

# Spikeball Rules

## Tournament Structure

- Preliminary Matches followed by Single Elimination Tournament
- Divisions
  - Women's Doubles
  - Men's Doubles
  - Coed Doubles
  - Faculty/Staff Doubles
- Location: Matches will be played at Neiman Field

## Spikeball Information

- All participants must provide a valid OU ID (with picture) prior to each contest.
  - No OU ID = No Play
- Registration will be taken at [imleagues.com](http://imleagues.com).

## Overview

Spikeball is a team sport played by two teams consisting of two players each. Opposing team members line up across from each other with the Spikeball™ roundnet set in the center. A point begins when the server hits the ball off the net towards the opposing player. After the service, there are no sides or boundaries. The object of the game is to hit the ball off the net in such a way that the opposing team cannot successfully return it.

A team is allowed up to three touches to return the ball onto the net. Once the ball is played off the net, possession switches to the opposing team. The rally continues until a team is unable to legally return the ball. Players may move as they wish during a point, so long as they don't physically impede the opponent's play on the ball.

## Equipment and Court

- Equipment
  - Regulation Equipment - A Spikeball™ Pro Set and Ball are to be used for official tournament play.
  - Set Contents and Dimensions - A Spikeball™ Pro Set consists of 5 rims, 5 legs, and a net. The set has a diameter of 3 feet and a height of 8 inches.
  - Net Tension - The tension on the net should be consistent throughout. A ball dropped from a height of 5 feet from the ground should bounce up approximately 20 inches from the net (measuring from the bottom of the ball).
  - Ball Inflation - The ball should be inflated to 12 inches in circumference. Using the Pro Set measuring device, the ball should touch the sides of the measuring device and be able to pass through with light pressure.
- Court
  - Court Components - A roundnet court consists of the set, service lines, and designated playing space. A minimum of 25' x 25' is recommended for each court, however, there are no out of bounds.
  - Serving Lines - When possible, a serving line circle should be drawn 6 feet from the edge of the set or 7.5 feet from the center of the set. Hash marks should be drawn at each of the four starting service positions. When indoors or unable to draw lines, tape may be placed 6 feet from the set's edge or 7.5 feet from the set's center at equal intervals around the set to outline a circle and service positions.

## Participants

- Team Composition
  - A team consists of 2 players.
- Player Equipment / Clothing
  - Players may wear cleats, sneakers, or play barefoot at their own risk. Cleats with dangerous parts, such as metallic baseball cleats, track spikes, or worn or broken studs with sharp edges, are not allowed.
  - Players may wear glasses at their own risk.
  - Players may wear any soft clothing that does not endanger the safety of other players or provide unfair advantage.
  - Compression pads (ex: knee pads) may be worn for protection or support.
  - Players may not use clothing or equipment to unfairly inhibit or assist the movement of the ball or another player.
  - OU FIT + REC staff reserves the right to refuse any player equipment or clothing that does not abide by these guidelines.
- OU FIT + REC staff reserves the right to alter a team name, team logo, jersey graphic, or uniform if it is inappropriate for the specific event or the organization as a whole.

## Playing Format

- To Score a Point - Roundnet is played using rally scoring; points can be won by the serving or receiving team. A team scores a point when:
  - The opposing team fails to legally return the ball to the set.
  - The opposing team commits a point-loss infraction.

