

Tennis Rules Spring 2021

General COVID Policies:

- All participants must show the supervisor on duty their approved Campus COVID Symptom Survey, as well as proof of testing within the last 7 days, prior to participating
- All participants will be required to stay home if they are sick
- Participants are expected to report positive cases for themselves or for individuals residing in their household. Participants will require medical clearance from Student Health and Counseling Services and will need to submit clearance to Ben Dao, Rec Sports Coordinator
 - If a participant reports a positive case, that individual will not be allowed to return to participate until they are cleared and submit clearance to the Rec Sports Coordinator.
 - Face coverings are required at all times for all participants, even when actively participating (exception will be activities in the pool)
 - All participants will be expected and continuously reminded to always engage in proper hand washing, good hygiene, good sanitizing practices, etc.

Tennis Specific COVID Policies:

- i. Physical distancing/No contact
 - 1. Participants will stay 6ft apart at all times.
 - 2. Doubles will be allowed once we reach Red Tier status.
 - 3. When beginning a match, sides will be designated as home and away. When changing sides, participants will have to move their equipment to their specified side and bench.
 - 4. If a ball is hit onto another court with players on it, they will need to return the ball using their racquets.
 - 5. Players will sanitize hands after each set
- ii. Equipment
 - 1. Each team will be given two balls at the beginning of the match.
 - 2. Each participant will be responsible for their own racquets, of which will not be shared with other participants. Any other items participants bring along will not be allowed to be shared (towels, water, etc.).
 - 3. Tennis balls are the main shared equipment. To allow players to play sets with each other, we will mark each player's tennis balls for the day (number with a sharpie marker).
 - Example- Team 1 will only serve/touch 'ball 1 & 2' and Team 2, only 'ball 3 & 4'.
 - 4. After matches, teams will be able to keep their designated balls
- iii. Small groups < 9
 - Only four (4) participants in addition to a supervisor will be allowed on each court at any given time. We will have participants sign up for game slots ahead of time, and only those who have signed up will be allowed on the courts.
 - Spectators will not be allowed.
- iv. Outdoors
 - Marya Welch Tennis Center, North Courts (ICA game courts)

USTA Tennis Rules Condensed

USTA Rules may be modified for Rec Sports Play at the discretion of the Rec Sports Office

RULE 1: The Court

The court shall be a rectangle, 78 feet (23.77m) long and, for singles matches, 27 feet (8.23m) wide. For doubles matches, the court shall be 36 feet (10.97m) wide.

RULE 2: Permanent Fixtures

The permanent fixtures of the court include the backstops and side stops, the spectators, the stands and seats for spectators, all other fixtures around and above the court.

RULE 3: The Ball

The ball shall have a uniform outer surface consisting of a fabric cover and shall be white or yellow in color. If there are any seams, they shall be stitched less. **2 Balls will be provided for each match.**

RULE 4: The Racquet

The hitting surface of the racquet shall be flat and consist of a pattern of crossed strings connected to a frame and alternately interlaced or bonded where they cross. The stringing pattern shall be generally uniform, and, in particular, not less dense in the center than in any other area. The racquet shall be designed and strung such that the playing characteristics are identical on both faces.

The frame of the racquet shall not exceed 32 inches (81.28cm.) in overall length, including the handle and 12.5 inches (31.75cm.) in overall width. The strung surface shall not exceed 15.5 inches (39.37cm.) in overall length, and 11.5 inches (29.21cm.) in overall width.

The frame, including the handle, shall be free of attached objects and devices other than those utilized solely and specifically to limit or prevent wear and tear or vibration, or to distribute weight. Any objects and devices must be reasonable in size and placement for such purposes.

The frame, including the handle and the strings, shall be free of any device which makes it possible to change materially the shape of the racquet, or to change the weight distribution in the direction of the longitudinal axis of the racquet which would alter the swing moment of inertia, during the playing of a point.

