

# Rally point scoring for Pickleball

USA Pickleball introduced rules for rally point scoring in 2025.

Most tournaments still use standard scoring, but rally point scoring helps clubs manage waiting times. The advantages of rally point scoring are:

1. The games [at least following the rules we have created for Pickleball Scotland] are of a predictable length – around 15 mins for a game to 15 points.
2. Adopting rally point scoring can do away with timed games which can be frustrating if they do not reach a conclusion in the time allowed. 15 mins is a reasonable play time but it could be shorter if it is decided the game should be played to 11.
3. This scoring might also work well for festival events.
4. Rally point scoring should encourage an emphasis on not making a mistake since this automatically gives opponents a point.
5. Everyone always feels they have a chance in this scoring system – it evens out play.

The rules we have adopted are as follows. Please note they are not the same as badminton rally point scoring.

1. A game may be to 11, 15 or 21 points.
  - o Clubs should decide which is best and no setting is a good idea.
2. Each rally is scored as a point to the serving or receiving team (see point 5. for the exception)
3. Each team has only one serve to lose before a side-out. If they win the rally, the server moves to the other half of the court and continues to serve. If the rally is lost, a side-out occurs.
4. After a side out, serve starts on the right-hand side with the players in the correct positions according to the score. (Example: A and B versus X and Y. The starting servers are A and X. At the start of the game at 0-0, A serves to X and loses the rally. The score is now 1-0 to Team XY. As the score is 1-0, Y will serve from the right hand court. This means X and Y have to switch sides. This preserves the 'rule' that the starting server is always serving from the right hand side court when the score is 0,2,4 etc.)
5. A team can only win the game on their own serve. Therefore - In a game to 15, the first team to reach 14 'freezes' its score, which can now only improve on their own serve. When/if their opponents score reaches 14, they too 'freeze'. **FIRST TO 15 WHILE SERVING WINS**

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