- The opposing team's server has two successive faults.
- **Replay** - A point is replayed when:
  - Teams disagree on the legality of a hit.
  - Teams disagree on an infraction.
  - Certain types of hinders occur, see Chapter 6 for details.
  - There is outside interference (ie a player, ball, or other object from outside a match impedes on the game).
  - If a point is replayed after a legal serve is hit, the game resumes at the same score, player positions, and serving order. The server will start on their first serve. If a point is replayed because the teams cannot agree on the legality of the serve, the game resumes at the same score, player positions, and serving order, and fault count.
- **Rally** - A rally is a sequence of playing actions between the moment the serve is hit to the moment the ball is out of play.
  - If the serving team wins a rally, they score a point and continue to serve.
  - If the receiving team wins a rally, they score a point and must serve next.
- **To Win a Game** - A game is won by the team that first scores the designated number of points (typically 15 or 21).
  - Games must be won by two points unless otherwise specified. In the case of a 14- 14 or 20-20 tie, play is continued until a 2 point lead is achieved (17-15 or 27-25).
  - **Hard cap** - according to the tournament director's discretion, certain games can be given a hard cap, meaning if the score is tied at a given number, the next point wins. For example, in games with a hard cap at 25, if the score is 24 to 24, the game will be decided by the next point. Hard caps should be set before the games start.
- **To Win a Match** - A match is won when a team wins the designated number of games (typically 2).
- **Forfeit** - A team that is not able or refuses to play when summoned to do so may be subject to a forfeit loss at the tournament director's discretion.
- **Deciding Serve/Receive**
  - **One game** – Before the game, a player from each team plays one game of Rock, Paper, Scissors. The winner gets to choose serve/receive or side.
  - **Two game matches** – In bracket play, the team with the higher seed gets to choose serve/receive, side, or defer in game one. If the higher seed defers their choice, the lower seed gets to choose serve/receive or side in game one. The choice of serve/receive or side will switch in the second game.
  - **Three-game matches** – If the match goes to a third game, a player from each team plays one game of Rock, Paper, Scissors and the winner is awarded the choice of serve/receive or side in the third game.
- **Positions**
  - The four players start set up in four positions around the set, 90 degrees apart. Teammates are located next to each other. All players must start with their entire body at least 6 feet from the set.
  - The established positions should be used for the duration of the match. Typically the positions are parallel and perpendicular to the orientation of the field. The positions will be indicated by a hash mark when possible.
  - At the start of a game, the serving team sets their positions first and declares which player will start serving. Once the serving team is set, the receiving team positions their players.
  - The receiver is the player that is positioned 180 degrees across from the server. Once the server is set the receiver may adjust their position and is free to move anywhere without distance restrictions.
  - Only the designated receiver can field the serve.
  - The other two players may only move from their positions once the ball is hit by the server.
  - If the serving team wins the point, the server switches positions with their partner and serves to the other member of the opposing team.
  - After every 5 points players rotate one position counterclockwise to equalize conditions.
  - If a non-receiving or non-serving player takes a step before the ball is hit by the server, they lose the point. In the case where both non-receiving and non-serving player move before the ball is hit by the server, the team that moved first will lose the point. If the infractions happen simultaneously the point will be replayed.
- **Time-outs**
  - **60-second timeouts** - Teams are allotted one 60-second timeout per game. The time-out may not be called during a point. The time-out may not be called in between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> serve with the exception of an injury timeout. The teams may not leave the court area and should have refreshments or equipment stored near the court before the match.
  - **Injury timeouts** – An injured player is given a maximum of 5-minutes recovery time one time a match. See 3.13.1 for details.
- **Time Between Points**
  - Points should be played in succession without breaks. After the rally has finished the ball should be recovered immediately. Once the ball has been recovered and given to the server, they must set their position, announce the score, and hit their serve. This sequence of events should take place within 10 seconds of recovering the ball. Delaying these actions will result in a delay of game warning. After receiving a delay of game warning, any additional infractions will be considered a fault.
- **Time Between Games**
  - Players will be given 3 minutes between games. Players should remain near their court. Failure to be ready to start after the break will result in a delay of game warning at 3 minutes. If players aren't set within the next minute, one point will be given to the opposing team. An additional point will be assessed for every minute teams are late.
- **Changing and Adjusting Equipment**
  - In the case of a set or ball no longer being suitable for play, the game shall pause while a replacement is found. When replaced, the game resumes at the same score, player positions, and serving order and situation (ie 1st vs 2nd serve, # of timeouts remaining, penalties/warning still in effect, etc.) as before. If a net gets moved out of position or gets altered from

its original state (ie a leg piece gets turned in, the net comes off a hook, etc.) it should be returned to its original position and state before players set for the next point.

