NUMBERS AND FACTS ABOUT TABLE TENNIS

Basic numbers and timing

♦ 3 sets to win in order to win a match (3-0, 3-1, 3-2)
♦ 11 points in a set (not 21 anymore)
♦ 2 serves in a row, for each player
♦ 6 points to wait before break is possible (for towels, shoes)
♦ 1 single time-out allowed for each player/team during a match
♦ 1 minute maximum for a time-out
♦ 1 minute maximum between 2 sets, used for a short break and coaching advices
♦ 2 minutes warm-up are allowed as “adaptation to the table and conditions” before the match starts
♦ 10 minutes “medical break”: can be accepted in some rare circumstances (classical case is wheelchair player)
♦ asking for going to the toilets, spasms, blood pressure issues, etc.)

Timing between matches

♦ Minimum time allowed between 2 single matches (from ¼ final to ½ final for example). No rule about that point, it is supposed to be defined by the schedule (recommended 40 min. between 2 matches start)
♦ 5min: Minimum allowed time between 2 matches during team event (between the double and the next single match for example)
♦ Minimum time allowed between 2 team matches (from ¼ final to ½ final for example). No rule about that point, it is supposed to be defined by the scheduled (recommended 2h30min between 2 team matches start)

Classes/genders

♦ 5 classes for wheelchair athletes (from 1 to 5)
♦ 5 classes standing athletes (from 6 to 10)
♦ Note that classes may be combined in some circumstances (lack of players, IPC guidelines, etc.)
♦ 1 class for mentally disabled athletes (class 11)
♦ 2 genders, for each class: male and female

Ball and table, for your curiosity

♦ 180 km/hour : maximum speed of the ball
♦ 150 rotations/second : maximum rotation speed of the ball
♦ 2.7 grams : weigh of the ball
♦ 40mm: diameter of the ball (used to be 38mm)

♦ Size of the table: 2.74m long, 1.525m wide
♦ 40 cm minimum are mandatory up to the feet of the table, to get a “wheelchair accessible table”

Olympics/Paralympics

♦ Table tennis is a paralympic sport since 1960 (Rome), and an Olympic sport since 1988 (Seoul)
♦ Table tennis is #2 sport in able-bodied, more than 100,000 millions of licensed players (and 20 millions in China), #2 in paralympic movement

Did you know it?

♦ 10.000 hours of practice during 10 years are considered as mandatory basics to reach elite-level of game.
♦ What about you?...

ADVICE TO TABLE TENNIS PLAYERS.....FROM THE UMPIRE’S POINT OF VIEW.

Before the match

♦ Bring an extra racket. If one gets damaged, you will be expected to continue play immediately.
♦ “Chewed-up” edge on the racket or the rubber is not acceptable.
♦ Trim the rubber up to the edge of your racket. Up to 2mm overhang is acceptable.
♦ Do not leave large amounts of exposed wood between the rubber and the edge of the blade.
♦ Covering with edge tape is not acceptable.
♦ Check the color of the ball to be used. Make sure that the color of your shirt and shorts is different to the ball.
♦ Make sure your shirt color is clearly different to your opponent. In doubles, wear the same color shirt and shorts (or track pants for wheelchair players) as your partner.
♦ Wheelchair players: you are not allowed to wear jeans.
♦ If you have permission from the referee to wear anything not normally permitted, such as track pants, religious headwear, etc., ask for a note from the referee to show the umpire each time you go to new match. It saves the umpire a lot of time and he/she will appreciate it.
♦ ALWAYS make sure that you have your player number on your shirt or on your wheelchair if it is required by the tournament.
♦ Wheelchair players: you should not bring extra baggage
hanging off the back of your chair.
♦ Keep water bottles and towels next to the umpire or assistant umpire.
♦ Bring your classification card in case the umpire needs to see it.
♦ Check your opponent’s classification card BEFORE the match, if any aspect needs to be clarified
♦ Be at your scheduled table a few minutes before time. Don’t leave washroom needs until the last minute.

