



**NORTH AMERICAN
ISMAILI GAMES**

TABLE TENNIS RULEBOOK

The North American Ismaili Games (NAIG) is a premier regional sporting event that brings together athletes from across North America in a spirit of excellence, sportsmanship, and healthy competition, aligned with international standards.

Beyond competition, NAIG serves as a platform for unity, belonging, and shared growth—fostering meaningful connections and collective pride across regions. The Games are designed to be inclusive and accessible, enabling participation across age groups, skill levels, and regions.

NAIG also promotes lifelong active living and continuous improvement, while extending its impact through complementary programming such as development clinics, leadership forums, mentorship, and community engagement.

Highlights

A game shall be won by the player or pair first (1st) scoring eleven (11) points unless players or pairs score ten (10) points, when the game shall be won by the first (1st) player or first (1st) pair subsequently gaining a lead of two (2) points.

All matches will be played best three (3) out of five (5) games in all stages of the competition.

A player or team can win the point without holding serve (PAR – point-a-rally system).

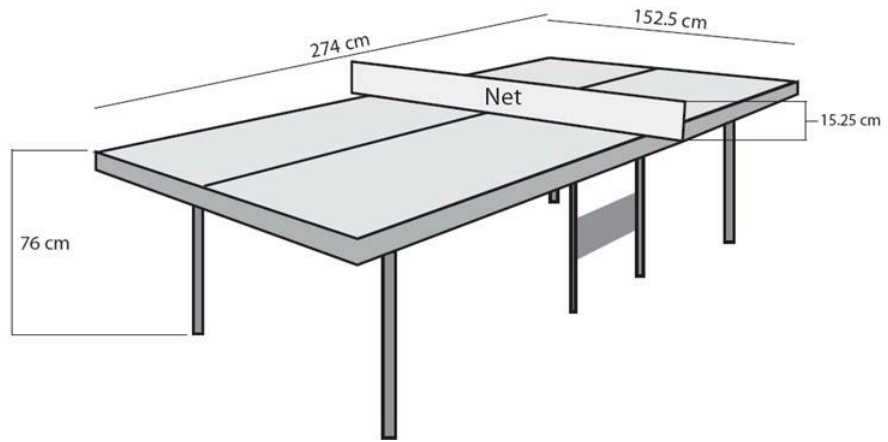
If the ball touches any part of the facility, including but not limited to walls, court dividers, poles, umpire chair, it is whistled dead and the other player/team gets the point.

The ball shall be spherical, with a diameter of forty (40+) millimeters and weighing 2.7 grams and be composed of celluloid or similar plastics material, and be white or orange, and matte.

The playing surface shall be uniformly dark colored and matte.

Table Tennis Table

The diagram below is an illustration of a table tennis table:



Equipment

The racket may be of any size, shape or weight but the blade shall be flat and rigid.

At least eighty-five (85) percent of the blade by thickness shall be of natural wood; an adhesive layer within the blade may be reinforced with fibrous material such as carbon fiber, glass fiber or compressed paper, but shall not be thicker than seven-and-a-half (7.5) percent of the total thickness or 0.35 millimeters, whichever is the smaller.

The surface of the covering material on a side of the blade, or of a side of the blade if it is left uncovered, shall be matte, bright red on one (1) side and black on the other.

Slight deviations from continuity of surface or uniformity of color due to accidental damage or wear may be allowed provided that they do not significantly change the characteristics of the surface.

A side of the paddle used for striking the ball shall be covered with either ordinary pimples rubber, with pimples outwards having a total thickness including adhesive of not more than two (2) millimeters, or sandwich rubber, with pimples inwards or outwards, having a total thickness including adhesive of not more than four (4) millimeters.

The ball shall be spherical, weigh 2.7 grams, with a diameter of forty (40+) millimeters and made of celluloid or similar plastics material, and shall be white or orange, and matte.

The upper surface of the table, known as the playing surface, shall be rectangular, 2.74 meters long and 1.525 meters wide, and shall lie in a horizontal plane seventy-six (76) centimeters above the floor. The playing surface shall not include the vertical sides of the table top. The playing surface shall be uniformly dark coloured and matte.

Official Rules

The top of the net, along its whole length, shall be 15.25 centimeters above the playing surface

Method of Scoring

A player or team can win the point without holding serve (PAR – point-a-rally system)

Unless the rally is a let, a player or pair shall score a point:

If their opponent(s) fails to make a good service

If their opponent(s) fails to make a good return

If, after they made a good service or a good return, the ball touches anything other than the net assembly before being struck by their opponent(s)

If the ball, after being struck by the opponent(s), passes through the net or between

the net and the net post or between the net and the playing surface

If the ball passes beyond their end line without touching their court, after being struck by their opponent(s)

If their opponent(s) strikes the ball twice successively

If their opponent(s), or anything their opponent(s) wears or carries, touches the net assembly

If their opponent's free hand touches the playing surface

If a doubles opponent strikes the ball out of the sequence established by the first (1st) server and first (1st) receiver

Tie Games

A game shall be won by the player or pair first (1st) scoring eleven (11) points unless both players or both pairs score ten (10) points, when the game shall be won by the first (1st) player or first (1st) pair subsequently gaining a lead of two (2) points.

