



Basic Tennis Information, Rules, Etiquette & Guidelines

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The Northwest Louisiana Community Tennis Association hopes this booklet is helpful with the recap on local rules and regulations, guidelines, etiquettes, etc., but for a actual and complete understanding of any local, state, or USTA rule and guidelines please refer to the links on last page.

Tennis Match Basic Information

You should be at the location of the match at least 15 minutes before the match is scheduled to begin.

- In USTA League if you are 15 minutes late that court can be defaulted by the other team. Please See local Rule and Regulation 2.01C95 for detailed information.

Public court team players pay their own individual court fees when playing another public court team. Public court players PAY for private club player court fees if the public court is home team.

- If you're a public court player and HOME Team you would pay for yourself and for 1 private club player.
- When a public court player is at the Private Club he/she does not pay a court fee for a USTA match.

Home team supplies the tennis balls.

A tennis match starts by racket spin.

On the end of your racket there is letter or shape.

- If you have a Wilson racket it is a "W". You then can use "M" or "W" when you spin your racket.
- If you have a racket with symbols, you simply tell other side which symbol is up or down then spin.
- You can either hold it in your hand or spin it until your opponent says "stop."
- You could also spin it on its head and let it drop.

Whoever wins the toss gets to pick if they want to serve first, choose their side, or defer (to the other player or team) to choose serve or side.

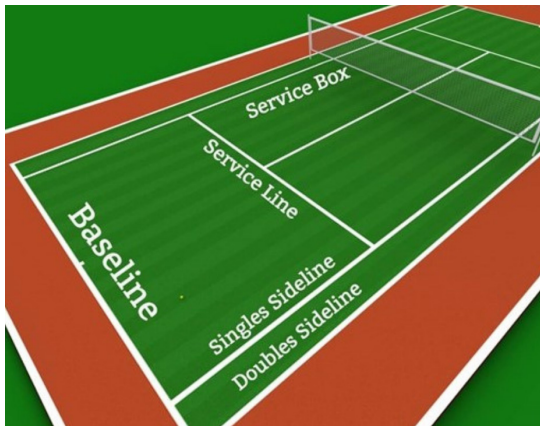
Warm-Ups

Warm-ups should be no more than 10 minutes which includes serves. Warm-ups are not practice. Each player should make special effort to hit shots directly back to the opponent.

To win a point during a tennis match you must hit the ball inside the white lines.

- If a ball goes out of bounds the point is over and whomever hit the ball out loses that point.
- If the ball lands on the lines, it is considered in and playable. One set of lines are for doubles and one set for singles.
- If you are playing singles the ball must land within the singles court which is outlined by the singles sideline and baseline.
- If you are playing doubles, you would use the doubles sideline and baseline to mark where the ball should land.

There also can be other lines on the courts for junior tennis, usually in a lighter blue, these are NOT used in adult tennis.



The diagram above shows the lines and their names.

Basic Doubles Vs. Singles Tennis Rules

For doubles, a player's line extends to include both alleys on both sides. For singles it DOES NOT include the doubles alleys.

- The ball is considered out of bounds if it lands in the double's alley.
- In doubles, you and your partner take turns serving during a match.
- One of you will serve 1st then the next time that your team is serving it would be your partners turn.

In singles, you and your opponent will switch serving between the two of you after every game.

Keeping Score in Tennis

Both you and your opponent should be keeping score.

- The person that is serving should announce the set score (i.e. 5-4) before starting a game and the game score (i.e. 30-40) prior to serving each point.
- If you forget the score, ask your partner, then announce the score before serving. If you both forget if you both forget score, confirm with your opponent if they know it.
- If you both have forgotten what it is, go back to the point that you both remember and go from there.
- Once the score has been said and the serve and point has happened the score stands so be sure it is correct.
- On change over use the score board to record the game count.

Switching Sides in Tennis

- You switch sides with your opponent after every odd game, ie., first, third, and fifth games, etc.
- There is NOT a break after the first game, only a changeover.

- When you switch sides (change over), break time is 90 seconds and set break time is 2 minutes.
- The changeover allows you to grab a quick drink or wipe off with a towel.
- A tennis bag at the bench filled with everything you may need during a match is a good thing to do.

