



ARIZONA

PICKLEBALL PLAYERS LEAGUE

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WHAT IS APPL?

What is APPL?

The Arizona Pickleball Players League (APPL) is a statewide team-based pickleball league. It currently operates in the following regions: Southern Region (Tucson and surrounding southern Arizona area; East Valley Region (cities in the eastern Phoenix metro and surrounding area); West Valley Region (cities in the western Phoenix Metro and surrounding area); White Mountain Region (a summer league that includes Show Low, Pinetop, Lakeside and surrounding area) and Flagstaff Region. APPL is a nonprofit corporation led by a group of volunteers with years of experience in team-based league pickleball who want to make that experience available to players throughout Arizona.

Why was APPL formed?

APPL was formed to develop and introduce competitive team-based league pickleball to Arizona and eventually nationally. We believe there are thousands of players that would like to enjoy a low cost, organized, locally convenient and competitive pickleball experience that is open to all adults ages 18 years and above.

What is APPL's objective?

APPL's objective is to bring a standardized team-based league format to Arizona and eventually nationally as an alternative or addition to the existing singles or doubles tournament infrastructure.

What does "team-based" league pickleball mean?

Team-based league pickleball is a competition where several teams consisting of 6 or more players compete against other teams within the same skill level over a period of months for a championship using a standardized and structured format of play.

How long has the league been playing?

The league has been in existence since 2012 and originally started out as the East Valley Interclub League (EVIL). The Arizona Pickleball Players League became incorporated as a nonprofit corporation in 2019. In 2026, 6,000 players participated on over 500 teams in APPL leagues throughout Arizona.

How Large is APPL?

APPL is statewide. It currently operates in the following regions: Southern Region (Tucson and surrounding southern Arizona area; East Valley Region (cities in the eastern Phoenix metro and surrounding area); West Valley Region (cities in the western Phoenix Metro and surrounding area); White Mountain Region (a summer league that includes Show Low, Pinetop, Lakeside and surrounding area) and Flagstaff Region (a summer league).

What happens after we play in a season?

APPL holds a State Championship and invites teams from each Winter Season flight to participate. State Champions then have the opportunity to participate in the American Team Pickleball League (ATPL) National Championship which is typically held in November and in various locations.

APPL DIVISION DESCRIPTIONS

Is there an age requirement?

The APPL Regional leagues' age requirement is 18 years and over. There are four age defined leagues (Open, 50+, 65+ and 70+).

- Open League: Players must be 18 years or older by the start of the season.
- 50+ League: Players must be 50 years or older during the calendar year of the league start. For example, for a season starting in 2024, the player must turn 50 by December 31, 2024.
- 65+ League: Players must be 65 years or older during the calendar year of the league start. For example, for a season starting in 2024, the player must turn 65 by December 31, 2024.
- 70+ League: Players must be 70 years or older during the calendar year of the league start. For example, for a season starting in 2024, the player must turn 70 by December 31, 2024.

What levels of play are there?

APPL supports Gender and Mixed skill level flights in 2.5, 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 and 4.75+ increments depending on regional interest.

HOW DO I GET ON A TEAM?

How do I join APPL?

You don't really "join" APPL. If you play on an APPL team there is a fee that you will pay when you register yourself on that team. If your club or community has indicated an interest to play in APPL you should contact your club APPL administrator and indicate your interest in being on a team. You can also form your own team. If you have a network of similar skilled players that enjoy playing together and they are interested in joining your team, you can register a team on the APPL website.

How much does it cost?

See the website for current cost information. There is a \$30 player registration fee for each team the player plays on. Then the team will split the cost of their Home venue matches. You typically have 3-5 home matches. The per player fee for the entire season will continue to be less than the cost to play in one sanctioned tournament.

How do I get on a team?

If you are a member of a community or club, you should ask your club's administration if they will be participating and, if so, who is in charge of putting teams together. You can also form your own team if you have a network of similar skill level friends who would be interested in enjoying team-based pickleball. In this case you would simply register your team when registration opens for a particular season. If you're not able to pull a team together and/or your club is not involved, sign up as a 'Free Agent' on the APPL website to connect with captains needing players or other players looking for a team.

When do I sign up?

Team and Player registration for the APPL Winter League (Jan-Mar) starts in October.

Can I form my own team? How do I do that?

Yes, you can form your own team. Gather your pickleball friends and discuss forming a team and participating in the league. Check out the information on the 'Get Started' page of the APPL website. There is information on how the APPL league works, how matches work and other information that will help you to form a team.

Do I have to be a member of a club to participate?

