



# **AMATEUR SOFT TENNIS FEDERATION OF INDIA**

Office: 401/A, Samruddh Apartment, Nr. Kankaria Football Ground, Ahmedabad-380022

Email: [softtennisindia@gmail.com](mailto:softtennisindia@gmail.com) Web: [www.softtennis.in](http://www.softtennis.in) Mobile: +91-93270 50344

## **Technical Handbook of Rules & Regulation of Soft Tennis**

# International Rules for Competitions

## DOUBLES

### Chapter 1 General Rules

(Purpose)

- 1 The provisions hereunder shall aim to specify the matters to be required to conduct soft tennis competitions (doubles).

### Chapter 2 Court for Soft Tennis

(Soft Tennis Court)

- 2 A soft tennis court shall consist of Court, Outcourt, Net and Net Post and Umpire's Chair.

(Court and Outcourt)

- 3 A court and outcourt shall be the same flat space which shall be maintained so as not to cause any hindrance to the play. For the out-door court, however, a slight slope for water drainage shall be allowed to be constructed to the extent that no hindrance to the play shall be caused.

(Surface of Court and Outcourt)

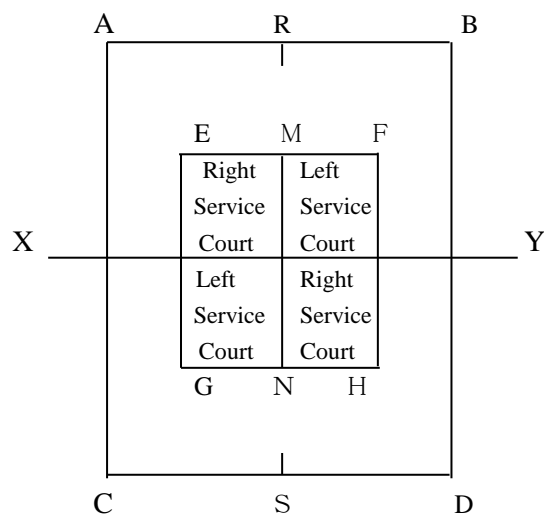
- 4 The surface of a court and outcourt shall be clay, sanded artificial grass, all-weather chemical or other appropriate materials for the outdoor court, and for the indoor court, the surface shall be wooden, sanded artificial grass, hard rubber, chemical or other appropriate materials.

(Court )

- 5 The court for doubles shall be a rectangular space, which shall be surrounded by lines (the lines are part of the court), of 23.77m in length and 10.97m in width, and it shall be divided into two equal portions by the net, which is supported by the net posts, in the middle of the court.

(Divisions of Court and Lines)

- 6 The names of the divisions of a court and the names and lengths of the lines on the court are as shown hereunder.



#### Names of Lines

Names of Lines	Symbols	Length
• Sideline	AC, BD	23.77m
• Base Line	AB, CD	10.97m
• Service Sideline	EG, FH	12.80m
• Service Line	EF, GH	8.23m
• Service Center Line	MN	12.80m
• Center Mark	R, S	0.15m (from the inner edge of the base line)

(Color, Width and Length of Line)

- 7 The lines shall, in principle, be white in color and not less than 5cm and not more than 6cm in width. However, **the width of the other lines than the base lines may not be less than 2.5cm and not more than 5cm** and the width of base lines may not be less than 5cm and not more than 10cm.

(Outcourt)

- 8 1. The outcourt shall be a space surrounding the court and the space shall spread, in principle, **the recommended minimum distance from the respective base line shall be 6.4m and the recommended minimum distance from the respective side lines shall be 3.66m.**  
2. In the case where two or more courts adjoin each other, **the recommended minimum distance of the adjoining courts shall be 3.66m in principle.**

(Net Post)

- 9 The net post shall be not less than 7.5cm and not more than 15cm in diameter.

(Location of Net Post)

- 10 1. The net posts shall be set up outside and in the middle of the sidelines on both sides of a court and fixed vertically at the equal distance from the side lines.  
2. The distance between the two posts shall be 12.80m (measured at the outside of the posts) and the height of the posts shall be 1.07m from the ground. In the case where the facility conditions do not permit such a height of the net post as above, it shall be allowed to be less than 1.07m but not less than 1.06m.

