foot.

Stage two

When ready to strike the ball, point your free arm towards the ball. At impact, rotate your body quickly to face forwards. Aim to hit the ball at its highest point. Transfer body weight from back to front foot.

Stage three

Follow through with the bat pointing towards the intended target. Return back to ready position for the next shot.

Forehand Push

A forehand push is a difficult defensive shot that requires the player to strike downwards on the back and underneath the ball to create backspin. When performed correctly, a forehand push is used to change the pace of an exchange or to return the ball in a very low manner.

Stage one

Stand square to the table in slight position and keep your feet shoulder width apart. Slightly flex your knees, leaning forward and hold your arms out in front. Keep close to the table.

Stage two

When ready to strike the ball, draw the bat backwards to the side of the body (strongest side). Hold the bat in an open angle with a straight wrist and your playing arm just in front of the body.

Stage three

On impact, bring the arms forward and ensure that power comes from the elbow and forearm (it is not a swing shot). Aim to hit the ball at its highest point. Transfer body weight from back to front foot.

Stage four

After impact, point the bat to where you want to hit the ball. Ensure that your arm does not swing across your body to the left. Return back to ready position for the next shot.

Forehand Smash

The forehand smash is a fast, hard and powerful stroke that aims to force the opponent away from the table or to win a point outright. However, the shot is not always about force and requires the player to use good timing, technique and precision simultaneously.

Stage one

As the ball is returned, stand in position on the balls of your feet, with knees slightly flexed. Face sideways with your shoulder pointing towards the target. Body weight should be on the back foot.

Stage two

When ready to strike the ball, point your free arm towards the ball. Raise the racket to a high position to generate downwards and forwards power.

Stage three

As the ball bounces off the table, rotate your body quickly to face forwards. Aim to hit the ball at its highest point. Transfer body weight from back to front foot. Return back to ready position for the next shot.

Block

The block shot is a defensive stroke that allows a player to use the speed of their opponent's shot against them. It needs to be completed straight after the bounce to ensure that the player maintains control of the ball.

Stage one

Stand square to the table in slight position and keep your feet shoulder width apart. Slightly flex your knees, leaning forward and hold your arms out in front. Keep close to the table.

Stage two

When ready to strike the ball, draw the bat backwards to the side of the body (strongest side). Hold the bat in an open position with a straight wrist and your playing arm just in front of the body.

Stage three

On impact, bring the arms forward and ensure that power comes from the elbow and forearm (it is not a swing shot). Aim to hit the ball at its highest point. Transfer bodyweight from back to front foot.

Stage four

After impact, point the bat to where you want to hit the ball. Ensure that your arm does not swing across your body to the left. Return back to ready position for the next shot.