

# Why Pickleball Is the Perfect Sport, Especially for Seniors

Pickleball began on a summer afternoon as “something to do” for a family in 1965. Its creators grabbed some old sports gear sitting around that included ping-pong paddles and a Wiffle ball, then they headed to the badminton court in their neighborhood. Several weeks later, they developed some rules, lowered the net, and invited others to the asphalt to play.

The sport of pickleball had begun.

But, little did the original players know its impact on so many lives almost 60 years later. Pickleball grew in 2021 to 4.8 million players in the US, an incredible two-year growth rate of 39.3%. It's currently considered the fastest growing sport in America, and many parks and facilities are converting their tennis courts into pickleball courts. It's even in such demand for senior living facilities that having one is considered a competitive advantage.

But why is this sport growing in popularity? And why is it the perfect sport, especially for seniors?

Let's dive in.

## Why Pickleball is the Perfect Sport

For most, playing sports ends after high school and college. Sure, you may play kickball or softball in your 20s or 30s or give golf a shot later in life. Maybe, if you're careful with your body, you can even play around some in your 40s and 50s. But, neither of those really get your body moving or your competitive juices flowing like sports in your younger days did.

With less and less activity over time, your body starts to get used to a more sedentary lifestyle, and finding that joy of sport no longer becomes a priority. That is until pickleball entered the scene.

Over the last five or six years, more and more people have discovered the fun and benefits that pickleball brings. In a recent study, playing pickleball has been shown to reduce blood pressure, improve cardiovascular health, and even [help people battle depression](#).

And the benefits don't stop there.

## Pickleball Is Easily Accessible

One of the significant factors contributing to the popularity of pickleball is how easily accessible it is to all ages. This is not by accident. The creators of pickleball **wanted something for the entire family to do together**. So, it's very common to see all ages out there on the courts. Some are former athletes who can no longer participate in their sports, but others are people who just want something fun and active to do with others. To show how accessible it is, the fastest-growing population of pickleballers is **seniors**.

Another factor to consider is the low cost of entry. Because of demand, many public parks and tennis courts have converted their grounds to cater to pickleball players, who can show up and play for free. Balls and rackets can be purchased from many big-box retailers for just a \$30 to \$40 investment. And really, that's all you need!

## It's a Social Activity

As we age, no matter how lively and friendly you are, **making new friends can be very difficult**. Especially friends that we can sweat and be active with. For those who grew up playing sports, it's challenging to replace that camaraderie you get from having teammates.

Pickleball, especially if you **play doubles**, can provide those opportunities.

**About 13.8 million older adults live alone.** So for some, that social interaction on the pickleball court might be the only time they spend talking with other people throughout the week. And meeting new people and developing friendships has been shown to **enrich our lives and improve our health.**

## Pickleball Is Low Impact, High Activity

Pickleball courts are 44 feet long and 20 feet wide. This is almost **half the size of a tennis court.** A smaller court means less running and more minor wear and tear on your body and joints. Yet, you still get the cardiovascular benefits of quick bursts of action and an aerobic workout. **High intensity, low impact** is one of the best ways to work out your body long-term and improve your health, whether you are young or trying to stay young at heart.

Even the equipment has less of an impact on your body than tennis and other sports:

- The paddle is light and without strings, which reduces the exertion on your arms, wrists, and shoulders.

- The ball is hollow and very light, which again limits its impact when hitting it.
- Since serving and most of your hits will come from an underhand motion, pickleball also removes overhead shots that could cause strain on your shoulders.

## Pickleball Is Easy to Learn

Instead of reinventing the wheel and coming up with a list of new rules for everyone to learn, the pickleball creators adapted rules from badminton, tennis, and ping-pong. While those rules have evolved over the years, and **new rules are introduced annually**, it's still an easy game to learn with **just a few rules**.

As the game changes and new rules are introduced, many are created to promote fair play and equal opportunities for all players.

If you're nervous about giving it a try because you don't know the rules, many programs are available that teach you the game, and even more information can be found **around the web**. Also, you'd be hardpressed to find a pickleball player that doesn't love talking about pickleball, so don't be afraid to ask people on the court.

Also, if you're not sure where to play, you can visit the [USA Pickleball Association website](#) to find a place near you.

*Pickleball is the perfect sport.* It's accessible to all people and offers countless health and social benefits. Whether you're a young or older adult, give pickleball a shot, we think you'll be glad you did.