

THE FIRST 4 SHOTS

A 4-WEEK PICKLEBALL
IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM



L2P ACADEMY

WE DON'T JUST
TEACH PICKLEBALL.
WE BUILD PLAYERS.



LEARN.
THE RIGHT —
SKILLS



IMPROVE.
WITH PURPOSE
AND FOCUS



DOMINATE.
ANY OPPONENT,
ANY LEVEL

MASTER THE 4 SHOTS THAT **WIN GAMES.**

1

SERVE

2

RETURN

3

THIRD SHOT

4

FOURTH SHOT

THE IDEA

WIN THE OPENING PATTERN

A coaching framework for 3.0-3.5 doubles players

THE PROMISE

Many recreational rallies are decided before a sustained dink exchange begins. The first four shots often determine which team reaches the kitchen in control.

This program does not replace dinking. It teaches the sequence that earns you the chance to dink from a position of strength.

1.

SERVE DEEP — Start safely and apply depth pressure.



2.

RETURN DEEP — Create time to advance under control.



3.

CHOOSE — Drop or drive based on the ball you earned.



4.

RESPOND — Attack, reset, or neutralize with discipline.



SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- More returns and serves landing deep with margin.
- Balanced movement instead of rushing through contact.
- Fewer forced attacks from poor positions.
- Clear decisions you can explain after each rally.

**THE OBJECTIVE IS REPEATABILITY
UNDER PRESSURE –
NOT HIGHLIGHT-REEL WINNERS.**

THE FIRST 4 SHOTS

SERVE DEEP WITH MARGIN

DEEP FIRST. HARD SECOND.

WHY IT MATTERS

A good serve begins the rally, keeps the returner back, and makes the second shot more difficult. Depth is useful only when you can repeat it with a legal, balanced motion.



- Start the rally without donating an attack

FOUR EXECUTION CUES

1.



Choose a target you can repeat.

2.



Swing smoothly and clear the net with margin.

3.



Finish balanced inside your base.

4.



Recover behind the baseline and read the return.

COMMON LEAKS

- Serving at maximum effort
- Aiming at lines before owning depth
- Changing the routine after a miss
- Watching the serve instead of recovering



RETURN DEEP, ARRIVE BALANCED

CREATE TIME WITHOUT RUSHING YOUR FEET

HIT. GO. SPLIT.



WHY IT MATTERS

A deep return keeps the serving team back and gives you time to advance. The return is not complete until you are balanced and ready for the third shot.



FOUR EXECUTION CUES

- 1 Prepare early and choose a high-margin target.
- 2 Contact the ball before starting forward.
- 3 Advance under control after the finish.
- 4 Split-step as the opponent contacts the third shot.



COMMON LEAKS

- Returning short while aiming too fine
- Moving before clean contact
- Running through the kitchen line
- Watching the return instead of the hitter

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CHOOSE THE THIRD SHOT

DROP FOR TIME. DRIVE FOR ADVANTAGE.

EARN THE KITCHEN.



WHY IT MATTERS

The third shot is a decision, not a favorite stroke. Use the return quality, your contact height, your balance, and opponent position to choose the ball that helps your team advance.



FOUR EXECUTION CUES

- 1 Low contact or off-balance: choose margin and drop.
- 2 Short return and higher contact: drive with purpose.
- 3 Move forward only behind a useful ball.
- 4 Expect a fifth shot; the third rarely finishes the job.



COMMON LEAKS

- Driving every return
- Trying to win from the baseline
- Dropping without enough net margin
- Standing still after a successful third

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SERVE DEEP
WITH MARGIN



RETURN DEEP,
ARRIVE BALANCED



CHOOSE THE
THIRD SHOT



RESPOND WITH
DISCIPLINE

PROTECT THE KITCHEN

ATTACK ONLY THE BALL YOU EARNED

— **ATTACK. RESET. NEUTRALIZE.** —



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WHY IT MATTERS

The fourth shot belongs to the return team, usually near the kitchen. Your job is to preserve the advantage without forcing speed from a poor contact point.



FOUR EXECUTION CUES

- 1 High contact while balanced: attack a safe target.
- 2 Medium contact or heavy pace: block or reset.
- 3 Low contact: neutralize with a controlled dink.
- 4 Recover the kitchen line after every response.



COMMON LEAKS

- Attacking every ball
- Judging height without checking balance
- Swinging hard at incoming pace
- Backing away and giving up kitchen control



SERVE DEEP
WITH MARGIN



RETURN DEEP,
ARRIVE BALANCED



CHOOSE THE
THIRD SHOT



PROTECT THE
KITCHEN

FIRST-FOUR DECISION MAP

READ THE RALLY ONE CONTACT AT A TIME.



1. SERVE

Can I land deep with margin?

YES: serve deep and recover ready.



2. RETURN

Can I return deep and arrive balanced?

YES: high margin, then split-step.



DRIVE

DROP

3. THIRD

What did the return give me?

