



1 – Purpose of this document

This document summarizes shuttlecock rules, taken from ISF official rules. It defines how a shuttlecock match should be played and offers guidelines for referees as well as players. This document will apply in particular to all Shuttlecock competitions held in France.

Audience : all players and referees are invited to carefully read the official ISF rules before reading this summary : please refer to http://www.shuttlecock-world.org/site/news/official_isf_rules/

It is meant to be used as a reminder – not at all a replacement – of above ISF official rules.

2 – The Draw and Scoring system

- The draw (rule to state who will serve first, or which side of the court to start with) : before warm up, if team A wins the draw, team A can choose to serve first or the side of the court. If team A chooses to serve first, then team B will choose which side of court to start with, and vice-versa.
- All Match are played in 2 winning sets of 21 points
- In case of a 3rd Set, teams have to switch courts as soon as a team reaches 11 points. In case the referee and players forget to switch courts, they will switch courts as soon as possible.
- In case the score is 20-20 : the last team which reaches 20 points (meaning it won the last point) keeps the right to serve (or gains the right to serve). From then on the services are executed alternately until there is a winner (one team has 2 points ahead of the other)

3 – List of faults

Any of the following faults are penalized by 1 point, and the opponent gains the right to serve.

During the same point : if more than 1 fault is observed, only the first one is taken into account, and ends the point.

3.1 – General Faults

- The ball hits the ground outside of court boundary lines
- The ball hits an object out of the playing field, as the roof or a nonplayer individual
- The ball hits the antennas, the ropes, the poles or the net in the area outside the side bands and antennas
- The ball touches the net during service
- The ball passes the net outside the area restricted by the antennas
- One player hits the ball more than 2 times consecutively
- One team hits the ball more than 4 times
- The ball is « held » by a player or slides on a player (the contact with the ball should be instantaneous)
- One player is assisted by an object or another player to hit the ball

Remark : if two players hit the ball simultaneously, then 2 hits are counted. If two players move actively toward the ball and even collide, but only 1 player hits the ball, then only 1 hit is counted

Did you know ?

A lot of players think it is forbidden to throw the ball to the opponent's side with the head.

An attacking hit with the head is authorized if the player accomplishes such an attack outside of the restricted area (the restricted area line is located 2 meters behind the net). The player is allowed to even jump from outside the restricted area, then hit the ball with his head : but the hit should occur before the player lands in the restricted area.

Well : this is very theoretical : what is the last time you saw such an attack ?

Blocking with the head is forbidden if the head is used actively to counter the ball : if the player's head does not move while blocking, and the ball hits the head, then it is not considered as a fault.



3.2 – Service Faults

- The serving player kicks the ball more than 5 seconds after the referee whistles
- After referee whistles : the ball hits the ground (even if the serving player did not hit the ball)
- The serving player steps on the Endline or the service area lines
- The ball fails to pass over the net (between the 2 antennas)
- The ball touches the Net or the Antennas, or one of the serving player's teammates, before it passes over the Net.

Remark : if serving player serves before the referee whistles, the service is canceled and repeated (not considered as a fault)

Did you know ?

Until 2012, if a player made a mistake while serving and failed to hit the ball, the serving player was allowed to pick up the ball from the ground and within 5 seconds to complete a proper service.

Nowadays, players have to be aware that referees will consider such a move as a fault

3.3 – Other service faults – Players positions and service turn violation

About service turns :

- in teamplay, when the service is gained, the serving player should be the next in the list of players in the team. The rotation of players should occur always in the same order, a clockwise turn.
- in doubles, when the service is gained, the serving player should be alternately chosen between the 2 players

During the service phase, the receiving players :

- in teamplay, player N°1 should be positioned behind players N°2 and N°3
- in teamplay and doubles : all players should have at least one foot inside the court

In the serving team (teamplay as well as doubles) :

