



THE OFFICIAL INTERNATIONAL RULES OF THE GAME OF PETANQUE

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F.P.U.S.A. Code of Behavior

— GENERAL —

Article 1 — Game Setting

Pétanque is a sport in which

- 3 players play against 3 players (triples) or**
- 2 players play against 2 players (doubles) or**
- 1 player plays against 1 player (singles)**

In triples, each player uses two boules.

In doubles and in singles, each player uses three boules.

No other version of the game is allowed.

Article 2a — Characteristics of Approved Boules

Pétanque is played with boules which are approved by the F.I.P.J.P. and which must conform to the following criteria:

- (a) They must be made of metal.**
- (b) Their diameter must be between 7.05 cm (2.775") (minimum) and 8 cm (3.149") (maximum).**
- (c) They must weigh between 650 grams (1 lb 7oz) (minimum) and 800 grams (1 lb 13 oz) (maximum). The trademark of the manufacturer and the weight must be imprinted on the boules and must always be legible.**

In the case of competitions reserved exclusively for players 11 years old or younger, junior boules that weigh 600 grams (1 lb 5 oz) and are 65mm (2.56") in diameter may be used provided that they are made by an approved manufacturer.

- (d) They must not be weighted nor sanded down. As a general rule the boules must not be tampered with in any way, nor altered or**

modified after manufacture by the maker approved by the F.I.P.J.P.

It is particularly forbidden to re-temper [re-heat] the boules in order to modify the hardness provided by the manufacturer.

However, the player's name or initials may be engraved on them, as well as various logos, initials and acronyms, applied during manufacture.

Article 2b — Penalties for Non-conforming Boules

A player guilty of breaking the above condition (d) is immediately disqualified from the competition together with his or her team mate/s. The following two cases can arise:

(1) For boules said to be “tampered with” - the player is rendered liable to withdrawal of his or her license [or FPUSA membership card] for a period as defined in the Code of Discipline, together with any other penalties imposed by the Federation [FPUSA's] Discipline Committee.

(2) For boules said to be “re-tempered” [re-heated] - the player is rendered liable to withdrawal of his or her license [or FPUSA membership card] for a period of 2 years and a 3-5 year ban on playing in qualifying heats for the National and International Championship.

In either of the above cases, if the boules have been borrowed and the owner is known, the latter will be suspended for 2 years.

If a boule is worn or defective in manufacture, [as opposed to being tampered with] and is not passed by the controlling body or does not comply with (a), (b) or (c) above, the player must change it. He or she may also change the complete set.

Complaints relating to (a), (b) or (c) made by either team must be made before the first end of the game begins. All players should therefore ensure that their boules and those of their opponents comply with the above conditions.

Complaints relating to (d) may be made between two ends at any time during the game. However, from the third end onwards, if a complaint made about the boules of an opponent is proved to be unfounded, the team or the player complaining will be penalized 3 points which will be added to the opponents score.

In the case where a boule has had to be opened, the complainant is then responsible for the boule, so that if it is found to be legal, the complainant has to reimburse the owner to replace the set of boules. But under no circumstances can he or she be asked to pay damages.

The umpire or the jury may, at any time, check the boules of any player

Article 3— Approved Jacks

Jacks [Cochonnets] are made entirely of wood or of synthetic material which carry the maker's mark and have secured confirmation by the F.I.P.J.P. that they

comply exactly with the relevant specification.

Their diameter must be between 25 mm (minimum) and 35 mm (maximum).

Jacks may be painted any color.

Article 4— Licenses

A license must comply with the Administrative Rules of the F.I.P.J.P. and, in particular it must bear an embossed photograph and the signature of the owner.

Before the start of a competition, each player must produce his or her license [or FPUSA membership card]. He or she must also produce it upon request by the umpire, or by an opponent but only before the start of a game.

— PLAY —

Article 5 — Terrain and Dimensions

The game of Pétanque is played on any terrain. However, by a decision of the organizing committee or the umpire, the teams may be asked to play on a marked terrain, whose minimum dimensions must be as follows:

For National Championships and International Competitions, it is 15 m long and 4 m wide.

