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# PADEL MANUAL





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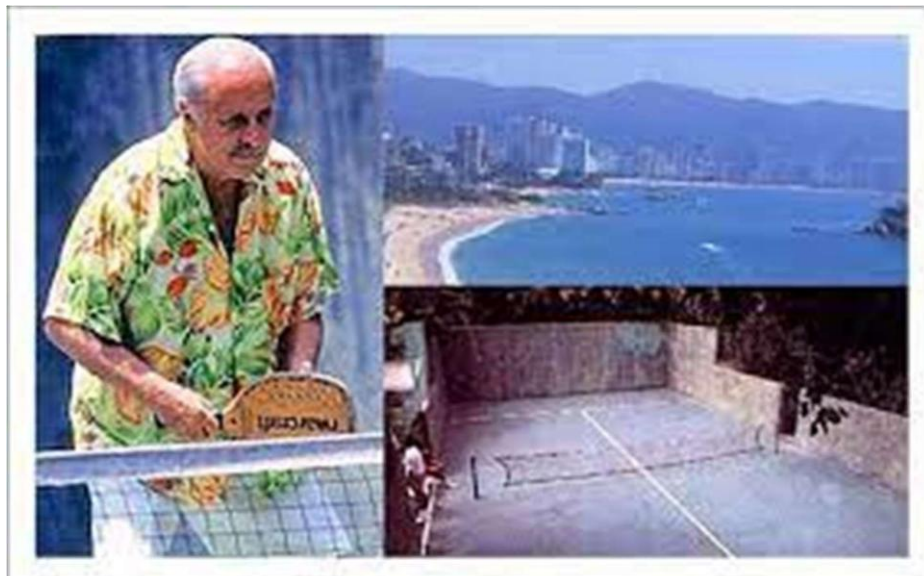
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# History

## How padel was born

Padel is a relatively young sport, which has spread and is spreading rapidly amazing for her its characteristics of great playability and to be favorable to all bands of age without distinction of sex.

The game of Padel was born in the 70s in Mexico, when Enrique Corcuera known entrepreneur Mexican fan of racket games, he decided to take advantage of the space available in his residence for to build a field from tennis.



However, the space available was smaller than that needed to build one with measurements regulations, and was also limited on some sides by masonry structures. That's why, it camecreated a limited playing area compared to the size of a tennis court, completely surrounded by a suitable combination of concrete walls and wire mesh, which had the task of preventing the ball from leaving the playing field. This particular combination had the undoubted advantage Of create a play area in which there ball was always in movement.



## The introduction of padel to Europe

Padel was later introduced to Spain thanks to Mr. Alfonso Hohenlohe, a close friend of Mr. Corcuera who frequently traveled to Mexico. He brought the sport to Marbella, where the first two courts in Spain were built in 1975. After spending several summers playing padel with Corcuera, Mr. Hohenlohe decided to build additional courts, making some improvements to the original design.

Initially, padel remained an elite sport until the early 1980s, when American tourists discovered it and brought the game back to the United States, building several courts there. Gradually, padel began transforming into a recognized sport and started spreading to various countries—from Argentina (where millions now play) to Spain, its adopted home with thousands of players, as well as to France, the U.S., Brazil, and more.

In Italy, padel officially made its debut in 1991 during a sports event at the Bologna Fair, where a demonstration court was set up. Matches were held between representatives from Spain, Argentina, and Italy. The launch was a great success, interest grew quickly, and soon there was a surge in inquiries about court construction and how to start playing the sport.

From that moment on, padel's growth in Italy became unstoppable. The year 2008 marked a major milestone, as padel was officially recognized by the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) through its inclusion under the Italian Tennis Federation. Today, Italy is home to thousands of padel courts, with new padel schools emerging rapidly—what's most important for the future of any sport: it's attracting the youth.

## MiniPadel: The Quality and Responsibility of a Padel Coach

Being a former top-level player or holding a certification is not, by itself, sufficient to be an effective padel coach. The true value of a coach lies in their **didactic (teaching) ability**, especially when working with younger students. This ability is a combination of various skills that must be developed to deliver meaningful and successful instruction.

