



# **RULES OF JOMBOLA**

## **Jombola**

Jombola is the newest racquet sport in the world today. It is played by either two opposing players (singles) or two opposing pairs (doubles). The sport demands excellent fitness: players require aerobic stamina, agility, strength, speed and precision. It is a technical sport, exciting, requiring good motor coordination and the development of sophisticated racquet movements and skill.

The following information is a simplified summary of Jombola International rules.

### **The Game**

Jombola plays a score of 11 points for Singles and 15 points for Doubles. Scoring is based on a rally system. Each service results in a point.

Players take up positions on opposite sides of a rectangular court that is divided by a net. Points are scored by striking a Jombola ball with a racquet so that it passes over the net and lands in the opponents' half of the court, and the opponent failing to return it according to the rules of play.

### **Jombola Serving Rules**

The Serve

Every time play begins, and subsequently to resume play after a point has been won, this starting action is called a 'Serve' or 'Service'.

1. At the start of every serve, the server and opponent stand in diagonally opposite Service Courts referred to as 'Service Boxes' (see court diagram). The ball must be served into the diagonally opposite Service Box only. It must land inside the rectangle in which the opponent is standing. If it lands in the 'Short' or

'Long' service lines, it is an 'Out'. Landing in the other court is a 'Wrong Court'. Landing between the Singles and Doubles sidelines is also a fault. Should any of these happen, the point is lost by the server and service changes hands.

3. Once the ball has been hit over the net into the diagonally opposite court, it can now be returned to any part of the playable area of the court according to the rules of Singles or Doubles play.

4. A ball must only be served using an underarm stroke, where the ball at the time it is struck is at or below waist height, with the racquet angled downwards.

5. For the service, the ball must be bounced once before being hit, and it must bounce again in the opponent's court before it can be returned. From this point onwards, play continues with each player returning the ball after it has bounced in his/her court. After the service, players may also hit the ball in flight even before it bounces (Volley).

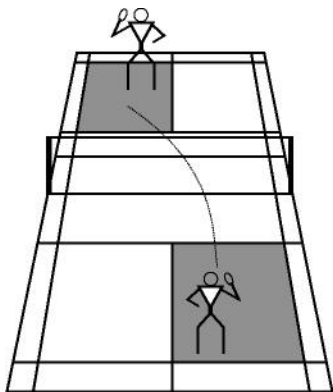
6. When the serving side loses a point, the serve immediately passes to the opponent(s)

7. Service is always done diagonally, i.e, from player's right court to opponent's right court, or from left to left. The first serve of every game is always taken from the player's right court.

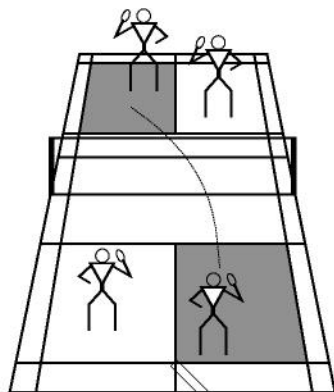
8. During service, players must stand in their respective service courts, inside of the lines that define the court. The receiving player is not permitted to move his/her feet until the opponent has moved to serve.

9. 'On the Line' shots for the service or rallies are considered in, though court boundaries are different for singles and doubles play. The back line is the same for both, but singles is played within the inside lines of the two sidelines.

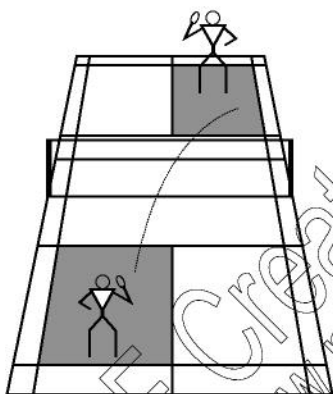
10. A serve that strikes the net and lands anywhere in the opponent's court is a 'Let' and is retaken. A serve that strikes the net a second time is a point to the opponent.



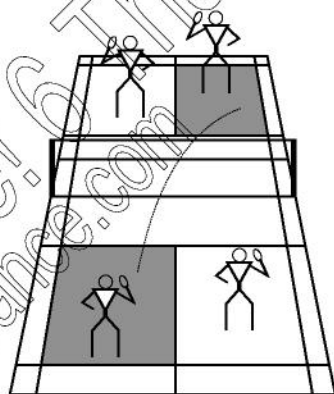
Singles serve. Server's score is even.



