

Table tennis tables in demand like never before: Here you can play for free in Rostock

Team sport in the open air with sufficient safety distance: table tennis is currently high on the agenda. Many children, teenagers and adults are currently meeting on the 21 publicly accessible table tennis tables of the city of Rostock to play a game together. Where this is possible and what needs to be considered.



Rostock. Saad Safdar pulls out and beats the table tennis ball to the other side of the concrete plate. The ball bounces up at the corner and jumps to the ground - no chance for its opponent Abrar Ahmed. "He's better," admits the 26-year-old and laughs. I'm a beginner, I still have to practice.

For this, the friends come three times a week to the table tennis table, which is located on the playground in Laurembergstraße. Sometimes we also meet with many other fellow students and go there together, says the computer science student. Actually, we also have a table tennis table in the dormitory in the southern city, but the room is closed due to Corona. Glad that there are possibilities outside."

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Saad Safdar (r) and Abrar Ahmed play table tennis three times a week. Source: Katharina Ahlers

Here you can play table tennis in Rostock

There are numerous possibilities for fellow students to do this. The Office for Urban Green, Nature Conservation and Cemetery Services currently maintains four table tennis facilities and 21 table tennis tables on various playgrounds, distributed throughout the city. There are opportunities to play in the Kringelgrabenpark in the Südstadt, Thomas-Müntzer-Platz in the Hansaviertel or in Pablo-Picasso-Straße in Toitenwinkel.



A high use of the playgrounds, especially during the Corona period, has been noticed. Public green areas are also becoming increasingly important. Playgrounds and green areas have become a popular meeting place for everyone, says Rostock's city spokeswoman Kerstin Kanaa. And so the public plates can also be used by all age groups.

Demand is great

Saad Safdar can also confirm that demand is high. Sometimes we have to wait a little because others play, he says. But sometimes we can also join in and play a match together – table tennis is good for meeting new people.

Recreational sports have further advantages, as the Rostocker Tabea Ricken knows. Especially at this time and in this weather, it is good to spend a lot of time in the open air, says the 30-year-old. As a teenager, she herself played a lot of table tennis, especially liked the "circulation", i.e. the race and playing with several players around the plate.

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Table tennis is a good team sport

In recent years, she has not played quite so often. During a walk with her four-year-old son Emil, she makes a stop at the table tennis table next to the sports hall at the Petrikirche. Emil curiously stands on the record, over which he can only look closely. He cares about everything that has to do with balls, says his mother and laughs. Slowly table tennis will also be more interesting.

Ricken hopes to be able to inspire her two sons for the sport. As soon as they are at the right age, I will teach them that. Because: Table tennis is a team sport, you have to learn to abide by the rules and deal with them, sometimes lose.

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More possibilities in schoolyards

In addition to the play equipment in parks and playgrounds, many schools have also set up table tennis tables on their schoolyards – including the Werner Lindemann School in Elisabethstraße or the workshop school in the Südstadt. These may also be used at certain times. Schoolyards are part of the social space and public after the end of class, explains Steffen Bockhahn (left), Senator for School, Sports and Social Affairs.

He appeals to users to behave responsibly. But we are always happy when table tennis is played without smoking or drinking alcohol. And we are even more happy if, if alcohol was smoked and drunk, nothing of it can be seen the next day at the beginning of school, because no one left their garbage."

By Katharina Ahlers

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