

Pickleball Skill Level Guideline



WHICH CLINIC do I sign up for?

- 101: 2.0-2.5 level
- 201: 3.0 level
- 301: 3.5 level

Review the skills below for each level to determine player level.

If there is any question on which level sign up for, students are encouraged to have an instructor assessment which can be conducted while they are playing during Open Play. If not able to do this, the Beginner Clinic is the best place to start for anyone that is uncertain.

2.0 LEVEL - Intro to the game - students, new to the game with no skills

2.5 LEVEL -

New to the game, learning the rules, not playing matches yet

Demonstrates:

- Basic pendulum swing on the forehand & backhand side.
- Proper side step movement while staying balanced at NVZ (No Volley Zone) line.
- Punch volleys
- Overheads with the proper sideways turn, arm positioning and backward movement
- Control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height}

Working on:

- Consistency while dinking down the line forehand & backhand
- Consistency while dinking cross court forehand & backhand
- Backhand ground stroke
- 3rd shot drops by long dinking from the transition area
- 3rd shot drops during match play on the short court
- Moving forward to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys

Performs:

- Good mobility and can move forward in a safe and balanced manner
- Good eye-hand coordination
- Keeps ball in play during short rallies

3.0 LEVEL -

Student possess all 2.5 skills, understands basic rules and fundamentals and some match experience

Demonstrates:

- Improved control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Better control on backhand groundstrokes
- Placement & depth on serves
- Placement & depth on return of serves

Working on:

- Consistently dinks while changing directions from cross court to down the line forehand & backhand
- Not backing up unnecessarily from NVZ
- Volley punches to the back of opponent court
- Short volley exchanges at the net
- Adjusting to different ball speeds (serves, groundstrokes, volleys)
- Attempting offensive lobs during play
- Controlling backhand groundstrokes
- Keeping the ball in play during short rallies
- Using 3rd shot drop during match play on the short court

Performs:

- 3rd shot drops by long dinking from the transition area
- Moves forward as a team to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Hits overheads with better control while maintaining proper position
- Good mobility & quickness

3.5 LEVEL

Should also possess all 3.0 skills

Demonstrates:

- Directional control while performing an overhead
- Control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, speed, depth, height)
- Control on backhand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Better placement and depth on serves
- Better placement and depth on return of serves

Working on:

- Dinking with a purpose
- Volley punches to the back of opponent court, to keep opponents at the baseline

Performs:

- Keeps ball in play during rallies and is aware of minimizing errors
- Communicates effectively with partner
- Utilizes different strategies to expose opponent weaknesses
- Moves forward as a team to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Sustains a controlled volley exchange at the net
- 3rd shot drop from the baseline
- Uses deeper and higher returns to approach the net quicker
- Dinks consistently while changing directions from cross court to down the line forehand & backhand
- Adjusts to different ball speeds (serves, groundstrokes, volleys) with control and accuracy
- Lobs offensively and effectively

3.75 LEVEL

Should also possess all 3.5 skills

Demonstrates:

- Increased ability to dink with a purpose
- Increased ability to volley punch to the back of opponent court, to keep opponents at the baseline.

One on One Evaluation:

- Down the line dinks (forehand side than backhand side) in a row:
- Center dropping dinks:
- Volleys in a row at ½ court:
- Forehand shots at baseline down the line:
Forehand cross,
- Backhand down the line and cross court:
- Serves:
- Returns:

- Increased speed, variety, and placement of shots compared to a 3.5

4.0 LEVEL

Should also possess all 3.5 skills, advanced shots, strategies, tournament player

Demonstrates:

- Block volleys
- Volley exchanges at the net and beginning to use directional control
- Hit winning volley when a ball is popped up
- 3rd shot drops from baseline during match play with greater success
- Forehand control on groundstrokes (direction, depth, height, spin)
- Backhand control on groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)

Working on:

- Consistency with 3rd shot drops from the baseline
- Using spin effectively on a variety of shots
- Anticipating shots more frequently (watching opponents paddle face)

Performs:

- Moves effectively with partner, easily switching sides, and communicates when required
- Controls play at the NVZ line, by keeping their opponent back if they're at the baseline
- Dinks with the purpose to elicit a put away shot
- Poaches effectively and understands when it's appropriate
- Changes the pace from fast strategy to slow and vice versa
- Overheads are beginning to be placed for winners
- Understands proper shot selection to minimize errors
- Adjusts to differing ball speeds consistently
- Lobs offensively and effectively
- Shows great patience with dinks & rallies

IN PLAY ASSESSMENT:

- Being able to dink consistently
- Able to hit serve and return deep
- Ability to hit a third shot drop
- Able to block shots