

NEW FOREST PETANQUE LEAGUE

LEAGUE RULES (2025)

1) REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY

- a) To be eligible to play in the New Forest Petanque League (NFPL), clubs must have registered with the Secretary and paid the appropriate registration fee for each team being entered.
- b) Each team must provide the team name, the name of the Club the team represents, the name of the team captain and contact details of two team representatives, the location, address and post code of the terrain they propose using for league matches, the size of the terrain and whether or not lighting is available so matches can be played after dark, and the names of at least eight players who have agreed to represent the team in league matches.
- c) The registration fee for each team must be paid at the pre-season meeting or at the latest before the first match of the season. Failure to do so might result in disqualification from the league. Such decision will be made by the Fixtures Secretary after consultation with the League Committee.
- d) Where a player has been registered for one team, and has played a league match for that team, they will not be eligible to play for another team in the league during that season without permission from the Secretary. Such permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- e) Additional player/s may be registered by a team at any time during the league competition. The name of the player must be forwarded to the Secretary at least 24 hours prior to the first occasion on which they play competitively in the league.
- f) The Secretary will provide a list of registered teams and players to the Fixtures Secretary and to the captain of each team registered in the league.
- g) These Rules shall apply equally to Cup and Plate matches.

2) LEAGUE FORMAT

- a) The league may be divided into two or more divisions, the number of teams in each division being equal. New teams joining the NFPL will always start in the lowest division of the league.
- b) Each team will play a home and an away fixture against every other team in its division. Any deviation from this rule will be only permitted in exceptional circumstances and only after prior agreement with the committee.

- c) Before the start of each season, the Pre Season Meeting will decide upon the divisional format and the process for promotion and relegation for that season. For example, two divisions, with the three bottom teams in the top division being relegated to the second division and replaced by the top three teams in the second division. Positions in each division of the league will be decided as set out in paragraph 5 of these Rules.
- d) The Pre Season Meeting will also decide the format of the Cup and Plate competitions.
- e) The format of league and cup/plate matches will be two triples games and three doubles games, played in that order. Games will be played to 13 points.
- f) To complete a match, each team requires a minimum of six and a maximum of twelve players. Those playing in the doubles need not be the same as those playing in the triples. However, a match may be played with a minimum of four players. This would mean a team of four would play both triples with just two players (using FOUR boules against SIX for their opponents) and the three doubles in whatever configuration the captain of the depleted team chooses (eg one game being 2v2 and the others 1v2). If a game is conceded, the score will be recorded as 13-7 to the opposition. In every case, the team playing with less players than the match allows can only use the number of balls appropriate to the number of players competing.
- g) Substitute players cannot be introduced during a game. If a player has to withdraw part way through a game they cannot be replaced and their team mates will play on without making use of the withdrawn player's boules.

3) MATCH ARRANGEMENTS

- a) It is expected that all league and cup/plate matches will be played.
- b) Matches will normally be played on a Thursday evening.
- c) The home captain will fill in the names of their players on the score sheet before each round and the visiting captain will then add the names of the away team.
- d) Matches will normally commence at 7pm. However, if either of the two captains needs to start later, this need **must** be accommodated, but matches must start not later than 7.30pm. If there is no such agreement, the match **will** start at 7pm.
- e) Semi-finals and finals in the cup and plate competitions will be played on neutral grounds. Captains will decide, by the toss of a coin, which team will be 'home' in the triples. The other will be 'home' in the doubles.

