



## How We Play

The Sea Islands Pickleball Club's goal is to have friendly and safe competition and enjoy good camaraderie. The purpose of "How We Play" is to provide Club members and guests standards of behavior expected of them while on the courts playing with the Club or representing the Club.

### 1. Safety on the courts

- a) Stretch and warm up before play. Stay hydrated between games while playing.
- b) If you are injured or don't feel well, you may get a substitute to finish the game in your place.
- c) Avoid hitting the ball with excessive force, especially above the chest, at your opponent, as this may cause serious injury.
- d) Never throw your paddle or strike the ball in anger or frustration.
- e) Be careful when near the net posts and fences. One point is not worth a serious injury.
- f) When playing, be careful if the court is wet or damp.
- g) When you need to chase a lob over your head, turn or use sideways steps rather than back-peddling.
- h) Do not chase your ball on an adjacent court while they are playing a point. Instead, call "pickle" to stop play (to avoid injury), and retrieve the stray ball and return it to a player on the court from which it came. Replay the interrupted point. Do not swat the ball back toward the direction it came from, because play on additional courts may be impacted.
- i) When playing with a partner, communicate such as "mine" or "yours" and avoid hitting your partner while both are trying to play a ball hit down the middle.
- j) Do not play if your movement or judgment is impaired by alcohol or drugs.

## 2. Behavior on and around the courts

- a) It is the policy of the Club that all newcomers will be welcomed and encouraged to join in and play with our members. While newcomers are encouraged to become SIPC members, they are not required to join our club if they wish to continue playing outdoors with the club during designated times.
- b) If you are an “advanced” player, adjust your style when playing with beginners – work on your short game, work on ball placement. Do not intimidate weaker players or dominate a game. Play to have fun.
- c) When playing with players of apparently lesser ability, encourage their effort, praise their good shots, and don’t disparage their poor ones. Mentor and offer advice kindly.
- d) Players are expected to exhibit courtesy, respect, fairness, and honesty in dealing with others on and off the courts. Players should exhibit good sportsmanship at all times. They should not engage in rude or abusive behavior, use profane language, give unsolicited advice, or let emotions get out of control.
- e) It is unsportsmanlike to over-celebrate points won or to taunt or degrade the opposition when they miss a shot or lose a point. Keep fun in the game. Good-natured ribbing within reason is considered part of the fun.
- f) CALL OUT THE SCORE every time you serve so that your opponents can hear the score. Call out your score first, then the opponents score and, finally, if you are the first server or the second server.
- g) Claim a replay only if a transient element or occurrence not caused by a player adversely affects your team’s ability to play the ball, e.g., balls, flying insects or foreign materials.
- h) At the end of each game, meet the other players at the net to acknowledge them in a positive manner.
- i) When you finish a game, one player should put the ball away in the ball/extra paddles/supply bag. Players leaving a court should not walk near or on an adjacent court, which can bother play on that court.
- j) Players waiting for access to a court should avoid distracting those playing, and should stay at least a few feet away from the court boundaries when play is underway there.
- k) Take all your belongings with you when leaving, and discard trash into the proper waste receptacles.

## 3. Customs and conventions for local play

- a) Learn and play by the official rules of Pickleball as set out by the IFP (International Federation of Pickleball).
- b) A row of paddles is accepted to indicate which players are prioritized for the next available court. Teammates coming off the court should place their paddles with handles in opposite direction. Players for the next game should be the four paddles with handles facing the same direction.
- c) If a player is not present in the court area when it is time for the next four players to take the court, they can be bypassed.
- d) Normal game scoring is first to 11 points (win by two).

- e) When there are 4 or less players waiting, winners can stay on the court and split. Losers must leave the court to allow others to play.
- f) Win or lose, no one is allowed to play more than 2 games back to back unless there is no one waiting to play.

## 4. Line calling

- a) Players will call the lines on their side of the net. The opponent gets the benefit of the doubt in that any ball that cannot be called “out” will be considered “in”.
- b) All players should strive for accuracy in making line calls.
- c) Spectators should not be consulted on any line calls.
- d) No players should question an opponent’s call unless asked. Arguments over line calls are never acceptable.
- e) All “out” calls must be made “instantly”, otherwise the ball is presumed “in” and still in play.
- f) In doubles play, if one player calls the ball “out” and the partner calls it “in”, then doubt exists and the ball must be declared “in”.
- g) Line calls should be promptly signaled by hand or voice, regardless of how obvious they may seem.
- h) If, while the ball is in the air, a player yells “out,” “no,” “bounce it,” or any other word to communicate to his or her partner that the ball may be out, it should be considered player communication. If the ball lands in, play will continue. If the out call is made after the ball has hit the playing surface, it is considered a line call and play should stop.
- i) Admit if the ball hits you or your paddle on the way out of bounds.
- j) Watch your own and your partner’s feet for service or NVZ foot faults.