**At the start of the match**

♦ You are allowed to check your opponent’s racket.
♦ Identify your coach to the umpire before warm up in singles and doubles. If you are a doubles team from two different associations, you may have two coaches.
♦ Coaching is allowed before the warm up. You cannot return to your coach between warm up and the start of the game.
♦ Wheelchair players: strapping above the knees is allowed only in Open Events, not in Class or Team Events.
♦ Don’t extend the warm up time. A maximum of two minutes is allowed.
♦ If you have a disability which requires the relaxation of ITTF Law 2.6.6, then demonstrate your service to the umpire or show your classification card with the relevant information.
♦ Toss: The winner may choose to serve, to receive, or the end he/she wishes to start the first game.
♦ The loser may make his/her choice from the options that are left.
♦ You and your opponent should be present for the toss. **DO NOT ACCEPT** the toss being completed in your absence.
♦ If there is a problem, you, or your coach, should ask for the Referee. Don’t get into arguments.
♦ In doubles, advise the umpire who is serving or who is receiving. The first receiver in the first game **DOES NOT** have to be the first server in the second game.

**During the match**

♦ You, or your coach, may call for a 1 minute time-out at any time during a match. You are allowed ONLY one per match.
♦ If your coach calls a time out, and you don’t want one, you don’t have to take a time out. The final decision is yours, the player.
♦ When the player calling the time-out returns to the table, his opponent **MUST** return **IMMEDIATELY** even if less than 1 minute has passed.
♦ The laws require you to serve so that: **As soon as the ball has been projected, the server’s free arm shall be removed from the space between the ball and the net** (voted in Shanghai, May 2005)
♦ And the umpire must be able to know that the free arm is not between the ball and the net.
♦ This applies even if there is only one umpire. The umpire will **NOT** change sides and you may **NOT REQUEST** an assistant umpire.
♦ If you think that your opponent is serving illegally let your coach deal with the umpire.
♦ For standing players, if you need to wet the soles of your shoes for better traction, use a damp towel, or paper towel placed beside the table. Spitting on the floor is not the entertainment that spectators come to see, and the umpire will show you a yellow card for spitting.
♦ Be respectful to the umpire(s) and your opponent(s) throughout the match. Bad behaviour can cost you points.
♦ Don’t waste time. Play must be continuous. Kicking or hitting balls to the end of the court or bouncing the ball excessively before service may result in a yellow card for delay of game.
♦ Towelling is allowed every 6 points or at authorized intervals or at the change of ends in the last game of a match.
♦ If you wear glasses the umpire may allow you to use the towel more frequently but do not abuse the privilege.
♦ You are allowed a **1 minute** interval between games.
♦ If you are playing in a team match, you are allowed to have 5 minutes between successive games which you are playing. Example: between the doubles and the ensuing singles.
♦ Players who have racket strapped to the hand do not have to leave the racket on the table between games.
♦ You can **NOT** leave the playing area unless you have permission from the umpire.
♦ For any injury suffered **DURING** play you will be allowed up to 10 minutes suspension of play by the **REFEREE, one time only.** Muscle Cramp is a condition that will not occur if you are fit and warmed up ready to play. **NO SUSPENSION** will be allowed to recover from muscle cramp.
♦ If you need to keep hair out of your eyes during play, please wear a recognized headband.
♦ Referees are **VERY LIKELY** to forbid the wearing of other headgear, including baseball caps whether they are worn backwards or the correct way round.

**After the match**

♦ Be courteous; shake hands with your opponent(s) and the umpire(s) and your opponent’s coach.
♦ Make absolutely sure that any paperwork associated with your match(es) is correct. **CHECK THE SCORES AND THE WINNER.** It may be impractical to correct any errors once the tournament has progressed to other rounds.
♦ Make sure that you leave the court with everything that you took to the court.

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**Versão 5.1 - Fevereiro de 2008**
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**Links:**
http://www.ipttc.org/rules/
http://www.ittf.com/ittf_handbook/ittf_hb.html