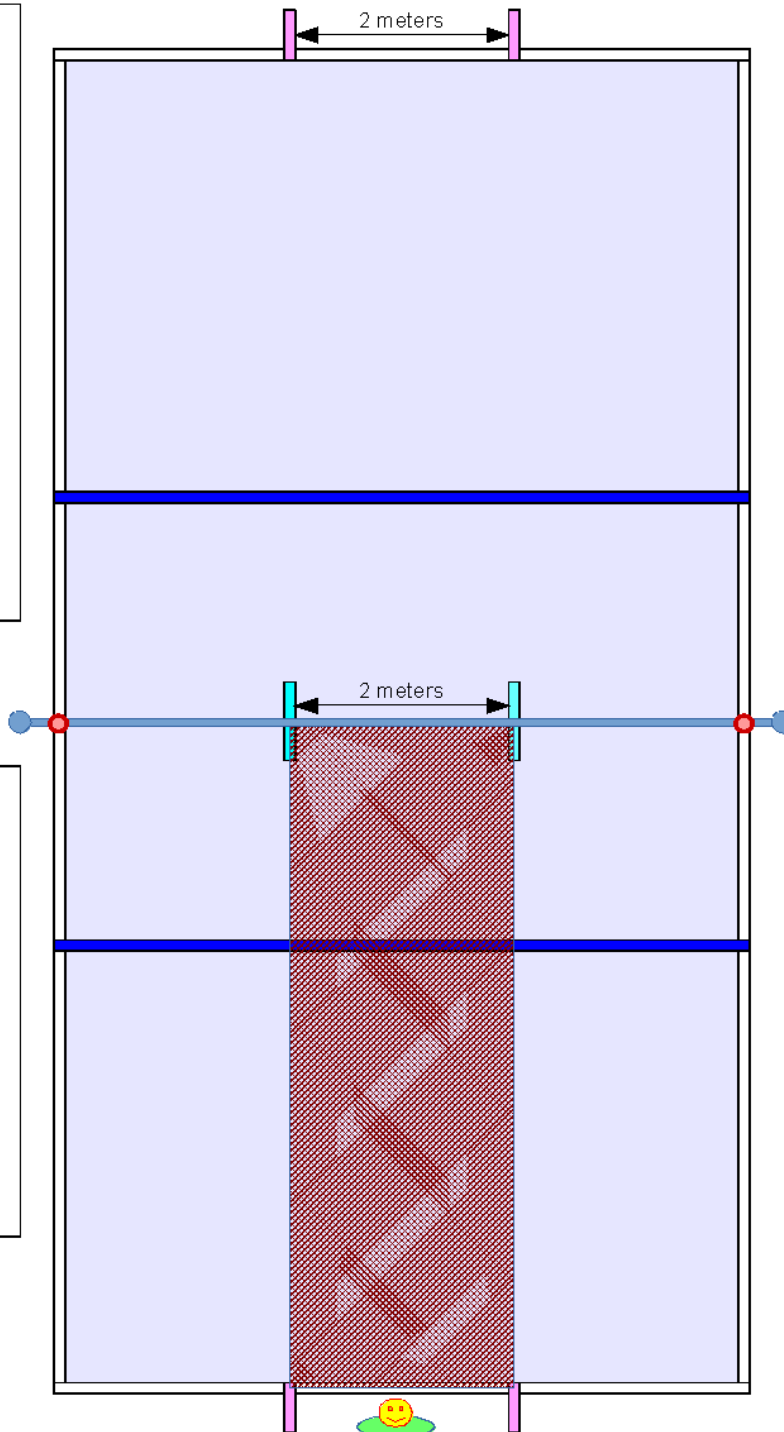
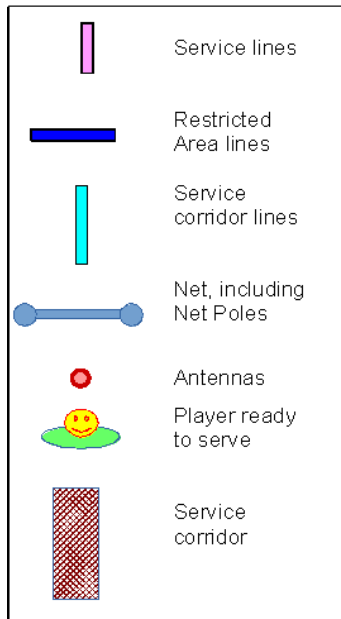
- all players should have at least one foot inside the court
- all players should stand outside of 2 meters wide service corridors (see also on next page)
- the serving team should respect service turns (see above about service turns)

If the referee realizes that the team has violated the positioning and rotation order, or any of the above rules was not respected, he punishes the team to lose the service, asks the players to take their proper places and credits the opponent team with a point.

