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McGILL INTRAMURALS PICKLEBALL RULEBOOK

Updated – August 2025

Sections **highlighted yellow** are major rule changes for the 2025-26 season.

ID. CARDS

- Prior to the start of intramural games, students must present their valid McGill ID card to the timer. Staff and Alumni must present their valid Sports Complex Membership Card or Intramural Access Card. Please indicate to the timer which team you will be playing for. **NO ID. - NO PLAY!**
- All player IDs will be inspected by the scorekeeper and immediately handed back to the participant. IDs will NOT be kept by the scorekeeper and are not the responsibility of the McGill Intramural program.

DEFAULT RULE

- A five **(5) minute** delay to the start of the game will be granted if a player is late or if a team has an insufficient number of players to begin.
- Should a player or team not show up after the **5-minute** delay the game will be classified as a default. The offending team automatically loses the match **2-0 (11-0, 11-0)**.
- **The defaulting team will be deducted 2 points in the standings**
- If both teams do not have enough players, it will result in a double default.
- **The defaulting team is also subject to a \$60 Default Fee (IM Handbook article 6.1).**
- **This fee must be paid [online](#) before the team's next game or the team will be disqualified from their respective league.**

EQUIPMENT

- Paddles and balls will be provided
- Players can bring their own paddles if they prefer

COURT/BOUNDARIES

- The game is played on a doubles badminton court.
- The badminton short service line will be used as the "kitchen" line

LEAGUE FORMAT

- A DOUBLES league will be available for competitive play
- All divisions will be considered OPEN meaning anyone can participate
- Tier 2 (Intermediate-High), Tier 3 (Intermediate-Low), Tier 4 (Beginner) and PLAY-FUN will be offered

SCORING

- Matches will be best 2 out of 3 games

- A game is first to 11 points. Must win by 2 points. With a cap at 15. Meaning if it is 14-14 the next point wins.
- A team may only score a point on their serve

GAME MANAGEMENT

- A staff member will be on-site to help facilitate the matchups and game schedule
- Players/teams will be given a 5-minute warm-up period
- Players/teams must report the final score to the staff member on-site
- The staff member on-site can also help with any rule clarifications

RULES

- Official [USA Pickleball](#) rules will apply

SERVING

- The ball is served with an underhand stroke so that contact with the ball is made below waist level in an upward arc. The server hits from behind the baseline on one side of the center line and aims diagonally to the opponent's service zone. The ball must bounce on each side of the net once before volleying can occur.

KITCHEN / NON-VOLLEY ZONE

- The non-volley zone is commonly referred to as "the kitchen"
- Volleying is prohibited within the non-volley zone. Volleying means that you have hit the ball in the air without letting it bounce first.
- A player may enter the non-volley zone to play a ball that bounces and may stay there to play balls that bounce. The player must exit the non-volley zone before playing a volley.
- It is a fault if, when volleying a ball, the player steps on the non-volley zone, including the line and/or when the player's momentum causes them to touch the non-volley zone, including the associated lines.

TWO-BOUNCE RULE

- When the ball is served, the receiving team must let it bounce before returning, and then the serving team must let it bounce before returning, thus two bounces.
- After the ball has bounced once in each team's court, both teams may either volley the ball (hit the ball before it bounces) or play it off a bounce (ground stroke).

FAULTS

- Not serving into the correct diagonal zone
- Not hitting the ball beyond the net
- Not hitting after the 2nd bounce on one side of the net
- Hitting the ball out of bounds
- Volleying the ball on the service return
- Volleying the ball on the first return by the serving side
- Stepping into the non-volley zone (aka the "kitchen") in the act of volleying the ball.

LEAGUE MANAGEMENT

- [IM Leagues](#) will be used as the official league management site. Players/teams can view the schedule, results, and standings on this page.
- The regular season will be 6 games unless otherwise stated by the intramural office
- Only the top-finishing teams will advance into playoffs. The number of teams that advance into the playoffs is determined by the number of total players/teams in the league. Please refer to section 11.3.1 of the Intramural Handbook for full qualifying rules.

ROSTER

- Doubles teams are allowed to have more than 2 people on their roster. Multiple people are allowed to "check-in" to the game.

- However, substitutions may only happen between sets. The same two players must play the entire set. You cannot substitute after each point.

LESSONS

- Private and semi-private lessons are available. Fill out a lesson request form here:
<https://recreation.mcgill.ca/private-lessons>