RULE 5: Score in a Game

a. Standard game (**THIS METHOD NOT USED FOR Rec Sports. PLAY, SEE PARAGRAPH "C" BELOW**)

A standard game is scored as follows with the server's score being called first:

No point	-	"Love"
First point	-	"15"
Second point	-	"30"
Third point	-	"40"
Fourth point	-	"Game"

If both players/teams have won three points, the score is “Deuce.” After “Deuce,” the score is “Advantage” for the player/team who wins the next point. If that same player/team also wins the next point, that player/team wins the “Game”; if the opposing player/team wins the next point, the score is again “Deuce.” A player/team needs to win two consecutive points immediately after “Deuce” to win the “Game.”

b. Tie-break game

During a tie-break game, points are scored “Zero,” “1,” “2,” “3” etc. The first player/team to win seven (7) points wins the “Game” and “Set,” provided there is a margin of two points over the opponent(s). If necessary, the tie-break game shall continue until this margin is achieved.

The player whose turn it is to serve shall serve the first point of the tie-break game. The following two points shall be served by the opponent(s) (in doubles, the player of the opposing team due to serve next). After this, each player/team shall serve alternately for two consecutive points, until the end of the tie-break game (in doubles, the rotation of service within each team shall continue in the same order as during that set).

The player/team whose turn it was to serve first in the tie-break game shall be the receiver in the first game of the following set.

**c. “No-Ad” Scoring Method (THIS IS THE METHOD USED FOR Rec Sports PLAY)
This alternative scoring method may be used.**

A standard game is scored as follows with the server’s score being called first:

No point	-	“Love”
First point	-	“15”
Second point	-	“30”
Third point	-	“40”
Fourth point	-	“Game”

If both players/teams have won three points each, the score is “Deuce” and a deciding point shall be played. The receiver(s) shall choose whether to receive the service from the right half or the left half of the court. In doubles, the players of the receiving team cannot change positions to receive this deciding point. The player/team who wins the deciding point wins the “Game.”

RULE 6: Score in a Set

The first player/team to win six games wins that “Set,” provided there is a margin of two games over the opponent(s). If the score reaches six games all, a tie-break game shall be played.

RULE 7: Score in a Match

A match will be played to the best of 3 sets (a player/team needs to win 2 sets to win the match). If the match enters a third set, that set will be played as a tie-breaker (we will not play a full 3rd set). The match must be completed within an hour and 15 minutes.

RULE 8: Server and Receiver

The player/teams shall stand on opposite sides of the net. The server is the player who puts the ball into play for the first point. The receiver is the player who is ready to return the ball served by the server.

RULE 9: Choice of Ends and Service

The choice of ends and the choice to be server or receiver in the first game shall be decided by toss before the warm-up starts. The player/team who wins the toss may choose:

- (a) To be server or receiver in the first game of the match, in which case the opponent(s) shall choose the end the end of the court for the first game of the match; or
- (b) The end of the court for the first game of the match, in which case the opponent(s) shall choose to be server or receiver for the first game of the match; or
- (c) To require the opponent(s) to make one of the above choices.

RULE 10: Change of Ends

The players shall change ends at the end of the first, third and every subsequent odd game of each set. The players shall also change ends at the end of each set unless the total number of games in that set is even, in which case the players change ends at the end of the first game of the next set.

During a tie-break game, players shall change ends after every six points.

RULE 11: Ball in Play

Unless a fault or a let is called, the ball is in play from the moment the server hits the ball, and remains in play until the point is decided.

RULE 12: Ball Touches a Line

If a ball touches a line, it is regarded as touching the court bounded by that line.

RULE 13: Ball Touches a Permanent Fixture

If the ball in play touches a permanent fixture after it has hit the correct court, the player who hit the ball wins the point. If the ball in play touches a permanent fixture before it hits the ground, the player who hit the ball loses the point.

RULE 14: Order of Service

At the end of each standard game, the receiver shall become the server and the server shall become the receiver for the next game.

In doubles, the team due to serve in the first game of each set shall decide which player shall serve for that game. Similarly, before the second game starts, their opponents shall decide which player shall serve for that game. The partner of the player who served in the first game shall serve in the third game and the partner of the player who served in the second game shall serve in the fourth game. This rotation shall continue until the end of the set.

RULE 15: Order of Receiving in Doubles

The team which is due to receive in the first game of a set shall decide which player shall receive the first point in the game. Similarly, before the second game starts, their opponents shall decide which player shall receive the first point of that game. The player who was the receiver's partner for the first point of the game shall receive the second point and this rotation shall continue until the end of the game and the set.