If the team gained a point, it is canceled since the players were out of position order. Only the point gained in the last phase shall be canceled.

On next page : position of serving player and teammates (description of service corridor for doubles and teamplay), and screening.

3.4 – Screening faults



Player ready to serve : at the moment player kicks the ball, his feet should not touch or exceed service lines.

If player has teammates (in double or teamplay), none of his teammates should have any part of the body inside the service corridor (which is 2 meters wide)

The two service lines (near the service area) as well as the two Service corridor lines (under the Net) materialize the service corridor.

During the service, while player N°1 is serving or ready to serve, players N°2 & N°3 should not prevent the opponent team from having visibility of the serving player or the course of the ball (otherwise : screening fault).

For this reason, regarding the serving player's teammates, it is forbidden to :

- stand within the serving corridor, which is 2 meters wide, see graphic above
- move any part of the body (in order to distract or hide the course of the ball)
- strike the foot before the kick (same applies to block)
- voicing or making faces



3.5 – Blocking faults

A player that is in the process of blocking is committing a fault in these conditions :

- the player blocks a service
- the player jumps with opened arms or hands up
- the player hits the Net or antennas

3.6 – Timeout faults

A team can require 2 timeouts (30 seconds each) for each set.

To ask for a 3rd timeout is considered as a fault.

3.7 – Game Delays faults

Some player or team actions can prevent the continuation of the game, and are punished by a warning (first occurrence) and then by a fault (second occurrence):

- Extending the Timeout time after the command (by the referee) to continue the game (see chapter 6 for a description of time management and proper delays)
- Requesting a repetition of an improper Timeout during the same set (example : player laces his shoes again and again)
- Delaying the game more than 10 seconds after the last point was played : when a point ends, players should get ready for next point within 10 seconds, so that the referee can whistle for service

3.8 – Net and penetration faults

A player commits a fault if:

- the player touches the Net or Antennas (see below, in red, for exceptions)
- the player enters the opponent court above or under the net by any part of his body. Walking on the central line (under the net) is permitted as long as the player's foot does not cross this line to the opponent's area. Any other part of the body should not touch or cross the centerline.

If the ball touches the Net part between the antennas : it is not a fault except during service, but it is a fault in any case if the ball hits the net outside the area between the antennas, or if the ball hits the poles.

Remark - Exceptions

Regarding « touching the Net » faults, there are some exceptions :

- contact from hair to the net is not considered as a fault*
- if the net is hit by the ball, causing the Net to touch an opponent player, this contact is not considered as a fault*
- It is not ascribed as a fault, if after hitting the ball the player touches the antennas, the net outside the antennas, the poles, the rope, or any other object, as long as this did not happen on purpose and it does not interfere playing*

Did you know ?

Until 2012, penetrating below the net inside the opponent court was considered as a fault only if the player's foot did cross completely the centerline.

Not all players are aware that the penetration rule has evolved, some explanation might be welcome if needed.



4 - Points to replay

A point should be replayed in such conditions :

- A service was completed before the referee whistled : the service is then canceled and replayed
- The ball gets stuck in the Net
- Feathers get broken or fall apart from the ball
- An object or an individual enters the court during the game
- Two teams commit a fault simultaneously
- The referees have serious doubts about a decision, and even after referees talk to each other, the 1st referee still has doubts about which decision to take : he or she can then command that last point is replayed

5 – Substitutions, team composition

- There are no substitute players for single games, doubles and mixed doubles
- Teampay : up to 3 substitute players. A maximum of 3 substitutions for each set
- Teampay : one of the players is registered as the team captain and wears a discreet mark on the left arm
- Each team has the right to register a coach

6 – Time management

Here is a summary of time management rules during a shuttlecock game.

Warm up : 3 minutes

Maximum delay for serving after referee whistles : 5 seconds

Maximum delay to get ready for service after last point ended : 10 seconds

Timeout lasts for : 30 seconds

Special timeout in case of an injury : 5 minutes

Substitution : 15 seconds

Delay between 2 Sets : 1 minute

Delay when switching sides during 3rd Set : none



7 – Communication, Yellow & Red Cards

Communication between players, on the court

Within a team, all players are allowed to communicate without constraint, as long as it does not interfere with basic principles of the game (showing respect to the referees, opponent players and teammates is clearly demanded)

Communication with people outside of the court

Players on the court are allowed to communicate with the registered coach. No other people are allowed to communicate with players during the game, including timeouts.