(Umpire's Chair)

- 11 The umpire's chair **shall not be less than 1.5m and not more than 2.44m in height** and be placed in an outcourt, 60cm apart (at the nearest part of the chair) from a net post.

(Illuminance on courts)

- 12 **The recommended illuminance on the court shall be 500 lux or more than 500 lux at the position of 1m height from the courtsurface.**

(Height of ceiling of indoor courts)

- 13 **The recommended minimum height measured at the net from the courtsurface to the ceiling in the indoor court shall be 9.14m and the one measured at the backstops from the courtsurface to the ceiling in the indoor court shall be 4.87m.**

### Chapter 3 Equipment

(Net)

- 14 The specifications of the net shall be as undermentioned.
- (1) Color : Black
  - (2) Height : 1.07m In the case where the facility conditions do not permit this height, the height shall be allowed to be less than 1.07m, but not less than 1.06m. (The net shall be put up tightly between the posts, horizontally on a level at the height of 1.06m to 1.07m measured at the sidelines.)
  - (3) Length : 12.65m
  - (4) Meshes : Not more than 3.5cm in square
  - (5) Metal Cord : 15m in length and 4.5mm in diameter, as standard specifications
  - (6) The top of a net and the metal cord shall be covered with a white cloth band of 5cm to 6cm in width.
  - (7) Both ends of a net shall be kept touching to the net posts and the lowest part of the net to the ground.

(Ball)

**15** The ball shall be rubber-made, air-filled, and its color shall be white in principle. The specifications of the ball shall be as undermentioned.

- (1) The bounce of a ball shall be adjusted so that the highest point that the ball reaches after it bounced on the court comes to not less than 70cm and not more than 80cm (measured at the bottom of the ball) from the ground when dropped without putting any intentional force from a height of 1.5m from the ground upon the court where the match is to be played.
- (2) Weight : not less than 30g and not more than 31g
- (3) Diameter : 6.6cm with a allowance of plus or minus 0.1cm

(Racket)

- 16**
- 1 The racket shall be the one which is designed to achieve the same effect at its both faces with its frame strung with strings and its strung face shall be flat. The condition of strings after strung shall be practicably even.
  - 2 The frame of a racket shall be allowed to be of any material and weight, and in any size and shape.
  - 3 The strings shall be fixed to the frame of a racket and shall be crossed each other.
  - 4 The strings shall not be of specifications which may provide a ball with excessive variations in flying.

#### **Chapter 4 Competitions**

(Player's Conduct)

**17** Players shall mutually respect good manners and observe the code of conduct as undermentioned.

- (1) Players shall not excessively yell out or make much noises which may cause discomfort for their opponent.
- (2) Players shall play continuously from the start to the finish of a match, and the behaviors as undermentioned are prohibited.

An allowance of one(1) minute shall be allowed before they get ready to start a next point or game after the completion of the previous point or game, when they change sides or before starting the final game or when they change sides after having finished 10 points in a short match as provided in Article 17.2 of this Rules ("Let's Play").

- ① A server intentionally delays delivering a serve, even when the receiver of the serve is ready to receive, and likewise, the receiver of a serve does not get ready to receive even when the server is about to deliver the serve.
- ② A player intentionally acts to make the match drag on.
- ③ A pair of players in doubles make lengthy arrangements with each other or take a rest between points or games, thus obstruct the progress of the match.
- ④ A player does not get ready to start the next game within the allowed time after the previous game was completed.
- ⑤ A player takes a rest while changing sides in the final game.
- ⑥ A player repairs its racket during a match.

- (3) Players shall follow the instructions given by the umpire in proceeding the match.

(Match)

**18** 1 Players shall always abide by this Rules and keep to a fair play throughout a match.

- 2 A doubles match is organized by 2 pairs and each pair consists of 2 players. Each player shall play with one racket throughout a match.
- 3 A ball shall be struck alternately by one or the other player of the opposing pairs.

