



CANADIAN OLYMPIC ACTIVITY CHALLENGE



TABLE TENNIS

Table tennis is considered the most popular racket sport in the world today, with over 300 million players in five continents. For many, the sport is known as 'ping-pong', but this is only the brand name for table tennis equipment. Table tennis first became an official Olympic sport at the Seoul 1988 Olympic Games.

Each game goes to 11 points. There is one exception- if there is a 10-10 tie, play continues until someone has a two-point lead. Players rally the ball back and forth with rubber-covered rackets. Each time a player causes the ball to go out of play, their opponent scores a point. To be in play, the ball must bounce once on the opposite court. It doesn't matter whether it goes over or around the net to get there. Asides from missing or misplaying the ball, a player can also lose a point if they touch the table with their free hand.

Table tennis is played one-on-one (singles) or two-on-two (doubles). In the Olympic Games there are singles and team events. A singles match is the best of seven games. The team event is the best of four singles and one doubles match.

Table tennis is incredibly fast-paced. Balls can travel at speeds up to 160 kilometers an hour. They can spin up to 9000 times per minute. Be sure to watch the fast paced action at the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games table tennis matches.

To learn more about Table Tennis or to find a local club please visit www.ttcan.ca.



SCHOOL PROGRAM



FEATURED COUNTRY

CHINA



Table tennis began as an English parlour game. Today, China owns the sport. They did so well at the Olympic Games that format changes had to be made. In 2008, the doubles event became a team event. From 2012 on, countries could only bring two players per event. This was to end podium sweeps. Despite these changes, China won every table tennis event in 2008 and 2012. They have won a total of 25 of the available 28 Olympic gold medals since 1988. Chinese player Wang Nan alone has four golds and a silver in her Olympic career.

China is known for an intense focus on sporting excellence. Their top talents train at sport schools, practicing for seven hours a day and six days a week. Children who show talent may leave public school to live and train with the pros.

Table tennis is not just for elite athletes. It is one of China's most popular pastimes.

FEATURE ATHLETE



PIERRE-LUC THERIAULT

Pierre-Luc Thériault has wanted to represent Canada since watching the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and seeing other athletes proudly perform for their countries. Thériault began playing for the cadet national team as a 13-year-old, progressing to the junior national team before joining the senior national team in 2010. That year he also debuted at the ITTF World Championships. He has been on the Canadian world championship team each season since. Thériault's first exposure to multi-sport competition came as an alternate for the 2010 Commonwealth Games. He was then part of Team Canada at the 2011 Pan Am Games and the 2014 Commonwealth Games. Among Thériault's career highlights are winning the singles titles at the North American Championships and North American Cup in 2012.

To learn more about Pierre-Luc, check-out www.olympic.ca


TABLE TENNIS

ACTIVITIES


Described below are Daily Physical Activity table tennis activities that can be used in the classroom and gym. Have fun!

ROLLERBALL

In table tennis, you need to become comfortable with two things: your grip and your strokes. Develop comfort in the way you hold the racket by trying out both the penhold and shakehand grip. Developing your backhand stroke takes time and patience. Control of your stroke will allow you to make shots with precision!

 **Participants :** Individual and pairs

 **Space :** Classroom or gym

 **Equipment :** 1 racket and ball per person
(NOTE: If you do not have a table tennis racket, use a small book or the back of a calculator).

STARTING SKILLS:

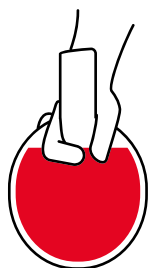
To hold the racket, table tennis athletes use either the shakehand grip or the penhold grip. It is a matter of comfort for the athlete as to which they use. Try them both out, and see what works best for you! The shakehand grip provides you more ball control, and creates an easier transition between forehand to backhand. The penhold grip helps create spin when you serve, as you can easily rotate your wrist with this grip.



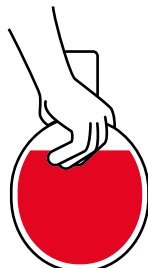
SHAKEHAND GRIP
FOREHAND



SHAKEHAND GRIP
BACKHAND



PENHOLD GRIP
FRONT VIEW



PENHOLD GRIP
BACKVIEW
CHINESE STYLE



PENHOLD GRIP
BACKVIEW
KOREAN/JAPANESE STYLE

ROLLERBALL

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Sit facing a wall. Place your feet against the wall with your legs spread apart in a “v” formation. This is your playing space!
- With the racket in your dominant hand, use your backhand to stroke over the top of the ball, rolling it along the ground to the wall and back.
- Without bounces, try to keep the ball rolling along the ground. When done consistently, your backhand stroke will become a circular motion.
- As you become comfortable with this, move further and further away from the wall. Count how many strokes in a row you can take without having the ball bounce!


