

## Improve Your Serve

- **Put your serve into the correct service court.** I cannot stress enough the importance of doing this. Pickleball is different from tennis in this regard. You don't get a second try, and most serves, no matter how good they might be, are returned. Don't try to "ace" the serve. Your serve can be slow, high, or otherwise less than stellar, but, if it lands in the service court, you are that much closer to making a point. If you miss the service court, your attempt at the point is lost. So read the suggestions below and try them—but remember: get the serve into the service court.
- **Call the score *just before you serve***—not while you're serving and not too far ahead of the serve. Call the score—then leave a few seconds for any questions or corrections before starting the serve. Doing this alerts all the players that you are preparing to serve the ball. Calling the score while you serve is very distracting to you and your opponents and is considered to be poor etiquette on the court. You'll find that anything occurring while you serve will cause you to serve out of bounds, into the net, or otherwise to serve poorly.
- **Vary your serve.** If you served deep before, try a short serve to throw your opponents off guard.
- **Try deep serves to the baseline.** Players can sometimes be caught "creeping" into the court area and, because they must play the ball off a bounce, they'll have trouble doing so if they are too close.
- **Serve to your opponent's backhand.** Most players are weaker on the backhand side, and their reach isn't as long, so this is typically a good strategy.
- **Serve low and fast** since these serves are generally harder to return than high, slow ones.