To teach effectively, a coach must continually reflect on these fundamental questions:

- **What am I teaching?**
- **To whom am I teaching?**
- **Where is this teaching taking place?**

A coach's success depends largely on how well they balance **knowledge and practical ability**, a combination that defines **competence**—that is, the capacity to apply theoretical knowledge and technical skills in real-life coaching and teaching scenarios.

However, having technical and tactical knowledge—no matter how advanced—is not enough. That knowledge must be supported by strong **instructional skills**, which answer the essential question of how to teach. It's not enough for a coach to explain a task clearly; they must also guide their students through the process of physically performing the skill, progressively improving both effectiveness and complexity.

The coach must recognize that each student will follow a different learning path. For some, the process will be fast and smooth; for others, it may take longer and involve greater challenges. But even when a student completes a task once, the coach's job isn't done. To truly master a skill, students must practice it **repeatedly, with increasing speed, precision, and consistency**, and in **varied contexts**—including emotionally intense environments like competitions, not just practice sessions.

Another crucial component of effective coaching is understanding **who the students are**—their individual characteristics, learning styles, motivations, and the **socio-environmental context** in which they live and play padel.

Finally, a coach must have the ability to **analyze and manage their working environment**. This includes understanding the type of organization they operate in—whether it's a club, association, private academy, or federal training center—and being aware of its goals, strategies, and dynamics among the different stakeholders involved.

## **Before everything, the security.**

Those responsible for working with young players are, above all, entrusted with ensuring the **safety and well-being** of their students. This involves the **proper setup of courts and equipment**, as well as a thorough **assessment of the environment** in which they operate. Equally important is a solid understanding of the **physical demands** associated with the training programs being implemented. The exercises selected by the coach should aim to enhance the **technical and physical abilities** of the students, but must also be carefully assessed to **prevent any risk of injury or harm**.

## **Fostering motivation.**

An essential responsibility of the coach is to nurture and sustain a growing interest in the sport of padel. Those in a teaching role must not overlook the critical role motivation plays in the learning process. Even the most naturally talented athlete cannot progress without strong interest and a genuine desire to improve. It is the coach's duty to promote and encourage the practice of padel in a way that responds to the diverse needs and aspirations of their students.

## **Developing motor skills.**

From a physical development perspective, the coach plays a crucial role in restoring fundamental motor skills in young individuals—skills that have increasingly diminished in recent years. The evolving lifestyle and social habits of newer generations often hinder the natural development of basic movements such as walking, running, and jumping. Reduced opportunities for spontaneous physical activity and the rise of sedentary behavior frequently result in motor deficiencies.

To address this, coaches must implement activities—even beyond padel—that help reinforce and rebuild these foundational motor patterns. Achieving this requires not only technical expertise but also a broader set of pedagogical and developmental skills.

## **Organizational Skills**

To complete the picture, organizational and managerial abilities are becoming increasingly essential for padel instructors. In order to perform effectively, coaches must be able to plan their activities, document their teaching interventions, and continuously assess the suitability of the tools and methods they employ.

## **Teaching Padel Requires Interdisciplinary Training**

It is clear that effective padel instruction demands a distinctly interdisciplinary



foundation. A teacher's ability to enhance learning outcomes relies on knowledge drawn from multiple disciplines. Psychology, for instance, plays a vital role by helping the coach establish positive relationships with students, understand their needs, and adapt behavior to suit their psychological characteristics.

In addition, padel instructors must consider the broader social context—such as the local community, family environment, school, and club dynamics.

A comprehensive understanding of training methodology, along with biomedical and neurophysiological principles, is also essential. This includes mastering the components of physical load, the nature and sequencing of exercises, lesson planning, and instructional procedures. Equally important is understanding how students respond to training and how their behavior evolves as they develop specific skills.

## **A Multidimensional Approach.**

The effectiveness of a teacher's actions— including the proposed exercises and the way they are organized for optimal learning—depends primarily on the teacher's comprehensive understanding of the subject being taught: the discipline of padel, approached from a multidimensional perspective.