For other competitions: the F.I.P.J.P. [and FPUSA] may allow variations down to 12 m x 3 m.

When playing areas are placed end to end, the end lines of the lanes, which are common to both playing areas, are considered dead ball lines.

If the terrain is surrounded by solid barriers these must be a minimum of 30 cm outside the dead ball line. The dead ball line will encircle the exterior of the terrain at a maximum distance of 4 meters.

These rules apply also to the “Carré d’Honneur” [terrains used for finals, etc.].

The game is played up to 13 points, though league and qualifying heats may be played to 11 points.

Article 6 — Starting of the Game and Playing Circle

The players must toss up to decide which team will choose the terrain, if it has not been designated by the organizers, and will throw the jack first.

If the terrains have been marked out by the organizers [into separate pistes] the jack must be thrown within the terrain [piste] allotted to each team. The team must not play on a different terrain without the Umpire’s permission.

Any member of the team winning the toss chooses the starting point and traces a circle large enough for any player to stand with both feet fully inside it. However, it may not measure less than 35cm or more than 50cm in diameter.

Where a prefabricated circle is used, it must have an internal diameter of 50cm. This circle, valid for the three consecutive throws allowed to a team, must be drawn at least 1 m from all obstacles, and at least 1 m inside the boundary of the playing area [normally the dead boule line] and, for competitions on open terrains, at least 2m from another circle in use.

The team about to throw the jack must erase any previous throwing circles located near the new one.

The area within the circle may be completely cleared during the end but it must be restored when the end is finished or, at the latest, before the start of the next end.

The circle is not considered to be out of bounds.

The feet must be entirely inside the circle without touching it, and must not leave the circle or be lifted completely off the ground until the thrown boule has touched the ground. No other part of the body may touch the ground outside the circle. A player who has lost a lower limb need place only one foot inside the circle.

For players throwing from a wheelchair, at least one wheel (that on the side of the throwing arm) must rest inside the circle.

The throwing of the jack by one member of the team does not imply that he or she must play the first boule.

Article 7 — Throwing Distance and Requirements

For the thrown jack to be legal, the following conditions apply:

- (1) The distance from it to the nearest edge of the circle must be between
 - 4 m min and 8 m max. for Minimes.
 - 5 m min and 9 m max. for Cadets.
 - 6 m min and 10 m max. for Juniors and Seniors.
- (2) The [nearest edge of the] circle must be 1 m from all obstacles and at least 1 m inside the boundary of the playing area.
- (3) The jack must be at least 1m minimum from all obstacles and from the boundary of the playing area.
- (4) The jack must be visible to the player whose feet are entirely inside the circle and who is standing upright. In cases of dispute, the umpire will decide if the jack is visible and there can be no appeal.

At the following end, the jack is thrown from a circle drawn around the point where it finished at the previous end, except in the following cases:

- (a) The circle would be less than 1 m from an obstacle or from the boundary of the playing area. In this case, the player will trace a circle in the nearest valid position from the obstacle and the boundary.

- (b) **The jack could not be thrown out to all valid distances.**
In this case, the player may step back, in line with the previous end's line of play, until he or she is able to throw the jack any valid distance up to the maximum distance, allowed and not beyond. This may only be done if the jack cannot be thrown in any other direction to the maximum distance.

If after 3 consecutive throws by the same team, the jack has not been thrown correctly, it is then passed to the opposing team who also has 3 tries and who may move the circle back as described above.

After this, the circle cannot be moved again even if this team has not succeeded with its three throws.

In any case, the team who lost the jack after the first three tries plays the first boule.

Article 8 — Deflection of the Jack

If the jack thrown, is stopped by the umpire, a player, a spectator, an animal or any moving object, it is not valid and must be re-thrown without being included in the three throws to which the player or the team is entitled.

After the throwing of the jack and the first boule, an opponent still has the right to contest the validity of the jack's position. If the objection is valid, both the jack and the boule are re-thrown.