But the coach should restrain from communicating except in these precise conditions :

- timeouts
- substitutions
- between 2 sets
- teams switching side during 3rd set, as long as it does not slow down the process of changing sides

The coach does not have the right to give any instruction apart from the above described situations. If the coach does not comply : he first receives a warning from the referee, and if the coach keeps on ignoring the warning, the referee can ask that he or she leaves the court.

Communication with the referees

Only the coach or team captain are allowed to talk to the referees in order to :

- require explanations about a decision made during last point
- ask for permission to change equipment, check the Net or the Ball or the court itself
- ask for a timeout
- ask for a substitution

All requests should be made in a respectful manner. Any kind of inappropriate behavior would be punished by a yellow card.

Apart from these requests (related to the game), the coach or captain should not talk to the referees at any time. The other players do not have any permission to talk to the referees.

Yellow cards

- Inappropriate behavior towards the referee, fellow players or opponent players
- Kicks or throws the ball under the net instead of giving it to the opponent after losing a phase, or denying passing the ball to the opponent after losing a point, or passing it showing signs of anger
- Kicks, hits or punches the opponent or even attempts to
- Leaves the court during an interrupt of the game without the permission of the referee

Red Cards

- To a player that was already warned by a yellow card and keeps an inappropriate behavior, or without warning after a sufficiently serious fault



8 – Referee Positions and duties

All referees that were registered for a game should behave as a « team of referees » : their main duty is to help the game to be played as smoothly as possible. Of course, accurate decisions will help them in this task. To achieve this goal, each referee should focus on his duties, and exchange as much « eye contacts » as possible with the 1st referee, and even, in some occasions, interrupt the game to exchange opinions with the 1st referee if it can help the course of the game (peace of mind of players and referees).

There should be at least 5 referees :the 1st referee, the second referee, the scorekeeper and two linesmen. An assistant for the scorekeeper is commonly recommended as the scorekeeper has lots of duties.

The 1st referee directs the game from the beginning until the end and his decisions are final. He or she only has the power to punish bad attitudes and delays. He is permitted to reject the decisions of other members that participate as official (second referee, linesmen), if he or she judges that they are wrong. The 1st referee has the right to end or start over the game. He or she will have to whistle at each credited point, violation, fault or timeout loud enough for the teams and the scorekeepers to hear, and should show with a clear hand signal the reason for his whistle and to indicate the team that has the service.

In case the 1st referee cannot continue his/her duty, the 2nd referee can replace the 1st referee. The second referee may, without whistling, indicate faults, which are not his responsibility, but he cannot insist on them to the first referee.

Below are listed the position and « main duties » of each referee.

8.1) The Linesmen (one on each side of the court)

They should stand 1 or 2 meters behind the endline and watch : the endline, one sideline (on their side), one serving area.

They focus on faults such as : ball hitting the ground out of the court, serving player making a service fault (such as entering the court before kicking the ball, foot walking on a serving line ...)

8.2) Scorekeeper (and his assistant if any)

At the opposing side of the 1st referee (and facing him or her), sitting at the scoretable.

Duties :

- fill in the game sheet, including registering players numbers, captain, coach, and position at each set for 1st service
- write down the score, number of timeouts, which team served first in the 1st Set
- check serving turns and rotations at the beginning of the set and during the game
- warn the second referee as soon as an error is noticed (in serving turns and rotations)
- in case of a 3rd Set, warn when a team reaches 11 points (in order to trigger side switching)
- at the end of the game, ask the 1st referee and 2nd referee and captains of each team to sign in the game sheet
- display the score using a scorer device

8.3) The 2nd Referee (umpire)

- watch the centerline for penetration faults
- watch the net (on his side) for ball touching the net during service, or ball hitting the net on antennas or on the net outside of the antennas, or ball passing the net outside of antennas
- watch the net (on his side) for player touching the net or antennas
- watch the sideline (on his side)

8.4) The 1st Referee

- makes the draw before the warm-up
- checks that warm-up occurs properly, and lasts no more than 3 minutes
- watch the net (on his side) for ball touching the net during service, or ball hitting the net on antennas or on the net outside of the antennas, or ball passing the net outside of antennas
- watch the net (on his side) for player touching the net or antennas
- watch the sideline (on his side)