

Pickleball Machine Safety Precautions and Instructions

The Islands Pickleball Association (IPA) has a "Pickleball Tutor" ball machine for our use. The ball machine is a very good tool to practice numerous shots. It only has a few controls so is easy to operate, but, like any tool (machine) it can injure if not used properly. The ball machine is capable of projecting balls at speeds up to 50 miles per hour with a ball feed rate/frequency of between 2-10 seconds. At speeds well below the maximum, the ball can still cause injury.

Safety Precautions

- Be cautious at all times when:
 - Drilling with the machine
 - Operating the machine
 - Gathering balls
- Do not operate the machine until you have been trained in the correct way to operate it.
- Do not operate the machine if the balls or ground is wet or raining.
- Never place your hands or any other object (other than pickleballs) in the machine while it is powered on.
- Do not put yourself in front of the machine unless you are actually drilling with it.
- **The machine operator should be the only person on the side of the net where the machine is placed.**
- **Never walk in front of the machine unless you are sure it is powered off.**

Instructions/Overview

- If possible, set up the machine on a court where adjacent court(s) are not being used.
- Run a few test balls before anyone steps onto the court to use it to ensure the speed, distance, and frequency are correct.
- It is better to start slower and slowly increase the speed and frequency of the balls once you are comfortable with the operation of the machine.
- Only adjust the controls in small increments as large increments can dramatically change the speed and placement.
- Do not adjust speed or frequency while in line of the machine - step aside and make sure it is safe and you can react in time to the balls being sent forth.
- If a ball gets stuck, turn the machine off prior to trying to clear the jam.
- The balls will react differently each time they go through the machine depending on temperature, cleanliness, wear of the balls and the wheels in the machine. **Be aware of the changing trajectories and be ready for anything at all times.**
- Take proper care of the machine during your use; collect all balls, store the machine, and lock it in the pickleball shed after use.
- Contact an IPA board member for assistance if you have questions about proper use or problems with machine operation.
- Report any equipment malfunction, failure, or breakage to an IPA board member.