- Exceptional Interruptions
  - Injury
    - In the case of an injury, the game is stopped. Once the player begins to receive care (if provided), they have 5 minutes to return to play. If the player is not able to return to play before 5-minutes is up, the team must forfeit that game. If the player returns to play and is injured again, they must return to play in one-minute or be subject to forfeit. Any further injury stoppage during the game that lasts more than 15 seconds between points will cause the injured player to forfeit.
  - External interference
    - In the case of an external interference preventing the game to be played, the game shall pause. When the game can be resumed, the game continues at the same score, player positions, and serving order and situation (ie 1st vs 2nd serve, # of timeouts remaining, penalties/warning still in effect, etc.) as before.

## Serving

- First serve of the game
  - The first team to serve is decided by either one game of Rock, Paper, Scissors or, in bracket play, the higher seed can choose serve/receive, side or defer (see 3.7).
- Serving order
  - The initial serving team decides which player from their team will start as the server. That player continues to serve until the receiving team wins a point.
  - Once the receiving team wins a point, they get the service possession and choose who will start serving for their team. From there on, service alternates between teammates after each change of service possession. This four person order continues the rest of the game.
  - Order in a New Game - The process stated in 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 occurs each game so the serving order does not need to stay the same for multiple games.
- Serving Position
  - If the serving team wins the point, the server switches positions with their partner and serves to the other member of the opposing team.
- Characteristics of the serve
  - All parts of the server's body and the ball must be behind the 6 foot service line when the ball is struck.
  - Before serving, the server must set their feet.
  - At least one foot must maintain a single point of contact with the ground until the ball is struck.
  - The server may take one step in any direction. This action establishes the pivot foot. Once the non-pivot foot touches the ground, that foot must also maintain one point of contact.
  - The ball must travel at least 4 inches away from the point of release from the server's hand before it is struck.
  - Serves must be struck. The ball cannot be caught, carried, or thrown.
  - Serves may be struck with any amount of force; short serves are allowed.
  - Serves may not pass higher than the receiver's straight-up extended hand while standing straight up. (See 4.6.9) There is no limit to the angle at which serves can be hit.
- Execution of the service
  - The server must set their feet centered over the correct position (see 3.8.2). Before starting their serving motion, the server then calls the score to the receiver, placing the serving team's score before the receiving team's score and pausing momentarily to ensure the receiver is ready and the score is agreed upon. The receiver may move from their position once the server has set up.
  - If the server does not call the score, calls the wrong score, or calls the score while in the act of serving, the receiving team can call for a replay of the point before their second touch. Note – the spirit of the rule is to make sure the other team is ready and to settle any score discrepancies before points begin. Don't be a jerk.
  - If the server commits a Service Fault (see 4.6) the serving team has one more attempt to hit a legal serve.
  - If the server commits a service fault, either player on the receiving team has until the ball is hit for a second time or there is a change of possession to call "fault." The server is then allocated a second serve. If a second "fault" is called, the receiving team is awarded a point.
  - The receiving team may choose to play through a fault. Exception 4.6.10 – 4.6.14. Unless a call is made by a player or observer, the play is live. The receiving team is not required to say anything if they choose to play through a fault.
- Service faults
  - The ball is struck before traveling 4 inches away from the point of release from the server's hand.
  - The ball is struck from within the 6 foot service line.
  - Any part of the server's body contacts the ground within the 6 foot service line before the ball is struck. If the server hits the ball with one foot airborne, that foot must contact the ground at least 6 feet from the net before further movement. Any contact with the line is a violation.
  - The server does not maintain one point of contact with their pivot foot.
  - After taking a step, the server does not maintain one point of contact with their non-pivot foot.
  - The ball's trajectory changes due to proximity to the rim, without contacting the rim (i.e. pocket). Exception: If the ball hits

near the server's side of the net, commonly called a near net, it typically bounces low and hard without a change in direction. This is a legal serve.

