



Official Rules of Futpong

Court and playing space

- 1) The court is a hard, level, rectangular surface 12 feet in length (Sidelines) and 6 feet in width (Baselines) that is clear of debris including standing water. Distances are measured from the outermost edge of the lines, which are considered In Bounds during play.
- 2) The court is divided in half by a net assembly running parallel to the Baselines and perpendicular to the Sidelines. The net is suspended between two upright posts each 16 inches high. The net is supported by four legs and a crossbar that are attached to the upright posts. The top of the net should be 15-16 inches above the playing surface. The bottom of the net should be as close as possible to the playing surface.
- 3) With the court at the center, the complete playing area for Futpong should be 24 feet long by 12 feet wide, allowing room for players to move outside of the court.

Equipment

In addition to the net assembly, Futpong requires a ball, which has a circumference of between 18-20 inches. The ball weighs between 190-210g, and is inflated to a pressure of 7 psi. The ball is made of tpu (thermoplastic polyurethane) or pvc (polyvinyl chloride) material.

Attire

Shoes (preferably athletic shoes) and shirts are required for play. Clothing must be in good taste, free of wording intended to mock or to intimidate opponents.

Definitions

- 1) Baseline: Either of the six-foot-long lines of the court that run parallel to the net.
- 2) Fault: A serve that lands Out of Bounds or violates one of the rules of serving (see "The Serve" below).
- 3) In Bounds: Anywhere within the 6-foot-by-12-foot court. Sidelines and Baselines are considered In Bounds, as is the net and the crossbar.
- 4) Let: A serve that lands In Bounds on the opponent's side of the court but which touches the net first.
- 5) Out of Bounds: Anywhere outside the court. The upright posts and support legs for the net are considered Out of Bounds, even if they shift location during play to what would otherwise be an In Bounds position.
- 6) Rally: A period in which the ball is in play.
- 7) Receiver: The player who returns the serve.
- 8) Server: The player who puts the ball into play for a given point.

- 9) **Service Cycle:** The rotation of body parts used for serving consecutive points. It is a three-part rotation as follows: one foot; opposite foot; any body part except feet, hands or arms; repeat. A new Service Cycle always begins with a foot, regardless of where the player's last Service Cycle ended.
- 10) **Sideline:** Either of the 12-foot long lines of the court that run perpendicular to the net.

Practice

Players are permitted to practice for up to 5 minutes immediately before the start of a match.

Match length

Before play begins, players (or the tournament director) should decide how many games will be in the match. This is usually an odd number and the winner will take the majority (e.g. two games out of three).

Choosing Servers and sides

- 1) Before play begins, opponents traditionally choose Servers and sides by conducting a Rally that starts with a legal serve plus a minimum of two legal returns. The winner of the Rally earns the right to choose whether to serve first or to choose a side of the court to play on. The player who lost the Rally makes the remaining choice. For example, if the player who wins the Rally elects to serve first, his or her opponent then gets to choose which side of the court to defend.
- 2) Alternative methods may also be used to determine who makes the first choice, such as flipping a coin.
- 3) If a match lasts more than one game, the player or team that lost the previous game gets to choose whether to serve or receive in the subsequent game. Players and teams also switch sides after each game.

Maximum number of touches

Before play begins, opponents (or the tournament director) should also agree on a maximum number of touches per player (or team) used to play the ball back over the net. Two is the typical number; but more can be allowed for beginning players or one-touch required for advanced players.

Calling score

Before any serve, the Server calls out the score, saying the Server's current tally first and then the Receiver's.

The serve

To make a legal serve in either a singles or doubles match, the Server bounces the ball once In Bounds and then strikes it so that it passes over the net and lands In Bounds on the opponent's side. Note that the first serve of a Service Cycle must be done with a foot.

Faults

If any of the following Faults take place during the serve, no point is scored, but service changes over to the Receiver.

- 1) The ball fails to clear the net or lands Out of Bounds on the opponent's side of the net.

- 2) The ball does not bounce, bounces more than once or bounces Out of Bounds before being struck.
- 3) The non-kicking foot comes off the ground before the kicking foot touches the ground again. If the ball is being served with something other than a foot, then at least one foot must stay on the ground while the ball is being struck.
- 4) The incorrect body part is used to serve (see Service Cycle above).
- 5) Either foot touches the court surface In Bounds prior to the ball being struck
- 6) Two consecutive Lets (see below).

Lets

If the serve lands In Bounds on the opponent's side of the net but touches the top of the net first, the serve is replayed using the same body part of the Service Cycle. A second Let immediately after the first is a Fault.