## **The student at the center.**

Students must be placed at the heart of the teaching and learning process. They should be considered the primary focus of the teacher's educational efforts. Teachers need to create an environment that welcomes, motivates, and continuously encourages genuine learning.

It's essential that pupils feel their teachers are genuinely invested in their learning. They should clearly sense that the teacher cares about their success—not only in academic or athletic performance but also in enjoying the process. The goal is for students to feel satisfaction and have fun while improving.

The student should be the central reference point in all of the teacher's actions—seen not only as an athlete but as a person. The teacher must regard each student as the true protagonist of the lesson or training session. It is the student, supported by the teacher's guidance, who should feel fulfilled and rewarded through the practice of padel.

Success and progress are key drivers of this satisfaction. A teacher who can spark this positive cycle creates an ideal learning environment—one where both the student's

success and the teacher's goals are achieved simultaneously.

## **Know your students.**

Every student possesses unique physiological and psychological traits that prepare them for learning and behavioral change. However, these characteristics vary significantly from one student to another, leading to strong individual differences. It is essential that coaches and teachers recognize and consider these differences when identifying the most effective learning path for each individual.

Even when students are grouped by gender, age, or playing level to create relatively homogeneous groups, it's still crucial to understand and keep in mind the specific characteristics of each student. The key differences that must be carefully evaluated by the teacher or coach include:

- **Structural** (e.g., body type, posture)
- **Motor skills** (coordination and physical conditioning)
- **Technical abilities**
- **Psychological traits** (emotional, affective, motivational)
- **Social behavior**
- **Cognitive development**

From a motor skills perspective, understanding each student's level of coordination and conditioning is essential to choosing the right activities for them. Students also differ in cognitive functions such as attention, anticipation, and decision-making. These abilities are particularly important in sports like padel, where the environment is constantly changing—whether due to indoor or outdoor conditions, shifting ball trajectories, or evolving game strategies. Students must continuously adapt and respond to these

dynamic situations.

Moreover, the teacher or coach must assess students' psychophysical traits, such as emotional control, interpersonal skills (both with peers and with the teacher), and—most importantly—motivation.

It is crucial to understand what drives each student to play padel and to remain committed. Their motivation might stem from various sources: a love for the game, admiration of a famous player, a desire to be part of a group, the ambition to improve technically, the opportunity to make new friends, or simply the wish to stay active and healthy. These underlying reasons help shape how each student approaches their training and overall experience with the sport.

**Motivation is the key to everything**

Motivation plays a fundamental role in learning and progression. It is often categorized into two types: **intrinsic** and **extrinsic**.

- **Intrinsic motivation** comes from within the individual and is driven by personal satisfaction, a desire to improve, take responsibility, and enjoy the learning process itself.
- **Extrinsic motivation**, on the other hand, is influenced by external factors such as current trends, peer pressure, or family traditions.

When motivation is extrinsic, it tends to be more fragile and less deeply rooted. This increases the risk of students losing interest or abandoning the activity altogether.

Naturally, it's easier for a teacher or coach to work with students who are intrinsically motivated. However, to be truly effective, they must also be able to engage and support those whose motivations are weaker or externally driven.

In these cases, the teacher's behavior, their approach to presenting padel, and their style of communication become crucial. A supportive, engaging, and motivating environment can make a significant difference when students' commitment is uncertain or unstable.

It's also important to note that shifts in motivation are rarely sudden. Recognizing early signs of declining interest and responding appropriately—whether by countering or gently guiding those changes—is a key skill of an effective teacher or coach.

## The social aspects.

Finally, the teacher must also consider the social dimension of each student. Every pupil comes from a unique social background, with different family environments, values, and reference points. These differences influence how each individual perceives and engages with sport.

The meaning and importance that students attribute to practicing a sport can vary widely. This affects how they internalize the behaviors expected of an athlete and shapes their attitude toward learning and training.

Children and young people approach sports with a wide range of experiences and mindsets. Some come from families with strong athletic backgrounds or have personal experience in sports. Others may be completely unfamiliar with the discipline they're about to begin, though they might have experience in other physical activities. Still others may be generally sedentary and not yet convinced about participating in sports at all.

Understanding these diverse social and personal contexts is essential for the teacher to effectively guide each student along their own sporting journey.