- f) Before the season starts, captains will be invited to submit to the Fixtures Secretary not more than two dates when they knew they would have difficulty fulfilling a fixture. The fixture list will then be published taking these needs into account. Thereafter, it is expected that teams will fulfil all their matches as set out in the final published fixture list, making use of their squad strength and rule 2f above. However, if the two captains can agree an alternative date for a fixture, the match will be played on that agreed date. If they cannot agree, the match must be played on the original date.
- g) If a team has to cancel within 24 hours of the time/date on which a match is scheduled to be played, that team **will** forfeit the match by 3 games to two and the match scores will be recorded as 13-7, 13-7, 13-7, 7-13, 7-13 to the opposing team (NB. team captains should be aware of rule 2e above which allows matches to be played with incomplete teams).
- h) If a team fails to arrive to play a fixture without prior notice the match **will** be awarded to their opponents as set out in rule 3g above.
- i) In the event of late cancellation or no show for a fixture, the offending team can appeal to the league committee against the decision to award the match to their opponents. However, such an appeal will only be allowed in very exceptional circumstances.
- j) If a match has to be postponed, it must be played within four weeks of the originally scheduled date. Team captains should liaise and make every effort to agree a new date bearing in mind the added responsibility of the home captain in arranging the terrain and other local facilities. If no date is agreed within the set timescale the Fixtures Secretary, in conjunction with the league committee, will arbitrate. Their decision will be final and may include declaring the match null and void, no points being awarded to either team.
- k) If due to exceptionally inclement weather a match has to be postponed, the home captain must inform the Fixtures Secretary.
- l) If a match has to be abandoned part way through either because of weather or equipment failure, the scores in completed games will stand and part games will be replayed from 0-0. The home team captain will be responsible for re-arranging any games needing to be replayed. The Fixtures Secretary must be informed at the same time and will, if necessary and in consultation with the league committee, arbitrate. Their decision will be final.
- m) All league matches must be played before the deadline established at that season's PSM. If one or more matches remain unplayed, the Fixtures Secretary in consultation with the league committee will award results and scores accordingly and their decision will be final.
- n) If a team withdraws from the league part way through the competition, all matches already played by that team will be null and void with no points awarded.
- o) Score sheets must be agreed by both captains at the end of each match. The home captain will despatch the completed score sheet or an electronic copy thereof to the Fixtures Secretary within one week of the match being played.

4) LOCAL RULES

- a) Before the commencement of a match the home captain will inform their opposite number of any local rules that apply. For example, the width of some playing areas may mean that if a jack or boule touches or crosses a dividing string it is deemed out of play, and some terrains have dead areas which must be explained.

5) LEAGUE POSITIONS

- a) The league positions will be decided as follows:
 - The team winning most matches wins the league, and so on down the division.
 - If more than one team wins the same number of matches, they are ranked according to which has won the most games.
 - If more than one team wins the same number of matches and games, they are ranked according to which has the better difference between points won and conceded.
 - If two teams still remain level at this point, the aggregate result of the matches between those two teams will be the deciding factor. If the matches were even, the number of games won will count; if the games won were also even then points difference will be the deciding factor.
- b) Perpetual trophies will be awarded to the team winning each division and to the teams winning the Cup and the Plate competitions. These trophies will be returned to the league at the end of the following season for re-engraving and re-presentation. Keepsake trophies (maximum eight per team) will be awarded to each of these teams. Keepsake medallions (eight per team) will be awarded to the teams finishing as runners up in each of these four categories.

6) DISPUTES AND DISCIPLINE

- a) Teams are encouraged to take all reasonable steps to resolve disputes amicably between themselves during a match. Where this is not possible the league committee will convene a group of three committee members to resolve the matter and their decision will be final.
- b) Teams who during a match argue, show lack of respect or sportsmanship towards their opponents or spectators will be at risk of having the affected game/s or the entire match declared in favour of their opponents by the league committee. In the event of such an incident, the Secretary must be advised of the full circumstances in writing (or by electronic means) within twenty four hours of the end of the match concerned.
- c) Players guilty of bad or unsporting behaviour towards an opponent or a spectator will be at risk of exclusion from the league for such period of time as is decided by the league committee.

