



Special Olympics

TENNIS COACHING GUIDE

Tennis Rules & Protocol

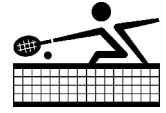
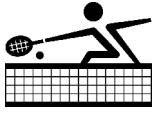


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Teaching Tennis Rules

The best time to teach the rules of tennis is during practice. The Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall govern all Special Olympics tennis competitions. As an international sports program, Special Olympics has created these rules based upon International Tennis Federation (ITF) Rules for tennis. ITF Rules shall be employed except when they are in conflict with the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules. In such cases, the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules shall apply. Please refer to the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules Book for the complete listing of tennis rules.

Match Play Rules

Competition will be governed by the Rules of Tennis from the official code of the ITF. Please note items of particular interest below.

Service: The service motion may be underhand or overhand. The ball shall not bounce before being struck.

Scoring: One six-game, no-ad pro set will be used, with a 12-point tiebreak played at six games all (6-6). Traditional scoring of love, 15, 30, 40, etc. or simplified scoring of 1, 2, 3, 4 may be used. At deuce (or 3–3), the server serves into the side of the court chosen by the receiver.

Continuous play: Umpires allow 25 seconds between points and 90 seconds on changeovers. There is no break after the first game.

Coaching: Players may receive coaching from a designated coach when the player changes ends at the end of a game. Coaching is not allowed during a tiebreaker.

Balls: Three new balls should be used for all matches.

Officials: Officials will call lines, service lets, foot faults, time violations and code violations under the ITF point penalty system. Lateness for match will be penalized in accordance with the point penalty system.

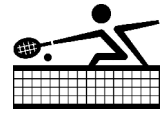
Medical Timeouts and Toilet Breaks: A medical timeout for each new medical condition, or aggravation of a pre-existing condition, may be taken during the warm-up or match for a treatable medical condition. Treatable medical conditions include, but are not limited to, injury, illness, and heat-related conditions and cramps. Once the umpire is notified and the trainer or medical personnel has reached the court and made a diagnosis that the condition is treatable, the three-minute treatment time begins. A player may request one or more toilet breaks during the match. Coaching is not allowed during medical breaks or toilet breaks. Players will be escorted during toilet breaks.

Unified Sports® Rules

There are few differences in the rules for Unified Sports doubles competition as stipulated in the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules and modifications outlined in the rules book. The additions are highlighted below.

- Each Unified Sports doubles team shall consist of one athlete and one partner.
- Each team shall determine its own order of service and selection of courts (ad or deuce).

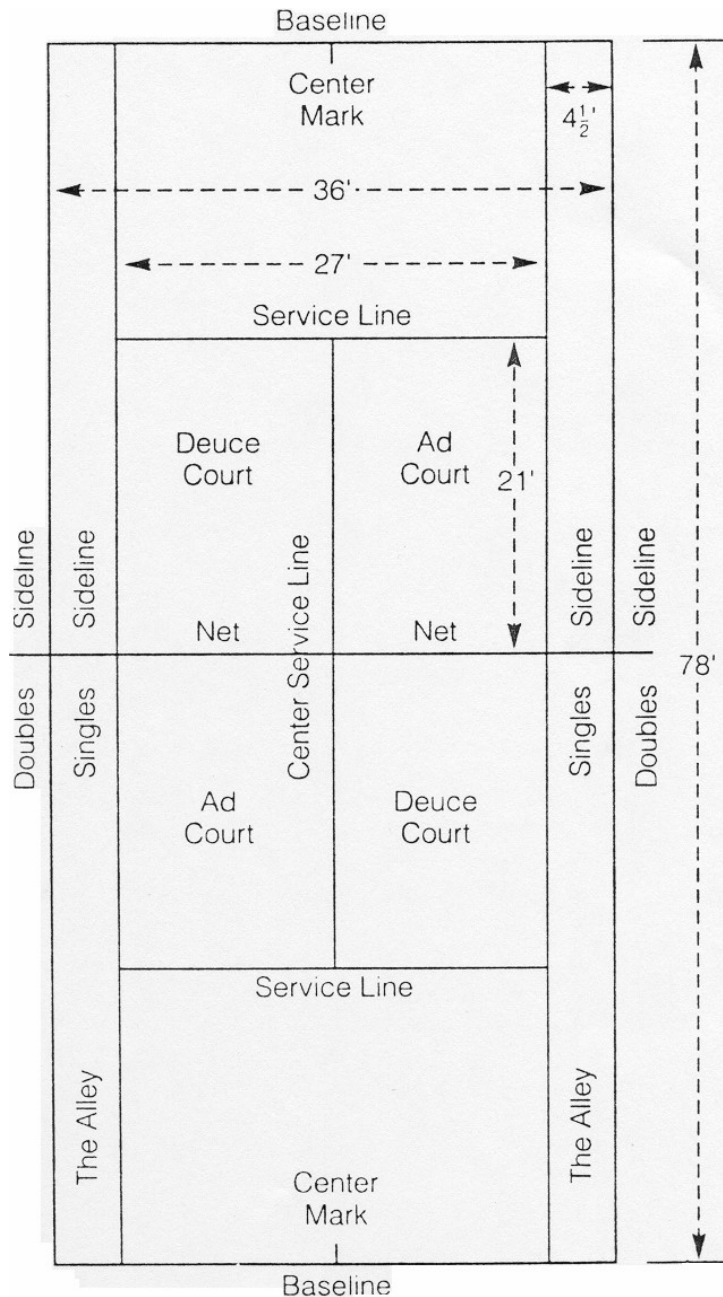
The selection of athletes and partners of similar age and ability is essential for Unified Sports doubles competition. Though rule modifications have been implemented to minimize differences between athletes and partners, inappropriate competition experiences and a higher risk of injury result from teams where athletes and partners are poorly matched.

