



IPTPA Skill Assessment

2.0 Players

2.0 Skill level

- Knows the basic rules including two bounce rule, scoring and player position relative to scoring
- Demonstrates basic pendulum swing on the forehand & backhand side
- Demonstrates dinks down the line forehand & backhand
- Demonstrates dinks cross court forehand & backhand
- Demonstrates proper ready position
- Demonstrates punch volley
- Demonstrates proper sideways turn, arm positioning and backward movement for overhead
- Demonstrates an overhead
- Knows where to stand as the serve team and the return team
- Demonstrates proper side step movement while being balanced
- Has good mobility and can move forward in a safe and balanced manner
- Developing eye-hand coordination
- Demonstrates a forehand ground stroke swing low to high and striking the ball off front foot
- Demonstrates a backhand ground stroke swing low to high and striking the ball off front foot
- Demonstrates a serve
- Demonstrates return of serve

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- Forehand down the line 4/10
- Forehand cross court 4/10
- Backhand down the line 4/10
- Backhand cross court 4/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys

- Forehand Punch Volley 4/10
- Backhand Punch Volley 4/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Serves

- Right side of the Court 4/10
- Left side of the Court 4/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves

- Right side of the Court 4/10
- Left side of the Court 4/10

Ghost Doubles – 3 games to 11 – Rally Scoring



IPTPA Skill Assessment

2.5 Players

2.5 Skill level should also possess all 2.0 skills

- Knows the basic rules including two bounce rule, scoring and player position relative to scoring
- Demonstrates basic pendulum swing on the forehand & backhand side
- Working on consistency while dinking down the line forehand & backhand
- Working on consistency while dinking cross court forehand & backhand
- Demonstrates proper side step movement while staying balanced at NVZ line
- Demonstrates a punch volley
- Is developing 3rd shot drop by long dinking from the transition area
- Attempting to hit 3rd shot drop during match play on the short court
- Moving forward to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Demonstrates an overhead with the proper sideways turn, arm positioning and backward movement
- Has good mobility and can move forward in a safe and balanced manner
- Has good eye-hand coordination
- Beginning to demonstrate control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Uses a backhand ground stroke
- Keeps ball in play during short rallies

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- Forehand down the line 6/10
- Forehand cross court 6/10
- Backhand down the line 6/10
- Backhand cross court 6/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand 4/10
- Backhand 4/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys

- Forehand Punch Volley 5/10
- Backhand Punch Volley 5/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Overhead

- Overhead 2/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Serves

- Right side of the Court 3/5
- Left side of the Court 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves

- Right side of the Court 3/5
- Left side of the Court 3/5

Ghost Doubles – 3 Games to 11 – Rally Scoring



IPTPA Skill Assessment

3.0 Players

3.0 Skill level should also possess all 2.5 skills

- Attempting to consistently dink while changing directions from cross court to down the line forehand & backhand
- Does not back up unnecessarily from NVZ
- Punches volley to the back ½ of opponent court
- Sustains a short volley exchange at the net
- Can perform 3rd shot drop by long dinking from the transition area
- Using 3rd shot drop during match play on the short court
- Moving forward as a team to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Can perform an overhead with better control while maintaining proper position
- Has good mobility & quickness
- Demonstrates improved control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Better control on backhand groundstrokes
- Keeps ball in play during short rallies
- Attempts offensive lobs during play
- Demonstrates placement & depth on serves
- Demonstrates placement & depth on return of serves
- Attempting to adjust to different ball speeds (serves, groundstrokes, volleys)

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- Forehand down the line 7/10
- Forehand cross court 7/10
- Backhand down the line 7/10
- Backhand cross court 7/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand 5/10
- Backhand 5/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand 2/5
- Backhand 2/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys (A-Ball lands in the back half of opponents court/B-Ball lands within a foot of the opponents NVZ.)

- Forehand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 6/10
- Backhand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 6/10
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Skill Testing Requirement: Serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court 3/5
- Left side of Court 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court 3/5
- Left side of Court 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Overhead

- Overhead 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Offensive lobs from NVZ line

- Offensive lobs 3/5

Ghost Doubles – 3 games to 11 – Rally Scoring



IPTPA Skill Assessment

3.5 Players

3.5 Skill level should also possess all 3.0 skills

- Can consistently dink while changing directions from cross court to down the line forehand & backhand
- Punches volley to the back ½ of opponent court, to keep opponents at the baseline
- Sustains a controlled volley exchange at the net
- Performs 3rd shot drop from the baseline
- Is beginning to dink with a purpose
- Moving forward as a team to approach NVZ for dinks & volleys
- Developing directional control while performing an overhead
- Demonstrates control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, speed, depth, height)
- Demonstrates control on backhand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Keeps ball in play during rallies and is aware of minimizing errors
- Able to communicate effectively with partner & utilize different strategies to expose opponent weaknesses
- Using deeper and higher returns to approach the net quicker
- Uses offensive lobs effectively
- Demonstrates better placement and depth on serves
- Demonstrates better placement and depth on return of serves
- Improved control when adjusting to different ball speeds (serves, groundstrokes, volleys)