For the jack to be thrown anew both teams must have accepted the throw as being illegal or the umpire must have declared it so. In either case the jack must be re-thrown. Any team continuing otherwise loses the throw of the jack.

If the opponent has also played a boule the jack is deemed valid and no objection can be accepted.

Article 9 — Annulment of Jack

The jack is deemed dead in the following six cases:

- (1) When, during an end, it is moved outside the boundary of the playing area [normally the dead boule line], even if it comes back onto the playing area. A jack on the line of the boundary is still in play. It only becomes dead after having completely crossed the boundary. Where a jack floats freely in water the area of the puddle is out of play.
- (2) When, still on the terrain, the moved jack is not visible from the circle, as defined in Article 7. However, a jack hidden by a boule is not dead. The umpire may temporarily remove a boule to ascertain whether the jack is visible or not.
- (3) When the jack is displaced to more than 20 m or less than 3 m from the throwing circle.

- (4) When on marked out playing areas, the jack crosses more than one lane immediately to the side of the lane in use and when it crosses the end line of the lane where the line is common to the lanes end to end.
- (5) When the moved jack cannot be found after a 5 minute maximum search time.
- (6) When there is dead ground between the jack and the throwing circle.

Article 10 — Removal of Obstacles - Penalties

It is strictly forbidden for any player to remove, move or flatten any obstacle on the terrain within the boundaries of the playing area.

However, the player about to throw the jack is allowed to test the ground by tapping it no more than 3 times with one of his or her boules. Furthermore, the player who is about to play or one of his partners may fill in the hole that was made by the last boule thrown.

For not observing the rules above, players incur the penalties described in Article 34.

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Article 10a — Changing, Breaking, Boule or Jack

It is forbidden for any player to change boules or jack during a game, except in the following cases:

- (a) A boule or the jack cannot be found after a search time limited to 5 minutes
- (b) A boule or the jack breaks, in which case only the largest piece counts to mark the position It is immediately replaced, after measuring if necessary, by a boule or jack of diameter identical or similar to the broken one.

From the following end, the player concerned may use a complete new set.

Article 11 — Jack Masked or Displaced

If, during an end, the jack is completely obscured by a leaf, piece of paper etc., remove these objects.

If the wind or slope of the terrain moves the stationary jack, it is put back in its place providing its position had been marked.

The same applies if the jack is moved accidentally by the umpire, a player, a spectator, a boule or jack from another game, an animal or any moving object.

To avoid any argument, the players should mark the jack's position. No claim can be accepted regarding a boule or jack whose position has not been marked.

Article 12 — Jack Moved into Another Terrain

If, during an end, the jack is moved onto an area where another game is in progress, either on a marked or unmarked terrain, the jack is valid subject to Article 9.

The players using this jack will wait for the players in the other game to finish their end before completing their own.

The players concerned are asked to show patience and courtesy.

At the following end the teams continue on the terrain allotted to them and the jack is thrown from where it was before it was displaced, subject to the conditions of Article 7.

Article 13 — Scoring when Jack is Out of Play

If, during an end, the jack becomes dead, one of three cases can apply:

- (a) If both teams have boules to play, the end is void.
- (b) If only one team has boules left to play, then this team scores as many points as it has boules to play.
- (c) If neither team has boules to play, the end is void.

Article 14 — Placement of Jack after Interference

- 1) If the jack, having been hit, is stopped by a spectator or by the umpire, it remains where it stops.
- 2) If the jack, having been hit, is stopped by a player, his opponent has the choice of:
 - (a) Leaving the jack in its new position.
 - (b) Putting it back in its original position.
 - (c) Placing it anywhere on the extension of a line from its original position to the point where it is found, but only within the playing area, and so that the end can be continued.

Paragraphs (b) and (c) can only be applied if the position of the jack was previously marked. If it was not marked, the jack will remain where it lies.

If the jack, having been knocked on, crosses a boundary of the playing area [the dead boule line] but comes to rest on a permitted area, it is deemed dead and the rules defined in Article 13 apply.

— BOULES —

Article 15 — Throwing of the First and Following Boules

A player belonging to the team that has won the toss or the last scoring end throws the first boule of an end.

