SVPL Rules of the Game of Pétanque

**(*Adapted from* *Official Rules agreed by the International Congress of the Federation International de Petanque et Jeu Provencal in October 2002)***

**General**

**Article 1 – Composition of Teams**  
Pétanque is a sport in which:

- 3 players play against 3 players (triples)

It can also be played by:

- 2 players against 2 players (doubles)  
- 1 player 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.

# Articles 2-4 – Not adopted

## Play

**Article 5 – Terrain Regulations**The game is played up to 13 points.

**Article 6 – Start of Play – Rules Regarding the Circle**  
The players must toss up to decide which team will choose the terrain and throw the jack.

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.  It must be drawn within the boundary limits area as stated by the home team

The team that throws the jack must wipe out all throwing circles near the one in use.

The feet must be entirely on the inside of the circle without touching it, and they 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.  The exception is that those who are disabled in a lower limb are allowed to place only one foot inside the circle.

A player throwing from a wheelchair must place it so that the circle is in the middle of the wheels with the footrest above the edge of 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 – Valid Distances for the Thrown Jack.**  
For the thrown jack to be valid, the following conditions apply:

(i)         The distance from it to the nearest edge of the circle must be between –

-           4m min. and 8m max. for Minors.

-           5m min. and 9m max. for Cadets.

* 6m min. and 10m max. for Juniors and Seniors.
* (ii) The circle and the jack must be within the boundary limits as stated by the Home Team Captain prior to the start of the match.

(iii)       The jack must be visible to the player whose feet are entirely inside the circle and who is standing absolutely upright.  In cases of dispute, the Captains 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:

* **The circle would be less than one metre from an obstacle.(Nov 2021 amdt)**
* The throwing of the jack could not be made to all regulation distances.

In the first case the player will draw the circle in the nearest valid position from the obstacle or the boundary.

In the second 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.

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 keeps the right to play the first boule.

**Article 8 – For the Thrown Jack to be Valid**  
If the thrown jack is stopped by the Umpire, a player, a spectator, an animal or any moving object, it is not valid and must be thrown again 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, and provided the jack has not been moved by 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 replayed.

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

For the jack to be thrown anew both teams must have accepted the throw as being invalid. Any team continuing otherwise would lose the benefit of throwing the jack.

**Article 9 –  Dead Jack**  
The jack is deemed dead in the following six cases:

1. When, after having been thrown, it is not within the limits as defined in Article 7
2. When, during an end, it is moved outside the boundary of the playing area, even if it comes back onto the playing area.  A jack on the line of the boundary is valid.  It only becomes dead after having completely crossed the boundary that is to say, when it lies entirely beyond the boundary when viewed from directly above.  A puddle on which a jack floats freely is considered to be out of bounds.

(iii)        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.

(iv)        When the jack is displaced to more than 20m for Seniors and Juniors, or 15m for Cadets and Minors, or less than 3m from the throwing circle.

(v)         When the moved jack cannot be found after a 5 minute maximum search time.

(vi)        When there is an out-of-bounds area between the jack and the throwing circle.

**Article 10 Displacement of Obstacles – Penalties**.

It is strictly forbidden for players to press down, displace or crush   
> any obstacle whatever on the playing area. However, the player about   
> to throw the jack is authorized to test the landing point with one of   
> his or her boules by tapping the ground no more than three times.   
> Furthermore, the player who is about to play, or one of his partners,   
> may fill in a hole which would have been made by **one boule played   
> previously *(Amended 2009)***

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

(i)         Warning.

(ii)         Disqualification of the boule played or about to be played.

(iii)        Exclusion of the guilty player for one end.

**Article 11– Jack Obscured or Moved**  
If, during an end, the jack is accidentally masked by a leaf or a piece of paper, these objects are removed.

If the stationary jack is moved by the wind or slope of the terrain for example, it is put back in its place on condition that it 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.

If the jack is moved by a boule played in this game it is valid.

To avoid any argument, the players must mark the jack’s position.  No claim can be accepted regarding boules or jack whose positions have not been marked.

**Article 12 – Jack Moved into Another Game**  
If, during an end, the jack is moved into an area where another game is in progress, either on a marked or unmarked terrain, the jack is valid subject to Article 9.

If necessary, the players using this jack will wait, if there is room, for the players in the other game to finish their end before completing their own.

The players concerned must show patience and courtesy.

At the following end the teams continue on the terrain allotted to them.

**Article 13 – Actions to Take if the Jack is Dead**  
If, during an end, the jack becomes dead, one of three cases can apply:

(i)         If both teams have boules to play, the end is void.

(ii)         If only one team has boules left to play, then this team scores as many points as it has boules to play.

(iii)        If neither team has boules to play, the end is void.

**Article 14 – Positioning the Jack after it has been Stopped**  
(a)        If the jack, having been hit, is stopped by a spectator or    by the Umpire, it remains where it stops.

(b)        If the jack, having been hit, is stopped by a player, his opponent has the choice of:

(i)         leaving the jack in its new position.

(ii)         putting it back in its original position.

(iii)        placing it anywhere on the extension of a line from its original position to where it is found up to a maximum distance of 20m (15m for Cadets and Minors) and such that it is visible.

Paragraphs (ii) and (iii) 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 after having been struck, the jack travels into an out-of-bounds area before returning, finally, on to the playing area it is classed as dead and the rules defined in Article 13 apply.

**Article 15 – Throwing the Jack after it is moved outside the designated playing area.**  
If, during an end, the jack is moved outside the designated playing area, the next end is started at the point from which it was displaced providing (see Article 7):

The jack can be thrown to all valid distances.