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- 14 out of 20 windshield wiper dinks

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand down the line 8/10
- Forehand cross court 8/10
- Backhand down the line 8/10
- Backhand cross court 8/10

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand down the line 3/5
- Backhand down the line 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Overheads

- Overheads 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Offensive lobs from the NVZ line

- Offensive Lobs 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys (A-Ball lands in the back half of opponents court/B-Ball lands within a foot of the opponents NVZ.)

- Forehand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 7/10
- Backhand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 7/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court 4/5
- Left side of Court 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Return of serves (Ball lands in the back half of opponents court)

- Right side of Court Forehand 4/5
- Left side of Court Backhand 4/5

Ghost Doubles – 3 Games to 11 – Rally Scoring



IPTPA Skill Assessment

4.0 Players

4.0 Skill level should also possess all 3.5 skills

- Sustains a volley exchange at the net and beginning to use directional control
- Can demonstrate a block volley
- Able to hit winning volley when a ball is popped up
- Better consistency when performing 3rd shot drop from the baseline
- Can hit 3rd shot drop from baseline during match play with greater success
- 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
- Dink with a purpose to elicit a put away shot
- Can demonstrate an effective poach, and understands when it's appropriate
- Able to change a fast paced strategy to a slow one and vice versa
- Can consistently perform an overhead and beginning to place the shot for winners
- Demonstrates control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height, spin)
- Demonstrates control on backhand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height)
- Understands proper shot selection to minimize errors
- Able to adjust to differing ball speeds consistently
- Uses offensive lobs effectively
- Beginning to use spin effectively on a variety of shots
- Maintains greater patience in dinks & rallies
- Beginning to anticipate shots more frequently (watching opponents paddle face)

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- 16 out of 20 windshield wiper dinks

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from transition area (middle of the court)

- Forehand down the line 4/5
- Forehand cross court 4/5
- Backhand down the line 4/5
- Backhand cross court 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand 7/10
- Backhand 7/10

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys (Ball lands in the back one third of opponents court)

- Forehand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 4/5
- Backhand Punch Volley with directional & depth control 4/5
- Forehand Block Volley 3/5
- Backhand Block Volley 3/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Overheads

- Overheads 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Offensive lobs from NVZ line

- Offensive lobs 4/5

Ghost Doubles – 3 Games to 11 – Rally Scoring



IPTPA Skill Assessment

4.5 Players

4.5 Skill level should also possess all 4.0 skills

- Consistently punches volley to the appropriate spot on the court
- Consistently demonstrates a block volley
- Can demonstrate a swing volley
- Sustains a controlled volley exchange at the net, with directional control, creating unforced errors
- Able to consistently hit winning volley when a ball is popped up
- Can consistently hit 3rd shot drop from baseline during match play
- Can drive a third shot for power as an option
- Initiates & maintains an extended dink exchange to elicit a put-away shot
- Can demonstrate an effective poach, and understands when it's appropriate
- Able to change a fast paced strategy to a slow one and vice versa
- Can stack with partner on the serve and the return
- Demonstrates control on forehand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height, top spin and under spin/slice)
- Demonstrates control on backhand groundstrokes (direction, depth, height, top spin and under spin/slice)
- Keeps ball in play during rallies and is aware of minimizing errors
- Knows the rules including player position, relative to scoring and stacking on the return and serve
- Uses offensive lobs effectively
- Demonstrates placement, spin and depth on return of serves
- Can adjust to different ball speeds and spins (serves, groundstrokes and volleys)
- Uses spin effectively on a variety of shots

Skill Testing Requirement: Dinks

- 18 out of 20 windshield wiper dinks

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drop from baseline

- Forehand down the line 4/5
- Forehand cross court 4/5
- Backhand down the line 4/5
- Backhand cross court 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: 3rd shot drive from baseline

- 3rd shot drive from baseline 4/5

Skill Testing Requirement: Volleys

- Forehand swing volley 4/5
- Backhand swing volley 4/5
- Forehand punch volley with directional control 4/5 (Ball lands in the back third of the opponents court)
- Backhand punch volley with directional control 4/5 (Ball lands in the back third of the opponents court)
- Forehand block volley 3/5 (with the ball landing in opponents NVZ)
- Backhand block volley 3/5 (with the ball landing in opponents NVZ)