(The Number of Games in a Match)

- 19** 1 A match shall be played by a 7 or 9 games system in principle.  
2 Short matches like a 15-point match, a 3-game match or a 5-game match can be played. Long matches like a 3-set match or a 5-set match can also be played, wherein one set consists of 15 points or 3, 5, 7 or 9 games.

(Win or Loss of a Game)

- 20** 1 A pair who has first won four points in a game shall win the game. When both pairs won three points in a game, the score shall be called deuce, and the procedures as undermentioned shall be applied.  
(1) The pair who has won one point after deuce gets advantage, and when the same pair has won the next point in succession, the game shall be scored for the pair.  
(2) When, after the advantage for one pair, the other pair has won the following point, the score shall be called deuce again. The same procedures shall be followed as far as the same proceeding of a game as above continues.  
2 When both pairs won three games in a 7-game match, the following 7th game shall be called the final game, and the procedures as undermentioned shall be applied. The same procedures shall be applied for 3-, 5- or 9-game matches, i.e. when both pairs won 1 game in a 3-game match, 2 games in a 5-game match or 4 games in a 9-game match.  
(1) Notwithstanding the provisions in Article 18.1 above, the pair who has won 7 points in the final game shall win the game and the match.  
(2) When both pairs won six points in the final game, the score shall be called deuce, and the provisions in Article 18.1(1),(2) above shall be applied.  
3 For a 15-point match, the final game shall be played according to Article 32.2 of this Rules, and the pair who has first won 15 points shall win the game and the match. In the case where both pairs won 14 points, the score shall be called deuce, and Article 18.1(1),(2) above shall be applied.

(Win or Loss of a Match)

- 21** 1 In the case of a match of 3 or more odd games, the pair who has first won the majority of the games shall win the match.  
2 In the case of a match of 3 or more odd sets, the pair who has first won the majority games of each set shall win the set, and who has first won the majority of the sets shall win the match.

(Serve)

- 22** 1 The play of serve shall start at the moment when a player who is going to deliver the serve has tossed (The word "toss" means for a server to leave a ball from its hand to deliver a serve. Hereinafter this word shall be used in the same meaning.) up into the air by hand and shall complete at the moment when the player has struck the ball with its racket before it drops on either of the court or outcourt. In the case where a server has failed to hit at ball in trying to deliver a serve, the serve shall be regarded as completed at the moment when the ball may have touched the racket of the server in serving. The judgment of this shall be made by the chair umpire.  
2 A player who is limited to using only one arm/hand for the play shall be allowed to utilize its racket for tossing a ball.

(Time of Serving)

- 23** A server shall deliver a serve following the chair umpire's call on scores, after confirming the receiver's readiness.

(Servers & Receivers)

- 24** Each pair shall stand face to face with the net between them and the pair who delivers the serve shall be called Servers and the other pair who shall receive the serve shall be called Receivers.

(Position for Serving)

- 25** A server shall deliver a serve from behind the base line and between the imaginary extensions of the center mark and the sideline.

(Player to Serve )

- 26** 1 A serve shall be delivered by one of servers, who shall deliver the serve to the diagonally opposite service court, starting from the right side of the center mark facing the net, and then from the left.
- 2 Each player of Servers whose turn it is to serve shall alternately serve for two consecutive points, and the initial order of service shall not be changed in the same one game.

(Fault in the Serve)

- 27** 1. The cases where the serve is defined as a fault are as undermentioned.
- (1) A ball served has failed to fall directly into a proper service court, except for the cases of a let as provided in Article 26 of this Rules.
  - (2) A server did not struck a ball after having tossed the ball in the air for delivering a serve.
  - (3) Two balls have been tossed at the same time in delivering a serve, or one of the two balls for the serve has dropped from the server's hand while the other ball was tossed up but not yet struck for the serve.
  - (4) A ball has come into contact with the server's racket more than once in delivering a serve.
  - (5) A ball served has come under either of the provisions as undermentioned after the ball touched the net or the net post and before it hits the court, outcourt, fences, etc.
    - a. The ball has touched the server's racket (including a racket which had left from the server's hand), body or attire (including a cap or a hat, a face towel, glasses, etc. which the server was wearing).(Hereinafter the word "attire" shall mean the same.)
    - b. The server's racket (including a racket which had left from the server's hand), body or attire has passed over or touched the net or the net post, before the the ball hits the court, outcourt umpire's chair, fences, etc.
  - (6) A server has touched the base-line, sideline or center mark, or gone into the inside of the court while delivering a serve (Foot Fault). However, the case where the server has moved over the base line into the court but was still in space while delivering the serve shall not come under this clause.
2. The server, if the first serve turned fault, shall be allowed to deliver the second serve.

