

## Badminton Time!

Tara played badminton. It was her favorite sport. Badminton has a lot of the fun and excitement of hitting back and forth like tennis and volleyball, but it takes finesse and careful aim. It can be a LOT of fun. If you like ping pong at all, you should definitely give badminton a shot.



Badminton requires only a net, a racket, and a birdie or shuttlecock. Unlike other sports that require balls, badminton's birdie has a unique shape. It looks like half of a rubber ball attached to a plastic lace cone. Because of its shape, it flew differently. It was bottom heavy, so it would sail into the air ball end first, and then the rubber side of it would fall downward, so you could hit it with your racket. Badminton rackets are much lighter and smaller than tennis rackets, although they do look similar.

Badminton is played with as a one-on-one or a two-on-two game, just like tennis. The courts are much smaller than tennis, though. A badminton court is about 20 foot by 40 foot, with a 5 foot net splitting it halfway. Badminton is played to a score of 21. You only get points on your team's serve. A strange thing about serving is that you're supposed to switch from the left side to the right to serve depending on if your current score when serving is even or odd! That's different, right? Also, unlike volleyball, you can only touch the birdie once before it goes over the net. You don't get 3 hits or touches. It's very fast back and forth!

Usually you play a set of 3 matches in badminton. You must win by 2 points, too, so if you get to 21 points and your opponent is at 20, you have to keep going. It's a very exciting game that will have you running all over the court. Because the court is smaller than in other sports, you really need to work on your control and technique. You need to be able to drop the birdie right inside the lines and work on your aim a lot!

Tara liked playing singles games. She could play doubles, but she liked running all over the court and hitting the birdie back without having to work with or around another player. There were a lot of subtle moves in badminton that could make a big different. You could make it look like you were going to spike the birdie, but then only lightly touch it to get it to barely drop over the net. The aerodynamics of the birdie made it an interesting thing to play with, too. It just flew differently and travelled differently than any other ball or object in other sports she'd played.





Tara knew that not everyone knew a lot about her sport. It was sort of a strange mix of tennis and volleyball with an even stranger ball to hit! It was fun for her though, and a great workout. It was also cheap to start playing and it was not full contact. She didn't like crashing into people when she played sports, so it was great for her. However, she had twisted an ankle once or twice trying to get to a birdie that was just falling in the wrong place!

Are you going to try to watch or play badminton?

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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What sport does Tara play?
  - A. Pickle ball
  - B. Tennis
  - C. Badminton
  - D. Ping Pong
  
2. What do you have to score to win a game of badminton?
  - A. 12
  - B. 20
  - C. 21
  - D. 25
  
3. Usually there are how many players on a badminton team?
  - A. 1 or 2
  - B. 2 or 3
  - C. 3 or 5
  - D. Always only 1
  
4. TRUE OR FALSE: According to the story, badminton is very similar to football.
  - A. True
  - B. False
  
5. TRUE OR FALSE: The 'ball' in badminton is called a birdie or a shuttlecock.
  - A. True
  - B. False

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