## **The responsibility to teaching.**

When a student enrolls in a padel course, they place their trust in the teacher's skills and experience, expecting certain needs to be met. These include a well-structured program, a positive and effective learning environment, fair and motivating evaluations, professional conduct, respect for educational and sporting values, and genuine attention to the student's emotions and aspirations.

Teachers cannot shift the blame for a student's lack of progress, learning difficulties, or even dropping out onto external factors—such as family issues, school pressures, personality traits, lack of effort, or societal influences.

On the contrary, a teacher who is truly committed to improving their abilities must reflect critically on their own teaching methods and strategies. They should look inward and seek to understand the root causes of challenges primarily from a pedagogical perspective.

## **360° expertise for complete professionalism**

While the relationship with students remains a top priority, it is not the only one a teacher must manage. In every setting, even in small or simple clubs, the teacher interacts with various stakeholders—club managers, parents, and fellow coaches. This means a padel teacher must be equipped with a broad range of knowledge and skills to make sound decisions and take effective action at multiple levels.

These competencies can be broadly divided into the following categories:

- **Tactical-technical skills**
- **Motor skills**
- **General psychological skills**

- **Specific teaching (didactic) skills**
  - **Managerial and organizational skills**
- 

### **The Role of Technique**

To teach padel effectively, a coach must understand not only the techniques themselves but also their purpose within the sport. In padel, technique is not an end in itself—as it is in disciplines like gymnastics, figure skating, or diving, where the goal is the perfect technical execution. Instead, in sports like padel, team games, and combat sports, technique is a **means** to achieving results.

Success in padel is the outcome of various interconnected elements, one of which is tactical-technical ability. While mastering technique is crucial, it alone is not sufficient. Teachers must also develop strong **teaching methodology** to deliver technical knowledge in a way that leads to real improvement.

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### **Conducting a Lesson**

Designing a lesson plan aimed at teaching technique requires a teacher to:

- Assess students' starting level
- Define clear, progressive goals
- Structure exercises and drills accordingly
- Assign tasks effectively on the court
- Demonstrate key actions and explain their purpose

These steps form the foundation of effective instruction.

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### **Building Empathy**

A teacher's efforts are unlikely to succeed without strong relational and interpersonal skills. A high level of **empathy** is essential—understanding a student's struggles, recognizing their emotions, and being mindful of their individuality helps build a deeper connection.

This empathetic approach fosters **mutual trust and respect**, creating a safe, supportive learning environment where students can thrive both technically and personally.

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## Teacher and Manager

Padel coaches also need **managerial skills**, which not only support effective lesson planning and delivery but are also essential for managing relationships with the facilities they work in—or in some cases, operate themselves. These skills are crucial for handling responsibilities outside the court, such as organizing schedules, managing communications, and coordinating events or programs.

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## The Importance of Methodology

An effective **teaching methodology** is the cornerstone of a successful coach. While this may seem obvious, it is often overlooked. Some coaches believe that playing experience, competitive history, and strong technical knowledge are enough to teach effectively.

However, when students fail to progress, these coaches may blame external factors instead of reflecting on their own approach.

To avoid this, every teacher must **continuously develop their professional skills**. True teaching competence is built from a combination of integrated knowledge and abilities. This defines a coach's educational effectiveness, shapes their professional identity, and contributes to their social recognition as a respected educator and guide in the sport.

## Global practice or practice by parts? How to choose

Choosing how to structure practice exercises for students is a critical decision in the teaching process. We refer to **global practice** when the exercise replicates the full movement as it would be performed during a match. In contrast, **practice by parts** involves isolating and working on individual components of the movement, with the goal of later integrating them into the complete action.

Movements can be taught either holistically or by breaking them down into smaller segments. The choice between the two methods generally depends on the **complexity of the skill** being taught. When a movement is particularly complex, it's often more effective to break it down into parts—analyzing and mastering each component before reassembling them into the full motion. This step-by-step method can significantly aid in learning.

In padel, a **balanced alternation** between global and part-based practice is usually preferred. For instance, a session might begin with global practice, allowing the student to get a feel for the full movement and understand its purpose. Then, part-based practice can be introduced to focus on specific technical details or correct mistakes, followed by a



return to global execution to reinforce the complete motion.

