ESSENTIAL

FOOSBALL RULES

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1. Starting the Match

- First game: Flip a coin. The team that wins the coin toss gets to choose between serving first or picking the side of table they want.
- Subsequent games: Switch sides after each game. The team that lost the last game serves.

2. Serving the Ball

- After the first serve, the team last scored upon serves the ball.
- Before serving, it's good etiquette to tap the ball on the server side of the table to signify that play is about to begin. Wait until all players are grasping the rods to serve.
- The player who serves can influence the roll of the ball (i.e. spin it), and position it where they want before serving it, by placing a hand within the play area.
- Once the ball is in play, the server cannot have any part of either hand in the playing area.
- No player can touch or strike the ball until it has touched the play field.
- You cannot score on the serve by serving it directly into a goal; however, if the served ball ricochets off a player and enters the goal, it counts.

3. Ball in Play

- Once a ball is put into play it shall remain in play until the ball is hit off the table, a dead ball is declared, time out is called, or a point is scored.
- A ball entering a goal counts a point.
- A ball that enters a goal but bounces back out to the play field **is still a point.**
- When a ball is in play, no player may reach into the play area, even if they do not touch the ball, unless they have permission from the opposing team.

4. No Spinning!

- A spin is when you rotate a figure more than 360 degrees <u>before or after</u> making contact with the ball.
- In calculating the 360 degrees, you do not add the degrees spun before to the degrees after striking the ball (i.e. 2 half spins don't make a whole spin).
- If you spin and:
  - Score a goal: no point scored and the ball is put back in play by the goalie.
  - Strike the ball but no goal: the opposing team can either continue play from that spot or choose to re-serve the ball.
- If you spin without contacting the ball, just keep playing.
- **But** if you spin and knock the ball backwards into your own goal, it counts as a point for the opposing team.

5. No Jarring!

- Jarring is considered to be a forceful slam of the rods against the wall of the [foosball table](#).
- Jarring also includes lifting, sliding or moving the table in any way.
- If you are called for jarring, the opposing team has the option of continuing play from the current position, playing from the point of infraction, or re-serving the ball.

6. Switching Positions

- Once the game has started, you may only switch positions with your teammate between points or during a "time-out" (see [USTSA rule 7](#) for more information about time-outs).
- You cannot switch positions while the ball is in play.
- You can switch positions in between games.

7. Dead Ball

- A ball is dead when it's no longer in motion (completely stops) and is not within reach by any player.
- If it's still spinning, it's not a dead ball.
- If the ball is dead between two opposing rods, the ball shall be re-served by the team that last served.
- If the ball is dead between the goalie and the 2-man rod, it should be placed within reach of the nearest player.

8. Out of Play

- If the ball hits a top rail and lands in the table area, or comes off the table area completely, it's considered out of play.
- A ball that's in the air, but still within the play area, is still in play.
- The out of play ball must be re-served by the team that served last.

9. 5-Bar Rules (Simplified/Modified)

- A pinned ball must touch at least two other players before advancing to the 3-man rod. (This applies to a ball pinned against the playing surface or wall).
- But a pinned ball can be shot on goal by the 5-man. A shot must enter the goal, be blocked by the goalie, or hit the back wall.
- You must pass the ball from the 5 rod to the 3 rod within ten seconds, directly after a serve.
- After the initial serve, players are allowed 15 seconds to pass from the 5 bar.
- See [Rule 21 for full rule and official tournament details](#)