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OMG  
Play Tips

## Keep the Ball Low

It is imperative that you keep the ball low—or else pay the consequences! When you hit the ball higher than you intended, ask yourself these questions.

**[1] How is my grip pressure?** During a long rally, it's natural to feel more anxiety as the point wears on. Perhaps you have returned four or five dinks in a row. As the "dink fest" continues, you may become obsessed with controlling the ball. Perhaps you forget to breathe which further raises the amount of stress you experience. With this stress comes tension. The next thing you know, you have a death grip on the paddle. So how tightly should you hold the paddle?

Imagine that you want to hold a bird in your hand firmly enough that it won't fly away but not so tight that you choke it.

**[2] Is my body comfortable and relaxed?** The paddle face will determine the trajectory of the ball, but your body will determine your paddle position. Think about your body. Are your feet at least shoulder width apart? Are you relaxed with a slight flex in your knees? Is your back, chest, and head up? Are you comfortable and relaxed? Are you breathing normally, which is important to staying calm.

**[3] Where did I make contact with the ball, relative to my body?** You want to make contact with the ball in *front of your body*—not at your side, at your feet, or behind you. When you make contact too close to your body, you are more likely to pop the ball up, especially when you scoop it up near your feet. Be certain that your arms are holding the paddle out in front of your sternum. Keep that distance. Track the ball with your paddle, and make contact with the ball in front of your body.

**[4] Am I hitting the ball on the run?** Stop before you hit the ball. If you step and hit at the same time, you'll often add extra energy, making it more difficult to control the ball, thus popping it up. Instead, take the time to let your weight settle onto the ground prior to every ball you hit.

**[5] Did I step to the ball?** Don't reach to hit the ball. Doing so creates a greater chance of popping up the ball. Take that extra step whenever you can to get to the ball! Balance is key to hitting a ball squarely on the paddle face. By putting your body in the best position to execute the shot, you will hit better shots.

**[6] How am I striking the ball?** Don't flick, flinch, or flail at the ball. Rather, *keep your wrist laid back, and keep your paddle steady.* Do not flick your wrist. With your knees slightly bent, stay low as you strike the ball—do not pop up until **AFTER** you hit the ball!

Click [here](#) to view PrimeTime Pickleball's video entitled **Why Do I Pop Up The Ball.**

Click [here](#) to view Deb Harrison's video entitled **Push it Forward & Keep it Low.**



**Keep the ball low to avoid giving your opponent an offensive opportunity!**