

PUEBLO EL MIRAGE (PEM) – SKILL RATING DESCRIPTIONS

The descriptions of the ratings are to help you determine your skill level.

1.0

- New and have only minimal knowledge of the game.

1.5

- Has taken at least one beginner lesson
- Limited to some rallies
- Learning how to serve
- Developing a forehand
- Fails to return easy balls frequently
- Learning to play a game, court lines, scoring and some basic rules
- Learning where to stand in doubles play
- Learning the dink game but has trouble keeping the ball in the kitchen and low enough

2.0

- Has participated in novice and beginning skills practice
- Moves around the court in a balanced and safe manner
- Gets some serves “in”
- Realizes aspects of score-keeping, rules and where to stand on the court during serve, receive of serve, and general play
- Has some basic stroke skills, backhand, forehand, volley but has obvious weaknesses
- Knows where to stand in doubles play
- Able to sustain a short rally with players of equal ability
- Just tries to return the ball with no plan for placement
- Learning to come to the NVZ line but frequently gets caught at mid-court
- Knows the two bounce rule
- Is mastering keeping score

2.5

- Able to serve “in” more regularly
- Knows where to stand on the court during serve, serve receive and general play
- Aware of the soft game and occasionally tries to dink
- Working on form for ground strokes, accuracy is variable
- Makes longer lasting slow paced rallies
- Sometimes lobs with forehand with varying degrees of success
- Beginning to approach the non-volley zone to hit volleys
- Court coverage is weak but is improving
- Knows fundamental rules and can keep score
- Learning the importance of the third shot but uses mostly lobs
- Has control of forehand groundstroke
- Beginning to use backhand groundstroke

3.0

- Working to keep the serve deep
- Moves quickly towards the non-volley zone when opportunity is there
- Returns ball lower over the net when appropriate
- More aware of their partner's position on the court and moving more as a team
- Developing more power in shots
- Uses deeper and higher service returns to allow time to approach the net
- Demonstrates improved skills with all the basic shot strokes and shot placement
- Beginning to use strategy when placing the ball
- Starting to use the 3rd shot drop
- Able to sustain dink exchange
- Sustains short volley sessions at net
- Uses forehand lob with some success

3.5

- Demonstrates a broad knowledge of the rules of the game
- Gets high majority of serves "in"
- Able to serve and return serve deep
- Hits to the weak side of opponent often
- Demonstrates more strategies of playing during games
- Works better with partners in communicating, covering court, moving to net
- With consistency executes: lobs, forehand/backhand ground strokes, overheads, net volleys, and sustained dinking
- Uses moredrop shots in order to get to the net quickly
- Knows when to make some specific placed shots in the game
- Working on mixing up soft shots with power shots to create an advantage
- Hits fewer balls out of bounds or in the net
- Dinks mostly in opponents kitchen and is dinking lower over the net
- Able to sustain dinking in the game
- Has a moderate number of unforced errors
- Exhibits some aggressive net play
- Beginning to anticipate opponents shots
- Able to consistently hit balls lower over the net
- Can create coverage gaps and then hit the gap
- Sustains short volley sessions at the net with placement and control
- Hits most overheads with control
- Uses forehand and backhand lobs when appropriate

4.0

- Beginning to play more consistently in all phases of the game: dependable ground strokes, lobs, overheads, volleys, directional control, depth, placement, pace
- Anticipates opponents shots resulting in good court position
- Primarily plays offensively
- Controls and places serves and return of serves to best advantage
- Puts strategy into play in the game
- Consistently varies shots to create a competitive advantage
- Works and moves well with partner – easily switches court positions when required
- Very comfortable playing at the non-volley zone. Works with partner to control the line, keeping opponents back and driving them off line
- Can block volleys directed at them
- Has good footwork and moves laterally, backward and forward with ease
- Uses strategy in dinking to get a put-away shot
- Consistently executes effective slow paced drop shots
- Demonstrates 3rd shot strategies: drop shot, lobs and fast paced ground strokes
- Hits a low number of unforced errors per game
- Initiates and maintains a sustained dink exchange to elicit a “put away” shot
- Able to change from fast to slow paced strategy and vice versa
- Can block and return fast paced volleys
- Recognizes and exploits opponents weaknesses

4.5

- Able to regularly convert a hard shot to a soft shot
- Exhibits patience at a superior level
- Shows noticeably increased skills, a higher level of strategy, quickness of hands and movement, judicious use of power, superior placement of shots, anticipation of play, sustained volleying skills, superior put-aways – all with consistency
- Understands strategy and can adjust style of play and game plan according to opponents strength and weaknesses and court position
- Beginning to master dink and drop shots
- Makes very few unforced errors

5.0

- Has mastered all skills and strategies
- Dependable in stressful situations
- Athletic ability, quickness, agility separates these players

This handout is also available for download from our website at:

www.pempickleball.com under the “Training” tab.

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