

YELLOW BALL

COMMUNITY AND COACH'S CURRICULUM

Yellow Ball Practice And Play Plans

YELLOW BALL 2 | YELLOW BALL 1



DEAR COACH,

WELCOME TO NET GENERATION!

On behalf of the USTA, thank you for supporting Net Generation. You are the key to growing the game, and together, we can shape the future of tennis. Net Generation isn't just a new brand—it's a comprehensive platform and development program for kids ages 5 through 18. By creating a singular platform for tennis that we all can rally behind, and through the support the USTA will offer along the way, we believe we can grow participation, instill the love of the game in future generations, and ensure that tennis remains a vibrant sport in our communities for years to come.

As U.S. Fed Cup and U.S. Davis Cup captains, former professional tennis players, and parents, we are Net Generation ambassadors because we believe this new approach will benefit the growth of youth tennis. We believe that no other sport is meeting the needs of today's discerning parents, players, coaches, and community organizations quite like we will with Net Generation.

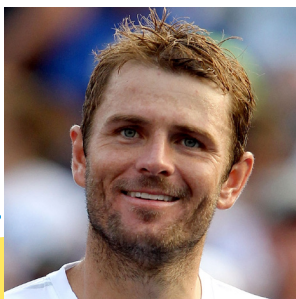
By registering and becoming an active part of Net Generation, you will get access to the very best in coaching curriculum, digital tools and resources that make teaching, coaching, planning and playing easier, and marketing resources and support to enhance your programs' visibility. The USTA created Net Generation with you in mind and we hope to hear from you about what is working, what is not, and what additional materials, curriculum and tools will help you. After all, this is your brand and without your talents as a coach, teacher, and mentor, we cannot inspire kids to get in the game—and stay in it.

This coach's manual is just one item under the Net Generation brand. It's comprehensive, competency-based, collaborative, and packaged conveniently online with additional resources to help you customize your approach to teaching the sport you love.

Again, thank you for being a part of Net Generation! Together, we will shape the future of tennis!

Mardy Fish

U.S. Davis Cup Captain
Net Generation Ambassador



Kathy Rinaldi

U.S. Fed Cup Captain
Net Generation Ambassador



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YELLOW 1

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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for registering with Net Generation. It is great to have you as part of the team where our focus is to have more kids playing tennis more often. Net Generation starts with all of us, and we're here to usher in a new era of tennis in the United States.

Net Generation is the United States Tennis Association (USTA) official youth brand and development program that captures the imagination of parents and children ages 5 through 18. One that taps into the adaptability and creativity children and parents seek when choosing activities.

The following practice and play plans are unique to the USTA and have been developed and designed specifically for you, the coach. In doing so they are:

COMPREHENSIVE

Covers the beginner red ball to the advanced green ball player, and now includes yellow ball.

COMPETENCY BASED

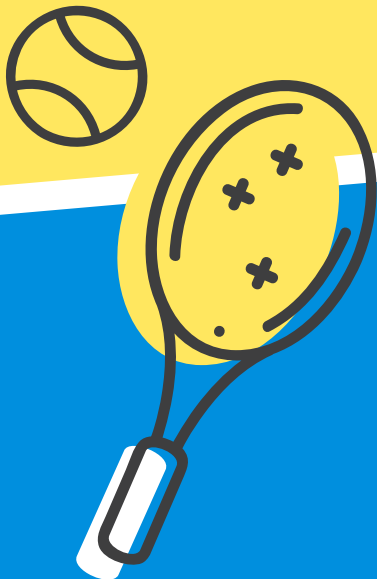
Spells out the skills and knowledge each player should have before moving to the next ball and court size.

COLLABORATIVE

Includes eleven levels developed by the USTA Community Tennis and Player Development divisions, USPTA and PTR, and subject matter experts in the field from the U.S. and abroad.

CONVENIENT

Lets you select the method of delivery that works best for you—printed manual, downloadable PDFs, or coaches app.



Inside this manual you'll find two levels of Practice and Play Plans—Yellow Ball 2 and Yellow Ball 1. Each plan consists of eight chapters. We recommend you use each Practice Plan twice before moving on to the next plan. When you finish all the plans, you can start from the beginning again or move certain players to the next level.