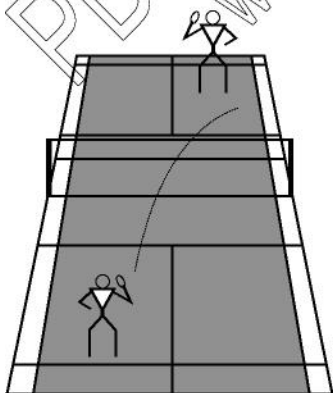
Doubles serve. Server's score is even.



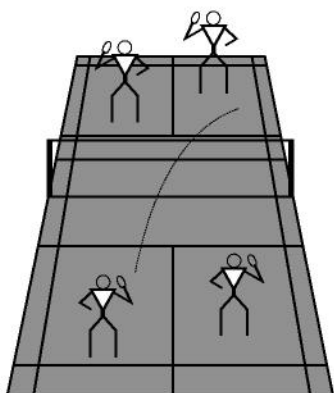
Singles serve. Server's score is odd.



Double serve. Server's score is odd.



Singles play area



Doubles play area

## Scoring

Each game is played to 11 points for Singles and 15 points for Doubles. A point is scored each time the ball goes out of play regardless of whichever side had served the ball. A 'Match' is the best of three games. At the conclusion of each Jombola game, players or teams must switch sides. Winning two games consecutively means winning the match. Should each side win one game each, a third game called the 'Decider' has to be played. For this game, the players change sides of the court when any one player has scored 8 points. The winner of the third game wins the match. Match end scores will therefore be 2-0 or 2-1.

## 'Deuce'

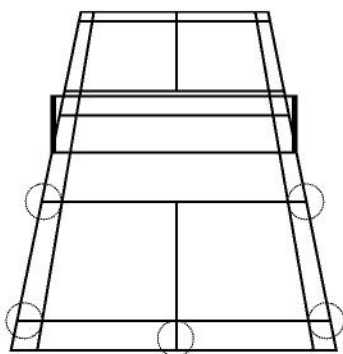
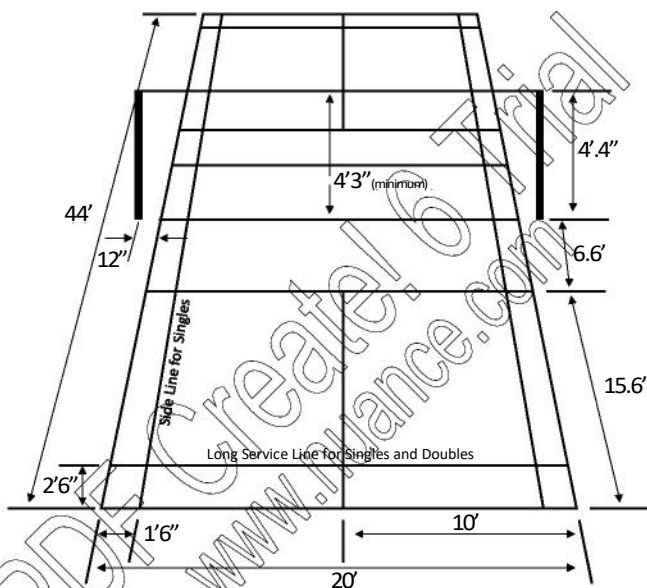
If the game is tied with a score of 10-10 for Singles or 14-14 for Doubles referred to as '10 All' or '14 All', then the game goes into a new mode called the 'Deuce'. This is 'extra time' to give both players an equal opportunity to win the match. For this, the scoring pattern changes. Instead of the game ending at 11 or 15 points, the first player to win two consecutive points from that new starting score of 10-10 or 14 – 14, wins the game. Either player needs a 2 point difference to win. If this fails to produce a winner, then the first player to achieve a score of 15 points for Singles or 20 points for Doubles wins the game.

