

TABLE TENNIS

The exact origin of table tennis is unknown, but in the 1890's the game was being played in various forms in England, Europe, and the United States. It increased in popularity when they developed the celluloid balls that were uniform in size and performance. Commonly known as "ping pong" the game started to gain popularity in the United States in about 1927, and today it is considered a favorite among indoor recreational activities because it requires little space, is inexpensive, and affords the opportunity for keen competition.

Table and Net

The table is rectangular 9' long and 5' wide. The top of the net should be 6 inches from the table surface. Extreme care should be taken to avoid striking the table with the racquet, because the resulting holes and dents will cause the table tennis ball to bounce in an unpredictable direction.

General Description of Game

Two (singles) or four (doubles) players can play, table tennis. The player who starts play is called the server and the player who receives the serve is called the receiver. To start play the server strikes the ball with the racquet so that it lands first on his side and then goes over the net. The receiver then returns the ball after it bounces once on his side of the net. The ball is then rallied between the two players until a point is won.

Service

The service must be delivered by the server, who releases the ball without imparting any spin to it. On the service any form of spin imparted to the ball by any agency but the racquet is prohibited. The service must be made with the serving hand open and flat, fingers straight and the thumb free. The server's paddle must strike the ball behind the endline.

Grip

The Western grip (shake hands grip) is the basic grip and it is the grip we will use in class.

Rules

1. Twenty-one points constitute a game unless the score is tied 20-20 in which case one player must win by a 2-point margin.
2. The serve changes from one player to the other every time 5 points are scored except when the score is tied at 20-20. Then the serve changes after each point.
3. When no officials are present the server should call out the score as in volleyball.
4. If a player touches the playing surface with any part of his body, the point is won by his opponent. The same is true if a player should move the table by bumping against it.

5. If the ball hits the net on the serve and goes over a “let” is called and server serves again.
6. If a player misses the ball completely, it is a point for his opponent.
7. The only way a ball can be legally hit is with the paddle or the hand holding the paddle.

Doubles

The service must be made from the servers right hand court to the receivers right hand court. The first set of five serves can be served and received by either partner. The second serve is delivered by the receiver of the first five serves and is received by the partner of the first server. The partner of the first server serves the third set of five points and they are received by the partner of the original receiver. The order of service is that after a player serves his five services he should change places with his partner. The only difference between doubles and singles play is that in doubles the partners must alternate in hitting the ball.

Terms

Angle shot – A return angled so that it bounces from the table tope to one side instead of the end of the table.

Backhand – A stroke executed with the back of the hand facing the net.

Backspin – Counterclockwise motion of the ball.

Bat – The racquet or paddle

Blade – The face of the racquet or the striking surface

Drop Shot – A short shot played close to the net.

English – Spin applied to the ball with the racquet.

Forehand – A stroke with the palm of the stroking hand facing the net.

Rally – A series of strokes exchanged by players before a point is won.

Set-Up – A return in such a position that it is easy to score a point.

Slice – An undercut stroke with backspin on the ball.

Smash – A drive hit as flat as possible for the purpose of scoring a point.

Topspin – Clockwise motion of the ball.

SKILLS

Western grip – Shake hands grip

Body Position

Neutral Position – face table with knees bent and feet shoulder width apart. You should be 2 – 2 ½ feet away from the table.

Backspin – ball revolves in a counterclockwise direction as it moves forward.

To Counter – tilt blade back and push ball forward and upward.

Defensive strokes – beginners should learn defensive strokes first to force opponent into making more errors.

Block Stroke – the basic defensive stroke, made by intercepting the ball just after it starts its upward bounce from the table.

Offensive Strokes

Push Shot – most elementary offensive stroke. Same as block stroke except that when the ball is hit a slight push and follow-through motion is applied. NOTE: use this stroke to return backhand strokes.

Forehand Drive – The wrist should be firm and fairly straight. The stroke should start at the waist and continue through by the face.

Backhand Drive - Same as the forehand – but on the backhand side. Ball should be contacted in front of the body.