#### Boules

**Article 16 – Throwing of the First and Following Boules**  
The first boule of an end is thrown by a player belonging to the team that has won the toss or the last scoring end.  Following boules are played by the team not holding the point.

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

The boules must be played one at a time.

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

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

If after shooting or pointing no boules are left on the designated playing area, the rules concerning a stalemate position defined in Article 29 apply.

**Article 17 – Behaviour of Players and Spectators during a Game**  
During the regulation 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 throwing circle and the jack.

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

**Included following February 2010 Meeting**

The only occasion when a non-participant should be on the playing area is when he/she is requested to make an independent measure.

Advice can be sought by players regarding the Rules but absolutely no advice from non-participants on selection of any throw.

**Article 18 – Throwing of the 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 10

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

**Article 19 – Dead Boules**Any boule is dead from the moment it passes into an out-of-bounds area.  A boule straddling the boundary is valid.  It only becomes dead after having completely crossed the boundary of the authorised terrain or dead ball line that is to say, when it is placed entirely beyond this boundary when viewed from directly above.

If the boule subsequently comes back into the playing area, either because of the slope of the ground or by having rebounded from an object, moving or stationary, it is immediately taken out of the game and anything that it has moved after re-entering the playing area is put back in place.

Any dead boule must immediately be removed from the game; by default, it is considered to be live the moment another boule is played by either team player.

**Article 20  - Stopped Boules**  
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 dead.

Any boule pointed that is stopped by an opponent can, according to the wishes 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)        to leave it where it stopped, or

(b)        to place it on the extension of a line which would go from the original position it occupied to the place it was found, but only on the playable area and only on condition that it had been marked.

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

**Article 21 – Time Allowed to Play**  
Once the jack is thrown, each player has the maximum duration of one minute to play his or her boule.  This short period starts from the moment when the previous boule or jack stops 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.

The player not respecting this rule will incur penalties as stated in Article 10.

**Article 22 – Moved Boules**If a stationary boule is moved by the wind or slope of the ground, for example, it is put back in its place.  The same applies to any boule accidentally moved by a player, an Umpire, a spectator, an animal or any moving object.

To avoid any disagreement, the players must mark the positions of the boules.  No claim will be accepted for a boule which has not had its position marked.

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

**Article 23 – Players Throwing a Boule other than their Own**  
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 possibly after measuring.

In the event of it occurring again during the game, the guilty 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 24 – Throwing Boules Contrary to the Rules.**  
Any boule thrown contrary to the rules is dead and, if marked, everything it has moved in its travel is put back in place.  The same applies to any boule played from a circle other than that from which the jack was thrown.

However, the opponent may play the advantage rule and declare it to be valid.  In this case, the boule pointed or shot is valid and everything it has displaced remains in its place.

#### Points and measuring

**Article 25 – Temporary Moving of Boules**  
In order to measure a point, it is permitted to temporarily move the boules and obstacles situated between the jack and the boules to be measured, after having marked their positions.  After measuring, the boules and the obstacles are put back in place.  If the objects cannot be moved, the measuring is done with the aid of callipers.

**Article 26 – Measuring of Points**  
The measuring of a point is done by the player who played last, by one of his or her team-mates or by any person from the opposing team. The opponents still have the right to measure after one of these players, whatever positions the boules may hold, and at whatever stage the end may be.

Measuring must be done with appropriate equipment, which each team must possess.  It is particularly forbidden to measure with one’s feet.  The players who do not observe these rules could be penalised by one of the sanctions provided for in Article 10.

**Article 27 – Boules Picked up before the Agreement of Points**  
At the finish of an end, any boule picked up before the agreement of points is dead if its position was not marked.  No claims can be accepted on this subject.

**Article 28 – Moving the Boules or the Jack**The team whose player displaces the jack or one of the contested boules, while effecting a measurement, loses the point.

**Article 29 – Boules Equidistant from the Jack**  
If the two boules closest to the jack belong to opposing teams and are equidistant from it, the following 3 cases can apply:

(a) If neither team have boules to play the end is declared void and the jack is thrown by the team winning the previous end.

(b) 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.

(c) If both teams have boules to play, the team which played the last boule plays again, then the other team, and so on alternately until the point has been won by one of them.  When only one team has boules left, they play them as described in the above paragraph.

If, after completion of the end, no boules remain within the boundary of the playing area, the end is void.

**Article 30 – Foreign Bodies Adhering to the Boule or Jack**Any foreign bodies adhering to the boules or the jack must be removed before measuring a point.

**Article 31 - Claims**  
Claims made after the result of the game has been established and the score sheets signed by both Captains cannot be considered.

### Discipline

**Article 32 – Penalties for Absent Teams or Players**  
An incomplete team has the right to start a game without its absent partner; nevertheless it does not use the boules of that player.

**Article 33 – Arrival of Missing Players**  
If, after an end has started, the missing player arrives, he or she does not take part in that end.  He or she is accepted into the game only as from the next end.

An end is considered to have started when the jack has been placed on the playing area in accordance with the rules.

# Articles 34-35 – Not adopted

**Article 36 – Sharing of Prizes**Any sharing of rewards or prizes is strictly forbidden.

Any teams taking part in the final stages, or any other game, who show a lack of sporting spirit or respect towards the public, officials or Umpires, will be disqualified from the competition.  This disqualification may affect the relative positions obtained in the final results as well as invoke penalties as in Article 37.

**Article 37 – Incorrect Behaviour**The player who is guilty of incorrect conduct, or worse, showing violence towards an official, another player or a spectator shall be reported to the Committee where both Captains will be required to send a report on the incident.

**Articles 38-39 – Not adopted**

Executive Committee

17 May 2004