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## Single-sided Pips-out Penholder Play - 4. Serving with pips

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### 4. Serving with pips.

Serving with pips is technically alike to serving with inverted rubber, but you have to put more venom into it in order to generate lots of spin. This is achieved by using your wrist and underarm; snap your wrist most aggressively when serving, and make the blade rotate for three quarters of a circle if you can. It is also very useful to try and deceive your opponent; if you can get him to read the kind of spin wrong, you do not have to put a lot of it into the ball. Perhaps the easiest way to deceive and the easiest way to put spin on the ball as well is the backspin/sidespin stab Jiang Jia-Liang was fond of using. It is executed as follows. Stand behind the left-hand corner of the table, the line of your hips at an angle with the baseline. Hold your bat tip down. Toss the ball up, lift your bat at the same time but keep the tip pointing down, and when the ball is coming down make contact when it is a couple of centimetres above the surface of the table. Do this by stabbing hard downward/inward with your bat, using your underarm, brushing the back of the ball just below its centre and a bit to the left side. At the same time snap your wrist inward. If you keep the bat vertical, backspin will be heavy; if you turn the tip of the bat slightly up when stabbing down (your opponent will not be able to notice this if you keep the face of the bat facing him), backspin will be moderate; if you mostly snap your wrist on making contact you will generate sidespin and if you do this while turning the tip of the bat slightly up, you will generate hardly any backspin at all. So with roughly the same movement you can vary very easily and be very deceptive. You should, of course, know beforehand where the return will come. Land the ball short and far on the forehand-side of your opponent's half of the table when you use sidespin; if he reads it wrong, the ball will go over the side at your left. Or land it less far on the forehand-side so you will get the return most likely somewhere in the middle of your half of the table, where you can hit it for a winner. If you use little or no backspin, be ready to smash the return.

For beginners: when you have learned these three basic elements, block, hit, and serve, you are ready to play. Actually I think it is well to play a while before learning more. This also applies to those who have turned from inverted to pips. Take time to blend left-hand defence and right-hand attack into a style you are comfortable with. When you are ready to go beyond basics, learn one technique at the time. First learn techniques for over the table play; then advanced techniques.