

ST ALBANS AND HARPENDEN PICKLEBALLERS

Guidance for Players

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Policy owner	Club Committee
Approved by	[INSERT APPROVING BODY OR COMMITTEE DATE]
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Revisions made	Rewritten to reflect current safeguarding, data protection, equality, health and safety and sports club governance guidance.

1. Purpose

This guidance helps players, guests and visitors enjoy safe, fair and respectful pickleball at SHARP Pickleball sessions. It should be read alongside the Code of Conduct, Health and Safety Policy, Safeguarding Policy and Equality Policy.

2. Before you play

- Wear suitable clothing and indoor court shoes with good grip.
- Bring water and drink during the session.
- Warm up before playing and join any stretching or warm-up routine offered.
- Do not play if you feel unwell, injured or unable to take part safely.
- Tell the session lead about any injury, health issue or access need that affects safe participation, where you feel comfortable doing so.
- Follow the booking, payment and attendance rules for the session.

3. Court safety

- Check the playing area for trip hazards before play starts.
- Do not take extra balls onto the court unless the session lead says this is allowed.
- Do not run backwards, as this increases the risk of falls and wall collisions.
- Never walk behind a court while a rally is in progress.
- Be aware of your partner and other players. Communicate clearly by calling mine or yours where needed.
- Report damaged equipment, wet floors, loose nets, poor lighting or other hazards to the session lead immediately.

4. Ball on court rule

If your ball goes onto another court, call “BALL ON COURT” loudly and clearly. Do not follow the ball onto the other court. Players on the other court should stop play immediately and return the ball when safe. The server should raise their arm to signal that the ball is needed before play restarts.

5. Fair play and etiquette

- Call the score clearly before serving.
- Call line decisions only on your side of the court. If in doubt, call the ball in.
- Thank your partner and opponents at the end of the game.
- Acknowledge good shots from all players.
- Encourage others and avoid criticism that embarrasses or discourages players.
- During social play, stronger players should challenge less experienced players without overwhelming them.

6. Injuries, accidents and near misses

All injuries, accidents and near misses should be reported to the session lead. The session lead will follow the venue reporting process and club process. If emergency help is needed, call 999 and alert venue staff immediately.

7. Photos, videos and social media

Do not take or share photos or videos of other players without appropriate permission. Do not share images, private messages, contact details or sensitive information from club groups without permission. Images of children or adults at risk must not be taken or shared unless the correct consent and club approval are in place.

8. Inclusion and safeguarding

Players should help create an inclusive environment. Bullying, harassment, abuse, discrimination and intimidation are not acceptable. Any safeguarding concern about a child, young person or adult at risk should be reported to the Welfare Officer or Deputy Welfare Officer. If someone is in immediate danger, call 999.

9. Repeated unsafe or unacceptable conduct

Players who repeatedly ignore safety instructions or behave in a way that affects the enjoyment or safety of others may be removed from the session and dealt with under the Code of Conduct or Complaints and Grievance Procedure.

10. Review

This guidance will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if club sessions, venues, safety guidance or national governing body guidance changes.