(Let in the Serve)

- 28** 1 The cases where the serve shall be defined as a let shall be as undermentioned.
- (1) A breach of Article 21 in this Rules has occurred, as judged by the chair umpire.
  - (2) A ball served has come under the provisions as undermentioned after the ball touched the net or the net post.
    - a. The ball has fallen into a proper service court.
    - b. The ball has touched the receiver's racket ( including a racket which had left from the receiver's hand), body or attire before the ball hits the court, outcourt, umpire's chair and fences, etc.
    - c. The receiver's racket (including a racket which had left from the receiver's hand), body or attire has passed over or touched the net or the net post.
  - (3) The receiver of a ball served has come under the provisions as undermentioned, as judged by the chair umpire, before the receive is completed.
    - a. The receiver's play has been interrupted by an umpire's erroneous judgment.
    - b. The receiver's play has been interrupted by unforeseen incidents or by a ball for a match at some other court or its own ball which had been picked up and thrown in by people with no direct relations with the ongoing match or acts of such people.
    - c. Incidents which cause to lose a point have occurred on both pairs at the same time.

(4) Other cases which the chair umpire has acknowledged as a let in the serve.

2 When a serve has turned a let, that serve shall be tried again.

(Loss of Point in the Serve)

**29** In the case where both the first and second serves have turned fault consecutively, the servers shall lose the point as double faults.

(Receiving the Serve)

**30** In receiving a serve, the receiver shall return the ball legally served after its first bounce on a proper service court but before the second bounce.

(Order of Receiving the Serve)

**31** The order of receiving the serve among the receivers shall be as undermentioned.

(1) Each of the receivers shall receive a serve at either of the right or left service court, and the order of the receiving thus initiated shall not be changed during a game.

(2) The receive shall start with the right service court and the receivers shall receive a serve alternately at the right and the left.

(Loss of Point in the Receive)

**32** The cases where the receivers of a serve lose a point are as undermentioned.

(1) The receiver has failed to legally return the ball served.

(2) The ball served has directly touched the receiver's racket, body or attire ("Direct").

(3) The ball legally served has directly touched the racket, body or attire of the partner of the receiver before its second bounce on the ground ("Interfere").

(4) The partner of the receiver has touched the receiver's service court before the receiver completes the receive ("Interfere").

(5) A breach of Article 29(1) in this Rules has been found ("Interfere"). This shall be applied only to the point where the breach was found.

(Choice of Serve/Receive or Side)

**33** Serve/receive or side shall be chosen by competing pairs before the beginning of a match.

(Change of Serve/Receive and Side)

**34** 1 Servers and receivers shall alternate serving at the completion of each game, except for the final game, and they shall change sides at every time the odd games completed.

2 In the final game, the pairs shall alternate serving for every two points and they shall change sides after the first two points and then after every four points after that. The serve and receive in the final game shall be played as undermentioned.

(1) Each player of both pairs shall serve in rotation for two consecutive points.

(2) The player who serves for the first two points shall be either of the pair who has the right to be servers in accordance with the rules.

(3) Either one of the players who received the first serve in the final game shall serve for the third and fourth points, and either one of the players who served for the first two points in the final game shall receive the serve for the third point.

(4) The other one of the players who served for the first two points in the final game shall serve for the fifth and sixth points.

(5) The other one of the players who served for the third and fourth points in the final game shall serve for the seventh and eighth points.

(6) Thereafter, the orders of serve and receive shall revert to the order as provided in Items (2) to (5) above of this Article.

(7) The order of serve and receive in the pair shall not be changed during a game.