- The ball's initial contact with the set hits the rim or legs directly.
- The ball lands completely on the netting and subsequently rolls into the rim and up (i.e. roll-up).
- While standing straight up, the ball is higher than the receiver's straight-up extended hand. If a serve hits the palm of a straight-up extended hand it is good. If it hits the fingertips of a straight-up extended hand it is too high.
- The ball misses the set entirely.
- The ball lands underneath the set, also known as a Lobster Trap.
- The ball bounces multiple times on the net or bounces on the net then hits the set on the way down.
- After the ball is served, the first contact is by a player on the serving team (i.e. a player hits their partner with the serve).
- The ball is tossed and not hit/contacted. Dropping, catching or swinging at and missing a toss all count as a fault.

## Playing the Ball

- In Play - The ball is in play from the moment the server strikes it until one of the following occur:
  - A serving fault occurs and/or is called by the receiving team or an observer. 5.1.2. An infraction occurs and/or is called by any team or an observer.
- Hitting the ball
  - A hit is any contact with the ball by a player.
  - A team is entitled to a maximum of 3 hits alternating between players for returning the ball to the set. If more are used, the team commits the infraction of "Four hits" and loses the point.
  - Consecutive Contacts - A player may not hit the ball twice consecutively. Exception see rule 5.3.5.
  - Simultaneous Contacts - If teammates touch the ball simultaneously it is counted as two hits. Either teammate may take the next hit provided they have not already used all three hits.
- Characteristics of the hit
  - The ball may touch any part of the body.
  - The ball must be struck, not caught, lifted, or thrown.
  - Players may not hit the ball with two hands. Exception see rules 5.3.4 and 5.3.5. 5.3.4. At the first hit of the team on a possession, the ball may touch various parts of the body, provided that the contacts take place simultaneously.
  - At the first hit of the team on a possession, the ball may contact various parts of the body consecutively, provided that the contacts occur during one action. However, player may not have consecutive touches on the same hand (i.e. palms to fingers). This is intended to reduce carries.
- Infractions in Playing the Ball
  - Four hits - A team hits the ball more than three times before returning it to the set.
  - Non-strike - The ball is carried, caught, or thrown.
  - Two-handed hit – A player hits the ball with both hands simultaneously. Exception see rule 5.3.4.
  - Double-contact - A player hits the ball twice in succession or the ball contacts various parts of his/her body in succession. Exception see rule 5.3.5.
- Hits on the net
  - Illegal hits on the net - When the ball is returned to the set, the return results in a loss of point for the hitting team if:
    - The ball contacts any part of the ground.
    - The ball's initial contact with the set hits the rim or legs directly.
    - The ball bounces multiple times on the net or bounces on the net then hits the set on the way down.
    - The ball has a prolonged roll along the netting.
    - Pocket - During a rally, any shot that changes the trajectory of the ball due to the ball's proximity to the rim, without contacting the rim (i.e. pocket) is legal. Note, this is not legal on a serve.
    - Roll-up - During a rally, a hard-struck shot where the ball lands completely on the netting, and subsequently rolls into the rim and then off the net (i.e. roll-up) is legal. Note, this is not legal on a serve.
- Change of Possession
  - Possession changes once the ball comes off of the netting.
  - Neither team may contact the ball while it is in contact with the net.
  - Other hitting violations. All result in loss of point.
    - A defensive player attempts to play the ball out of turn.
    - An offensive player hits a shot off the net which subsequently hits themselves or their teammate.
    - A player is in contact with the ball while the ball is in contact with the net.
- Contact with the Set - Any contact with the set by a player (rims, legs, or netting) during a rally results in a "Set Contact" infraction for the offending player and is a loss of point for that team.

## Hinders

A hinder is any situation in which a player's positioning prevents the opposing team from safely making a play on the ball. Remember: player safety is paramount.