Global practice tends to be more effective for less complex technical skills and helps students form a clear **mental representation** of the movement. On the other hand, **practice by parts** is more suitable for the **correction phase** or when simplifying complex skills during early learning stages. However, it's important not to overuse this method—excessive repetition of isolated parts can hinder overall learning. The goal is to return to a **global approach** as soon as possible.

An alternative method for teaching complex skills—without relying too much on analytical breakdown—is **task simplification**. This can be achieved by:

- Reducing structural difficulty by modifying spaces or equipment to make them easier to control
- Lowering physical and attentional demands, possibly through manual assistance from the teacher
- Adding rhythmic accompaniment to support the execution
- Slowing down the speed of the movement
- Guiding attention to key elements through targeted verbal cues

This approach helps maintain the integrity of the full action while still making it more accessible for beginners.

# The Fundamentals in Padel

**PADEL ILLUSTRATED BY ITALIAN NATIONAL TEAM  
TECHNICIAN GUSTAVO SPECTOR**

## HANDLE



## FROM THE END OF THE FIELD

- The Serve in Padel
- The Forehand
- The Backhand
- Lob
- Back wall exit field
- Counter wall

## FROM THE NETWORK

- **Volley straight And reverse**
- **Smash**
- **Bandeja**
- **It vibrates**

## The Serve in Padel

The serve is the shot that initiates play. It must be executed diagonally (right to right, left to left) with both feet positioned behind the white service line. Before striking the ball, it must bounce on the ground and be hit **below the player's waist**.

Unlike in tennis, it's rare for a serve in padel to result in a direct point—commonly known as an “ace.” Instead, the goal is often to **put the opponent under pressure** with a well-placed serve that's either sharply angled or heavily spun.

There are generally **two types of serves** in padel:

- **Flat serve:** delivers a faster, more direct ball with minimal spin.
- **Slice serve:** adds significant spin, making it harder for the opponent to return.



## The Forehand

The forehand is the most common and natural shot in padel. It's performed by positioning yourself either sideways or facing the ball, using the racket as an extension of your hand. This shot can be played flat and short, offering greater speed and control.

In padel, **timing is crucial**. The fast-paced nature of the game leaves little room for error or adjustment. A flat forehand helps simplify the contact point with the ball, making it easier to control and execute efficiently under pressure.



## The Backhand

The backhand is a shot executed on the side opposite to the forehand and is generally more challenging to perform. It involves a less natural body movement and can be played either with one hand or with both hands on the racket handle. The technique focuses on striking the ball using the back of the racket rather than the palm side.





## The LOB

The lob, known as 'Globo' in Spanish, is primarily a defensive tactical shot, but it can also be used to gain control of the net. It can be executed with either a forehand or backhand stroke, and may be played as a direct shot or after the ball rebounds off the glass. The purpose of the lob is to send the ball over the opponent, forcing them to retreat toward the baseline to recover it—giving us the opportunity to move forward and position ourselves at the net for an attacking response.



## After the glass shot

The forehand or backhand wall exit is a shot executed after the ball has bounced off the glass. The player positions themselves laterally to the ball and strikes it on the fly after the rebound. Wall exits can offer various tactical options—primarily defensive—but they often present opportunities to transition into offensive play. These include a lob, a fast and low drive, or a soft, short shot near the net (known as a *chiquita*) to regain control and pressure the opponent.