You do not have to be a member of a club to participate. Many clubs and communities form their own teams and prefer their teams be made up of club or community players but APPL does not require you to be a member of a club or a community to participate. Anyone can form a team if they can meet the requirements such as securing a venue for their home matches, having enough players, etc. T

Do I have to be a member of USA Pickleball to participate?

No, you do not need to be a member of USAP to participate in any of the APPL leagues. In addition, your APPL match results do not affect your UTPR rating if you have one.

Do I need a rating to join?

If you are new to APPL, you will self-rate at the level you want to play. The Self Rating Assessment form can be found on the 'Get Started' page on our website. After your first season playing in APPL, you will receive an APPL Index Rating. Find out more about the APPL Index on the APPL Home page.

Can I use my DUPR?

Your DUPR rating has no factor to what self-rating you want to set for APPL. APPL does not feed your APPL play into DUPR.

WHEN AND WHERE WOULD I PLAY?

How often would my team play?

On average, each team has 8 to 10 matches per regular season. That will vary depending on the number of teams participating in the various skill level flights. The number of teams in a skill level flight vary – some flights might have 4 teams while others have 20+ teams. Larger flights are sub-divided into sub-flights which then would then have Regional Playoffs to determine teams going to State Championships.

What is the Schedule?

Your Captain will select a HOME venue and select a Day and Time that work with their players' schedules. This will be your day/time for your HOME matches. Your AWAY matches are controlled by the opposing team's schedule. So, you would play on various days and times based on their HOME slots. Your Captain does have the option to request reschedules from the AWAY team's Captain if you

have conflicts that would not allow to you form a 6-person team. Schedules are made available early December. Reschedules are allowed to be requested two weeks after the Schedules are made available (prior to the season start).

Where would I play?

You will have a set of Home and Away matches. Your Captain will select a HOME venue for your Home matches. Your Away matches will be at various other courts across your region. Home courts may be at city or county courts contracted through the appropriate officials (for example city of Phoenix Pecos Park courts, or Tucson's Udall Park, or Surprise Community Park, etc.) or club courts obtained through a community that have been approved for use for APPL matches. Visiting teams will travel to their opponent's home courts to play their matches. APPL attempts to reach agreements with various Public (City/County/Regional) and Private for Profit venues in each region to make courts available for APPL matches, for a fee.

When does the next season start?

- APPL's Winter League seasons typically start the first week in January and end near the last week in March. The State Championships are typically held the first week in April. See the website for registration deadlines and other key dates. APPL's Summer leagues typically starts in June and ends in August.

HOW DO NEW CAPTAINS GET STARTED?

As a new Captain, how will I know how to set things up?

Once you create and register a team, as a Captain or Co-Captain, you will have access to an APPL Captain's Guide and various training videos on how to ask for a team's availability, enter home matches, enter scores and much more about captaining your team. You will also have access to a League Coordinator whose primary job is to help you with your team, answer your questions and guide you through the season.

How many players are usually on a team?

It is common to have 10-14 players on your roster so you can have confidence that you can field 6 players when you have a match. On match day you will bring 6 players from your roster who will play against your opposing team's 6 players.

How is an APPL match played?

See the narrative below taken from the APPL Rules of Play.

- **Match Day Teams:** On match day the captain will bring 6 players to play on 3 doubles teams. Line-ups identifying the doubles teams on the scoresheet will be exchanged prior to the start of the match after which they may not be changed. The 3 doubles team partners will stay together for that day's match unless substitutions are made (see substitution rules). Captains or their designees are required to be on-site at each match.

- **Match Process:** To begin a match, the visiting teams choose serve, receive or side. Each doubles team will play 2 games to 11 (win by 2). Teams shall switch sides after the first game. At the end of the second games (first round), and the fourth games (second round), the visiting doubles teams switch courts to play the next home doubles team noted on the line-up/scoresheet. Therefore, on team match day, each doubles team will play 6 games (three rounds): 2 games against the opposing line 1 doubles team, 2 games against the line 2 team, and 2 games against the line 3 team. Two team points are awarded for each game won by a doubles team. If the losing team scores 6 or more points in a game they are awarded 1 team point. No team points are awarded for a score of 5 points or less. Whichever team earns the most team points in all the games played in a match, will be the winner of the match and will be awarded a win in their league skill group team standings.

Where can I get more information?

Visit the APPL website at: arizonapickleballplayersleague.org and click “Get Started” on the top menu. We have links to respond to common questions and a generic “Contact Us” button to respond to everything else. Or, reach out to one of the League Coordinators in the “Contact” section and they will be happy to help you.

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