

USTA New England and  
National Team Pickleball League (NTPL)  
League Rules

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Participation Requirements

Players are bound by the rules herein as well as those of the IFP (International Federation of Pickleball). Not all possible incidents may be covered in the following rules. USTA New England reserves the right to make any final decision based on misinterpretation or absence of stated rules.

Leagues are open to male and female players who are 18+ years of age. Age is determined by the player's age as of midnight of 12/31/2024.

Players may not compete on more than one team in the division. If a team member wishes to switch teams within the same skill group, after registration, the league coordinator must be notified and it is the sole discretion of the coordinator to afford this change.

All players will be required to sign a waiver release of liability prior to participation in the tournament.

Combo Doubles (Men's/Women's/combo Play)

a) 18+ 3.5 (no greater than 3.7 as of 12/31/24)

b) 50+ 4.0 (no greater than 4.2 as of 12/31/24)

### Team Requirements

Rosters should have a minimum of 2 men and 2 women for a combination team. It is recommended to have 3 men and 3 women in case of injury and/or illness. There is NO MAXIMUM, however, on a team. Captains have the discretion to create a team with as many players as necessary in order to avoid defaults in both the local and the national events. Captains may also add players to their roster at any point leading up to that player's first match.

### Rating Information

Team rosters must consist of players with skills that are consistent with the flight skill level in which their team is playing. Captains will oversee the "skill integrity" of their team. Ratings will be calculated using only the first decimal point from the rating system.

USTA New England will be using DUPR for their rating scores. Each captain is required to ensure that the ratings of each team member is within the appropriate rating as listed above. Ratings are locked for the 2025 season by 12/31/2024.

If a player does not have a rating from DUPR or any other approved national rating system, then USTA New England will assign a player a rating for play for each division as follows:

3.5 Division - not greater than a 3.7

4.0 Division - not greater than a 4.2

Players whose rating changes, during the 2025 year, and possibly moves them out of the range for that division will NOT be required to play at their new higher rating through the end of the 2025 Championship season.

### Sportsmanship

Good Sportsmanship is absolutely required within our tournaments and leagues. Cheers for good shots, but not missed or other mistakes. Multiple infractions could lead to disqualification. Captains and players are to monitor behavior to assure conduct is in accordance with the NTPL Code of Conduct and USTA New England. It is expected that players will adhere to the NTPL Code of Conduct. However, if circumstances warrant it, please [File for Grievance](#)

### Advancement

A combination doubles tournament will take place regionally for the top 2 teams in each division. Site TBD. A national combination doubles tournament will take place in the fall of 2025, location TBD. For more information on past events, please go to [NTPL.org](http://NTPL.org)

It is important that all captains and players are made aware of the fact that the winner (and possibly a wild card team) could be invited to participate in these national events. Captains should make players aware of this prior to registration of the team. All players that participate in the USTA local leagues must play in a minimum of 2 matches in order to qualify for the national championship.

The local league coordinator reserves the right to send an alternate team/player to the NTPL championship event if the #1 team is unable to go. This would be a "wildcard" spot and may consist of players from any of the players that participated in that particular league/division who played in at least 2 matches.

### Match Format

The following format will be used at all tournaments for combination doubles. These matches will consist of three (3) rounds of three (2) lines, two (2) games each. 2 courts required for 2 hours. Games will be played to 11, win by 2, cap at 15.

- 1) Round 1:
  - a. Home (women) plays visiting (women)
  - b. Home (men) plays visiting (men)
- 2) Round 2:
  - a. Home (combination 1) plays visiting (combination 1)
  - b. Home (combination 2) plays visiting (combination 2)
- 3) Round 3:

- a. Home (combination 1) plays visiting (combination 2)
- b. Home (combination 2) plays visiting (combination 1)

NTPL and USTA will be using Franklin X-40 balls for all leagues and tournaments, locally and nationally. Each team will be provided with 2 new balls on the morning of the match. If a ball becomes unplayable, the site will provide the players with an additional ball.

Matches shall start no later than 5 minutes after the posted match start time. If, after 10 minutes a player has not arrived, then the team will default ALL games the player would have normally played. If the team has a substitute player in attendance, that player may substitute and will remain in the match for all rounds of play. If no substitute is available, then games will be defaulted and scored 11-0 against the team with the absent player.

To begin a match, the visiting teams choose to serve, receive, side or defer. Each doubles team will play 2 games to 11 (win by 2, cap at 15). Teams shall switch sides after the first game. Mens' doubles and womens' doubles will play simultaneously. After single gender has played, teams will take a 10 minute time out from the time the last mens'/womens' have completed before beginning 2 rounds of combination doubles. Each doubles team will play each of the other 2 doubles teams to complete the match.

Depending on the result of each individual game played to 11 (win by 2), a team may earn two (2), one (1) or zero (0) points toward their overall TEAM score.

- A. *2 points = won the game*
- B. *1 point = lost the game but scored 6 or more points*
- C. *0 points = lost the game and scored 5 or less points*

After all 3 rounds have been played, the teams' points earned across all 6 games are totaled and the winning TEAM is determined.

Per IFP rules, coaching by anyone is only allowed after completion of each game, between rounds and during timeouts.

### Captains' Responsibilities

### *Registration and Naming of Team*

All players must have/create a free USTA membership account. Captains will submit an initial team name to USTA New England [here](#) through Serve Tennis.

After the captain sets up the team, players will be invited to register for their team and pay individually.

### *Confirmation of Match*

Home captains should reach out to opposing team captains to confirm upcoming matches along with start times with the opposing team captain by Wednesday prior to the match. If a team is unable to field a team by Wednesday before the upcoming match, that team will take a forfeit for that round. Teams receive 2 points for each of the games that are forfeited.

### *Line Ups*

Line Ups should be exchanged with the opposing captain prior to the beginning of the first round. The men and women who play in the single gender rounds DO NOT have to be the same players for the combination round, but they must be registered players on that team prior to the beginning of the match.

### *Warm Up Courts*

Warm up courts may or may not be available before a scheduled match is to begin. Captains should check with the opposing captain in advance of the match to inquire about the use of warm up courts and/or warm up time being available.

### *Recording of Scores*

It is the home team captains who will be responsible for reporting and recording all of the scores on [tennisscores.com](http://tennisscores.com) by 6:00 pm on Monday, the day following the match. Opposing captains must either verify the scores or protest the scores by Wednesday of that week. All protests need to be filed with the league coordinator before any scores will be changed. Please use this form [Modification of Scorecard](#)

### *Match Cancellation/Delay*

If a match has to be canceled due to weather/power outage, etc, it will be rescheduled and played in its entirety. If the first round is complete and play is discontinued before the second round is completed, it will be rescheduled and replayed at the start of the second round. If a match is to be replayed due to any

of the above, a captain is not required to field the same team line-up for the make-up match.