Serving

The ball must rest freely on the open palm of the server's stationary free hand

The ball must be thrown vertically at least sixteen (16) centimeters after leaving the palm of the free hand

The ball cannot be hidden by the server

The server's free arm must be removed from the space between the ball and the net once the ball has been projected

The Order of Serving, Receiving and Ends

The right to choose the initial order of serving, receiving and ends shall be decided by lot and the winner may choose to serve or to receive first (1st) or to start at a particular end.

When one (1) player or pair has chosen to serve or to receive first (1st) or to start at a particular end, the other player or pair shall have the other choice.

After each two (2) points have been scored the receiving player or pair shall become the serving player or pair and so on until the end of the game, unless both players or pairs score ten (10) points, when the sequences of serving and receiving shall be the same but each player shall serve for only one (1) point in turn.

In each game of a doubles match, the pair having the right to serve first (1st) shall choose which of them will do so and in the first (1st) game of a match the receiving pair shall decide which of them will receive first (1st); in subsequent games of the match, the first (1st) server having been chosen, the first (1st) receiver shall be the player who served to him/her in the preceding game.

In doubles, at each change of service the previous receiver shall become the server and the partner of the previous server shall become the receiver.

The player or pair serving first (1st) in a game shall receive first (1st) in the next game of the match, and in the last possible game of a doubles match the pair due to receive next shall change their order of receiving when first (1st) one (1) pair scores five (5) points.

Out of Order of Serving, Receiving or Ends

If a player serves or receives out of turn, play shall be interrupted by the umpire as soon as the error is discovered and shall resume with those players serving and receiving who should be server and receiver respectively at the score that has been reached, according to the sequence established at the beginning of the match and, in doubles, to the order of serving chosen by the pair having the right to serve first (1st) in the game during which the error is discovered.

If the players have not changed ends when they should have done so, play shall be interrupted by the umpire as soon as the error is discovered and shall resume with the players at the ends at which they should be at the score that has been reached, according to the sequence established at the beginning of the match.

In any circumstances, all points scored before the discovery of an error shall be reckoned.

Intervals

Players or pairs are entitled to practice on the match table for up to two (2) minutes immediately before the start of a match but not during normal intervals.

Play shall be continuous throughout an individual match except that any player or pair is entitled to an interval of up to one (1) minute between successive games of an individual match.

A player or pair will get brief intervals for toweling after every six (6) points from the start of each game and at the change of ends in the last possible game of an individual match.

A player or pair may claim one (1) timeout period of up to one (1) minute during an individual match.

The request for a timeout, which can be made only between rallies in a game, shall be indicated by making a "T" sign with the hands.

Warm-Up

Players will be allowed a warm-up time of two (2) minutes prior to each match.

Coaching

Coaching is considered to be communication, advice or instruction of any kind to a player.

Coaching can only be provided to the player(s) during the one minute (1) break interval between games and during the one (1) allowed timeout period of up to one (1) minute during a match.

In the above regulation breaks during a match, the coach must return to their designated chairs/seating area as soon as the umpire announces that there are twenty (20) seconds remaining.

The coach must remain seated in the designated chairs/seating area provided except at the approved intervals mentioned above.

Where a head coach is not present or available, an assistant coach, team manager, or "team" captain may assume the role of a coach.

Under no circumstances can coaching be provided when the ball is in play or in any manner distracting the opposing player(s) or disrupting play.

For under 16 category, parents are not allowed to coach in between points / rally. Coaching can be done only during official time out.

Substitutions

In the event of an injury or a no show for a doubles or mixed doubles team, a substitute is not allowed under any circumstances. If one of the players is unable to continue play, the doubles or mixed doubles team shall forfeit the game.

Illness, Injury and Bleeding

Illness

A player who suffers an illness that involves neither an injury nor bleeding must either continue to play immediately or the pair may use the one (1) thirty (30) second time-out allowed during a set.

This includes conditions such as a cramp, nausea, breathlessness and asthma.

Injury

Should a serious accident occur while the ball is in play, the referee shall stop the play immediately and permit medical assistance to enter the court. The rally will then be replayed.

If the referee is not satisfied that the injury is genuine, they must advise the captain/coach to decide whether to resume play immediately or use the one (1) thirty (30) second time-out allowed during a play for recovery.

If the referee deems the injury to be genuine and the injured/ill player cannot be substituted legally or exceptionally, the player shall be given a three (3) minute recovery time, but not more than once for the same player in the match.

After the three (3) minute recovery time, if the player does not recover, the pair may request a legal time-out during the match of thirty (30) seconds. If the player still has not recovered, the team is then declared incomplete.

A team is declared incomplete if it has fewer than two (2) players on the court and shall forfeit the match but shall retain any points already scored and any sets already won.

Bleeding

Whenever bleeding occurs, the bleeding must be stopped before the player can continue.

Play shall be suspended immediately lasting not more than three (3) minutes and the player shall receive medical treatment.

Play shall not resume until all traces of blood have been removed from the playing surface.

If immediate medical treatment does not rectify the injury, the player must be substituted or replaced until the bleeding is stopped and the blood is removed from their uniform.

After the three (3) minute recovery time, if the player does not recover, the team is declared incomplete.

A team is declared incomplete if it has fewer than two (2) players on the court and shall forfeit the match but shall retain any points already scored and any sets already won.

Bloodstained clothing must be replaced.

For all other issues not addressed in these Laws of Table Tennis, please refer to The United States Ismaili Games General Rules and Regulations.