(Error in Order of Serve/Receive and Side)

**35** 1 When an error in changes of servers or sides, as undermentioned, have been found, the correction of the error shall be made as at that point if it was before the point started. If an error was found after a point had started, the point in play shall be continued without suspension and the correction of the error shall be made as at the next point. Points already played before the finding of the error shall be effective.

- (1) An error has occurred in changes of servers("Change service") and sides ("Change sides").
- (2) An error has occurred in the order of serve between the partners ("Rotation Change").
- (3) An error has occurred in the order of selecting a service court ("Rotation Change").

2 In the case where such errors have been found after a fault in the first serve, the errors shall be corrected at that instant, and the match shall be resumed with the first serve.

(Judgment of In or Out)

**36** 1 The judgment of in or out of a ball shall be made at the landing spot of the ball.

2 The ball which has touched the court lines when it landed on the court shall be defined as in.

(Loss of Point In Play)

**37** 1 The cases of loss of points in play shall be as undermentioned. However, the cases where a serve is a let or the first serve is a fault shall not come under this clause.

- (1) The ball which was hit by a player has failed to directly fly over the net (no judgment call), and a ball has gone through a break of the net or a space between the net and the net post or under the net ("Through") shall come under this clause. However, the cases as unermentioned be excluded.
  - a. A ball touched the net or the net post, but has flied properly over into the opposite court.
  - b. A ball flied outside of the net post or touched the outside of the net post, but has landed properly on the opposite court.
- (2) The ball returned has landed on an outcourt or directly touched the umpire, the umpire's chair or other fixtures and facilities for the ongoing match ("Out")
- (3) A player has failed to hit the ball for a return before the ball bounces on the ground for the second time ("Two Bounces"). The case where the ball hit for a return has touched, before bouncing for the second time, the umpire, the umpire's chair or other fixtures and facilities shall also come under this clause. However, the case where the ball from the opponent landed properly on the court but rebounded to the net or the net post and the player has returned, before the ball landed the court again, the ball properly to the opponent shall be regarded as a good return.
- (4) A ball has touched the body or attire of a player ("Body Touch").

- (5) Such cases as undermentioned have occurred to the racket, body or attire of a player. However, the cases where the racket has crossed over the net or touched the opponent's outcourt from force of hitting a ball but that incident was not recognized as an apparent interference with the opponent's play ("Interfere") shall not come under this clause.
  - a. A player's racket has crossed over the net, the imaginary extensions of the net line or the net post in a failed swing of the racket in trying to hit a ball ("Over Net").
  - b. The racket, body or attire of a player has touched the net or the net post ("Net Touch"). The case where a ball hit the net or the wind moved the, thus the net touched the racket, body or attire of a player shall be included.
  - c. The racket, body or attire of a player has touched the umpire's chair or the umpire for the ongoing match ("Touch")
  - d. The racket, body or attire of a player has touched the opponent's court or the racket, body or attire of the opponent player ("Interfere").
- (6) A ball has touched a racket more than once in striking the ball ("Dribble") or the ball has rested on a racket face ("Carry").
- (7) A ball touched only the frame of a racket in trying to hit the ball, thus the player has failed to return the ball ("Tip").
- (8) A player has returned a ball by the racket which had left from its hand ("Interfere")
- (9) A ball in play has hit another ball on the court, including a ball which is used for the ongoing match and had been on one side of the court when the point started but moved in by the force of wind or some other reasons and rested on the other side of the court. However, in the case where such a movement of the ball was judged by the chair umpire as an intentional act against the opponent, this constitutes an interference. Also, the case where the ball hit players' things like a hat or cap or face towel, etc. which was lying on the court, thus the player has failed to make a good return of the ball shall come under this clause.
- (10) The racket, cap or hat, face towel, etc. of a player left from the player and has directly touched the net or the net post ("Net Touch"). The case where a racket once dropped from the player on the ground and then has touched the net or the net post shall be included.
- (11) When a player pushed away, by its hand, foot or racket, things like a hat or a cap or face towel, etc., excluding a ball, which was lying on the court or outcourt, they have directly touched the net or net post ("Net Touch"), or the umpire or the umpire's chair for the ongoing match ("Touch").
- (12) The racket, cap or hat, face towel, etc. of a player has touched the racket or attire of the opponent player or gone over into the opponent court ("Interfere").
- (13) Incidents which are an apparent interference with the opponent's play have occurred. ( called "Interfere")

(No Count)

**38** A play shall be suspended with a "No Count " call on the ball in play in the cases as undermentioned and the play for the point shall be resumed by starting with the first serve. The cases of a let in the serve shall not come under this clause.