7) PLAYING RULES

- a) The Official Rules of the Game of Petanque (applicable to all member Federations/Associations of the FIPJP including Petanque England (PE)) will be adopted by the NFPL. However, some of the formal rules of PE might not apply within the NFPL. For instance:
- The width and length of terrains might differ
 - The rule regarding a boule or jack being out of play will depend on local rules (para 4 above)
 - Dog boules are acceptable
 - Players are not required to mark every jack and boule played , though they may do so at their discretion when circumstances render it prudent.
 - Discipline (see Article 6 above)
 - The jack may be thrown up to the strings. If no strings are present, the jack may be thrown up to, but not touching, the boards delineating the side of the lane.
- b) The spirit of the NFPL is such that if a player inadvertently transgresses a rule it would be expected that this be pointed out for future application but that the other side does not seek to take an immediate retrospective advantage of the transgression.
- c) Some of the PE rules most likely to arise are highlighted below:
- Article 6 – Start of Play
 - Except as provided in Article 3e above, the players will toss a coin. The winners of the toss will choose the terrain (if this has not been allocated by the organiser) and will throw the jack first.
 - The team winning the toss, or the previous end, will have only one attempt to throw the jack. If this jack is not valid it is handed to the opponent who must place it on the terrain at a valid position.
 - Article 8 – For the thrown jack to be valid
 - If after the throwing of the jack, a first boule is played, the opponent still has the right to contest the validity of its position except in the case when the jack has been placed by a team member
 - Article 9 – Dead Jack during an end
 - The jack is dead.....when, still on the authorised terrain, the moved jack is not visible from the circle (Article 7.4) to the player whose feet are placed astride the extreme limits of the interior of the circle and whose body is absolutely upright.
 - Article 10 – Displacement of Obstacles
 - It is strictly forbidden for players to press down, displace or crush any obstacle whatever on the playing area.....Furthermore, the player who is about to play, or one of their partners, may fill a hole which would have been made by one boule played previously. NOTE: sweeping the terrain between ends is specifically forbidden.

- Article 14 – Rules to apply if the jack is dead
 - If during an end the jack becomes dead, one of three cases can apply:
 - If both teams have boules to play, the end is void
 - If only one team has boules left to play, this team scores as many points as boules remaining to be played
 - If neither team has any boules left to play, the end is void and the jack is thrown by the team that scored the points in the previous end

Article 21 – Time allowed to play

- Once the jack is thrown each player has the maximum duration of one minute to play their boule.
- This short period starts from the moment when the previous boule or jack stops or. If it is necessary to measure a point, from the moment the latter has been carried out.
- The same requirements apply to the throwing of the jack.

- Article 26 – Measuring of points
 - The measuring of a point is the responsibility of the player who last played or one of their team mates. The opponents always have the right to measure after one of these players.
 - Measuring must be done with appropriate instruments, which each team must possess. Notably it is forbidden to effect measurements with the feet. NOTE: Since the NFPL does not use umpires, reasonable agreement between the teams must be achieved perhaps with the assistance of a spectator or participant measuring independently of the players involved in the game itself.

- Article 27 – Removed Boules
 - It is forbidden for players to pick up played boules before the completion of an end.
 - At the completion of an end, all boules picked up before the agreement of points are dead. No claim is admissible on this subject.

- Article 28 – Displacement of the Boules or the Jack
 - A team whose player displaces the jack or one of the contested boules whilst effecting a measurement loses the point.
 - If during the measurement of a point an independent person (see Article 27 above) disturbs or displaces the jack or a boule, they will make a decision in an equitable way.

- Article 29 – Boules equidistant from the Jack
 - Where the two closest boules to the jack belong to opposing teams and are at an equal distance from it, one of three cases can apply:
 - If the two teams have no more boules to play, the end is dead and the jack belongs to the team which threw the jack at the preceding end.
 - If only one team has boules at its disposition, it plays them and scores as many points as it has boules closer to the jack than the nearest boule of the opponent.
 - If both teams have boules at their disposition, it is for the team which played the last boule to play again, then the opposing team, and so on alternately until the point belongs to one of them. When only one team possesses boules, the arrangements set out in the preceding paragraph apply.

- Article 32 – Penalties for absent teams or players
 - The players must be present at the agreed start time of the match. A quarter of an hour after that, the team which is absent from the terrain will be penalised one point which is awarded to their opponents. After this the penalty increases by one point for each five minutes of the delay.
 - The team that does not present itself on the playing area within thirty minutes of the agreed start time shall lose that game which shall be awarded to their opponents.

- Article 33 – Late arrival of players
 - If, after an end has started, a missing player arrives, they do not take part in this end. The player is accepted into the game only as from the following end. If a missing player arrives more than thirty minutes after the start of a game, they lose all rights to participate in that game.
 - The first end of a game is considered as started as soon as the jack has been thrown, regardless of the validity of the throw.

**FAIR PLAY SHOULD ALWAYS BE PARAMOUNT AND DECISIONS SHOULD BE MADE IN A PRAGMATIC
AND REASONABLE MANNER**