



Small Ball Official Rulebook

Objective

The objective of Small Ball is to be the last person standing on the table. Each player starts with 10 points, and you are eliminated when you reach 0 points.

Equipment

- **Table:** A 40-50 inch wide table, preferably round but a square table works as well.
- **Ball:** A ping pong ball or an official Small Ball.
- **Dividers:** Tape to divide the table into 4 sections (squares or pie slices), if needed.

Player Positions

Players position themselves equally around the table, each defending one of the four sections, similar to the game of Four Square.

Game Start

- The first round of the game starts with the person who has the longest hair serving first.
- To serve, the server tosses the ball upwards within their section of the table, then uses their open palm to bounce the ball into another player's section.
- Play continues with players hitting the ball underhand with their open palm into other players' sections.

Scoring System

- Each player starts with 10 points.
- A player loses 1 point if they lose a round.

- In **Elimination Mode**, players do not regain points.
- In **Continuous Play Mode**, players regain 1 point when a new player enters the table. (Further details to be provided in Variations)

Rules of Play

Starting the round

- To start the round, the server tosses the ball upwards within their section of the table, then uses their open palm to bounce the ball into another player's section.
- The round ends when a player loses or it's decided that the round needs to be replayed (due to a dispute).
- The player who lost the previous round is the player who starts the next round.

Playing the round

- After the serve, play continues with each player attempting to bounce the ball into other players' sections.
- Players must hit the ball with an upward-facing palm. Your palm cannot face even slightly downward. We call this an "aggressive angle" and it is not in the spirit of Small Ball.
- Game rules prioritize keeping the ball in play and keeping the round going. So even if the ball lands in another player's section, you can continue playing it if it feels natural.

Ending the round

The round ends when play is stopped for some reason. The player who caused play to stop loses 1 point, and that player starts the next round by serving.

- The ball can only bounce once in any player's section. If the ball bounces twice in a player's section, that player loses the round.
- If a player hits the ball with an aggressive angle, they lose the round.
- If a player touches the ball and the ball fails to land in another section (or it lands in the player's own section), that player loses the round.
- If the ball lands on the line, it usually favors the attacker (the ball is considered to have landed in the defender's section). If unclear, players can decide to replay the round.

Fouls and Penalties

- Players should stay behind their own section and not interfere with play in other sections, both on the table and in the standing space behind the sections.

Variations

- **Continuous Play Mode:** When a player is eliminated, a new player can enter the table, and each player regains 1 point upon the new player's entry.

- **Elimination Mode:** Players are eliminated when they reach 0 points, and play continues until one player remains.