



## Pickleball Index 1-9

### **MC INDEX 1 | Total Beginner**

**USTA Equivalent:** 1.0

**DUPR Equivalent:** 2.000 or below

**Experience:** Brand new to pickleball and paddle sports. Likely hasn't played a game yet.

**Skills:** Struggling with basic shots (e.g., serves and returns). Learning to hold the paddle correctly and understanding the court layout.

**Gameplay:** Rarely sustains a rally. Learning basic rules like the kitchen (non-volley zone) and the double-bounce rule.

### **MC INDEX 2 | Novice**

**USTA Equivalent:** 1.5

**DUPR Equivalent:** 2.001–2.499

**Experience:** Has played a few games recreationally. Understands the basic rules.

**Skills:** Can serve and return inconsistently. Starting to dink (soft shots over the net) but with little control.

**Gameplay:** Focus is on keeping the ball in play, but struggles with positioning and anticipating shots.

### **MC INDEX 3 | Developing Beginner**

**USTA Equivalent:** 2.0

**DUPR Equivalent:** 2.500–2.999

**Experience:** Playing regularly. Comfortable with rules like scoring, side-outs, and switching servers.

**Skills:** Can sustain short rallies. Dinks occasionally but lacks control. Struggles with executing volleys or lobs effectively.

**Gameplay:** Starts to focus on staying out of the kitchen and understanding basic shot strategies, such as hitting cross-court or down the line.

### **MC INDEX 4 | Intermediate Beginner**

**USTA Equivalent:** 2.5

**DUPR Equivalent:** 3.000–3.499

**Experience:** Plays recreationally but understands the concept of strategy. Learning to play at the non-volley zone (NVZ) line.

**Skills:** Serves consistently inbounds. Dinking improves but is often too high, allowing opponents to attack. Struggles with resets and third-shot drops (soft landing shots after a serve return).

**Gameplay:** Attempts to move toward the NVZ during points but struggles with transition shots. Understanding the importance of patience during rallies.

### **MC INDEX 5 | Intermediate**

**USTA Equivalent:** 3.0

**DUPR Equivalent:** 3.500–3.999

**Experience:** Plays regularly in social or competitive settings. Beginning to develop a feel for shot placement and tactics.

**Skills:** Consistent dinking at the NVZ. Executes basic third-shot drops but not always reliably. Can volley and block hard shots at the NVZ.

**Gameplay:** Starts to recognize opponents' weaknesses, such as targeting their backhand. Learning to reset the ball when under pressure.

### **MC INDEX 6 | Advanced Intermediate**

**USTA Equivalent:** 3.5

**DUPR Equivalent:** 4.000–4.499

**Experience:** Comfortable in competitive recreational games or entry-level tournaments.

**Skills:** Consistent serves and accurate returns. Executes third-shot drops or drives with purpose. Controls dinks with spin or placement. Handles fast exchanges at the NVZ line.

**Gameplay:** Actively uses strategies like stacking (partners switching sides to favor their strong hands). Plays aggressively but struggles with high-level consistency.

### **MC INDEX 7 | Advanced Player**

**USTA Equivalent:** 4.0

**DUPR Equivalent:** 4.500–4.999

**Experience:** Regularly competes in tournaments. Highly skilled and strategic in gameplay.

**Skills:** Excellent dinking, volleys, and third-shot drops. Uses topspin and backspin effectively. Can defend against hard drives and reset to a neutral position.

**Gameplay:** Strong NVZ game, dominating exchanges at the net. Recognizes and exploits opponents' weaknesses effectively.

### **MC INDEX 8 | Expert Player**

**USTA Equivalent:** 4.5

**DUPR Equivalent:** 5.000–5.499

**Experience:** Competes at a high level, possibly semi-professionally.

**Skills:** Precision in serves and returns. Executes all shots (dinks, drives, lobs, and smashes) with confidence. Perfectly transitions to the NVZ and controls the tempo of rallies.

**Gameplay:** Master of strategy, including disguising shots and exploiting weaknesses. Excellent communication and coordination in doubles.

### **MC INDEX 9 | Elite/Pro-Level Player**

**USTA Equivalent:** 5.0 or higher

**DUPR Equivalent:** 5.500 or higher

**Experience:** Professional or near-professional player. Competes in top-tier tournaments or leagues.

**Skills:** Mastery of every shot, including deceptive spins, sharp angles, and power. Handles fast-paced exchanges effortlessly.

**Gameplay:** Dominates with superior positioning, anticipation, and court coverage. Dictates rallies with confidence and adjusts to any style of opponent.