For community coaches, these plans are for players who have successfully moved through red, orange, and green and ready for more challenge. There are a few changes from the community plans.

- Numbering is the opposite, Yellow 2 represents the first level and Yellow 1 is the top level.
- Includes more advanced coaching and teaching tips – use what you can.
- Does not contain game components or free play – add these as needed.

Before you get started, take some time to review the necessary equipment, structure of the plans and descriptions of the activities.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

MEDICINE BALLS

Lightweight medicine balls or junior-size basketball.

YELLOW BALLS

Used on the 78-foot court.

RACQUETS

26-inches or longer for the 78-foot court with yellow ball.

BALL BUCKETS

40 to 60-quart plastic containers or small plastic paint buckets. The large containers can hold playground balls or yellow balls, and the small buckets are ideal when players work in small groups and need a limited supply of balls.

POLY-SPOTS AND THROW-DOWN LINES (TDLs)

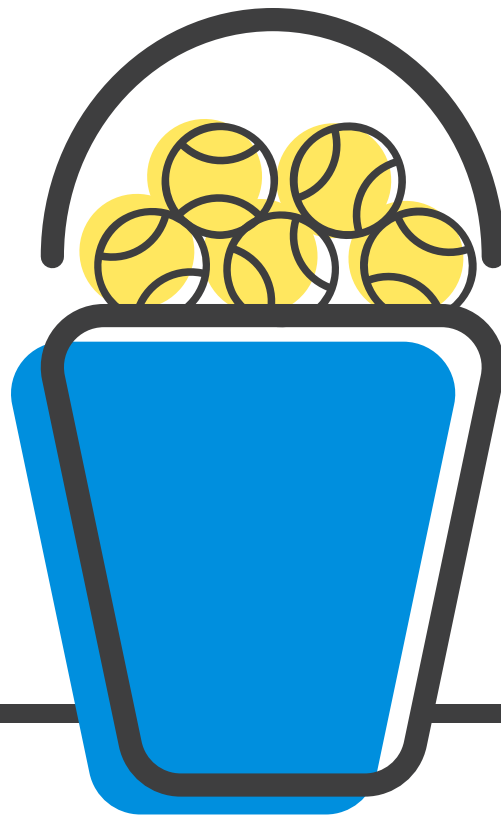
For targets, recovery spots, court lines, group control, etc.

FOOTBALLS

Junior size footballs, one size smaller than regulation.

CONES

9-inch and half-cones.



STRUCTURE OF PRACTICE AND PLAY PLANS

WARMUP

Partner-based activities that focus on control and theme of the day.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Athletic: Covers tennis-specific movement, ABCs (agility, balance, coordination), speed, strength, and advanced tossing/throwing/catching activities.

Tennis: Focuses on developing all five ball controls (direction, height, depth, speed, spin) and all phases of movement.

GAMES

Skills learned from practices will be applied to tactical situations during games.

CHARACTER

Practices have a character theme that can apply to tennis and life.

PLAY ON YOUR OWN

After each lesson, players are assigned specific challenges to practice at home with friends or family, or on the court.



DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES



TYPE

Individual: Independent skill development.

Team: Two or more players.

Cooperative: Pairs or groups focused on improving skills together.

Competitive: Scoring and declaring a winner.

Hand/Racquet-Feed: How the ball is introduced into the activity—can be player or coach.

FOCUS

Specific areas to work on.

SETUP

Location of players, balls, and equipment.