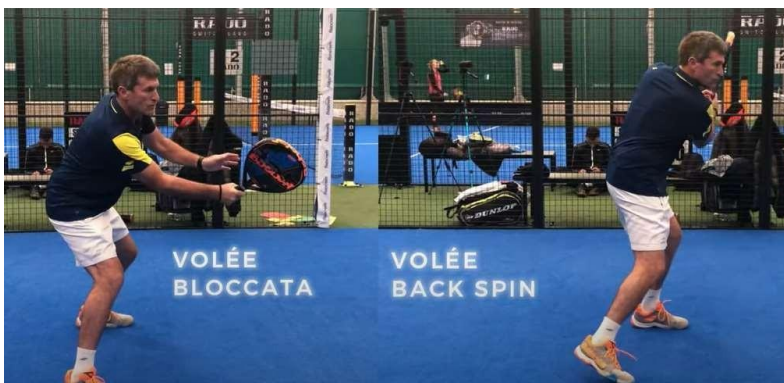
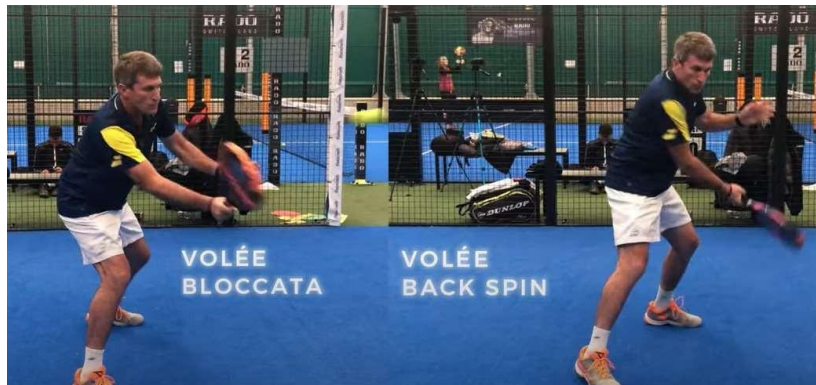
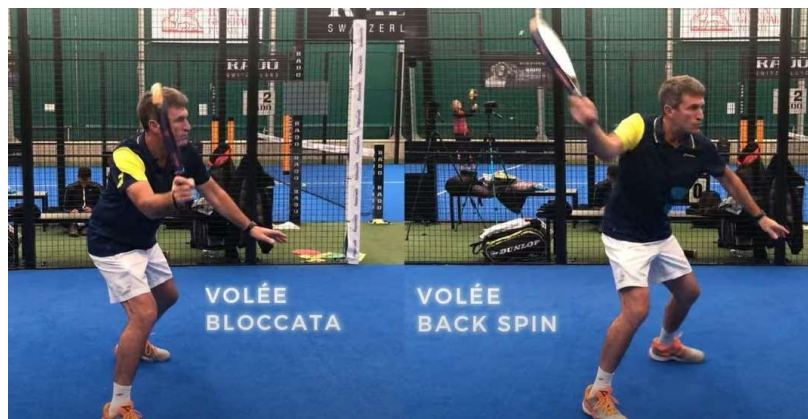
## The Counter-Wall Shot

The counter-wall shot, or glass rebound, is a challenging technique that requires both power and precise timing. It involves striking the ball so that it first hits your own back wall and then rebounds over the net into the opponent's court. The key is to generate the right trajectory from the rebound to ensure the ball lands effectively on the other side. This shot is typically used in high-pressure situations when you're forced close to the back wall, with little time or space to execute another play—making the wall exit a smart and often necessary option to stay in the point.



## The Volley

The volley involves a movement quite similar to a baseline groundstroke, but in this case, the ball is struck before it bounces. Typically executed from a position around 2 to 2.5 meters from the net, the objective is to return the ball over the net with precision and control. Volleys can be fast and aggressive to catch the opponent off guard, or slow and well-placed to set up a winning shot. These principles apply to both forehand and backhand volleys.



## The Smash

The smash is a powerful and spectacular shot that requires both coordination and strength, and it's not easy to execute. It's typically used when an opponent attempts to lob over you but fails to get the ball high or deep enough. In these situations, you have the opportunity to hit the ball forcefully in the air, aiming to win the point by sending it far from your opponent's reach—sometimes even bouncing it back onto your own side after hitting the glass.

In professional matches, it's common to see players smash the ball so hard that it exits the court. You'll often witness incredible moments where a player chases down the ball outside the court for a dramatic recovery. Some of the sport's most elite players are known for their spectacular smash shots and remarkable recoveries.

There are different types of smashes:

- **Flat Smash:** A fast, direct shot often aimed at the opponent's back glass, usually down the middle or cross-court.
- **Kick Smash (Sacar por Tres):** A topspin smash that causes the ball to bounce out of the court sideways over the 3-meter-high side wall—a signature move in advanced padel play.