After the receiver has returned the ball, either player in a team can hit the ball.

RULE 16: The Service

Immediately before starting the service motion, the server shall stand at rest with both feet behind (i.e., further from the net than) the baseline and within the imaginary extensions of the center mark and the sideline.

The server shall then release the ball by hand in any direction and hit the ball with the racquet before the ball hits the ground. The service motion is completed at the moment that the player's racket hits or misses the ball. A player who is able to use only one arm may use the racquet for the release of the ball.

RULE 17: Serving

When serving in a standard game, the server shall stand behind alternate halves of the court, starting from the right half of the court in every game.

In a tie-break game, the serve shall be served from behind alternate halves of the court, with the first served from the right half of the court.

The serve shall pass over the net and hit the service court diagonally opposite, before the receiver returns it.

RULE 18: Foot Fault

During the service motion, the server shall not:

- (a) Change position by walking or running, although slight movements of the feet are permitted.
- (b) Touch the baseline or the court with either foot.
- (c) Touch the area outside the imaginary extension of the sideline with either foot.
- (d) Touch the imaginary extension of the center mark with either foot.

If the server breaks this rule, it is a “Foot Fault.”

RULE 19: Service Fault

The service is a fault if:

- (a) The server breaks **rules 16, 17 or 18**; or
- (b) The server misses the ball when trying to hit it; or
- (c) The ball served touches a permanent fixture, singles stick or net post before it hits the ground; or
- (d) The ball served touches the server or server’s partner, or anything the server or server’s partner is wearing or carrying.

RULE 20: Second Service

If the first service is a fault, the server shall serve again without delay from behind the same half of the court from which that fault was served, unless the service was from the wrong half.

RULE 21: When to Serve & Receive

The server shall not serve until the receiver is ready. However, the receiver shall play to the reasonable pace of the server and shall be ready to receive within a reasonable time of the server being ready.

A receiver who attempts to return the service shall be considered as being ready. If it is demonstrated that the receiver is not ready, the service cannot be called a fault.

RULE 22: The Let during a Serve

The serve is a let if:

- (a) The ball served touches the net, strap or band, and is otherwise good; or, after touching the net, strap or band, touches the receiver or the receiver’s partner or anything they wear or carry before hitting the ground; or,
- (b) The ball is served when the receiver is not ready.

In the case of a service let, that particular service shall not count, and the server shall serve again, but a service let does not cancel a previous fault.

RULE 23: The Let

In all cases when a let is called, except when a service let is called on a second service, the whole point shall be replayed.

RULE 24: Player Loses Point

The point is lost if:

- (a) The player serves two consecutive faults; or
- (b) The player does not return the ball before it bounces twice consecutively; or
- (c) The player returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, or an object, outside the correct court; or
- (d) The player returns the ball in play so that, before it bounces, it hits a permanent fixture; or
- (e) The player deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on the racquet or deliberately touches it with the racquet more than once; or
- (f) The player or the racquet, whether in the player's hand or not, or anything which the player is wearing or carrying touches the net, net posts/singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, or the opponent's court at any time while the ball is in play; or
- (g) The player hits the ball before it has passed the net; or
- (h) The ball in play touches the player or anything that the player is wearing or carrying, except the racquet; or
- (i) The ball in play touches the racquet when the player is not holding it; or
- (j) The player deliberately and materially changes the shape of the racquet when the ball is in play; or
- (k) In doubles, both players touch the ball when returning it.

RULE 25: A Good Return

It is a good return if:

- (a) The ball touches the net, net posts/singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, provided that it passes over any of them and hits the ground within the correct court; except as provided in **Rule 2 and 24(d)**; or
- (b) After the ball in play has hit the ground within the correct court and has spun or been blown back over the net, the player reaches over the net and plays the ball into the correct court, provided that the player does not break **Rule 24**; or

- (c) The ball is returned outside the net posts, either above or below the level of the top of the net, even though it touches the net posts, provided that it hits the ground in the correct court; except as provided in **Rules 2 and 24(d)**; or
- (d) The ball passes under the net cord between the singles stick and the adjacent net post without touching either net, net cord or net post and hits the ground in the correct court; or
- (e) The player's racquet passes over the net after hitting the ball on the player's own side of the net and the ball hits the ground in the correct court; or
- (f) The player hits the ball in play, which hits another ball lying in the correct court.