ACTIVITY EXTENSION:

- Trade the wall for a partner! Sit with your feet together with partner and try keeping the ball rolling between the two of you. Don't forget there are no bounces allowed. Keep the “roller ball” rolling!
- Call “freeze” at any time. All players hold their grips on their racket in the air. Your teacher or a class leader will check if you are holding the racket correctly.
- Bring it to a table top and play for points! Stand on the opposite side of a table from your partner. To earn a point, try to roll the ball past your partner off of their end of the table. A point can only be scored if the ball rolls without bouncing. This requires a very controlled stroke over the ball. Be careful, if your racket hits the table, you lose a point! This is a quiet game of control.

BOUNCER

Table tennis is a game of control, speed and hand-eye coordination. Table tennis athletes need to move between their backhand and forehand without a second thought. You will learn quickly that the backhand stroke is a key stroke in this fast-paced game.

 **Participants :** Individual

 **Space :** Classroom, hallway or gym

 **Equipement :** 1 racket and 1 ball per player

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- With one ball and a racket, practice bouncing the ball continuously on your forehand and backhand. When bouncing the ball in the air with your forehand, you will note your thumb is to the ceiling. You are in the “thumbs up” position. When bouncing the ball in the air on your backhand, you will note your thumb is to the floor. You are in the “thumbs down” position.
- Try to keep your bounces small. The larger your bounce the harder it is to control!
- Count the number bounces you can do in a row.

ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:


- Too difficult? Have fun using a balloon with this activity.
- Mix it up! To make this more difficult, try switching grips. You can also try to alternate bounces on your forehand and backhand or try hitting the ball, then turning around and catching it.
- Instead of counting your consecutive bounces, say a letter of the alphabet for each bounce. And then try saying a word that starts with each letter of the alphabet with each bounce.
- Go freestyle! Come up with your own way to bounce the ball on your racket (ie. behind your back, through your legs, walking in circles, etc.).

TARGET PRACTICE

The serve is the most important of all of the shots in table tennis. Great placement of your serve has the potential to win you a point instantly. As you become better at serving, you will become better at knowing how to respond to serves that are coming at you!

 **Participants :** Pairs per table

 **Space :** Classroom or gym

 **Equipement :** Table tennis table and 2 rackets, 1 table tennis ball, 4 sheets of papers per table

NOTE

If you do not have a table tennis table, consider using any table top surface or use masking tape on the gym floor to create the markings for a table top on the ground. Use paper cups or small pylons to make the net.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

- Partners stand on opposite sides of the table. One person will be the server.
- Place a target (piece of paper) on the opposite side of the table from the server.
- To serve, throw the ball upwards in the air approximately 12 centimeters above the table. Contact the ball behind the end line of table. Note that a serve must bounce on your side of the table before it goes over the net onto your opponent's side of the table.
- Attempt to hit the target with your serve. Your partner will catch the ball, after it bounces and return it to you. Repeat this until you have had 10 service attempts.
- Switch roles with your partner.
- Move your targets to various positions on the table.

ACTIVITY EXTENSIONS:

- Add targets to your practice. Place 3-5 pieces of paper on the table and count how many serves it takes to hit each target once. Give each target a point value, and keeping score.
- Once you hit a target, fold the piece of paper in half and double its point value!
- Try 10-pin Table Tennis! Set 10 plastic cups along the end line and corners of the table. As the server, see how many serves it takes you to hit the cups off of the table. If you are playing on the floor, try to get your ball in the cups!
- Instead of serving, have your partner simulate a serve, by throwing the table tennis ball to you, challenging you to hit a moving ball at the targets.

BRINGING IT TO THE CLASSROOM

Part of being a good coach is to help your athletes believe that they can win. Write a pep talk for a national team table tennis player preparing to play against a Chinese champion in the gold medal match of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games.

Write a paragraph explaining why you think some countries do better at some sports than others. Why do the Chinese do so well at table tennis or the Canadians do so well at ice hockey?