Rally

If the serve is legal, then the Receiver(s) must play the ball back over the net without using his or her arms or hands and without exceeding the maximum number of allowed touches.

- 1) In a doubles match, either member of the receiving team may touch the ball first, but any second touch before returning the ball must be done by the second team member.
- 2) If the ball rolls on a player's body, it is considered one touch, provided that the ball stays in contact with the body and remains in motion.
- 3) A ball that bounces up in the air after striking the net or crossbar (though not the posts or support legs) and stays on a player's side of the net may be played again, though doing so counts as another touch.

Winning the Rally

A player or team wins the Rally if any of the following occur:

- 1) The ball lands In Bounds on the opponent's side of the net and then strikes the ground a second time. A ball that strikes the net and then lands In Bounds on the opponent's side of the net is considered In Bounds, providing this didn't occur during the service.
- 2) A ball last touched by an opponent lands Out of Bounds or In Bounds on their side of the net. If the opponent has at least one foot In Bounds and he or she touches it inadvertently, it is still considered a touch.
- 3) An opponent touches the ball more than the maximum number of times allowed or holds the ball in place (e.g. resting on top of the chest or trapped between shin and shoelaces).
- 4) In a doubles match only, if a single opponent touches the ball twice consecutively.
- 5) A ball returned by an opponent hits the player when they are standing entirely Out of Bounds (this is considered an Out of Bounds return.)
- 6) An opponent touches the ball while it is in play (regardless of intent) with hands or arms.
- 7) An opponent returns a serve before it bounces on his or her side of the net. Returns can be done before a bounce in all other situations.
- 8) An opponent touches the net, net uprights, crossbar or support legs during play.
- 9) An opponent breaks the invisible plane extending upward and to the sides of the net with some body part, even if there is no contact with the net itself.

When the Server wins the Rally

He or she (or the team) earns a point and continues in the Service Cycle as defined above. In a doubles match, the Server who won the first point continues to serve. The Service Cycle continues until the serving individual or team loses a Rally.

When the Receiver wins the Rally

If the Receiver or Receiver's team wins a Rally, they do not earn a point but do get to serve the ball next with a new Service Cycle. In a doubles match, the player who did not serve during the last cycle serves in the new one.

Exception: If the Receiver(s) wins the Rally because the Server(s) touched the net, upright posts or support legs during play, the Receiver not only wins the serve, but a point as well. DON'T TOUCH THE NET DURING PLAY!

Net alignment

The net sometimes moves during a game, but the only time that the net can be realigned into its proper position is between rallies, before the ball leaves the Server's hand. A point cannot be replayed if it is discovered afterward that the net was out of alignment during play.

Line calls

The player with the clearest line of sight should call a ball In Bounds or Out of Bounds, and players are encouraged to demonstrate good sportsmanship. In the event of a dispute, however, the player on the opposite court of where the ball lands has the final word.

Referees

Any player may request a referee to judge remaining line calls, Faults, Lets and sportsmanship violations at any point during a game, but no rallies can be replayed as a result of disputes. Once a referee is called, his or her word is final. Tournaments may require referees for semifinal or final matches.

Intervals

Play is continuous throughout a match except that any player or team is entitled to:

- 1) An interval of up to 2 minutes between successive games of a match.
- 2) An interval not to exceed 5 minutes if a player is temporarily incapacitated. If a referee is overseeing the game, it must be his or her opinion that the delay is not likely to disadvantage the opponent(s).
- 3) If anyone in the playing area is bleeding, play shall be suspended immediately and shall not resume until that person has received medical treatment and all traces of blood have been removed from the playing area.
- 4) Players shall remain in or near the playing area throughout a match except with the permission of a referee.

Sportsmanship

- 1) Distracting opponents during play, taunting, name-calling, kicking the ball at an opponent while the ball is not in play, swearing and hostile physical contact with an opponent have no place in Futpong.

- 2) If a player violates any of these restrictions, it results in a point to the opponent regardless of who is serving. A second violation during the same match results in the game being awarded to the opponent regardless of the current score. A third violation results in a forfeit of the match.
- 3) If a player disputes that he or she has violated one of these rules, no sanction is taken, but a referee should be brought in to oversee the remainder of the match.

Winning

- 1) To win a game, a player or team must score 11 points, but the margin of victory must be at least 2 points. Additional points will be played as needed for one player or team to achieve that margin.
- 2) To win a match, a player or team must win the best of any odd number of games, most typically two out of three games.
- 3) Alternative ways to win a game or match may be specified under tournament play.