MISSION

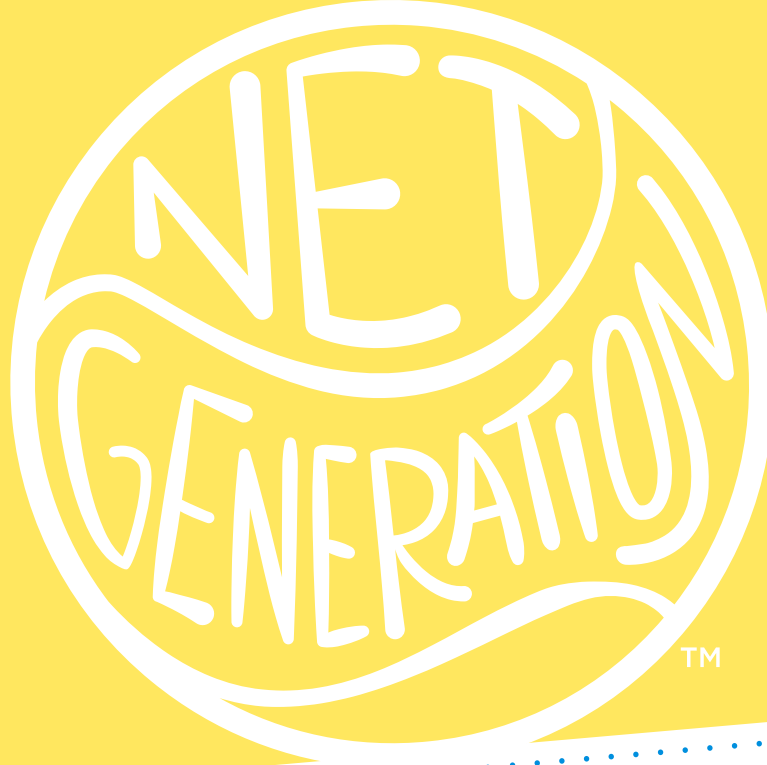
What we want players to do, followed by bullets with specific instructions.

GOAL

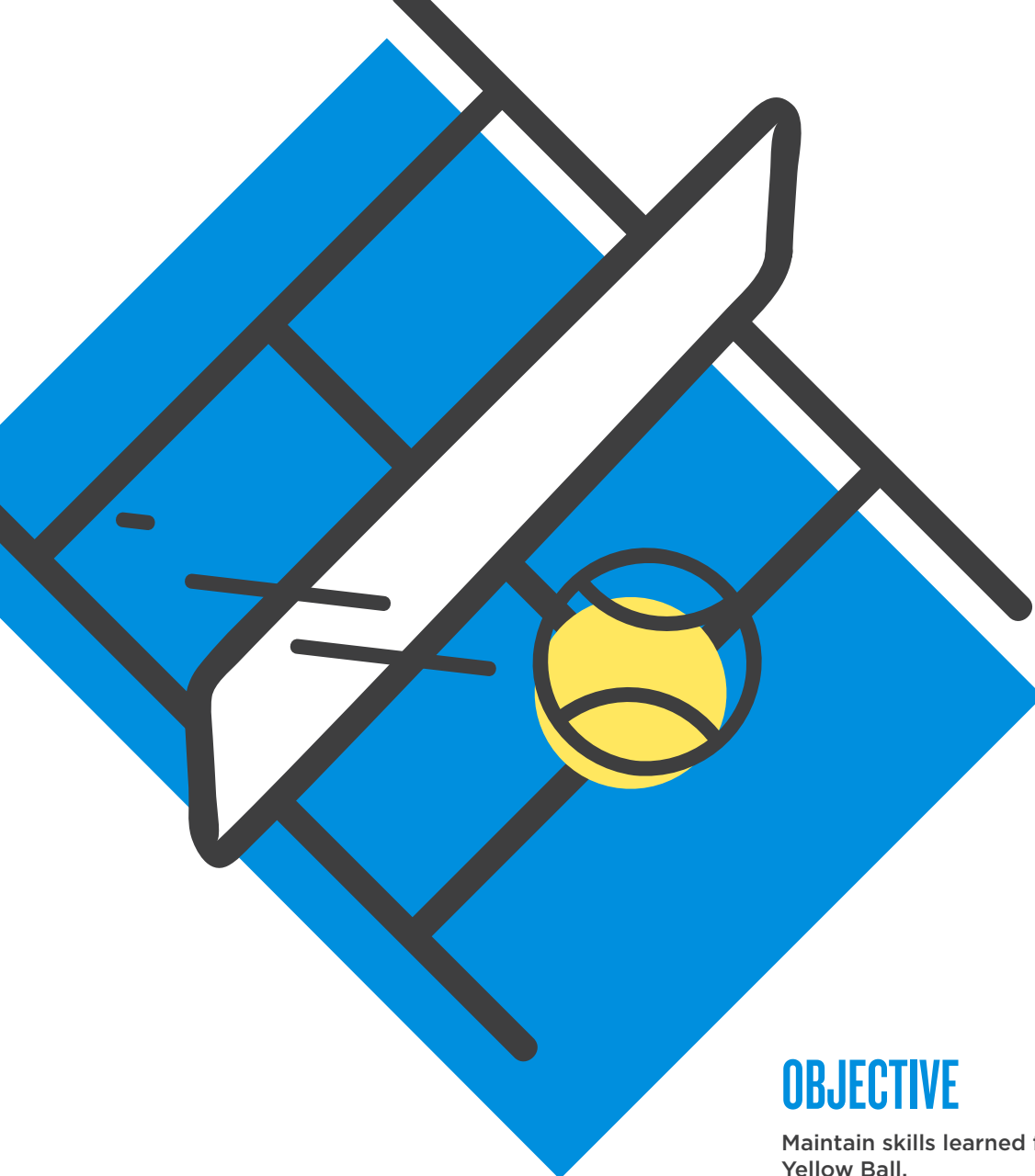
How we want players to execute the activity, generally related to a specific competency.

