



Padel, Pop & Pickle: New, fun styles of tennis



GUEST CORNER

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All three racquet sports are rapidly growing in the US and worldwide and have attracted new players offering them an exhilarating mix of strategy, agility, and teamwork. But like any sport these popular racquet sports also come with the risk of injuries due to the fast-paced and dynamic nature of the game.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PADEL, POP AND PICKLEBALL

- Padel: (pronounced with a Spanish inflection, "PAH-del") originated in Mexico in the 1960s when Enrique Corcuera, a local businessman, modified his squash court. It combines elements of tennis and squash and is played in an enclosed court with glass walls that players can use to bounce the ball off. The racquet is a solid platform without strings and the balls are like tennis balls but slightly less pressurized.
- Pickleball: originated in Bainbridge Island, Washington, when three dads invented the game to play with their kids using equipment readily handy. It is a combination of tennis, badminton, and table tennis, and is played on a hard court that is the size of a badminton court with a perforated plastic ball and wooden or composite solid paddles.
- Paddle or "POP tennis": is believed to have originated in 1898 as an outdoor game for children by Reverend Frank Beal and spread to lower Manhattan to create recreational activities for neighborhood children. It has elements of tennis and pickleball and is played on an open court with solid wall or mesh fencing. The rackets are solid but can vary in shape and size and the balls are like tennis balls but less bouncy. To better market the sport, promoters have changed the name from paddle tennis to "POP tennis" which corresponds to the sound of the ball hitting the paddle.

INJURIES COMMON TO PADEL, POP AND PICKLEBALL

- Ankle sprains: due to quick lateral movements and sudden stops.
- Tennis elbow (Lateral Epicondylitis): overuse of the forearm muscles lead to pain on the outside part of the elbow.

- Shoulder injuries: due to repetitive overhead strokes.
- Patellar Tendonitis: Pain over and below the kneecap caused by repetitive jumping and bending.
- Wrist injuries: sprains or strains caused by improper racquet handling.
- Falls: Due to poor balance.

INJURY PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Like any sport, it is imperative to prepare in advance to get your body ready for the physical demands of these racquet sports.
- Consider taking lessons to learn the proper form and techniques of the sport.
- Strengthening exercises for your core, legs, and upper body combined with full body flexibility stretches.
- Invest in correct footwear and racquet.
- Listen to your body and stay hydrated.
- Do proper warm up and cool down exercises.

SUGGESTED PREPARATION EXERCISES AT HOME

To warm up your muscles, start a fast pace walk for 15 - 20 minutes.

Strengthening for core, legs, and shoulders

Never hold your breath and focus on engaging your core, Glutes, and thigh muscles. Repeat each exercise 10 times and progress doing more repetitions as you improve:

- Squats: stand with back against a wall with feet about 18" away from wall. Hold 3-pound weights in hands and squat down to a comfortable knee bent as you lift arms with weights forward up to below shoulder level then return to upright position.
- Plank: lean against a sturdy counter on your elbows or hands, with your body at a straight angle behind you. Stay in this plank position, keeping shoulders away from your ears and your core tight. Progress doing the plank on the floor. Hold plank position 10-20sec.
- Lunges: stand in front of counter and use your hands if needed for stability on the countertop. Take a big lunge sideways with toes pointing forward and hips sticking out backwards. Progress by using 3-pound weights in your hands and punching opposite arm forward to the side you lunge to.
- Ankles and wrists: stand on one leg. Hold onto a sturdy counter with one hand. Lift the other leg up with knee bent. Trace the alphabet in the air with your ankle, at the same time hold a squishy ball in your free hand and squeeze and release. Switch sides.

Flexibility

Lean gently into the stretch for 10-20 sec and ease up if you feel any discomfort:

- Hamstring and calf stretch: Stand with your foot up on a staircase step. Anchor your forefoot against the tread of the step above your foot. Keep your front leg straight and gently lean with a flat back forward until you feel a stretch behind your knee into your calf.
- Inner thigh stretch: keep your leg up on the step but turn your body sideways and lunge onto the step bending the knee to feel the stretch in your inner thigh.
- Shoulder stretch: stand between a doorway lifting both arms as high as tolerable on either side of the doorway. One leg forward, bending front knee until you feel a stretch in your chest and shoulders.

Balance

- Sit on a chair. Come up to standing and immediately lift the one leg up to balance

on one leg. Hold 10-20 sec, repeat with other leg.

- Do small side shuffle movements from side to side keeping knees slightly bent. Progress to do the karaoke move, shuffling sideways alternating leg behind and in front of other leg.

Warm up and cool down exercises

- Fast-paced marching/jogging; dynamic leg swings, (front to back and side to side) arms circles and side to side body rotations.

Cool down with gentle flexibility stretches.

If you experience any discomfort or need guidance for more specialized exercises, please contact your physical therapist.

LLPT sends good energy for a peaceful Thanksgiving to all the community readers!

Lize Lubbe is the owner of Lize Lubbe Physical Therapy with its main practice located at 892 Route 35 in Cross River and a PT Studio in the premises of Apex Fitness (where her team focus on the rehabilitation of sports-related injuries). Learn more by calling 914-875-9430, emailing contact@lizeclubbept.com or visiting www.lizeclubbept.com.



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