Making Calls in Tennis

In recreational tennis there are not any line judges like you see in a professional match, therefore you and your opponent are the line judges.

- If you call a ball out then realize it was good, you should correct your call. The point goes to the opponent, NOT replayed. Use your partner for a reference, they may have had a better angle, and don't be shy about rescinding a call. Everyone makes mistakes.
- If you and your partners disagree on a call, the point should go to opponent. Remember that depending on the angle and where a person is standing their viewpoint could be different.
- Players makes calls on own side of the net. Opponent gets benefit of doubt. If you have any doubt as to whether a ball is out or good, you must give your opponent the benefit of the doubt and play the ball as good.
- Ball touching any part of line is good.
- It is your obligation to only call all balls on your side. If you think your opponent made a wrong call, you can ask them about it nicely, but it is their final call.
- Any "out" or "let" call must be made promptly, (i.e. made before either an opponent has hit the return or the return has gone out of play); otherwise the ball continues in play.
- If a ball rolls on court from another court, any player on the court affected may call a let as soon as player becomes aware of ball. Player loses the right to call a let if the player unreasonable delays making the call.
- Player cannot call a let on himself (i.e. ball falls out of his pocket, hat falls off etc). Only the opponent is allowed to make let call.
- DO NOT enlist the aid of spectators in making line calls or scoring disputes. All issues need to be solved on court by the players.

Players shall promptly acknowledge when:

- A ball in play touches a player.
- A player carries or double hits the ball.
- The ball bounces more than once in a player's court. Opponents are not entitled to make these calls.

Tennis Serving Rules

You must serve from behind the baseline. Avoid foot faults – a player's foot should not touch any part of the line until after the ball has been served.

- A serve is a "good" if it lands within the service box and bounces once before being hit by the receiver or touches any part of the net assembly, including its supports.
- A serve that hits near an opponent but does not touch him/her directly is still considered good even if your opponent does not hit it back.
- If your first serve lands out of the service box you get a second serve.
- If a serve hits the receiver or their partner before it bounces it is the opponents point so make sure you get out of the way.
- If you serve and the ball grazes the net and still falls in the serve box it is called a "let." A let means that you get to redo that serve.
- If your second serve lands out of the service box, the point is over and the point goes to the other team.

Service calls in doubles

The Receivers partner help with the call the service line and receiver should call the sideline and center service line. Nonetheless, either partner may call a ball that they clearly see on their side of the court.

- Any player can call a service let.
- A LET means the point is played over and a HINDERANCE means the point goes to the team calling the hinderance.

Hinderance Issues:

- A player shall not talk while the ball is on the opponent's side of the court.
- Any movement or any sound that is made solely to distract an opponent including but not limited to waving arms or racket or stamping the feet, should not happen and a hinderance can be called.

When the Ball Touches the Net

- Only during a serve can the ball touch the net, a let is called, and the server gets another serve. See above Tennis Serving Rules.
- If the ball touches the net at any other time during your match it is considered in play, and you would just keep playing the point as long as the ball is in bounds.

Hitting the Ball

- Use your racket to hit the ball.
- No carrying the ball with your racket.
- If the ball bounces twice the point is over.
- You cannot hit the ball twice in a row to get it over the net, only once.

- No throwing the ball during a point other than when you throw it in the air for your serve.

Other Ball Issues

- Wait until the players on another court have completed a point before retrieving or retuning a ball.
- If a player is touched or catches a ball before it bounces, the player loses the point.

Other Basic Tennis Code of Ethics and Courtesy:

- Use gates by your courts in between a point happening on either side of court when you are entering or leaving.
- Never get a ball or walk behind a match while a point is in progress.
- Don't return a bad serve unless it is necessary. This is not practice.
- When the match is over both teams should come to the net and tap rackets, shake hands, etc. to the other team and verbally confirm the scores of the match.

Captain and Basic Team Information

Setting Up Teams & General Info

The NWLA Community Tennis Association's website, www.playtennissb.com has all the information and links you will need to get started.