## Summary of Scoring System

1. A match consists of the best of 3 games of 11 points for Singles or 15 points for Doubles.
2. The side winning a rally adds a point to its score, regardless of which side served last
3. At 10-10 for Singles or 14 – 14 for Doubles, the side which gains a 2 point lead first wins the game
4. In a 'Deuce', Whoever is first to score 15 points for Singles and 20 points for Doubles wins the game
5. The side that wins a game serves first in the next game
6. For the 'Decider' game, players must change court mid-way of the game. For Singles, the change is when any side has scored 6 points. For Doubles it is 8 points.

## The Jombola Court

Except for net height, the court 'floor' dimensions are exactly the same as that of a badminton court. It is rectangular and divided into halves by a net. Courts are usually marked for both singles and doubles play, although Jombola rules permit a court to be marked for singles only.



The lines of a badminton court marked in dashed circles in the above diagram are not used in Jombola

The full width of the court is 6.1 metres (20 ft), and in singles this width is reduced to 5.18 metres (17 ft). The full length of the court is 13.4 metres (44 ft). The court must have free space of at least 12 ft at the back for the play. The side space between courts must also be a minimum of 10 feet to provide separation between courts.

The service courts are marked by a centre line dividing the width of the court, by a 'Short Service' line at a distance of 1.98 metres (6 ft 6 inch) from the net, and by the outer side and back boundaries. The back of the court is also marked by a 'Long Service' line, which is 0.76 metres (2 ft 6 inch) from the back boundary.

The net is 1.32 metres (4 ft 4 inch) high at the edges and 1.295 metres (4 ft 3 inch) high in the centre. The net posts are placed outside the doubles sidelines, even when singles is played.

The minimum height for the ceiling above the court is not defined by the Laws of Jombola. Nonetheless, a Jombola court will not be suitable if the ceiling is likely to be hit by a high ball.

## **How to Play**

To begin the game and when the score is even, the server serves from his/her Right Service Court (Box). In play, when the score is odd, the server serves from the Left Service Court.

If the server wins a rally, the server scores a point, then serves again from the next court. In the case of Doubles, this will require the pair to change their service courts, to allow the winning server to now serve the ball to the other player in the opponents' side.

If the receiving side wins a rally, they score a point and now take over the serving.

In the case of Doubles, whichever player is in the even or odd court as determined by the score, will take the service. Players must change courts before serving again

after they have won a point, not when there is a change of service.

When the server serves, the ball must pass over the 'Short Service' line into the required court on the opponents' side or it will count as a fault.

At the start of a match, a coin may be tossed, with the winners choosing whether to serve or receive first, or choosing which end of the court to occupy, their opponents taking the other side.

In subsequent games, the winners of the previous game serve first. For the first rally of any doubles game, the serving pair may decide amongst themselves who serves and the receiving pair may decide who receives. The players change sides to the opposite side of the net for the second game; if the match reaches a third game, they change ends both at the start of the game and when the score of any player reaches 6 points for Singles or 8 points for Doubles as described earlier.

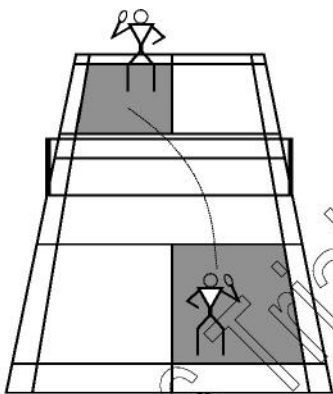
## **Starting Positions**

1. To begin the game, the first ball has to be served from the Right Service Court by the person who is starting the game. Subsequently, the server serves from the right service court when the score is even, and from the left service court when the score is odd.

2. In doubles, if the serving side wins a point, the same player continues to serve, but changes to the next court to serve so that he/she serves to a different opponent each time. If the opponents win the point, the service transfers over to them and if their new score



is even, their player in the right service court now takes the serve; if the score is odd, the player in the left service court must serve.



For service, the ball must land inside the 'Server's Box' (shaded area only) regardless of singles or doubles play

3. For service, all players must stand inside their respective 'Boxes' without stepping on court lines.

4. The game is begun by the player or team who wins the 'toss' or any other mutually decided method. To serve, he/she has to bounce the ball within the court before hitting it over the net into the opponent's service court. On the other side, the opponent must again take the ball only after it has bounced. Once this requirement has been fulfilled by both sides, the ball can be taken in any preferred way, with a bounce or before it bounces, ie, in flight.

