

When doubles is played, if the serving side wins a rally then the same player carries on serving, but changes service courts so that a different opponent receives the serve each time. Once the serving side loses a rally the serve automatically passes to the opponent. There is no second serve permitted within the new rules. Service courts are determined from which positions the players were in at the start of the previous rally. This system is played so that each time a side regains service a different player serves. It is not permissible for the same person to serve each time.

The rules of badminton state that the shuttlecock must pass over the short service line on the opponent's court each serve otherwise it is a fault.

Rallies are won by the shuttlecock landing on the floor within the boundaries of the opponent's court. Rallies can also be won if the opponent commits a fault, the most common fault being the failure to return the shuttlecock over the net and within the boundaries. Faults can also be called for incorrect serves; the shuttlecock must be hit below waist height and the racquet head must face downwards as the shuttlecock is hit (ensuring an arching serve).

Neither the server nor the receiver can lift a foot until the shuttlecock has been hit. The server must also begin the service stroke by hitting the base, cork, of the shuttlecock, although it is permissible to hit the feathers afterwards as part of the same stroke.

The Volley or the Rallies

The shuttlecock may only be hit once before it passes over the net during a single stroke. Players may contact the shuttlecock twice, as in some slice shots.

If the shuttlecock hits the ceiling it is a fault there are no lets called if the shuttlecock hits the tape of the net.

The court dimensions are 44 feet long x 17 feet wide for singles, and 44 feet long x 20 feet wide for doubles. The top of the net should be five feet from the floor in the center, and five feet plus one inch on the sides¹. Neither the racquet nor the body may touch the net during play. The shuttlecock or birdie may touch the net. If it should pass over the net, play continues. However, if the birdie should hit the net and then pass over the net on the serve, it is called a "let serve" and must be done again. A player is not allowed to reach over the plane of the net with either his body or the racquet.