RULE 26: Hindrance

If a player is hindered in playing the point by a deliberate act of the opponent(s), the player shall win the point.

However, the point shall be replayed if a player is hindered in playing the point by either an unintentional act of the opponent(s), or something outside the player's own control (not including a permanent fixture).

RULE 27: Correcting Errors

As a principle, when an error in respect to the Rules of Tennis is discovered, all points previously played shall stand. Errors so discovered shall be corrected as follows:

- (a) During a standard game or a tie-break game, if a player serves from the wrong half of the court, this should be corrected as soon as the error is discovered and the server shall serve from the correct half of the court according to the score. A fault that was served before the error was discovered shall stand.
- (b) During a standard game or a tie-break game, if the players are at the wrong ends of the court, the error should be corrected as soon as it is discovered and the server shall serve from the correct end of the court according to the score.
- (c) If a player serves out of turn during a standard game, the player who was originally due to serve shall serve as soon as the error is discovered. However, if a game is completed before the error is discovered, the order of service shall remain as altered.

A fault that was served by the opponent(s) before the error was discovered shall not stand.

In doubles, if the partners of one team serve out of turn, a fault that was served before the error was discovered shall stand.

- (d) If a player serves out of turn during a tie-break game and the error is discovered after an even number of points have been played, the error is corrected immediately. If the error is discovered after an odd number of points have been played, the order of service shall remain as altered.

A fault that was served by the opponent(s) before the error was discovered shall not stand.

In doubles, if the partners of one team serve out of turn, a fault that was served before the error was discovered shall stand.

- (e) During a standard game or a tie-break game, if there is an error in the order of receiving, this shall remain as altered until the end of the game in which the error is discovered. For the next game in which they are the receivers in that set, the partners shall then resume the original order of receiving.
- (f) If in error a standard game is started at 6 games all, when it was previously agreed that the set would be a “Tie-break set,” the error shall be corrected immediately if only one point has been played. If the error is discovered after the second point is in play, the set will continue as a “Tie-break set.”
- (g) If in error a standard game is started at 6 games all, when it was previously agreed that the set would be a “Tie-break set,” the error shall be corrected immediately if only one point has been played. If the error is discovered after the second point is in play, the set will continue as an “Advantage set” until the score reaches 8 games all (or a higher even number), when a tie-break game shall be played.
- (h) If in error an “Advantage set” or “Tie-break set” is started, when it was previously agreed that the final set would be a deciding match tie-break, the error shall be corrected immediately if only one point has been played. If the error is discovered after the second point is in play, the set will continue either until a player or team wins three games (and therefore the set) or until the score reaches 2 games all, when a deciding match tie-break shall be played. However, if the error is discovered after the fifth game has started, the set will continue as a “Tie-break set.”

RULE 28: Continuous Play

As a principle, play should be continuous, from the time the match starts (when the first service of the match is put in play) until the match finishes.

- (a) Between points, a maximum of twenty (20) seconds is allowed. When the players change ends at the end of a game, a maximum of ninety (90) seconds are allowed. However, after the first game of each set and during a tie-break game, play shall be continuous and the players shall change ends without a rest.

At the end of each set there shall be a set break of a maximum of one hundred and twenty (120) seconds.

The maximum time starts from the moment that one point finishes until the first service is struck for the next point.

- (b) If, for reasons outside the player’s control, clothing, footwear or necessary equipment (excluding the racquet) is broken or needs to be replaced, the player may be allowed reasonable extra time to rectify the problem.
- (c) No extra time shall be given to allow a player to recover condition. However, a player suffering from a treatable medical condition may be allowed one medical time-out of three minutes for the treatment of that medical condition. A limited number of toilet/change of attire breaks may also be allowed, if this is announced in advance of the event.

- (d) The warm-up time shall be a maximum of five (5) minutes, unless otherwise decided by the event organizers.**
- (e) Substitutions are only allowed on a permanent basis. Should you require a new partner due to injury or other extenuating circumstances, you may switch to a new partner with approval from the Rec Sports office. Once replaced, the original partner may not return to his/her original team**

For questions on the rules description please contact the Rec Sports Office

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