- (1) A play has been interrupted by an umpire's erroneous judgment.
- (2) A play has been interrupted by unforeseen incidents, a ball for some other match, a ball for the ongoing match which had left away but was picked up and thrown in by people with no direct relations with the ongoing match or the acts of such people. The application of this clause shall be limited to those acknowledged by the the chair umpire.
- (3) Incidents where the both pairs lose the point at the same time have occurred.
- (4) Other cases which the chair umpire has acknowledged as those for no count.

(Time)

**39** Time shall be allowed for players during a match in the cases as undermentioned.

- (1) A player has turned disable to continue the play by physical problems and the chair umpire has acknowledged the situation.  
In this case, the time allowable for a player shall be not more than 5 minutes per one occasion and a maximum of two occasions allowed for one player in the same one match.
- (2) Other cases which the chair umpire has acknowledged as necessary.

(Prohibitions)

- 40** 1. A player shall be prohibited from receiving any advice and physical treatment from any people other than their partner during a match, except for the cases approved by the chair umpire as necessary after discussing it with the referee.
2. Any people other than the players for the match, the umpires and those who are allowed for the specific reasons shall be prohibited from entering the soft tennis court during the match.

(Withdraw)

**41** A pair who comes under the items as undementioned shall be treated as the one withdrawn from the match, and their opponent shall be declared the winner of the match. Points & games so far won by such a loser shall be effective.

- (1) An entry for the competition had been made but the pair did not actually participated.
- (2) An application made by a pair for withdrawal from the competition for some special reasons has been accepted by the referee (or responsible officials of the completions)
- (3) Time was allowed for a pair for physical problems of either player of the pair, but the player has not recovered within the allowed time limits.
- (4) Either player of the pair applied for withdrawal from the match for its physical problems and the chair umpire has accepted it.
- (5) A pair has turned unable to play a match under the conditions as described in Article 11 of the Rules for Operations of Competitions.

(Prohibition of Protest and Other Related Acts)

- 42** 1. Players shall be prohibited from protesting against the umpire's proceeding of and its judgments in a match or discontinuing a play on purpose on the ground that such judgments are objectionable.
2. The provision as above, however, shall not prevent the players from inquiring of the umpire about its judgments and others. However, once the explanations have been delivered, then the provision of the proceeding Article 40.1 shall be applied.

(Warning)

**43** In the cases where apparent violations of Articles 38 and 40 have been recognized, the chair umpire shall give a warning to such pair ("Yellow Card").

(Disqualification)

- 44** 1. When the referee has found any violations of the conditions for participation provided in the guide to the championships, the referee shall declare the disqualification of such pair after consulting it with the responsible officials of the completions.
2. In the cases which come under the clauses as undermentioned, the chair umpire shall disqualify such pair and declare the winning of its opponent.
- (1) A pair who was called to a court for a match has not appeared.
  - (2) The number of warning issued has come to 3 in total to the same one pair during the same one match ("Red Card").

(Appeal)

- 45** 1. A pair shall be allowed to appeal to the referee if a misinterpretation or misapplication of the Rules for Competitions have been recognized in the judgments of the umpire.
2. A pair shall not be allowed to appeal for the second time against the ruling made by the referee.
3. A pair shall not be allowed to make any appeal after the greetings for the completion of the match have been exchanged.

(Suspension and Resumption of a Match)

- 46** 1. In the case where a match was suspended or postponed because of the weather condition or others, the match shall be resumed, in principle, as from the next point to those so far completed.
2. In the case where the match is resumed at a tennis court than the current one or on a later day, the side of the court shall be selected by the pair who had the right to select it in the current match. However, in the case where the match is resumed at a later time on the same day and the same court as for the current match, the same sides as at the time of the suspension of the match shall be maintained.

