

# Basic Racquetball Rules

The object of racquetball is to win points by winning rallies, the exchanges of play between 2 or 4 players where the ball must be hit against the front wall without touching the floor and returned with no more than one bounce before hitting the ball. Matches are played as the best of two games, with a third, shorter tie-break game if the players win a game each after two games.

Play starts with the server standing in the *service zone* (the area between two solid parallel lines in the middle of the court, see the diagram below), bouncing the ball once on the floor and hitting it towards the *front wall*. Once the ball bounces off the *front wall* and before touching the floor, flies beyond the *short line* towards the *back wall*, the rally is on. The players alternate taking shots at the *front wall* until someone is unable to keep the ball from bouncing on the floor more than once before returning the ball to the *front wall* and without touching the floor before it hits the *front wall*, thus losing the rally. At no time can anyone touch the ball once in play with anything but the racquet which means, if the ball touches any part of your body or clothing it is considered a fault.

The player who wins the rally always gets to serve. Points can only be scored by the serving player and winning a rally during a serve scores exactly one point. When the serving player loses the rally, no points are gained or lost, but the other player gets to serve and now has a chance of scoring. A single match is normally made up of three games, where the first two games go until 15 points and the last game only goes until 11. A good serve happens when the ball hits the *front wall* before anything else, flies over the *short line*, and does not hit the *back wall* before hitting the floor (it's OK to hit one side wall). If these things do not occur, it is considered to be a fault serve. The server gets two chances to make a good serve. If both serves result in a fault serve, the other player now gets to serve.

Due to the nature of the game both players can potentially occupy the same area of the court, thus blocking one of the players from making the best shot they can, or seeing the ball, or striking the other player with the ball or racquet. This is called a hinder and it typically results in a simple replay of the rally.

