

TABLE TENNIS FOR BEGINNERS

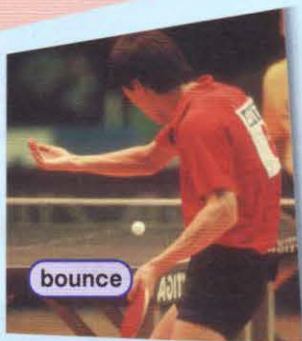
The following are some basic rules and guidelines to help a **table tennis** beginner. All rules are from the **International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF)** handbook.

EQUIPMENT

To play table tennis, you need a table and net. The table should be a rectangle 9ft long and 5ft wide, and the net 6 inches high. You also need a **table tennis ball**. The balls have a diameter of 40 mm (1.57 in). The final thing you need is a **racket** or **paddle**.

GAME PLAY

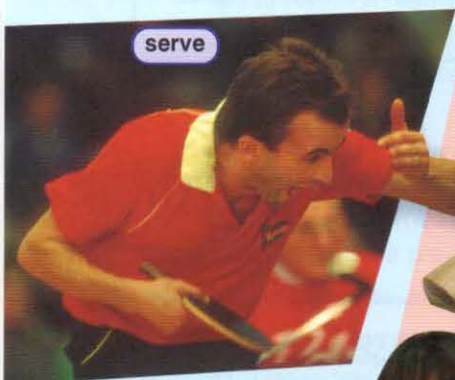
To begin a **rally**, first someone must **serve**. **Service** begins when the serving player throws the ball into the air. He or she must then hit the ball, hopefully with **spin**, to the other player, **bouncing** it once on their own side of the table after contact with the paddle, before it bounces on his or her own side of the net. Then, the other player **returns** it. When someone fails to return the ball, the opposite person scores a point. Sometimes, outside circumstances prevent a proper return. In this case, the rally is a **let** and no point is scored.



bounce



table tennis



serve



table tennis ball

racket



spin

Get ready!

1 Before you read the passage, talk about these questions.

- 1 How is a game of table tennis started?
- 2 What equipment is needed to play table tennis?

Reading

2 Read the table tennis rulebook. Then, choose the correct answers.

- 1 What is the main purpose of the article?
 - A to teach people how to apply spin
 - B to advertise a table tennis set
 - C to help advanced table tennis players improve their games
 - D to outline table tennis rules and regulations
- 2 When does service begin?
 - A when the server hits the ball across the net
 - B when the ball bounces on the table
 - C as soon as the ball leaves the server's hand
 - D when the opposite player returns the ball
- 3 Which of the following events would prevent points from being scored?
 - A a let occurs on a rally
 - B a player fails to return a serve
 - C a ball bounces twice on the opponents end
 - D a player misses the ball during a rally

Vocabulary

3 Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| 1 — spin | 4 — table tennis |
| 2 — return | 5 — bounce |
| 3 — serve | 6 — racket |

- A the rotation of a ball in the air
- B to come back off a surface
- C the first hit that begins a rally
- D a game played on a large table in which a ball is hit back and forth
- E something used to hit the ball between players
- F to hit the ball back to the other player's side

- 4 Fill in the blanks with the correct words and phrases from the word bank.

word BANK

paddle rally service
ITTF table tennis ball let

- Two players hit a(n) _____ back and forth in the game of table tennis.
- The _____ is responsible for creating official rules for table tennis.
- A player uses a(n) _____ to hit the ball to the other player.
- The period during which the ball is in play is called a(n) _____.
- _____ begins when the serving player throws the ball up in the air and hits it to his or her opponent.
- A(n) _____ is an unscored rally.

- 5 Listen and read the table tennis rulebook again. How high is a table tennis table net?

Listening

- 6 Listen to a conversation between a professional and beginner table tennis player. Mark the following statements as true (T) or false (F).

- ___ The man won the game.
- ___ The woman asks for advice on making serves.
- ___ The man recommends having a good racket.

- 7 Listen again and complete the conversation.

Beginner: Wow! That was an amazing game. 1 _____ on your win.

Professional: Thanks a lot! Do you play 2 _____ ?

Beginner: I'm learning. Tell me something, how did you get so great at 3 _____ ?

Professional: Well, it just 4 _____ of practice.

Beginner: Oh, I practice every day. I'm wondering if you have any 5 _____, though.

Professional: Let's see. 6 _____ be aggressive whenever possible. Don't simply react. Think where the ball might go.

Speaking

- 8 With a partner, act out the roles below based on Task 7. Then switch roles.

USE LANGUAGE SUCH AS:

Can you tell me how ...

Is there something ...

It just takes ...

Student A: A: You are a beginner table tennis player. Talk to Student B about:

- serves
- spin
- other playing advice

Student B: You are a professional table tennis player. Talk to Student A about how to improve his or her game.

Writing

- 9 Use the rulebook and the conversation from Task 8 to fill out part of the magazine interview.

Sports Magazine Interview

Table Tennis Weekly

We sat down with professional player, Mark Jackson. See what he had to say below.

TTW: How can fans become professional players?

MJ: _____

TTW: What is the most important skill for a professional player to have?

MJ: _____

TTW: What do you do before you serve?

MJ: _____