5. A ball may also be served with a Fore Hand or Back Hand.

6. Each half of the court is divided into the Left Service Court and the Right Service Court. For the purposes of starting a game or for playing for a point, the ball has to be 'served' from a pre-determined court, as explained further.

7. For play to begin, the ball is served from the right court. If the point is won and the score becomes 1 – 0, the player who served from the right court now moves over to the left court to serve, and so on. If it is a singles game, the opponent also has to move in tandem with the player who won the point, so as to be standing in the court diagonally opposite the player about to serve. In case of doubles, there would already be a player in that court.

8. Once play has commenced, the court to serve from is determined by the score. If the server has an even number for his/her score, the ball will be served from the Right court. If the score happens to be an odd number, then the service must be from the Left court. It's the same for the doubles. For an even score, the player in the Right Service Court will take the service, and vice versa. In short, all scores that are even, including '0' (zero), are taken from the Right. All odds are taken from the Left.

9. When the serving side loses a point, the serve passes to their opponent(s). The players will now serve from the court determined by the even or odd score existing.

10. **'Ace'** - is a unique form of play in the game of Jombola. If after the service and during play a player miss-hits the ball with the edge of his racquet and it does not go over the net but still remains in flight on the same side, the ball can be hit again by the same player or his / her partner, any number of times, provided that the umpire is satisfied that the ball is not being 'Set' by the player(s) for that purpose, and secondly, that it has not yet touched the ground. This is referred to as an **'Ace'**. If the ball is hit twice in a similar manner, it is referred to as a **'Double Ace'**, and so on. There is also no limit to the number of times an Ace is played. However, an Ace cannot be played at the service, only after the service ball has been returned by the opponent.

**11. 'Trip'** - A 'Trip' is a Jombola phrase that can only take place in Doubles play. It occurs when a doubles partner 'intercepts' a ball that was hit by his/her partner towards the opponent's court, before that ball crosses over the net. Through this interception, the partner may contact the ball to deflect it or assist the ball over the net. Hitting or 'Smashing' the ball is not allowed. The umpire must be satisfied as to the 'clear intent' of the first player to return the ball to the opponents' side, as opposed to *intentionally* passing it to his/her partner for the purpose of redirecting it over the net. Intentionally passing the ball to one's partner for the purpose of delivering it over the net is a fault that calls for the faulting player to be Yellow carded, regardless of whether the receiving partner succeeded or failed to send it over the net. If an attempt at Trip leads to an Ace, it is admissible and legal.

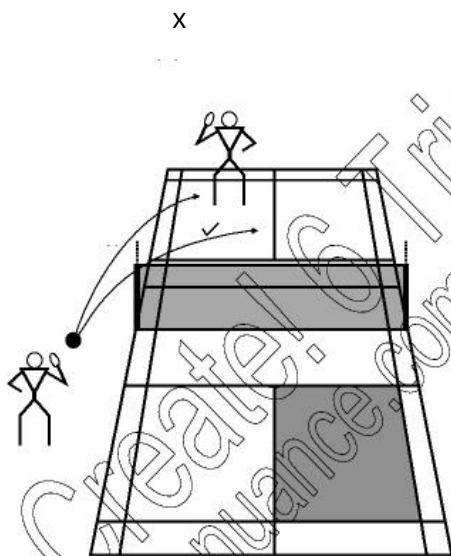
12. The ball is still considered to be in play if it bounces off the net and falls back into the same court from where it was hit. As long as it has not yet touched the ground, any player can still take the ball, provided there is no contact between the player or his/her racquet with the net.

13. If the racquet or the players' body touches the net during play, it's a fault.

14. If the ball touches the player's body, the point is lost. However, if the ball inadvertently touches the fingers clasped onto the racquet of the player taking the shot, and it is clear that the player had no intention of using his / her hand, play may continue

15. Balls may be 'sliced' to alter their bounce and direction.

16. A ball taken from outside the court must pass over the net into the opponent's court.



## **ADDITIONAL NOTES**

### **Forms of Play for Competitions**

The game has 3 forms - men's and women's singles, men's and women's doubles, and mixed doubles, where each pair consists of a man and a woman.