- **Defender Hindering the Offense** - Defending players must make an effort not to impede the offending team's possession or play on the ball. If a defender's position prevents a makeable play on the ball, the infringed player may call "hinder." The call should be made as soon as the infraction occurs and play should stop immediately.
- **Avoidable Hinder** - If the hinder is avoidable and the offensive player has a strong play on the ball, the point is awarded to the offensive team.
  - Example - Defensive team throws arm in front of shot over the net, preventing offensive player from swinging.
  - Example - the hitter is contacted by a defensive player during the act of swinging in close proximity to the net.
- **Unavoidable Hinder** - If the defender has no time to avoid the hinder when playing in a legitimate defensive position and the offensive player has a strong play on the ball, the point is replayed. The hindered team can choose to serve or receive while keeping the established serving rotation. Any faults will be reset.
  - Example - A close range body block pops up and goes directly into the player who just hit the ball.
- Any hinder that occurs without a strong play on the ball will result in the point being replayed. Whoever served to start the point will serve again and any faults will be reset.
- **Defender in the Ball's Path** - If during possession (or en route to the net), the ball contacts the defender to prevent a makeable offensive play, this is a hinder. The point will either be replayed or rewarded to the offense depending on the circumstances (see 6.1.1 and 6.1.2).
- **Offense Hindering the Defense**  
While less common, hinders can occur by the offensive team. The infringed player may call "hinder." The call should be made as soon as the infraction occurs. Hinders by the offense result in the point being replayed.
  - Example - Non-hitting offensive player contacts defensive player preventing them from making a play.
  - Example - Hitter falls into defensive player after taking their shot.
  - Example - After setting the ball, the setter restricts the defense's movement.

## Participant Conduct

- **Sportsmanlike Conduct**
  - Participants must know the Official SRA rules and abide by them.
  - Participants must play with integrity. The responsibility of fair play is first and foremost on the players. If a participant knows that they committed any sort of violation, it is their obligation to call it.
  - Participants must accept observers' decisions with sportsmanlike conduct, without disputing them. In case of doubt or confusion, clarification may be requested.
  - Participants must refrain from actions or attitudes aimed at influencing the decisions of the observers.
- **Fair Play** - Participants must behave respectfully and courteously in the spirit of fair play, not only towards the observers, but to opponents, partners, spectators, or tournament personnel.
- **Misconduct** - Inappropriate conduct by a player towards observers, opponents, partners, spectators, or tournament personnel is classified in three categories according to the seriousness of the offence.
  - Rude conduct - Action contrary to good manner or moral principles.
  - Offensive conduct - Defamatory or insulting words or gestures or any action expressing contempt.
  - Aggression - Actual physical attack or aggressive or threatening behavior.
- **Misconduct Sanction Scale**
  - Warning - The first rude conduct of the match by a player is sanctioned with a warning by the observer or tournament director.
  - Penalty - The second rude conduct of the same match by the same player is penalized with a point awarded by the observer or tournament director. The first offensive conduct of the match by a player is penalized with a point awarded by the observer or tournament director.
  - Disqualification - The third rude conduct of the same match by the same player is sanctioned by tournament disqualification by the observer or tournament director. The second offensive conduct of the match by a player is sanctioned by tournament disqualification by the observer or tournament director. The first physical attack or implied or threatened aggression is sanctioned by tournament disqualification by the observer or tournament director.
- **Misconduct before and between games/matches**
  - Any misconduct occurring before, between, or after games/matches are sanctioned according to rule 7.4 and sanctions apply in the following games. If not observed by a tournament official, this misconduct should be reported to the tournament director. Once a player receives a penalty, they will no longer get warnings in subsequent matches for that event. Sanctions will start at the penalty level.



## Making Calls and Settling Disagreements

- Calling Service Faults - see 4.5.2.1.
- Hitting and Play Infractions - Hitting infractions (like a direct rim hit) or play infractions (like contact with the set) must be called immediately after occurrence and play should stop.
- Calling Hinder - Hinders must be called immediately after occurrence and play should stop.
- Disagreements - If teams cannot determine the legality of a hit, serve, or call (when observers are not present), they must replay the point. Teammates do not have to agree with each other for that team to issue a disagreement. If three players think one thing and the fourth player still disagrees after discussion this merits replaying the point.

