

-The Put Away Shot



In pickleball, landing the perfect pickleball put away shot is like finding an open parking spot right by the entrance—it's rare, satisfying, and worth the effort.

As you advance in pickleball, you learn to level the playing field on offense by moving through the transition zone to the all-important kitchen line.

One of the most effective ways to get there is with a third shot drop—a 3.5+ skill-level shot that can change the dynamics of the point. A well-executed drop shot not only gets you closer to the net but often forces your opponents into making a mistake, setting you up for the win.

When you hit a great drop shot that barely clears the net and dies near the kitchen, your opponents will likely try one last-ditch effort to keep you back. Typically, their responses fall into one of two categories:

- A quick speed-up shot aimed right at you, hoping to catch you off guard.
- A dink attempt that doesn't quite go as planned, popping the ball up just enough for you to strike.

Either way, stay sharp and ready. These moments are prime opportunities to finish the point with a strong put-away shot. After all, pickleball is all about patience, strategy, and knowing when to close the deal.

Move in to Put Away the Shot

This is a pivotal moment in pickleball.

Moving in on a well-placed drop shot is crucial and often sets you up to end the point.

When you and your partner advance together, it's like turning up the heat—you put immediate pressure on your opponents.

As they see you closing in, they're forced into a split-second decision: do they try to speed it up, dink it, or simply hope for the best? (Spoiler: hoping for the best rarely works out.)

If one of you stays back, experienced players will spot it faster than you can say “kitchen violation” and send the ball straight to the feet of the player hanging out in no man's land.

But when you both move in, their options shrink, and the pressure rises. Suddenly, their decision-making gets a lot messier, and mistakes are far more likely to follow.

Move Together to Put Away the Shot

If your partner is more advanced and consistently lands drop shots at the opponent in front of you, they expect you to move in and be ready to capitalize. Think of it as teamwork—they set the table, and you're there to finish the meal.

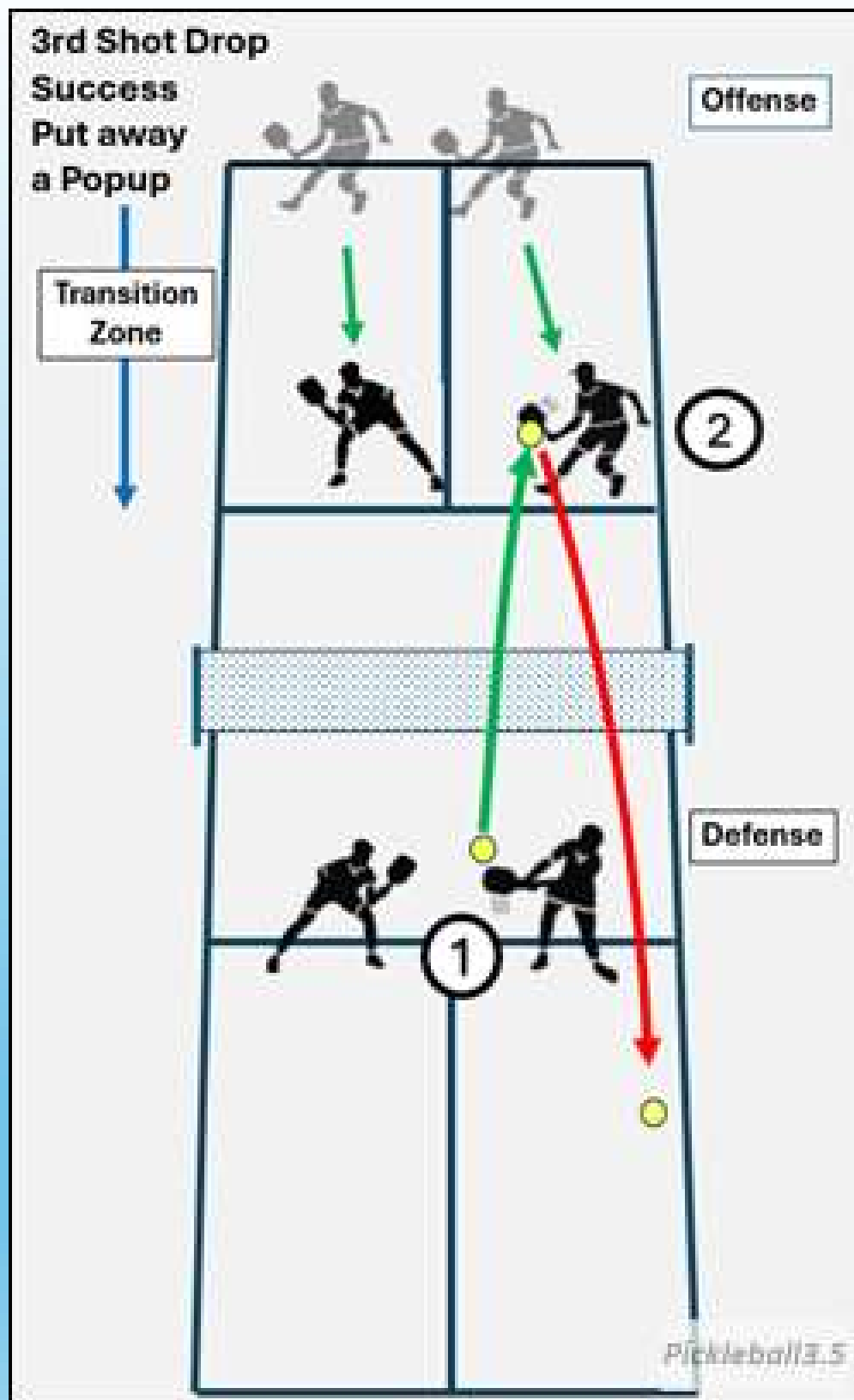
Failing to move forward and prepare for a put-away shot isn't just a missed opportunity—it's a fast track to your partner losing confidence in their drop shots. And let's be honest, nobody wants a partner second-guessing their plays because you're stuck in no man's land.

Staying alert and advancing on a well-placed drop shot is key. When your partner nails that

shot, it's your cue to step up, close the gap, and put the pressure on your opponents.

Moving to the net on a good drop shot isn't just a skill—it's a mindset. It's essential for improving your game and solidifying your place at the 3.5+ level in pickleball.

Pickleball Put Away Shot



In the illustration a good third shot drop is played. Both offensive players advance quickly and one of them puts away a popup hit by the defense.

You hit a good drop shot that lands in the kitchen just over the net. You and your partner advance to the kitchen line.

You have successfully leveled the playing field by advancing to the kitchen line and are looking for a mistake from your opponents.

1. Your opponent doesn't concede it is a good drop and tries to make a quick speed up shot back at you. Alternatively, they attempt a dink but pop the dink shot up.

In either case,

the ball is moving up to get over the net, it is above net height and is within your reach to volley.

2. You are at the kitchen line waiting for this and you put away the shot. You smash or volley it hard and down.

Summary

In pickleball, a well-executed drop shot is your ticket to taking control of the point—but only if you follow through. Advancing to the net positions you to capitalize on your opponents' responses, whether it's a weak return or a costly mistake. Hesitating or staying back not only misses opportunities but also undermines your partner's efforts.

The takeaway is simple: be proactive, move in, and stay ready to finish the play.

At the 3.5+ level, putting pressure on your opponents and closing out points with confidence is what elevates your game.

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