

# PICKLEBALL PADDLE SELECTION & BUYER'S DECISION MATRIX

Official Gear Lab Benchmark • Core, Face, Weight & Shape Architecture • PickleballScope.com

## 1. THE 4 ARCHITECTURAL PADDLE SPECIFICATIONS & COURT IMPACT

| Core Thickness | 13mm / 14mm (Thin)<br>16mm / 20mm (Thick)                              | 13mm: Explosive pop, stiff rebound, fast hands.<br>16mm: Plush dwell time, touch, deep resets.                                                    | Singles/Power = 13mm–14mm<br>Tournament Doubles = 16mm                                               |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Face Material  | Raw Carbon (T700)<br>Fiberglass (Composite)                            | Carbon: 2,100+ RPM spin, micro-grit durability.<br>Fiberglass: Springy trampoline pop, fast drives.                                               | Spin & Touch = Raw Carbon<br>Budget / Raw Power = Fiberglass                                         |
| Weight Class   | Light (7.3–7.8 oz)<br>Mid (7.9–8.4 oz)<br>Heavy (8.5+ oz)              | Light: Maximum hand speed at NVZ kitchen line.<br>Mid: Gold standard blend of speed & stability.<br>Heavy: Maximum baseline plow-through & power. | Reflex Defense = Lightweight<br>All-Around = Midweight (8.0–8.2 oz)<br>Singles Bangers = Heavyweight |
| Paddle Shape   | Standard / Wide (16x8")<br>Elongated (16.5x7.5")<br>Hybrid (16.3x7.7") | Standard: Huge sweet spot, low swing weight.<br>Elongated: Extra reach, heavy baseline leverage.<br>Hybrid: Modern balanced tournament geometry.  | Mishit reduction = Standard/Wide<br>Tennis converts = Elongated<br>Competitive all-court = Hybrid    |

## 2. PRO BUYER MATCHMAKER: EXACT SPECS BY PLAYER ARCHETYPE

| Player Archetype                              | Tactical Court Needs                                                                              | Ideal Paddle Recipe                                                                                                   | Benchmark Pro Models                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Control Doubles Specialist (3.5–5.0 DUPR) | Needs zero pop-ups on 3rd shot drops, rock-solid dinking touch, and wide sweet spot forgiveness.  | • 16mm Polymer Core<br>• Toray T700 Raw Carbon Face<br>• Midweight (8.0 – 8.3 oz)<br>• Hybrid or Standard Shape       | CRBN 1X 16mm, Joola Perseus 16mm, Vatic Pro Prism Flash, Six Zero Double Black Diamond     |
| The Singles Banger / Power Attacker           | Requires blistering drive depth, heavy overhead putaway speed, and maximum passing shot reach.    | • 13mm / 14mm Core<br>• Thermoformed Carbon/Kevlar<br>• Heavier Midweight (8.3 – 8.6 oz)<br>• Elongated Shape (16.5") | Selkirk Vanguard Power Air Invikta, Gearbox Pro Power Elongated, Engage Pursuit Pro MX 6.0 |
| The Tennis Transition Player                  | Accustomed to heavy racquet plow-through, long swing strokes, and two-handed backhand drive grip. | • 14mm / 16mm Hybrid Core<br>• Long Handle (5.5" minimum)<br>• Elongated Aero Shape<br>• High swing weight (118+)     | Joola Mod-TA-15, Volair Forza Mach 1, Diadem Edge 18k Speed, Bread & Butter Filth          |
| The Arm Relief / Tendonitis Player            | Needs maximum impact shock absorption, zero edge flutter, and vibration dampening before joints.  | • 16mm or 20mm Foam-Injected Core<br>• Raw Carbon Face<br>• Midweight (8.1 oz)<br>• Cushioned 4.25" grip wrap         | ProKennex Kinetic Pro Speed, Owl Quiet Paddle, Paddletek Bantam ALW-C 14.3mm               |

## 3. GRIP SIZING, HANDLE LENGTH & PRE-PURCHASE INSPECTION CHECKLIST

| Measurement & Rule       | How to Test & Critical Verification Standards (USA Pickleball Rule 2.E)                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| The Index Finger Test    | Grip the paddle with your normal Eastern/Continental grip. Slide the index finger of your other hand between your fingertips and the heel of your palm. If your finger cannot fit, the grip is too small; if there is wide extra space, it is too large. |
| Standard vs. Long Handle | Standard (4.75" – 5.0"): Ideal for single-handed backhands; maximizes hitting face surface area.<br>Long (5.25" – 5.75"): Essential for two-handed backhand players and players seeking extra whip leverage.                                             |
| USA PB Seal Verification | Always verify the paddle appears on the official USA Pickleball Approved Paddle List (equipment.usapickleball.org). Look for the etched or printed 'USA Pickleball Approved' stamp on the face neck.                                                     |