PROGRESSIONS

Specific steps to increase the difficulty of the skill/activity, to be used in subsequent practices or to handle mixed abilities.



YELLOW BALL 2



OBJECTIVE

Maintain skills learned from Green and adapt to the Yellow Ball.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Total: 90 minutes

- Warm-up: 6 - 10 minutes
- Athletic Skills: 15 - 20 minutes
- Tennis Skills: 10 - 12 minutes each (20 - 24 minutes total)
- Games: 15 - 20 minutes each (30 - 40 minutes total)
- Play-on-your-own Review: 3 minutes or less

Note: For all chapters, there will be a cooperative tennis skill that will lead to a game, then another cooperative skill that will lead to a game.



NOTES:

For this level, a dynamic stretch at the beginning and static stretch at the end are important. If properly trained, players can do these outside of the practice session.

PLANS AT A GLANCE



Warmup	Character	Athletic Development	Tennis Skills	Games	Play on Your Own
01 Keep It Deep	Build Up Confidence	Obstacle Course Make 'Em Move	Squeeze Rally Serve Plus One	Budge All Position Doubles	Play with a Friend
02 Whatcha Got?	Mini-Tennis Gratitude	Big Ball Tennis Four-Corner Toss	Control It! First Four	What's it Worth? First Four Live	Rally for Numbers
03 Double Trouble	Mini-Tennis Leadership	Jump Rope Quarterback	Volley Controls Overhead warm-up	Mini-tennis Dubz Lob and Play	Volley to Wall
04 Over And Under	7 Up Courage	Serpentine Shuffle Fence Throws	Slice and Dice Toss/hit/catch: Topspin	Mini-tennis points Crazy Feed	Over and Under
05 Move It	V Groundstrokes Persistence	Copy Cat Make 'Em Move	Four Square Rally V Volley	Four Square Huff and Puff	Move 'Em
06 Over My Head	Mini-tennis Aspire	Crossover Shuffle Three-ball throw	Serve Plus One Hi-Lo	Moonballer Airmail	Lob It
07 Team Up	Mini-tennis Dubz Teamwork	Hi-Lo Toss Relay Races	Up and Back Volley Three-level Serve	Two On One Attack Triples	Play Dubz
08 Let's Play	Mini-Tennis Points Resilience	Ultimate Tennis	Serve Index	Team Defender Up and Down the River Doubles	College Match

KEEP IT DEEP

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

BUILD UP

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Pair up players, two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Players start on service line.

Mission – Keep ball in play.

- Players rally back and forth using either stroke.
- Coach determines number of shots to rally back and forth (e.g. six).
- Once number is achieved, players increase rally goal by increments of two shots.
- Once successful, move to baseline.

Goal – Increase size and length of swing as you move further back.

Progressions

1. One stroke.
2. Rally crosscourt in a diagonal.
3. Outside stroke only (for righties, forehand on deuce side, backhand on add side).