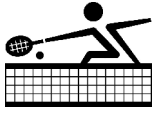


Protest Procedures

Protest procedures are governed by the rules of competition. The role of the Competition Management Team is to enforce the rules. As coach, your duty to your athletes is to protest an action or event that violates the Official Tennis Rules. Protests should be filed to correct a specific rules violation. Making a protest is a serious matter that impacts the competition schedule. Check with the Competition Management Team prior to competition to learn the protest procedures for that competition.

Tennis Court with Dimensions

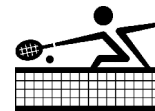




Tennis Protocol

Coaches and athletes should refer to the National Governing Body Code of Conduct in tennis for their respective country. An excellent resource in the United States is the United States Tennis Association (USTA) Code of Conduct, which may be found in the USTA publication *Friend at Court*. General conduct may include the following:

- ♦ Players make calls on their own side of the net. A player calls all shots landing on or aimed at the player's side of the net.
- ♦ A ball touching any part of the line is good.
- ♦ A player should not enlist the aid of a spectator in making a call.
- ♦ When a ball from an adjacent court enters the playing area, any player may call a let, as soon as the player becomes aware of the ball.
- ♦ The server shall announce the game score before the first point of the game and the point score before each subsequent point of the game.
- ♦ Athletes and coaches need to be aware of disruptive noises on and off the court.
- ♦ Be respectful to matches in play. Outside spectators should not be on the court.



Sportsmanship

Good sportsmanship is both the coach's and athlete's commitment to fair play, ethical behavior and integrity. In perception and practice, sportsmanship is defined as those qualities which are characterized by generosity and genuine concern for others. Below are highlighted a few focus points and ideas on how to teach and coach sportsmanship to athletes. Coaches should lead by example.

Tennis is a game that requires cooperation and courtesy from all participants. Make tennis a fun game by praising your opponent's good shots and by not exhibiting the following behaviours as noted in the *USTA Friend at Court*.

- Making loud noises after points.
- Complaining about shots, like lobs and drops shots.
- Embarrassing a weak opponent by being overly gracious or condescending.
- Losing your temper, using foul language, throwing your racket or slamming a ball in anger.
- Sulking when you are losing.

Competitive Effort

- Put forth maximum effort during each event.
- Practice with the same intensity as you would perform in competition.
- Always finish the event. Never quit.

Fair Play at All Times

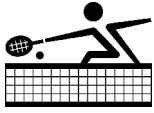
- Always comply with the rules.
- Demonstrate sportsmanship and fair play at all times.
- Respect the decision of officials at all times.

Expectations of Coaches

1. Always set a good example for participants and fans to follow.
2. Instruct participants in proper sportsmanship responsibilities and demand that they make sportsmanship and ethics a top priority.
3. Respect the judgment of officials, abide by rules of the event and display no behavior that could incite fans.
4. Treat opposing coaches, directors, participants and fans with respect.
5. Shake hands with officials and the opposing coach in public.
6. Develop and enforce penalties for participants who do not abide by the highest sportsmanship standards.

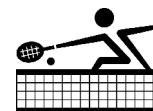
Expectations of Athletes and Partners in Unified Sports

1. Treat teammates with respect.
2. Encourage teammates when they make a mistake.
3. Treat opponents with respect. Shake hands prior to and after contests.
4. Respect the judgment of officials, abide by rules of the contest and display no behavior that could incite fans.
5. Cooperate with officials, coaches or directors and fellow participants to conduct a fair contest.
6. Do not retaliate (verbally or physically) if other athletes demonstrate poor behavior.
7. Accept seriously the responsibility and privilege of representing Special Olympics.
8. Define winning as doing your personal best.
9. Live up to the high standard of sportsmanship established by your coach.



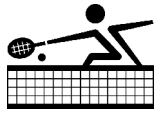
Remember

- ♦ Sportsmanship is an attitude that is shown by how you and your athletes act on and off the field of play.
- ♦ Be positive about competing.
- ♦ Respect your opponents and yourself.
- ♦ Always stay under control, even when you are feeling mad or angry.