Ghost Doubles – 3 Games to 11 – Rally Scoring

USAPA Player Skill Rating Definitions



NTRP	Forehand	Backhand	Serve /Return	Dink	3rd Shot	Volley	Strategy
1.0-2.0	This player is just starting to play pickleball and has no other sports background. Minimal understanding of rules of the game.						
2.5	This player has limited experience. Can sustain a short rally with players of equal ability. Basic ability to keep score.						
3.0	Ability to hit a medium paced shot. Lacks directional intent and consistency.	Avoids using a backhand. Lacks directional intent and consistency.	Able to hit a medium paced shot. Lacks depth, direction, and consistency.	Not able to consistently sustain a dink rally. Not yet developed the ability to control this shot.	Generally hits a medium paced ball with little direction.	Able to hit a medium paced shot. Lacks direction/inconsistent.	Understands fundamentals. Is learning proper court positioning. Knows the fundamental rules and can keep score and is now playing tournaments.
3.5	Improved stroke development with moderate level of shot control.	Learning stroke form and starting to develop consistency but will avoid if possible.	Consistently gets serve/return in play with limited ability to control depth.	Increased consistency, with limited ability to control height/depth. Sustains medium length rallies. Starting to understand variations of pace.	Developing the drop shot in a way to get to the net.	Is able to volley medium paced shots thereby developing control.	Moves quickly towards the non-volley zone (NVZ) when opportunity is there. Acknowledges difference between hard game and soft game and is starting to vary own game during recreation and tournament play. Can sustain short rallies. Is learning proper court positioning. Basic knowledge of stacking and understands situations where it can be effective.
4.0	Consistently hits with depth and control. Is still perfecting shot selection and timing.	Has improved stroke mechanics and has moderate success at hitting a backhand consistently.	Places a high majority of serves/returns with varying depth and speed.	Increased consistency with moderate ability to control height/depth. May end dink rally too soon due to lack of patience. Is beginning to understand difference between attackable balls and those that are not.	Selectively mixing up soft shots with power shots to create an advantage with inconsistent results.	Able to volley a variety of shots at different speeds. Is developing consistency and control. Starting to understand the block/re-set volley.	Aware of partner's position on the court and is able to move as a team. Demonstrates ability to change direction in an offensive manner. Demonstrates a broad knowledge of the rules of the game. Has a moderate number of unforced errors per game. Solid understanding of stacking and when and how it could be used in match play. Beginning to identify opponents weaknesses and attempts to formulate game plan to attack weaknesses. Beginning to seek out more
4.5	High level of consistency. Uses pace and depth to generate opponents' error or set up next shot.	Can effectively direct the ball with varying depth and paces with good consistency.	Serves with power, accuracy, and depth and can also vary the speed and spin of the serve.	Ability to place ball with high success at changing shot types while playing both consistently and with offensive intent. Recognizes and attempts to hit attackable dinks.	Consistently executes effective 3rd shot strategies that are not easily returned for advantage. Able to intentionally and consistently place the ball.	Able to block hard volleys directed at them and can consistently drop them into the NVZ. Comfortable hitting swinging volleys. Hits overhead shots consistently, often as putaways.	Has good footwork and moves laterally, backward, and forward well. Uses weight transfer for more efficient footwork. Able to change direction with ease. Very comfortable playing at the non-volley zone. Communicates and moves well with partner — easily "stacks" court positions. Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to the opponent's strengths and weaknesses and court position. Limited number of unforced errors.
5.0	Hits all shot types at a high level of ability from both the forehand and backhand sides including: touch, spin, and pace with control to set up offensive situations. Has developed good touch from all court positions. Has developed a very high level of variety, depth, and pace of serves.			Mastered the dink and drop shots. Ability to move opponents with shot placements. Exhibits patience during rallies with the ability to create an opportunity to attack utilizing the dink. Increased ability to change the pace of dinks strategically.	Mastered the 3rd shot choices and strategies to create opportunities for winning points. Able to drop and drive ball from both the forehand and backhand side with high level of consistency.	Able to block hard volleys directed at them and consistently drop them into the NVZ. Places overhands with ease for winners. Able to volley shots toward opponents feet consistently. Comfortable with swinging volley in both initiating and ability to attack back or neutralize return.	Mastered pickleball strategies and can vary strategies and styles of play in competitive or tournament matches. Is successful at turning defensive shots into offensive shots. Has efficient footwork and effective use of weight transfer for improved quickness on the court. Easily and quickly adjusts style of play and game plan according to the opponent's strengths and weaknesses and court position. Rarely makes unforced errors.
5.5+	This player is a top caliber player. Performance and tournament wins speak for this player's ability to consistently perform at a high level.						