Go to the website and click the Adult Tennis Tab and you will see:

- Current Season Important Dates and Information
- Captains Hand Out Packet
- How to Create a Team
- Local Rules and Regulations
- How to enter scores
- Links for Friends of Court Rule Book
- Links for State Tournament Dates, etc.

Communication with Teammates

- It is recommended that you sign up for the monthly newsletter and like the NWLA CTA Facebook page and Instagram to stay current on all leagues and programs in the local area.
- When asking players on your team make sure they know and agree to League Season Dates and the DAY and TIME of match play and are available for most of the season, otherwise they may should find another timeframe that better fits their schedule.
- Tell your team the State Tournament Dates so they can mark in their calendar and be prepared for state should your team win Local League.
- Set up a GroupMe or some type of format to communicate with your players.
- Double check your team on tennis link to make sure everyone is

registered. All players MUST be registered before they play their first match or that court will be defaulted to the other team.

- It is a good practice to ask your players at the beginning of the season if they know any dates, they will not be available to play due to vacations, etc., and make a note of them so you can play them at other times if possible.
- When you look at Tennis Link to see date, time and location of a match be sure and double check the location by clicking on the map!
- It is also good practice not to wait until the last minute to try and get a line up ready for a match. Sending out a text or GroupMe 3-5 days ahead is best. This gives you time to see who all can play and make a line up.
- You should always remind your team and get final confirmations the morning of a match to ensure everyone will be there.

General Match Information & Courtesy Codes

Match Time

- Match time is NOT show up time.
- Please have your team show up 15 minutes before match time.
- At match time all players should be on court warming up for the match.

Home Team Duties

- The home team determines the court surface if the Tennis Director has not already set up the court surface. If you have different court surfaces, ie., 2 soft and 1 hard, the home team determines if it is Doubles 1 or 2 Court or the Singles court and must tell the visiting Captain before line ups are exchanged.
- The home team supplies the can of balls for each court.
- The home team pays the court fees of a PRIVATE CLUB player. Public Court teams pay their own court fees.

Line Up

- You should exchange your line up when all your players are on site. This can be done with the scorecard that can be printed online, from a blank piece of paper, or using your smart phone.
- If you have a player with a different name in Tennis Link than what they go by please make sure the Captain or person you are exchanging line up with is aware of this information.
- You should not show your line up to the other captain until you are both doing at the same time, otherwise they could allow the other team to change their lineup.
- After line ups are exchanged substitution only can be made for injury, illness, or no show only, for matches not started (first service attempt) and only with player not already in the lineup. Please see Rules and Regulations on the website for detailed information.

Defaults

- A team may take a default if the other team cannot play a court for the match 15 minutes from set start time. Please see Rules and Regulations on the website for detailed information.
- In the spirit of good sportsmanship, known defaults should be relayed to opposing team as soon as known.
- Known defaults must be from the bottom up, singles or 2 doubles. A 2.5 team can only default 1 court of the 3 for the match to count and to play
- If court is defaulted just prior to match opposing team has opportunity to re-arrange their line up.
- Player arriving late but before default time is entitled to a 5 min warm up. Reg2.01C(5)
- If courts are not available at starting time: Default time does not start till 1st (one) court is available for the match.
- Defaulting a whole match should not happen. See Local Rule and Regulation 2.01C(5)e for detailed information and consequences.

Match Play

- From the beginning of the match play should be continuous.
- There is NOT a break after the first game and change over; thereafter;
- Change over break time is 90 seconds and set break time is 2 minutes.
- A 3rd set tie break is treated like a game and you should not stop in between change overs.
- A person may take a bathroom break at any time after a point is completed or during changeover or during set break. This should be done as quickly as possible.
- Medical time outs are not enforced at the local level because a referee is not present at any of the local matches to enforce. When a player is injured, they should be given a "reasonable timeframe" to assess whether they are able to continue match play.

