How am I Doing at Pickleball? A Self-Assessment Rating Guide

1) My Serve
   a) I get about half of my serves in, not fast or hard
   b) I get about 75% of my serves in, and can place some deep
   c) I get about 90% of my serves in, place the majority deep, and some are aces
   d) I get almost all of my serves in, vary the type, serve hard and deep, and can place them where I want
   e) I rarely ever miss my serve, use a variety of shots, can spin and control them, and place where I want

2) How is my Return of Serve?
   a) I sometimes miss my Return entirely, especially against better players
   b) I am beginning to Return most of them deep, but not consistently
   c) I Return most of the serves and return them deep, the majority of the time
   d) I can Return almost all of the serves, whether they are long or short, lobs, or fast and hard, and I can return them appropriately
   e) I can Return almost all of the serves that come my way, and can place the Return so my opponent has to work hard to get it

3) How is my Forehand Volley shot?
   a) I sometimes pop the ball up, hit into the net, out-of-bounds, or I miss it entirely
   b) I can usually return my Forehand shots, but miss the hard and fast ones
   c) I return my Forehand shots most of the time and am beginning to keep them lower to the net
   d) My Forehand is my strongest shot, my hardest and most accurate, and low to the net
   e) I rarely miss a Forehand shot; return it with accuracy, often hard and spinning

4) How is my Backhand Volley shot?
   a) I often miss this shot and my Backhand is very weak
   b) I'm beginning to anticipate this hot and am moving into position to get it, but am sometimes late
   c) I have worked on this shot, anticipate it better, and return it about half the time
   d) I see the shot coming and ready to return it low to the net and am successful about 75% of the time
   e) My Backhand is no problem; I can return it with speed, force, and accuracy about 90 of the time

5) How is my Lob shot?
   a) I don't know when, where, or how to hit a Lob shot, so I rarely, if ever, use it
   b) About half of my Lob shots land in-bounds, about half go out-of-bounds
   c) I am beginning to learn when, where, and how to use a Lob shot, and successful with it about 50% of the time
   d) I am good at executing the Lob shot and am successful with it about 75% of the time
   e) I know when, where, and how to execute the Lob shot and do it with accuracy about 90% of the time

6) How are my Dinking skills?
   a) I can get my Dink shots over the net about half of the time, but rarely use a Dink shot in a game
   b) I am beginning to learn the importance of the Dink shot and starting to implement it in my game
   c) I am learning the purpose of the Approach shot (Drop or Lob), to get to the net and begin Dinking
   d) I often use the Drop shot, so my partner and I can get to the net, and we move together while Dinking
   e) I consistently use the Drop shot and know how to Dink and move effectively along the NVZ with my partner

7) How is my Overhead Slam/ Put Away shot?
   a) I rarely use this shot and when I do, it often goes into the net or out-of-bounds
   b) My Slam shot is not as hard or as accurate as I want it to be
   c) I can execute my Slam shot and place it where I want about 50% of the time
   d) My Slam shot is fairly hard, consistent, and accurate at least 75% of the time
   e) My Put Away shot is one of my best shots: hard, fast, and accurate at least 90% of the time

8) How are my Communication Skills with my partner?
   a) I rarely talk to my partner about the game, except to say, "Yours, Mine, or Out."
   b) I am beginning to communicate basic observations to my partner, like who is leftie, hit it to the backhand, and who appears to be the weaker opponent
   c) I communicate often to my partner with: "Yours, Mine, No, Switch, Com Up, Stay Back, Put it Away, etc." to keep our "wall" intact
   d) I communicate most of the time to my partner, and we move together as a "team"
   e) I communicate all of the time to my partner, and we function as one "unit" on the court

9) How are my Strategy Skills?
   a) I don't know much about "strategy of the game" and only concentrate on getting the ball back over the net
   b) I am learning to put the ball where my opponent is not, and thinking about knowing what shots to use when and where
   c) I am beginning to use a variety of shots and know the strategy of using certain shots at certain times
   d) I consistently know the strategy of which shots to use and why I am using them to control the game
   e) I am a student of the game and understand the importance of using various strategies to keep my opponents back and controlling the game

10) How are my Footwork Skills?
   a) I am often "not in the right spot" and therefore miss some shot; or I can't move fast
   b) I am beginning to anticipate where the shot is going to land and move to the spot earlier
   c) I often know where the ball is going, stay on my toes to get there, and move correctly on the court
   d) I move around the court in a smooth, balanced manner, anticipating lobs, forehands, backhands, dinks, slams, etc. most of the time
   e) I am like a "rabbit" on the court, moving to wherever the ball is, anticipating correctly, making the shot, and getting back into position for the next shot, almost always

To get a good idea of your skill level (1.0 through 5.0) you will need to have 8-10 of your answers (A, B, C, D, E) at that level to rate yourself at that level. For example, if you have 8 answers, to the above questions, as a **b)** you are probably at a skill level of 2.0 – 2.5. This Self-Assessment guide should help you know what to work on to improve your game. Happy Pickling!

Skill Level # Answers Recorded

A) 1.0-1.5
B) 2.0 - 2.5
C) 3.0
D) 3.5 - 4.0
E) 4.5 - 5.0