

## Grip Pressure

We play our best when we are loose and relaxed. It begins with your grip pressure. A quality shot is impacted by how tight you are holding your paddle.

Grip pressure is measured on a scale of 1-10 where "0" means the paddle falls out of your hand, and "10" is an iron-fisted grip. In pickleball, very rarely will one get fully to a 10 level grip pressure!

The benefit of the light grip is an increased feel for the ball on the paddle. A lighter grip allows the paddle to "give" as it absorbs the force of the ball. When this happens, the ball actually stays on the face of the paddle longer instead of "popping" off the face. The result is more control.

Shorter and softer shots are on the low end of the grip pressure scale as the grip should be looser in order to absorb more of the ball's energy.



Longer but soft shots, like a drop shot, should be somewhere in the middle of the scale as the ball must have some energy to cover greater distances. A groundstroke hit with power requires maximum energy and the grip should be tightest on these shots.

The grip pressure ranges for the various pickleball shots are listed below.

Grip Pressure Ranges	
Serve	Between 7 & 9
Return of serve & other groundstrokes	Between 7 & 9
Third shot drop	Between 4 & 5
Dinks and any soft shot	Between 3 & 5
Volley (hard hit)	Between 7 & 9
Drop volley (soft)	Between 4 & 5
Overheads	Between 7 & 9

Especially when dinking, we tend to grip the paddle too tightly. Instead, a lighter grip should be applied. Click [here](#) to watch the video entitled *Grip Pressure When Dinking in Pickleball* by Dick's Sporting Goods.

If your dink and third shot drop shots aren't what they should be or if your forearms and elbows are tired or hurting after play, chances are you are gripping your paddle too tightly. Be aware of your grip pressure, and practice using the correct one. Then watch how your game improves!

**When you dink, hold your paddle as you would a bird. Don't let the bird fly away, but do not hold it so tight that you crush it.**