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Table Football Basic Rules of Play

An Introduction to the Standard
International Rules



International Table-Soccer
Federation
www.table-soccer.org

- 1 Start:** The winner of a coin toss chooses either to kick-off first or to pick side. The other team gets the remaining option.
- 2 Kick-off:** The kick-off is a serve from the midfield (5-bar). Subsequent kick-offs go to the team conceding the last goal.
- 3 Serve:** To serve the ball, first ask if your opponent is "ready?". When they say "ready", you can begin. The ball must touch two players and then you must wait one second before you pass or shoot.
- 4 Ball off table:** The ball is 'out' if it leaves the playfield, defined as inside the cabinet or directly above it. Restart with a serve by the defender of the team that did not shoot the ball out.
- 5 Dead Ball:** A ball is 'dead' if it stops and can't be reached by any player figure. If the ball goes dead between the 5-bars, restart with a kick-off by the team which conceded the last goal. If the ball goes dead behind a midfield bar, restart with a serve from the nearest defender.
- 6 Time Out:** Each team is allowed 2 time outs per game of up to 30 seconds each. A time out can only be called by the team in possession of the ball and when the ball is not moving. Either team may call a time out when the ball is not in play (e.g. between balls or when the ball is dead or out).
- 7 Scoring a Goal:** You can score a goal with any player figure on any bar. If the ball enters the goal and bounces out it counts as a goal.
- 8 Change of Positions:** In doubles, the players in a team may only swap positions between balls or during a time out.
- 9 Spinning:** The penalty for spinning is a kick-off for your opponent. It's a spin if the bar rotates more than 360° before or after striking the ball.
- 10 Time Limits:** You can't keep the ball for more than 10 seconds on the midfield bar, or more than 15 seconds on any other bar. The goalie and defence bars count as one bar.
- 11 Jarring:** It's illegal to bang the rods or move the table. The ball is given to the other team on the nearest rod forward from where the jar occurred.
- 12 Reset:** If the opponents cause the ball to wobble while it's in your possession (e.g. by aggressive shaking of their bars) then your time limits start again.
- 13 Reaching into the playing area:** It's illegal to reach into the playing area without permission from the other team. If your team had the ball, the penalty is a kick-off to the other team, otherwise a goal is awarded to the other team.
- 14 Passing:** If the ball is not moving, you can't pass it from the midfield to the forward or from defence to midfield without first touching a second player figure.
- 15 Foul:** Unless otherwise stated, if you break a rule then the other team has the choice of a kick-off or to continue play from the current position. Other fouls include distracting an opponent and using bad language.
- 16 Have Fun:** Official ITSF tournament rules are more complex, and can be found here:
<http://www.table-soccer.org/rules/>

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