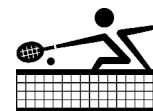
Tennis Glossary

Term	Definition
Ace	Ball served so well that the opponent fails to touch it with his/her racket.
Ad	Short for advantage in traditional scoring. It is the first point scored after deuce. Not used in the no-ad scoring system used for Special Olympics tennis competition.
Ad Court	Left service court.
Alley	The area between the singles sideline and the doubles sideline.
Approach	The shot hit from mid-court range that allows the player to come to the net to volley.
ATP	Association of Tennis Professionals; the organization for men's professional tennis.
Backcourt	Area between the service line and the baseline.
Backhand	The stroke that is used to return balls hit on the left side of a right-handed player and right side of a left-handed player. It can be hit with one or two hands. Note: Athletes should learn to hit a proper backhand not a right-handed forehand and a left-handed one.
Center Strap	Strap in the center of the net, anchored to the ground to hold the net secure.
Cross Court Shot	A shot in which the ball travels diagonally across the net from one corner to the other.
Deuce	A score of 40-40 in traditional scoring. Not used in the no-ad scoring system used for Special Olympics tennis competition.
Deuce Court	The right court, so called because the deuce point is played on that side.
Double Fault	The server loses the point if both of the two services attempts fail to cross the net and land in the appropriate service box.
Doubles	A match played by teams of two players. The court is extended to the doubles sidelines (after the serve).
Down the Line	A ball hit in a straight line near the sideline.
Draw	Procedure established to determine the position of each player in a tournament.
Drop shot	A touch shot that is hit softly over the net to force the opponent to run forward.
Etiquette	Rules of behavior on the tennis court.
Fault	A served ball that does not fall into the service box or goes into the net.
Fifteen	First point won by a player.
Foot Fault	An illegal serve caused by the server stepping on or over the baseline before hitting the ball.
Forehand	The stroke used to return balls hit to the right side of a right-handed player or the left side of a left-handed player.
Forty	Player's score after winning three points.
Game	The part of a set that is completed when one player or team wins four points. In no-ad tennis the scoring is 1, 2, 3, "game."
Good	A ball that lands inside the court or on the line forming the boundary of the court.



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Term	Definition
Grip	Bottom part of the racket that is used to grasp the racket.
Groundstrokes	Strokes played after the ball has bounced. Forehands and backhands are called groundstrokes.
Half Volley	Ball hit immediately following the bounce of the ball on the court.
In	A ball which lands within the boundaries of the court. Balls that hit any portion of the line are good in tennis.
ITF	International Tennis Federation.
Let	A point replayed because of interference; such as a ball rolling onto the court during play. This point would be replayed with two serves.
Let Serve	A serve that hits the top of the net and lands in the appropriate service box is replayed.
Lob	A stroke hit high in the air with the intent of being hit over a net playing opponent.
Love	A score of zero.
Match	A Special Olympics tennis match consists of one no-ad set. Traditional tennis matches are best 2 out of 3, or best 3 out of 5 sets.
Mixed Doubles	Doubles play in which a male and female team up to oppose another male and female team.
Net	The 3-foot barrier which divides the two sides of the court. To “play the net” means to attack your opponent by positioning yourself close to the net and hitting the ball before it bounces.
No-ad Scoring	The scoring system used in Special Olympics tennis in which the first player to win 4 points wins the game. If the point score reaches 3-3, the next point decides the game. The receiver has the choice of sides at 3-3.
Out	A ball is “out” if it lands outside of the boundaries of the court.
Overhead	An aggressive stroke played normally at the net when the ball is above the head.
Point	The smallest unit of score, awarded to a player when the opponent does not return a ball in play.
Racket	An implement used to strike the tennis ball.
Rally	A series of good shots exchanged between players. Also a term used for the type of practice where players intentionally hit balls back and forth to each other.
Receiver	The player who receives the service.
Referee	The official in charge of a tournament.
Serve	Short for service. It is the stroke used to put the ball into play. A server gets two chances to put the ball in play diagonally into the service box. The serve must be struck from a tossed ball (not off of a bounced ball).
Server	Player who serves the ball.
Service Box	Court area where a serve should be played. Deuce court or Advantage court.



Term	Definition
Set	The scoring unit that is awarded to the player or team that has won 6 games by a margin of at least 2 games. Examples: 6-2, 6-4 or 7-5. If the game score reaches 6-6 a tie-breaker is played.
Short Court	Short court is a transitional game utilizing the service box area only.
Singles	A match played by two players.
Tie-breaker or Tie-break	A system used to decide a set when the score is 6-all (6-6).
Thirty	Score which indicates a player has won 2 points.
Umpire	The person who officiates at a match.
Unified Sports Doubles	A Special Olympics event played with a doubles team, consisting of a Special Olympics tennis player and a peer tennis partner. Ideally, teammates would be of similar ages and ability levels.
Volley	A stroke made by hitting a ball before it has touched the ground. Normally done inside the service line.
WTA	Women's Tennis Association; the organization for women's professional tennis.

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