

SPC 2024 Rating Guide

Self-Rating	Pickleball Rating System
Novice	<p>Give yourself a pickleball self-rating of Novice if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) you are just starting to play pickleball and you know how to keep score and you have a minimal understanding of the basic rules of pickleball ball, i.e. 2-bounce rule; OR b) you have limited experience playing pickleball, you accurately place serve in the correct square, you can volley, and you can participate in a short rally on the pickleball court; c) you have experience playing pickleball, but you lack mobility and prefer to participate in casual, fun games most of the time.
Intermediate	<p>Give yourself a pickleball self-rating of Intermediate if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) you can generally hit a medium paced forehand and backhand with direction and consistency; you are able to hit a medium paced serve with direction and consistency; you are able to sustain a dink rally with control and with players of equal ability; you are able to hit a medium paced volley with some direction and consistency; and b) you understand basic strategy and proper court positioning, and you are able to keep score throughout the game; OR c) you are an experienced, competitive player, but you lack the mobility to make you competitive with higher-level games.
Intermediate +	<p>Give yourself a pickleball self-rating of Intermediate + if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) you can hit a forehand and backhand with a moderate level of shot control; you consistently place serves deep in the court and you are able to return a serve deep into the court and with pace; you dink and sustain medium length rallies and your dinks have height/depth control; you are able to hit 3rd shot drop to gain advantage; you are able to volley with medium pace and control; and b) you can vary your shots between the hard and soft game and know when to use it; you move quickly to the non-Volley Zone line when you have the opportunity; and you are comfortable with hard driven balls being directed at you during game play.
Advanced	<p>Give yourself a pickleball self-rating of Advanced if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) you can consistently hit strong forehand and backhand drives, serves, returns, dinks, drop shots, and volleys with pace, spin, depth, direction, and control; you can hit consistent and dependable overheads (directional control, depth and placement); you understand which balls are attackable and which are not in a dink rally; you are able to block and return fast, hard volleys; you are able to consistently execute 3rd drop shot from the baseline to approach the net; you can effectively lob; and b) you understand advanced strategies (including stacking and switching), aware of partner positioning and move as a team; you have a limited number of unforced errors, and you change your game play to attack your opponents' weaknesses on the pickleball court.
Expert	<p>Give yourself a pickleball self-rating of Expert if</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) you have mastered both forehand and backhand drives, serves, and returns with pace, as well as dinks, drop shots, overheads of different direction, and volleys of different speeds, and have consistency and control; and b) you have mastered the strategy and rules of pickleball (including stacking and switching), you rarely make unforced errors, and you attack your opponents' weaknesses on the pickleball court; and c) you are consistently winning at the highest level, meaning that you are winning against the best pickleball players at the tournament level.