Simplified Rules of Badminton

The Laws of Badminton and Competition Regulations (linked here) in the BWF Statutes provide the detail on every aspect of the game of badminton.

Below is a brief overview - simplified rules.

Scoring System

- A match consists of the best of 3 games of 21 points.
- Every time there is a serve – there is a point scored.
- The side winning a rally adds a point to its score.
- The winning side must win the game by a 2 point lead.
  - At 20 all, the side which gains a 2 point lead first, wins that game.
  - At 29 all, the side scoring the 30th point, wins that game.
- The winning side of each game serves first in the next game.

Time Outs (Intervals) and Change of Ends

- When the leading score reaches 11 points in each game, players have a 60 second time out.
- A two-minute time out is allowed between each game.
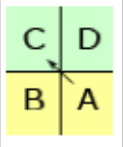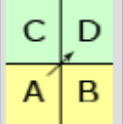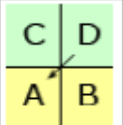- In the third game, players change ends (switch sides) when the leading score reaches 11 points.
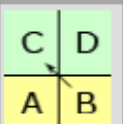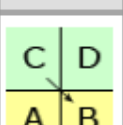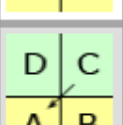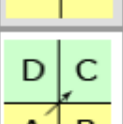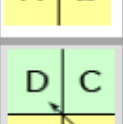
Doubles Play

- A side has only one 'service'. If a fault occurs during service, the receiving side scores a point and becomes the serving side.
- At the **beginning of the game** and when the serving side's **score is even**, the serve must occur from the **right service court.**
- When the serving side's **score it is odd**, the serve must occur from the **left service court**.
- If the receiving side wins a rally, the receiving side scores a point and becomes the new serving side.
- *Switching Service Courts*
  - If the serving side wins a rally, the serving side scores a point and the **same server must serve again from the** alternate service court.
  - Players **do not change** their respective service courts **until they win a point when** their side is serving.
- If players commit an error in the service court, the error is corrected when the mistake is discovered.
- The service passes consecutively to the players as shown in the diagram on the next page.

SCENARIO

- A doubles match between A & B against C & D.
- A & B won the toss and decided to serve – A will serve to C.
- A shall be the initial server while C shall be the initial receiver.

Scenario	Score	Service From	Server		Winner
START OF GAME	Love All 0-0	**Right Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **even.**	A serves to C. A is the initial server. C is the initial receiver.	C D / B A	A & B
A & B win a point. A & B will change service courts. A serves again from Left service court. C & D will stay in the same service courts.	1-0	**Left Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **odd.**	A serves to D	C D / A B	C & D
C & D win a point and also right to serve. Nobody changes their respective service courts.	1-1	**Left Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **odd.**	D serves to A	C D / A B	A & B
A & B win a point and also right to serve. Nobody changes their respective service courts.	2-1	**Right Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **even.**	B serves to C	C D / A B	C & D
C & D win a point and also right to serve. Nobody changes their respective service courts.	2-2	**Right Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **even.**	C serves to B	C D / A B	C & D
C & D win a point. C & D will change servic ecourts. C serves from Left service court. A & B will stay in the same service courts.	3-2	**Left Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **odd.**	C serves to A	D C / A B	A & B
A & B win a point and also right to serve. Nobody changes their respective service courts.	3-3	**Left Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **odd.**	A serves to C	D C / A B	A & B
A & B win a point. A & B will change service courts. A serves again from Right service court. C & D will stay in the same service courts.	4-3	**Right Service Court** because the score of the serving side is **even.**	A serves to D	D C / B A	C & D

Note that this means:

- The order of server depends on whether the score is odd or even.
- The service court is changed by the servicing side only when a point is scored. In all other cases, the players continue to stay in their respective service court from where they played the previous rally. This guarantees an alternate server.