## The Bandeja

Named after the Spanish word for "tray," the **Bandeja** is a fundamental stroke in padel, essential for maintaining net control. It involves moving the body forward to meet the ball at eye level, executing a precise, sliced shot.

The Bandeja is especially useful when dealing with a short lob that bounces around mid-court. Attempting a full-power smash in this scenario can be risky, and allowing the ball to bounce would give your opponent a tactical advantage. Instead, the Bandeja provides a balanced solution—neutralizing the lob while retaining your offensive position.

Since the lob already carries momentum, the goal isn't to add more speed but to control the shot carefully. The ideal execution directs the ball toward the side walls, making it harder for the opponent to respond effectively. This makes the Bandeja one of the most technical and strategic shots in the game of padel.



## The Vibora

Technically similar to the **Bandeja**, the **Víbora** differs in execution primarily through the racket's starting position and the slicing motion applied during the shot. Unlike the more controlled Bandeja, the Víbora begins from a more lateral position and is struck with a sharper, cutting motion.

When executed correctly, the Víbora becomes a highly effective and challenging shot for the opponent. It produces a fast, low-bouncing ball with a curved, diagonal trajectory, making it difficult to anticipate and return. Its combination of spin, speed, and placement makes it a favorite among advanced padel players looking to stay aggressive while maintaining control at the net.



# How to play Padel

Padel is a dynamic and enjoyable sport played in doubles—two players versus two—similar to tennis in scoring but with several key differences:

- **The Racket:** Unlike tennis rackets, padel rackets do not have strings. Instead, they are made of a solid carbon frame with an inner core of lightweight, perforated foam or composite material. The maximum length of a padel racket is 45.5 cm.
- **Strategy and Tactics:** Gameplay in padel involves unique strategies due to the variety of ball trajectories created by using the walls. Players can play off the side and back walls—typically made of glass or mesh—which adds complexity and variety to rallies.
- **Playing Environment:** Padel courts can be found both indoors and outdoors, allowing the game to be played in different conditions throughout the year.



## THE SCORE

The scoring system is similar to tennis (15, 30, 40, game, set) and is played in a best-of-three sets format (the first player to win two sets). Starting in 2020, the World Padel Tour's professional circuit introduced the golden point (or killer point) in place of the traditional advantage rule. At the amateur level, the old advantage system, as in tennis, is still commonly used. A set is won by reaching 6 games, with a minimum 2-game lead

over the opponent. If the score reaches 6-6, a tiebreak is played at 7 points (or beyond, as long as there is at least a 2-point lead).

## **BOUNCES AND WALLS**

The ball can be affected by either of the two players on the team, in any area of the court, either in the air or after a single bounce on the ground.

For the ball to be considered in play, it must bounce on the ground in the opponent's court before hitting the back walls, side walls, or mesh. If the opponent does not return the ball before it bounces twice on the ground, the point is awarded to the player.

Players are allowed to return the ball by bouncing it off one or more walls on their side of the court (but not the metal net), as long as the ball lands in the opponent's court after the rebound.

If the ball bounces at the junction between the floor and the wall, it is still considered in play.

It is mandatory to use a safety lanyard when holding the racket. Throwing the racket to hit the ball is both dangerous and forbidden. The ball can only be hit with the racket. If the ball touches any part of a player's body or clothing, it results in a point for the opponent.

Only one hit is allowed per player. If a player accidentally hits the ball twice before it lands in the opponent's court, it is a point for the opponent.

If the opponent hits the ball and it goes out of bounds after bouncing on the ground, the ball is still in play. The ball can be returned to the opponent's court before the second bounce, either via a ground pass or by bouncing off one of the side walls.

If the opponent hits the ball and it bounces in our court, then returns to their own court without anyone else touching it, it is a point for the opponent.

External elements such as the ceiling, lights, and their supports are not part of the court. If the ball bounces directly off one of these elements, the opponent wins the point. However, if the ball bounces on the court and then hits an external element, the point goes to the player who made the hit.