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Pickleball for seniors: 10 tips for pain-free play

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- 1 Warm up properly:** Get your body ready for play with light cardio (e.g., 5–10 minutes of brisk walking or marching in place for 5 minutes) and simple stretches appropriate for your fitness level (e.g., do 10–15 leg swings, arm circles, torso twists, and lunges to elevate your heart rate and activate your core muscles).
- 2 Change things up:** Vary your moves to be unpredictable to opponents—and avoid injury. For a lively game that spreads out wear and tear on your joints, try mixing in some soft dinks, lobbing a few deep shots from the baseline, and throwing in a power slam here and there.
- 3 Know your grip size before buying a paddle:** People 5'2" and under often choose with 4" grip size paddles, those between 5'3" and 5'8" generally opt for 4¼" grip size, and individuals over 5'8" usually pick 4½" grip size. If possible, try out paddles with different grip sizes before purchasing.
- 4 Add strength-training to your routine:** Adding exercises like wrist curls (for arm strength) and lunges and split squats (for leg stability).
- 5 Learn (and use) correct techniques:** Master the fundamentals, such as keeping an eye on the ball, using your core for power, and following through on your shots. New to pickleball? Consider lessons from a qualified coach for hands-on guidance, personalized feedback, and instruction.
- 6 Wear the right shoes:** Your choice of footwear matters. Invest in high-quality sneakers that provide support and cushioning.
- 7 Keep hydrated:** Drink water before, during, and after playing to keep muscles functioning properly and prevent cramps.
- 8 Take time to cool down:** When you've finished your matches, gently stretch your muscles to help them recover and reduce stiffness.
- 9 Listen to your body:** If you feel unusual pain or fatigue from playing, take a break. Consult a specialist for any issues, like swelling and discomfort, that persist.
- 10 Consider massage tools:** Using a foam roller or massage gun are effective options for speeding up recover and making tight muscles relax.



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