

# TENNIS

## COURTS

The surface of the court should be smooth, firm, and level. It may vary from grass to hard surfaced cement. Hard-surfaced courts afford playing soon after rains. Clay courts are best suited for team competition. Most clay courts in the United States are composition or rubico and not the red clay of European courts. Clay is particularly suited for match play (from the spectator's point of view) because the ball tends to hit and bounce rather than skid as on a hard-surfaced court, thus producing longer and more involved points. Although hard-surfaced courts cost more to build, they cost less in upkeep.

## DIMENSIONS

1. Singles court - 78 x 27 feet (23.8 x 8.24 m)
2. Doubles court - 78 x 36 feet (23.8 x 10.98 m) (4½ foot [1.37 m] alley added to each side)
3. Height of the net at center - 3 feet (.915 m), commonly measured by taking the length of the racquet plus the width of the racquet head
4. Height of the net at the posts - 3 ½ feet (1.07 m)
5. Height of the posts - 3 ½ feet (1.07 m)
6. Distance of the posts away from the side-lines - 3 feet (.915 m)
7. Distance between the baseline and the service line - 18 feet (5.49 m)
8. Distance between the service line and the net - 21 feet (6.41 m)

The end lines are called base lines, and the sidelines are called sidelines. The forecourt is near the net, and the back court is near the base lines. (See the figure below)

**(place picture of tennis court here)**

## START OF THE GAME

**T**he server always starts serving from the right side of the center line behind the base line. The server serves diagonally into the right service court, receiving two receiving two serves or chances to place the ball in this designated area.

## SCORING Game

**T**he sequence of scores in tennis for each successive point won by each player is 15, 30, 40, and game. If both the server and the receiver win a point, the score will be 15-all.

Deuce refers to the score of 40-all, not 30-all. When the score is tied after the point of 40-all, it is also referred to as deuce.

Love, in tennis, means that a player has a score of nothing.

Ad in or advantage in means that the server has won 1 point after the 40-all mark. Ad out or advantage out means that the receiver has won 1 point after the 40-all or deuce mark.

## Set

**A** set is completed when a player or team wins six games, provided the other player or team has not won more than four games. In other words, the winning player or player or team must win the set by at least two games. However, currently a tie-breaker is used to keep sets from being excessively long. When games reach 6-6, instead of continuing to play games, either a 9-point or a 12-point tie breaker is played. The 9-point system is most widely used and is played as follows: the player whose turn it is to serve serves the first 2 points (the points are scored by calling aloud the number of points each player wins). The serve now goes to the other player for 2 points. After 4 points have been determined, the players exchange sides of the court and the initial server serves the next 2 points.

## Match

**A** match consists of the best three out of five sets for men's national rules, both in singles and doubles. A match in women's national rules is best 2 out of 3.

## Let

The player serving receives two chances: if one of the serves (either the first or second) hits the net and lands in the proper service area, the serve is considered a let. The player is only permitted the let service over.

