

# International Table Tennis Federation

## Table Tennis Rules

### SERVICE

- At the start of service, the ball shall be stationary, resting freely on the flat, open palm of the server's free hand, behind the end line, and above the level of the playing surface
- The server shall then project the ball near vertically upwards, without imparting spin, so that it rises at least 6 inches after leaving the palm of the free hand.
- As the ball is falling from the highest point of its trajectory, the server shall strike it so that it touches first his court, and then after passing over or around the net assembly, the receiver's court; *in doubles, the ball shall touch successively the right half court of server and receiver.*
- The ball and racket must be above the level of the playing surface during service toss.
- When the ball is struck, it must be behind the server's end line but not farther back than the part of the server's body, other than his arm, head or leg, which is farthest from his end line.
- If the serve bounces once in the server's court, then twice in the receiver's court, the point goes to the server.

### A GOOD RETURN

A ball having been served or returned shall be struck so that it passes over or around the net assembly and touches the opponent's court, either directly or after touching the net assembly.

### THE ORDER OF PLAY

In doubles, players on a team must alternate hitting the ball.

### IN PLAY

The ball shall be in play from ... [moment the ball is served] until:

- a) it touches anything other than the playing surface, the net assembly, the racket held in the hand or the racket hand below the wrist, or
- b) the rally is otherwise decided a let or point.

### LET

The rally shall be a let:

- a) if an otherwise good service touches the net assembly when passing over or around it;
- b) if the service is delivered when the receiving player is not ready, provided the receiver does not attempt to strike the ball;
- c) if failure to make a good service or return is due to a disturbance outside the control of the player.

### POINT

Unless a rally is a let, a player shall lose a point

- a) if one fails to make a good service or return
- b) if one obstructs the ball
- c) if one strikes the ball twice successively
- d) if, except in service, the ball touches one's court before touching the opponent's court
- e) if one strikes the ball with a side of the racket whose surface does not comply with ITTF regulations
- f) if one, or anything one wears or carries, moves the playing surface or net assembly
- g) if one's free hand touches the playing surface

### GAME

A game shall be won by the player or pair first scoring 11 points unless both players or pairs score 10 points, when the game shall be won by the player or pair first scoring subsequently 2 points more than the opposing player or pair.