

# Padel



**Padel** is a racket sport typically played in doubles on an indoor hard court. The game combines elements of tennis, squash, and badminton and is known for its strategic play and because it is relatively easy to learn, making it accessible to a wide range of ages and skill levels. The game emphasises teamwork and quick reflexes.

## ■ The origins of padel

Padel originated in Mexico in 1969, thanks to a man, Enrique Corcuera, who modified a squash court at his home in Acapulco because he did not have enough space to build a regular tennis court. He enclosed the court with walls to prevent vegetation growth and keep the balls in play. This led to the beginning of the sport we know today.

Then, in 1974, A Spanish friend of Corcuera, Alfonso de Hohenlohe, brought the game to Spain, building the first two padel courts at a club in Marbella. In 1975, the game of padel was introduced to Argentina, where it quickly exploded in popularity.

## ■ The court and the equipment

The standard court, which measures 20 by 10 meters, is about one third of a conventional tennis court. It is enclosed by walls and has a net in the middle. Players use a type of racket which, unlike tennis rackets, has no strings but holes. It is made of hard materials and has a wrist strap. The ball is similar to a tennis ball.

## ■ Rules of the game

In padel, the serve must be hit **underhand**, and the ball must bounce on the ground before being hit. The scoring system is the same as in tennis.

Wall play is the thing that differentiates padel from the other racket sports. After the ball bounces once on the floor, players can also hit the ball against their own glass walls to return it. However, the ball must always bounce on the floor before hitting any wall. If the ball hits a wall before bouncing on the floor, it is a fault.

## ■ The spread of padel

Initially, padel's growth was heavily concentrated in Spanish-speaking countries. However, over the past decade, padel has been rapidly gaining popularity across Europe and the Middle East, generally replacing squash. Its accessibility, social nature, and fast **pace** contribute to its immense popularity.

**pace:** *ritmo*

**underhand:** *dal basso verso l'alto*

## 1 Write the words that correspond to the definitions.

1. Happening inside a room or a building. ....
2. Easy to be used or done by anyone. ....
3. The combined action of a group of people. ....
4. To surround on all sides with walls or panels. ....
5. A thin cord used to fasten something. ....
6. The part of the body connecting the hand to the arm. ....
7. Made with the arm or hand below shoulder level. ....
8. To make an object move up and down on a surface after hitting it. ....
9. A mistake made while playing a game. ....
10. A period of ten years. ....

## 2 Write a text comparing the game of tennis to that of padel using the information in the text. Share it with the class.