

Sport Terminology

Terminologie du sport

As of WED 21 OCT 2026

Term	Definition
Assistant Umpire	The official appointed to assist the umpire with certain duties.
Backhand	A stroke made with the rear side of the racket.
Backspin	Reverse spin about a horizontal axis, imparted by striking the ball with a downward movement of the racket.
Ball	The ball is made of plastic material, and is matt white or orange in colour, 40mm in diameter and 2.7g in weight.
Bye	The term used in a draw/results output to indicate a missing player/pair. The paired competitor will automatically advance to play in the next round.
Court	One half of the playing surface. For doubles, each court is divided by a centre line into two "half courts".
Duration	There are three duration statistics collected: • Game duration is the elapsed time from the first serve to the last point of the game, excluding all clock stoppages. • Match duration is the total elapsed time from the first serve of the first game to the last point of the last game, including all stoppage time and time between games.
End Line	A white line marked at each end of the playing surface.
Expedite System	A system of play used to restrict the duration of a game. It is introduced if a game has not finished after ten (10) minutes of play (or at any earlier time at the request of both players or pairs). This system cannot be used after a total of 18 points have been scored. Under the expedite system, each player serves for one point alternately until the end of game. If the receiving player, or pair, makes 13 returns, the receiver scores one point.
Forehand	A stroke made with the front side of a racket.
Game	A game is one part of a match. A game is won by the player/pair that wins 11 points first, with a lead of at least two points. If both players/pairs reach a score of 10 points each, the game is won by the first player/pair that gains a lead of two points over their opponent.
Game Point	The point which will decide the game if it is won by the leading player.
Grip	The way in which the racket is held, which may be either "shakehand" or "penholder".
In Play	The ball is in play from the last moment before it is thrown upwards in service until the rally is decided as a let or a point.
Match	A match is a meeting between two opposing players/pairs. A match consists of the best of five games in the singles preliminary stage and mixed doubles and the best of seven games in the singles knock out stage.
Match Point	The point which will decide the match if it is won by the leading player.



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Net Assembly	The structure, consisting of the net and the net posts, including the clamps, which divides the playing surface into two equal "courts".
Penholder Grip	A method of holding the racket between the thumb and forefinger, normally using only one side of the racket to strike the ball.
Playing Surface	The upper surface of the table.
Point Penalty System	A system by which bad behaviour by a player can be penalised, initially by a formal warning and for further offences by the award of first one, and then two, penalty points to the opponent. When giving a warning the umpire holds up a yellow card and when awarding penalty points he/she holds up a yellow and a red card together.
Points	The term "Point(s)" may be used as: • "Game point": The point which will decide the game if it is won by the leading player • "Match point": The point which will decide the match if it is won by the leading player
Points Ratio	The term "Ratio" may be used as: • Game ratio: The total number of games won by the player divided by the total number of games won by the opponent in the matches that are being considered • Points ratio: The total number of game points won by the player divided by the total number of game points won by the opponent in the matches that are being considered
Racket	The racket may be of any size or shape but its blade must be flat, even and rigid and consist mainly of wood. A side of the blade used for striking the ball must be covered with either (a) pimpled rubber, with the pimples outwards, or (b) sandwich rubber, with the pimples inwards or outwards. The surface of the racket must be matt, black on one side, and of a bright colour clearly distinguishable from black and from the colour of the ball on the other.
Rally	The period during which the ball is in play.
Receiver	The player due to strike the ball second in a rally.
Referee	The official responsible for the conduct of the competition in accordance with the official ITTF rules and for maintaining discipline and order on the playing field during the competition.
Retired	Indicates that the player/pair was unable to complete the match due to illness or injury.
Return	The ball shall be struck so that it touches the opponent's court either directly or after touching the net assembly.
Server	The player due to strike the ball first in a rally.
Service	The means by which the ball is put into play.
Shakehand Grip	A method of holding the racket as though "shaking hands" with it, allowing both sides of the racket to be used for striking the ball.



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Strokes	The number of times both players strike the ball in a rally. This should include the last strike by a player even if it is not a good return.
Table	The table is rectangular, 2.74m long and 1.525m wide, with its upper surface 76cm above the floor.
Time-out	In addition to the intervals between games, each singles player or doubles pair is entitled to one time-out during a match. The request for a time-out is signalled by making a "T" sign with the hands, which can only be made between rallies. Play is then suspended and is resumed when the requesting player or pair is ready, or at the end of one (1) minute, whichever is sooner.
Toss	The procedure whereby a coin or disc is tossed to decide which player or pair will have the choice of serving or receiving first, or of starting the match at a particular end of the table.
Umpire	The official appointed to control a match, whose decision is final on any question of fact arising during that match.

Note:
For further information please consult: www.ittf.com