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Pickleball Noise Issues: Why is it a Problem & What Can be Done to Overcome?

Written by [Stan Boone](#) in [Equipment](#), [Pickleball](#)



One of the issues facing the burgeoning sport of pickleball is the complaints from residents about the disturbances it causes because of its noise issues. In this piece we look at the issues surrounding pickleball noise, its effect on residents and how can this problem be potentially tackled.

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As the sport of pickleball has spread its wings far and wide in America and as it does the same in the rest of the world, more and more neighbors can be expected to raise their voices about the **effect its noise has on their peace**.

The continuous **pop-pop-pop of the pickleball paddle** hitting the ball has quite a few neighborhoods up in arms over this noise, noise which has been described as disturbing (and that's at best).

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The other issue is the same noise is amplified when the **pickleball hits the ground** too, something that's not an issue with tennis.

Be it [Ridgewood](#) in New Jersey, or [York](#) in Maine, or in various parts of Canada, pickleball players have been dogged by the same issue over and over again. **Complaints by the locals** who have been frustrated by the issue that pickleball noises have on the quality of their lives.

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And the challenge isn't just to down the sound of the paddle hitting the ball but also the **noise of celebrating players** in a game that's quite social in nature. Pickleball has transcended generations, is described as a fun sport with players typically having a whale of a time.

[Pickleball can be played on tennis courts](#), and more importantly one tennis court can accommodate four pickleball courts together. Now imagine two tennis courts are converted into eight courts, with four players featuring in each one of them – that's about **32 players making a din** that would invariably get very difficult for the residents around.

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Some residents are also worried the **sale value of their houses** might go down because of this sticky issue.

As a result of that, pickleball is facing a whole load of challenges with players finding it more and more difficult to get themselves freely-available courts to play the sport in the wake of these noise issues.

The video below is an indicator of how pickleball is driving residents crazy and some of the effect it has had on pickleball players themselves.





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Why is Pickleball Noise Different from Other Sports?

What is it about the pickleball noise that makes it a bigger pain in the backside than other sports? Communities, after all, had been living around tennis and other courts and coexisting without any major concerns before pickleball started proliferating in the region.

If we ignore the fun and social element of pickleball, the sound that disturbs neighborhood residents the most is that of the paddle hitting the pickleball.

Studies have been undertaken to measure the sound levels associated with pickleball and average sounds have come to around 70 dBA. This scale of sound measurement, is a [weighted decibel scale](#) which gives the relative loudness of sounds in air as perceived by the human ear.

Exposure to sounds of more than 80 dBA needs to be avoided while anything above 90 dBA is considered dangerous to the human ear.

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Unfortunately, the issue with pickleball's 70 dBA is despite it being lower than what the ear can endure, it's still more than what residents are used to from sports like tennis (whose courts are used to convert into pickleball courts) and other sports.

Tennis, for instance, gives out 40 dBA sounds, which makes it eight times softer than pickleball sounds, making it so much more difficult for residents to endure.

Also Read:

- [How to Become a Pickleball Referee?](#)

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- [How to Clean a Pickleball Paddle?](#)

Solutions to Pickleball Noise Issues

There are multiple ways in which the noise from pickleball courts can be reduced and things are made easier for neighborhoods. Some of these are listed below and we will keep updating this as and when there's more information.

AcoustiFence Pickleball Noise Curtains

The USA Pickleball Association has recognized this issue and [made a mention](#) of this on their

official website too.

One of the ways to overcome this problem, according to USAPA, is to use the 1/8-inch thick AcoustiFence Pickleball Noise Curtains (STC30) which can be used for all seasons and weather.

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This reduces the noise levels by around half in the entire American region, “from the heat of the sunbelt to the cold of Canada including Poinsettia Park in Carlsbad CA, Ocean City NJ, and parks in Vancouver, BC.”

These curtains can be customized to ensure it matches the height of the fence around the playing arena while also taking care of any further requirements while adding extra courts to the place.

According to Acoustiblok, the company that produces Acoustifence, this method of soundproofing reduces the noise levels by 10-12 decibels. More information on this can be found [here](#).

Quieter Pickleball Paddles

There is a problem with this solution itself. While new playing arenas or big communities and clubs which have the budget can afford to install this noise-reduction solution, smaller communities don't typically find it way tougher to get the funding needed for this.

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The alternative solution to this is to go with pickleball paddles which make lesser noise than most others.

There're quite a few '[quiet' paddles](#), which meet the criterion listed by the Green Zone Approved Paddles. These paddles make lesser decibel levels than the maximum allowed by pickleball clubs and associations.

These paddles need to pass the tests designed by Sun City Grand Pickleball Courts' directors with the result classifying paddles as green, yellow or red.

Those paddles falling in the red zone are banned from most courts and associations, those in the yellow zone are currently allowed but run the risk of getting banned in the future while green zone paddles are the ones players can use on all courts.

The good news is pickleball, despite the kind of interest that it has drummed up in the last few years, is still an evolving sport. And so is the technology around its paddles which means there is a high probability better and less noisy paddles will become a norm and make life easier for all the pickleball stakeholders.



[Get a list of our most favorite silent pickleball paddles which are Green Zone-approved here.](#)

Better Pickleball Practice Balls

There is a type of pickleball balls which are called the Foam Quiet Ball by Gamma which dish out lesser noise than the other balls used in the sport.

Because they are made of foam, the amount of noise produced on impact isn't what it would be otherwise.

That said, this type of ball cannot be used in official tournaments because it plays differently from a normal pickleball, with no pickleball pop sound coming off of it.

It can be used in casual play which is where most of the aforementioned resident complaints emanate from anyway, so that's one option which can be tried.



Regulated Timings

This will not take away the noise but could allow pickleball players and residents to co-exist with a compromise. With inputs from local players, club managers and residents, there could be a consensus on what works the best for everyone and there could be a win-win solution found out.

The challenge here is with the kind of demand for pickleball and with the [lack of courts](#) becoming a regular issue thanks to the ever-rising interest in the game, regulating the timing could reduce their play time and make things that much more difficult.

On the other hand, without sound-proofing of the courts as mentioned in the aforementioned first point, residents will still be subjected to continuous sounds at times all might not happy with.

Final Words on Noise Issues in Pickleball

Issues surrounding pickleball sounds is a genuine concern all over the USA and wherever the sport is played globally but more so where the courts are close to residential areas. Effort needs to be taken for pickleball (players) and residential communities to peacefully coexist and local councils and governments need to take the lead in that respect.

Stan Boone

I am the editor of Racket Sports World. I love my tennis, pickleball and most of the other racket sports played around the world and started this blog as my way to help other racquet sports fans even as I learn, explore and improve by connecting with them. Tweet at <https://twitter.com/StanBooneTennis>.

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