Following boules are played by the team not holding the point.

The player must not use any object to give aid in playing a boule or draw a line on the ground to indicate or mark the point of landing.

Whilst playing his or her last boule, he or she must not carry another boule in the other hand.

Boules must be played one at a time.

Once thrown a boule may not be replayed. Except that it must be replayed if it has been stopped or deviated accidentally from its course between the circle and the jack by a boule or jack coming from another game. Or by an animal or any other moving object (football, etc.), and also in the case defined in Article 8, second paragraph.

It is forbidden to wet the boules or the jack.

Before throwing a boule, the player must remove from it all traces of mud or any other substance. Penalties for this rule are as stated in Article 34.

If the first boule played goes out of play, the opponent plays and so on alternately while there are no boules in play.

If after shooting or pointing no boules are left in play, the rules defined in Article 28 apply.

Article 16 — Players & Spectators - Conduct During Play

During the time allowed for a player to throw a boule the spectators and the other players must observe total silence

The opponents must not walk, gesticulate or do anything that could disturb the player about to play. Only his or her team-mate/s may stand between the circle and the jack.

The opponents must remain beyond the jack or behind the player and, in both cases, to the side of the end's line of play and at a distance of at least 2 meters from the one or the other.

The players who do not observe these rules will be banned from the competition if, after a warning from the umpire, they persist in their conduct.

Article 17 — Throwing of Boules and Boules Going Outside the Terrain

No one is allowed a practice throw during a game. Players who do not observe

this rule could incur the penalties as defined in Article 34.

During an end, boules going outside the marked terrain are valid (except as in Article 19).

Article 18 — Invalid Boules

Any boule that goes entirely outside the boundary of the playing area, [normally the dead boule line], is out of play. A boule straddling the boundary is valid. It only becomes dead after having completely crossed the boundary. The same applies when, on marked terrains, the boule completely crosses more than one of the lanes alongside the lane in use.

If the boule subsequently comes back into the playing area, either because of the slope of the ground or by having rebounded from any object, moving or stationary, it is immediately taken out of the game. Anything that it has moved after re-entering the playing area is put back in place [if it has been previously marked].

Any boule out of play must immediately be removed from the playing area, if it is not, it will be deemed live as soon as the next boule has been played by the opposing team.

Article 19 — Boules Interfered With

Any boule played that is stopped by a spectator or the umpire will remain where it comes to rest.

Any boule played that is stopped by a player to whose team it belongs is deemed out of play.

Any boule pointed that is stopped by an opponent can, on the decision of the player, be replayed or left where it comes to rest.

If a boule shot or hit is stopped by a player, the opponent has a choice to:

- (a) Leave it where it stopped, or**
- (b) Place it on the extension line from the original position where it (boule or jack) was hit from to where it is found, but only within the boundary of the playing area and if its position was previously marked.**

Any player purposely stopping a moving boule is immediately disqualified, along with his or her team, for the game in progress.

Article 20 — Playing Time Allowed

Once the jack is thrown, each player has 1 minute at most to play his or her boule. This time starts from the moment when the previous boule or jack has stopped or, if a point has to be measured, from the moment the outcome has been decided.

This rule also applies to the throwing of the jack after each end.

Players not respecting this rule will incur penalties as stated in Article 34.

Article 21 — Displacement of Boules by Nature or Person

If the wind or slope of the ground etc. moves a stationary boule, it is put back in its place. The same applies to any boule accidentally moved by a player, the umpire, a spectator, an animal or any other moving object.

To avoid any disagreement, the players should mark the positions of the boules and the jack. No claim will be accepted for a boule or jack that has not had its position marked, and the umpire will only give a decision only according to the position of the boules and the jack on the terrain.

However, if a boule is moved by a boule played in this game it is valid.

Article 22 — Playing Wrong Boules

A player who plays a boule other than his own receives a warning.

The boule played is nevertheless valid but it must immediately be replaced, after measuring, if necessary.

In the event of it occurring again during the game, the player's boule is disqualified and everything it has moved is put back in place.