Sportsmanship and Behavior

- Spectators, including parents, friends and coaches are welcome at the match and enjoy matches. Their role, however, is clearly restricted to that of passive observer with no involvement of any kind during the match.
- Players are expected to put forth a full and honest effort regardless of the score or expected outcome.
- Players are expected to maintain full control over their emotions and behavior throughout the match. Any captain, player, or fan verbally or physically abusing an opposing player, player on the same team or any other individual may be asked to leave the facility.
- Team captains are responsible for informing their players of possible consequences for unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Cell phones and smartwatches are not allowed on the tennis courts at any time during a match. If a cell phone goes off during a point, this

is considered a hindrance and the opponent may claim the point. For detailed information please see Rules and Regulations on the website.

Entering Scores

- The winning team typically enters the score after a match but if agreed or communicated either team can enter the score. Both captains should always check the score and players entered to ensure it is correct.
- Make sure you have the correct NAMES when entering players and SCORES when entering players.
- Scores should be entered into TennisLink within 48 hours of match competition. If scores not entered it may lead to a double default. See Regulations on website for details.
- If there is an error, email opposing captain and CC your Local League Coordinator. Opposing captain must agree to change or scores enter will stand.

Include when submitting email for coordinator to correct score/players:

- Age, Level and League, Date of Match, all players and information and match number if possible.
- If you or a team player's rating changes, they MUST contact a local league coordinator so it can be submitted to the LTA for it to be changed on the current USTA Roster.

How to Record a Retirement (someone can't finish the match):

- Enter names and scores up to retirement, Click Retirement instead of Completed.

Weather

- Matches cannot be called due to weather until one (1) hour prior to match.
- Local league matches will be canceled when the temperature (including wind chill) is below 39 degrees Fahrenheit at the start of the scheduled match unless both team captains agree to play. Matches may be canceled when temperature (including windchill) drops below 39 degrees. Captains must notify the facility of postponement.
 - 2.01C(5)c Rescheduling Matches due to Inclement Weather: A match will be rescheduled if the wind chill is below 39 degrees one hour before the match is scheduled to begin, or if the courts are unplayable due to weather related causes (rain, snow, sleet, ect.), one hour before the match is scheduled to begin, as determined by the Head or Assistant Tennis Pro at the host facility. It is the responsibility of the hosting team's Captain to contact the Tennis Pro at the Host site to determine playability AND notify the Visiting Captain 1 hour before the match is scheduled to begin if the Match is to be rescheduled due to wind chill or weather. Canceled matches cannot be rescinded.
 - When determining weather, related to a match cancellation, go to www.playtennisb.com and click on CHECK THE WEATHER located in the center blue of the homepage. You must enter the host facility zip code. This can also be found on the website by clicking Clubs and Facilities on the home page. This will be the universal weather source used by local facilities and pros.
 - Please see the rest of the Rule on rescheduling on the website, www.playtennis.com, Under Adult Tennis Tab, Local Adult League Regulations.

- A Tennis Director may cancel a match if he/she deems the courts are not playable. The Tennis Director will contact the home captain and he/she will then contact the other captain.
- When rain or inclement weather forces the cancellation and re-scheduling of a team's match. Line-ups would stand only for those individual matches that have already started (first serve attempt) their match.
- All other individual matches, even those that were in warm-up may be changed including defaulted courts.
- Rescheduled matches should be made up within two (2) weeks of originally schedule match unless the state deadline date for the league is prior to the two (2) weeks, then matches need to be completed prior to the state deadline date. (See Rules and Regulations, Rainout Procedure on website)

Current Championship Information Links

All links are on our website www.playtennisb.com

2021 USTA LOUISIANA STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS

<https://louisianatennis.com/adult-state-tournaments>

2021 USTA SOUTHERN CHAMPIONSHIPS

<https://southernchampionships.com/>

2021 USTA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

<https://www.usta.com/en/home/play/adult-tennis/programs/national/usta-league-nationals-schedule.html>

USTA Louisiana Tennis Rules & Regulations

<https://louisianatennis.com/rules-and-regulations>

USTA Southern League Rules & Regulations

http://s3.amazonaws.com/ustaassets/assets/638/15/usta_southern_league_regulations_2019.pdf?intloc=headernavsub2

USTA National League Rules & Regulations

<https://www.usta.com/en/home/about-usta/who-we-are/national/officiating-rules-and-regulations.html>