## RULES

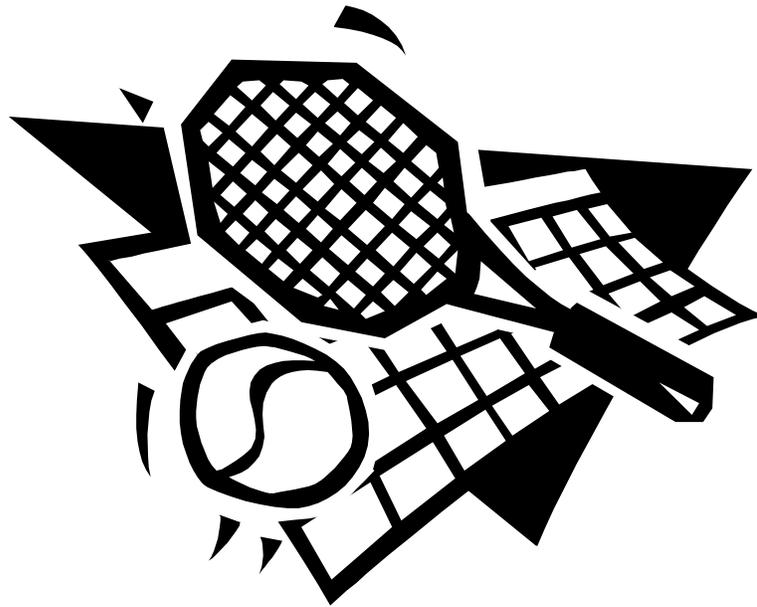
1. Players change courts on an odd number of games (1,3,5,7) of the total number of games.
2. A player loses a point in the following cases:
  - a. If the player allows the ball to bounce twice on the player's own side of the net. The ball must be returned after the first bounce or on a volley (volley meaning the ball is hit while in flight before striking the ground for the first time).
  - b. If the server or receiver returns a ball to any point outside the designated area.
  - c. If a player stops a ball before it goes out-of-bounds, regardless of whether or not it was going out-of-bounds. The player must let the ball bounce. A player may play a ball that is going out-of-bounds; however, if the return is not good, the point is lost.
  - d. If a player reaches over the net to play a ball. The ball must be contacted on the player's own side of the net. After contacting the ball on the player's own side of the net, it is legal to follow through with the stroke, provided that the net is not touched in the execution.
  - e. If a player throws a racquet at the ball.
3. A player cannot at any time invade the opponent's court with any part of the body or with the racquet.
4. A net ball is any ball hit into the net. In all cases the player committing this fault loses the point.
5. If the server fails to get the first serve into the serving court, it is called a single fault; if failing on both serves, it is a double fault, and the server loses the point.
6. Swinging at and missing a service toss constitute a fault. A player may toss the ball up for the serve as often as is necessary as long as a swing is not taken.
7. Any ball striking a permanent fixture other than the net is considered out-of-bounds and a point is lost. Balls hitting the top of a net post and falling in the court are good.
8. A player wins a point in the following instances:
  - a. By delivering an ace. An ace is a serve or return that the receiver does not touch and thus is unable to return.
  - b. During play when an opponent fails to return a shot.
  - c. When a receiver fails to return a serve on contacting the ball (called a fault).
  - d. After the service, when a ball touches the net and goes over into the opponent's court without being returned.
  - e. If a ball strikes a line, making it good, and is not returned.

## Foot faults

Foot faults pertain only to the server. During any serve, if the server commits a foot fault, that serve only is lost, not the point. In order to lose a point, the server must commit two foot faults in succession or a combination of a foot fault on one serve and another type of fault on the other. A foot fault occurs when the server touches the base line while serving.

## Additional rules

1. An underhand service is legal.
2. Receivers may stand anywhere on their own side of the net except inside the service box to which the serve is being made. After the serve is hit, servers play anywhere on their side.
3. The server's partner may stand anywhere on his or her own side of the net during service, but usually plays within 8 feet of the net on the side opposite that in which the serving partner stands.



## GLOSSARY

- ACE** A point scored on a shot that is impossible to return.
- ADVANTAGE IN** One point won by the server after the 40-all mark.
- ALLEY** The lane between the singles and doubles sidelines.
- BACKHAND** Hitting the ball with the back of the hand turned in direction of movement.
- BASE LINE** The boundary at the end of the court.
- CROSS COURT** Driving the ball diagonally across the court.
- DEUCE** The score of 40-all; also a tied score after the point of 40-all.
- FAULT** A service failure.
- FOOT FAULT** Touching the service line during the serve prior to contacting the ball.
- GAME** Reaching a score beyond 40 and being 2 or more points ahead of the opponent.
- GROUND STROKES** Strokes used after the ball has bounced.
- LET** To play the ball over; occurs when the ball hits the net and passes over it, when outside interference occurs, or when the receiver is not ready.
- LOVE** No score.
- MATCH** Contest play; may be two out of three sets, or three out of five.
- RALLY** To hit the ball a number of times.
- SERVICE BREAK** A game won by the receiver.
- SET** Six games, provided that a player or team wins by two or more games.
- SMASH** A hard hit ball from a position over the head.
- VOLLEY** To hit the ball before it bounces.