Players must not pick up the played boules before the completion of the end.

Article 23 — Invalid Placement of Boules

All boules thrown contrary to the rules are dead and, if marked, everything they have moved is put back in place. The same applies to a boule played from a circle other than that from which the jack was thrown.

However, the opponent may play the advantage rule and count the erroneously played boule as valid. In this case, the boule pointed or shot, and everything it may have displaced, is left in its new position.

— POINTS AND MEASURING —

Article 24 — Movement of Boules for Measuring

To measure a point, it is permitted to move temporarily, after having marked their positions, the boules and any object situated between the jack and the boule to be measured. After measuring, the boules and the objects moved are put back in place. If the object cannot be moved, the measuring is done with the aid of calipers.

Article 25 — Measuring

The measuring of a point is done by the player who played the last boule or by one of his or her teammates.

The opponents still have the right to re-measure the point. Whatever positions the boule may hold, and at whatever stage the end may be, the umpire maybe called to adjudicate and his or her decision is final.

Measuring must be done with appropriate equipment, which each team must possess. It is, for instance, forbidden to measure with one's feet. The players who do not observe these rules could incur the penalties provided for in Article 34 if, after a warning from the umpire they persist in their conduct.

Article 26 — Removing Boules After Play

At the finish of an end, all boules picked up before the agreement of points are void if their positions were not marked. No claims can be made on this subject.

Article 27 — Movement of Boules or Jack While Measuring

If, whilst measuring, one of the players moves the jack or a boule being measured, his or her team loses the point.

If, during a measure, the umpire disturbs or moves the jack or one of the boules and if, after re-measuring, the point is held by the boule which [the umpire] had originally judged to be on, then, in all fairness, he or she may declare it so. Even if the point is no longer held by that boule, the umpire may, in all fairness, still declare that it wins the point.

Article 28 — Equidistant Boules

If two boules belonging to opposing teams are equidistant from, or touching the jack, the end is declared void if there are no more boules to be played, and the jack is thrown by the team winning the previous end or toss.

If only one team has boules left to play, it plays them and scores as many points as it has boules closer to the jack than the nearest opponent's boule.

If both teams have boules to play, the team that played the last boule plays again, then the other team, and so on alternately until a boule is holding the point. When only one team has boules left, they play them as in the above paragraph.

If, after completion of the end, no boules remain within the boundary of the playing area [normally the dead ball line], the end is declared void.

Article 29 — Removal of Debris on Boule for Measuring

Any foreign bodies adhering to the boules or the jack must be removed before measuring a point.

Article 30 — Game Disputes and Claims

To be accepted all claims must be made to the umpire. Claims made after the result of the game has been agreed cannot be considered.

Each team is responsible for checking their opposing team (licenses [or FPUSA membership cards], classification, terrain, boules, etc.).

— DISCIPLINE —

Article 31 — Penalties for Absent Teams or Players

During the draw and the announcement of its result, the players must be present at the control table. A quarter of an hour after the result of the draw has been

announced, any team which is absent from the terrain will be penalized one point which is awarded to their opponents.

After this quarter of an hour, it will forfeit one point for every five minutes continued absence.

The same penalties will apply during the competition, after each draw and in the case of a re-start of play after a break for any reason (e.g. Lunch).

Any team not arriving on the terrain in the hour following the start (or re-start) of games will be eliminated from the competition.

Any incomplete team may start without its partner/s, but may not use their boules.

Article 32 — Arrival of Absent Players

If, after an end has started, any missing player arrives, he or she may not take part in that end, but may join in at the start of the following end.

If a missing player arrives more than one hour after the game has started, he or she loses all rights to participate in that game.

The player arriving late may take part in the following games provided he or she was registered with that team originally.

If the competition is played in leagues, he or she may take part in the following game whatever the result of the first game.

An end is considered to have started when the jack has been validly thrown in accordance with the rules.

Article 33 — Replacement of Players

The replacement of a player in doubles, or of one or two players in triples is only permitted up to the official announcement of the commencement of the competition (whether vocally or by whistle, gun, etc.), and provided that the replacements were not previously registered with another team in the same competition.