LOW/OFF-BALANCE: drop.

SHORT/HIGH: drive with purpose.



ATTACK

BLOCK/RESET

NEUTRALIZE

4. FOURTH

What is my contact quality?

HIGH: attack.

MEDIUM: block/reset.

LOW: neutralize.



**PRESSURE CHANGES EXECUTION -
IT DOES NOT CHANGE THE DECISION PROCESS.**



SERVE DEEP
WITH MARGIN



RETURN DEEP
ARRIVE BALANCED



CHOOSE THE
THIRD SHOT



PROTECT THE
KITCHEN

FOUR SHOTS, FOUR SIMPLE CUES

Use one cue at a time.

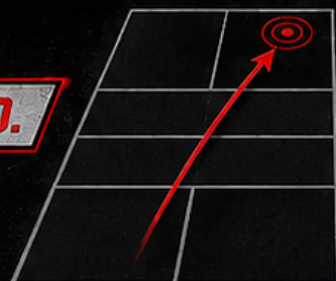
1.



1. SERVE

DEEP FIRST. HARD SECOND.

- Comfortable target
- Balanced finish
- Recover ready



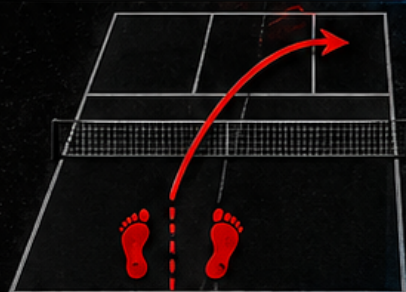
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2. RETURN

HIT. GO. SPLIT.

- High margin
- Advance under control
- Split-step on contact



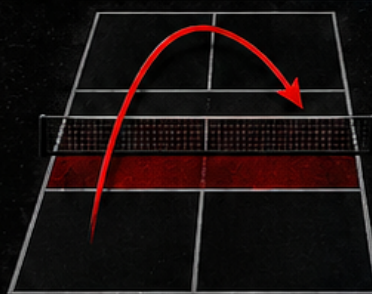
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3. THIRD SHOT

EARN THE KITCHEN.

- Read contact height
- Drop for time
- Drive for advantage



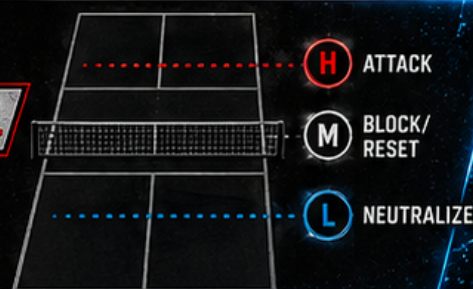
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4. FOURTH SHOT

ATTACK ONLY WHAT YOU EARN.

- High: attack
- Medium: block/reset
- Low: neutralize



FOUR SHOTS. ONE PLAN. WIN MORE POINTS.

1

SERVE

2

RETURN

3

THIRD SHOT

4

FOURTH SHOT

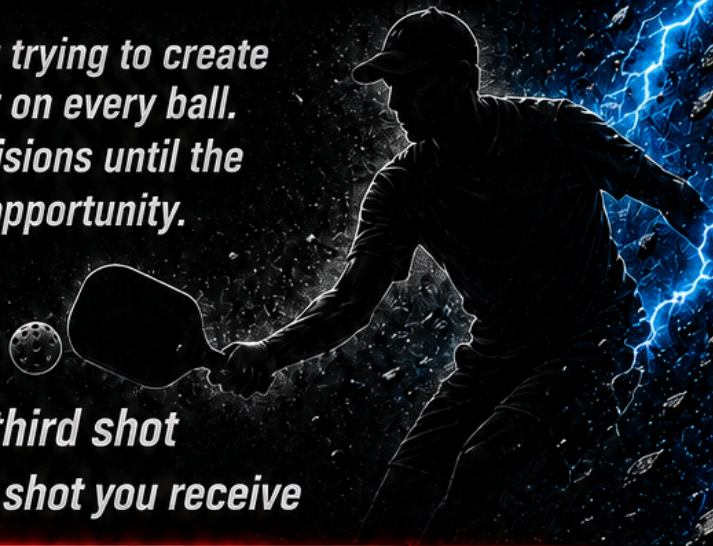
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FINAL COACHING MESSAGE

MASTER THE ORDINARY

The best players are not trying to create something spectacular on every ball. They repeat sound decisions until the opponent offers an opportunity.

- *Serve deep*
- *Return deep*
- *Choose the right third shot*
- *Respect the fourth shot you receive*



THE DINK STILL MATTERS.
NOW YOU HAVE EARNED THE CHANCE TO USE IT.

WIN THE OPENING. EARN THE KITCHEN.

1

SERVE

2

RETURN

3

CHOOSE

4

RESPOND



LEARN. IMPROVE. DOMINATE.

| When You're Ready - LET'S CHAT! | paul@learn2pickle.com | learn2pickle.com |