## Observers and their Responsibilities

The observer's job is to facilitate roundnet matches by settling disputes, ensuring adherence to rules, and promoting sportsmanship. While the observers are responsible for making a number of active calls, the responsibility for fair play and sportsmanship remains on the players.

- Active calls - When an observer sees any of the following infractions take place they are obligated to stop play and take the proper course of action:
  - Foot fault
  - Encroachment over the service line
  - Illegal service toss
  - Illegal net contact
  - Illegal ball contact - lift, carry, catch, double hit, etc.
  - Incorrect rotation or serving order
  - Incorrect score
  - Timing violations (time in between games and points, timeouts)
  - Player misconduct
  - Players are allowed to make active calls that they feel the observer missed. If the observer disagrees, they will lose the point. This stipulation is in place to encourage spirited and sportsmanlike games. Players can even make active calls against themselves.
- Passive calls - Passive calls are calls made by players. If players cannot come to an agreement about a call, they can go to the observer for a decision. Once a call goes to the observer, the observer's decision is final. If the observer is unable to make a definitive call, the point will be replayed. **NOTE:** For all non-active calls, players should always try to settle the matter among themselves before going to the observer. The observer should never add their input on a passive call until the players ask for the observer's perspective.
- Non-calls - If teams continue play after a possible infraction, they cannot ask for an observer to make a decision.
- One Observer - When using one observer, the observer should position themselves to the side of the server with a clear view of potential foot faults or encroachment infractions.
- Two Observers - When using two observers, they should be position themselves opposite of each other. The observer positioned to the side of the server is primarily focused on watching for foot faults or illegal toss violations. The observer positioned to the side of the receiver is primarily focused on watching for pockets and height violations.
- Three Observers - When using three observers, one will line up to the side of the server. This observer's primary job is to watch for foot faults. The second will line up to the side of and behind the receiver. This observer's primary job is to watch for pockets and height violations. The third will line up on the server's other side to get a clear view of encroachment over the 6- foot boundary and illegal tosses.
- Four Observers - When using four observers, one will line up to the side of the server. This observer's primary job is to watch for foot faults. The second will line up to the side of and behind the receiver. This observer's primary job is to watch for pockets and height violations. The third will line up on the server's other side to get a clear view of encroachment over the 6- foot boundary and illegal tosses. The fourth will line up on the other side of the receiver.
- Head Observer - When there are multiple observers being used, before the match starts one of the observers should be chosen to be the head observer. The head observer should be the person with the most experience. The head observer helps make final decisions on calls and is responsible for enforcing player misconduct penalties.
- Making Calls
  - Calls are not made by majority rule. When asked for a decision observers should huddle up and determine who had the best perspective. Whoever has the best perspective should be making the call.
  - If there is a disagreement between observers with an equally good perspective, the head observers decision will be final.
  - If a majority of observers agree, but the head observer disagrees and they all have equally good perspectives, it is ultimately the head observer's decision.
  - If none of the observers have a good perspective on the play in question they can call for a replay of the point.
- Examples
  - In the middle of a point, two players from opposite teams run into each other. After the collision, Team A is unable to get the ball back on the net. Team A calls a hinder on Team B. Team B does not believe a hinder occurred. Team B asks for the observer's decision. If the observer calls a hinder, the point is replayed. If the observer declares a hinder did not occur, Team B is awarded the point.

- A first serve flies through the hand of a player on Team A. Team A calls the serve too high. Team B does not believe the serve was too high. Team B asks for the observer's decision. If the observer calls the serve too high, then Team B will have one fault and gets a second service attempt. If the observer calls the serve legal, Team B is awarded the point.
- Team A thinks that Team B might have hit the rim on a shot. They play out the point and Team A ends up losing the point. Team A says they should replay the point because of the possible rim shot. Team B disputes the fact that it hit the rim. Team A asks for the observer's decision. The observer states that they cannot make a decision because the infraction occurred mid-point. Team B is awarded the point.