(Treatment of Other Questionable Issues on Rules)

- 47** In the cases where issues which are not specified in this Rules have occurred in a match, the chair umpire shall rule them after consulting them with the referee.

## SINGLES

**(Purpose)**

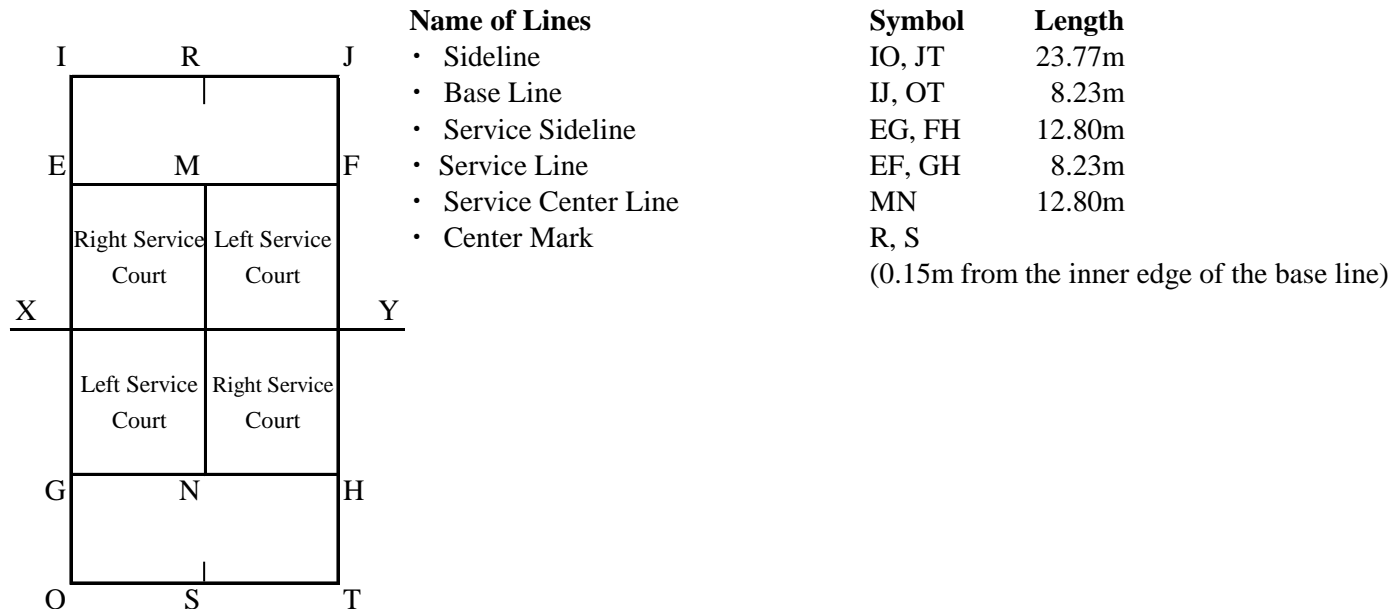
- 1 The provisions hereunder shall aim to specify the matters required to conduct soft tennis competitions (singles). The rules for doubles shall be applied for the matters not specified in the rules for singles.

**(Court)**

- 2 A court for singles shall be a rectangular space, which is surrounded by the service sidelines with their extensions to the base lines and the base lines, of 23.77m in length and 8.23m in width.

**(Divisions of Court and Lines)**

- 3 The names of the divisions of the court and the names and lengths of the lines are as shown hereunder.



**(Serve and Receive)**

- 4
  1. Except for the final game, the opposing players shall deliver the serve alternately for each of the games in a match, starting to deliver the serve in each game to the right, diagonally opposite service court and then to the left, and the other player shall receive the ball served.
  2. In the final game, each of the players shall deliver the serve alternately for two consecutive points, starting with the player who has the right to be a server in accordance with the rules, and the other player shall receive the ball served.

**(Match)**

- 5 The number of games in a match shall be 7 in principle.