Article 34 – Penalties

For not observing the above rules, the players will incur the following penalties:

- (1) Warning.
- (2) Disqualification of the boule thrown or about to be thrown.
- (3) Disqualification of the boule thrown or about to be thrown and the following boule.
- (4) Exclusion of the guilty player for the game.
- (5) Disqualification of the guilty team.
- (6) Disqualification of both teams in the case of complicity.

Article 35 — Inclement Weather

In the case of rain, all ends started must be completed, unless the umpire who, along with the jury, can decide to stop or call off play because of “force majeure” makes a contrary decision.

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Article 36 — Unfinished Games

If, after the announcement of a new phase of the competition, (2nd round, 3rd round, etc.), certain games have not finished, the umpire may, having been advised of the situation by the organizing committee, make any decisions deemed necessary for the smooth running of the competition.

Article 37 — Illegal Prize Sharing and Misconduct

Any collusion or sharing of prizes is strictly forbidden.

Any teams taking part in the final stages, or any other stages of the competition, which show a lack of sporting spirit or respect towards the public, officials or umpires, will be disqualified from the competition. This may affect the relative positions obtained in the final results as well as invoke penalties as in Article 38.

Article 38 — Player Misconduct

The player who is guilty of breaking a rule or showing violence towards an official, an umpire, another player or a spectator is liable to one or more of the following penalties, depending on the seriousness of the fault:

- (1) Exclusion from the competition.
- (2) Withdrawal of license [FPUSA membership card].
- (3) Confiscation or restitution of rewards and prizes.

The penalty imposed on the offending player can also be imposed on his or her teammates.

The umpire imposes the first and second penalties.

The third penalty is imposed by the Organizing Committee, which, within 48 hours, sends a report with the rewards and prizes retained to the Board of Directors of the FPUSA who will decide their destination.

As a last resort, The Board of Directors of the FPUSA will make a decision.

A reasonable dress is expected of all players (bare torsos and bare feet are not acceptable). All players who do not observe these rules will be disqualified from the competition after a warning from the umpire.

Article 39 — Umpires' Duties and Spectators' Conduct

The umpires designated to control the competitions are charged with ensuring that the rules of the game and the administration rules are strictly adhered to. They are allowed to disqualify any player or team who refuses to obey their decision.

Any spectators, who hold a valid or suspended license and who, due to their

behavior, cause an incident on the terrain, will be reported by the umpire to the FPUSA Board. The Board will convene a Disciplinary Committee that would then summon the accused person/s and decide any penalties to be imposed.

Article 40 — Composition and Duties of Jury

All cases not provided for in the rules are put to the umpire who may refer them to the competition's jury. This jury comprises at least 3 people and at the most 5 people. The decisions taken by the jury are without appeal. In the case of a split vote, the decision of the President of the Jury is final.

Note: The present rules were approved by the International Congress of the Fédération Internationale de Pétanque et Jeu Provençal held in Grenoble on 21st September 2006.

CODE OF BEHAVIOR of the F.P.U.S.A.

The following is an excerpt of the FPUSA Code of Behavior as it applies to players' conduct on the field of play. The complete Code and its means of implementation are described in Article XII of the Bylaws of the FPUSA.

FPUSA members shall behave in such a manner so as to not to discredit the sport of Pétanque, the clubs of which they are members and the FPUSA. Respect, integrity, good sportsmanship and courtesy should characterize one's behavior toward club members, teammates, opposing teams, the umpire, the organizing committee and spectators.

On the Pétanque terrain, the following are violations of the Code of Behavior:

1. Foul or abusive language and/or actions directed toward another person be it Player, Umpire, Organizing Committee member or Spectator.
2. Smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages during play.
3. Excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages.
4. Ridiculing the play of another person.
5. Failure to stand quietly without movement to the side of play when it is the other person's turn to play.
6. Improper attire.
7. Disobeying rules established by the Organizing Committee for the competition.
8. Not adhering to the direction of the Umpire.