### **Inter Team**

The winner of a team competition is the team that wins the most number of games out of five matches played. These five matches must include 3 Doubles and 2 Singles played alternatively, starting and ending with a Doubles match.

Team competitions and tournaments may include men and women in the same tournament.

In a variation under the 'Forms of Play' called the 'Mixed Rule' for competitions and if agreed by both sides, one singles and one doubles match out of the two must be played by women.

### **'Let'**

If a 'Let' is called, the rally is stopped and replayed with no change to the score. 'Lets' may occur because of some unexpected disturbance from which it would be unreasonable to carry on play, such as a ball from an adjacent court landing in the court of play, or the ball showing damage in mid rally.

A 'Let' may also be called if the receiver is not ready when the service is delivered; yet, if the receiver attempts to return the ball, he/she shall be judged to have been ready.

The decision to declare a 'Let' rests entirely with the umpire.

### **Body Contact**

If the ball contacts any part of the player's body, it is a fault against that player. The fault also applies if the player was positioned outside the court and the ball too was actually played out.

If the player's body or racquet touches the net when taking a shot, it is a fault.

### **Yellow Card**

The Umpire may 'Yellow Card' any player who plays an illegal stroke and violates game etiquette. A Yellow Card will result in the point being awarded to the opponent.

### **Red Card**

The Umpire may 'Red Card' any player who continues to play illegal strokes after fair and just warning has been given and has been Yellow Carded twice already in a match being played, or violates game etiquette. A Red Card will result in the player being suspended from the rest of that tournament. In case of a doubles team, both players are suspended.

### **Appeals to the Umpire and beyond**

1. Players may make up to two appeals in any one game, and a total of three in the whole set of three games.
2. A player may interrupt the game by raising his/her hand or racquet above the head. If a point is in play, ample justification must be provided for the interruption. Otherwise, the umpire may award the point to the opponent.
3. If there is reasonable and justifiable disagreement with the Umpire's decision, players may refer the matter to the Tournament Referee, and only then to the respective National Jombola Association's Technical Committee.

## **Rules for Ball Quality for Competitions**

1. A ball must be immediately replaced if there is any doubt as to its integrity.
2. Any player can call for a ball change.
3. If a ball is damaged during play, the umpire decides if that point has to be replayed regardless of whose favour the point was in.

Ball wear and tear must be considered in professional and regional tournaments. The umpire should examine the ball after every game and a new ball used whenever required.

As a courtesy to the receiver, the server will often signal to the receiver before serving a new ball. New balls may be 'seasoned' by a squeezing action to reduce their stiffness before they are used for competitive play.

## **Interruption to Play**

1. In the event of a rain delay, darkness or other conditions halting play, the match is resumed at a later time, with the same score as at the time of the delay, and the players at the same end of the court when play was halted, or at the same position if play is resumed on a different court.

## **Towel Breaks**

1. Towel Breaks are permitted when justified.
2. Players must display urgency to resume play.

## **Court Etiquette**

1. A Jombola match is intended to be continuous. Because stamina is a relevant

factor, arbitrary delays are not permitted. In most cases, service is required to occur no more than 30 seconds after the end of the previous point. This is increased to 2 minutes when the players change courts, including for the 'Decider' set. Other than this, breaks are permitted only when forced by events beyond the players' control, such as rain, damaged footwear, damaged racquet, or the need to retrieve an errant ball. Should a player be determined to be stalling repeatedly, the chair umpire may initially give a warning followed by subsequent penalties of "point", "game", and default of the match for the player who is consistently taking longer than the allowed time limit.

2. Convention dictates that two players shake hands at the end of a match

## **Equipment Rules**

Jombola rules restrict the design, size and weight of the racquet and ball. Hence, only equipment bearing the mark of 'Jombola' is authorized for use in play, competitions and tournaments. Anyone using any other device or equipment will be immediately disqualified.

All racquets and balls bearing the 'Jombola' mark have been produced to specifications laid down by the International Jombola Federation (IJF) and established in laboratory tests ensuring the correct weight, balance, flight, speed and bounce characteristics.

## Reference Sites

[www.jombola.org](http://www.jombola.org)

[www.Facebook.com/jombola.international](https://www.facebook.com/jombola.international)