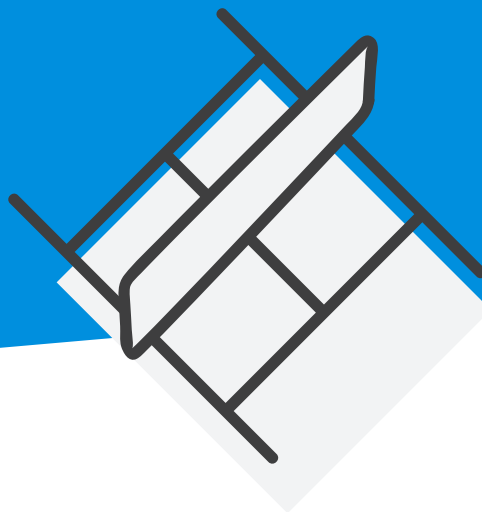
TEACHING TIP

When delivering the character piece, try to be a facilitator instead of a lecturer. Ask questions, such as “What does confidence mean to you?” “How can you become more confident?” This keeps the kids engaged, and gives them ownership.

II. CHARACTER

CONFIDENCE

Believe in yourself and your abilities.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

OBSTACLE COURSE

Setup

- Use four cones to create a 20x20-foot square in center of court on each side of net. Keep square a safe distance from net.
- Four to six players per square.

Mission

- Proceed from cone to cone using different movements. Next player goes when previous player reaches second cone.
- After each player has gone twice, change movement.

Progressions

1. Carioca. One round facing in, next facing out.
2. Skip. Change direction at each cone— forward, sideways, backward, sideways.
3. Sprint. Run to cone and stop, balanced on one leg, then run to next cone and stop, balanced on other leg.
4. Circles. Run to each cone and make a complete circle around it. Face same direction as player circles the cone.

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs, with a ball and TDL.
- No more than three pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as “home base.”

Mission

- Make catcher move by tossing balls side to side, high/low, and deep/short. Catch on one bounce.
- Catcher uses right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- Switch roles every minute.
- Need help? Allow players to catch with two hands, move closer.

Progressions

1. Toss higher and catch in air.
2. Increase distance between pairs.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

SQUEEZE RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Players start on opposite baselines with two TDLs each.
- Start with doubles line as one boundary and TDLs as other.
- Place TDLs parallel to each other to create a straight line.

Mission - Control rally within court boundaries.

- Start rally with straight-ahead serve and return.
- Rally four balls (two each) in boundary and yell, "Squeeze!". Then move TDLs in one racquet length.
- Continue until boundary is too narrow.

Goal - Extend follow-through to help direct ball into boundaries.

Progressions

1. Increase number of shots required.
2. Any stroke, then one stroke.



TEACHING TIP

Some players may be moving to yellow ball for the first time, others may be playing yellow and have difficulty keeping the ball in play. Remember to still use the green ball as a developmental tool for those who struggle with groundstroke consistency.

BUDGE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs, and competitive.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Need at least six players to be effective.
- Players in pairs rallying on half-court, two pairs per court.

Mission - Keep ball in play.

- Coach assigns different number of balls for each half-court to rally. Points begin with serve.
- An example for six players would be top court must rally 10 straight, middle court must complete eight, and bottom court six.
- Players yell "Budge!" when they reach their rally number.
- If bottom-court players yell "Budge!" first, they trade places with middle-court players.
- If middle-court players are successful before top-court players, they trade places with top-court.
- Make adjustments to number of shots required based on how many players are involved.

Goal - Use a combination of spin, height and speed to improve consistency.

Progressions

1. Hitting past service line counts two.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

SERVE PLUS ONE

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, each hitting diagonally across net from each other.
- Start on baseline.

Mission - Execute serve, return and first ball.

- Serve, return, hit one ground stroke and trap ball.
- Returner serves and continues sequence.
- Each player completes four sequences, then switches sides of court (deuce to ad).

Goal - Use continental grip on serve.

Progressions

1. Score a point for each complete sequence – go for a “court record”.
2. Serve to specific half of service box.

ALL POSITION DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Doubles positioning.

Setup

- Four to six players per court.
- Players begin in a one up/one back doubles formation.

Mission - Learn to play all four positions in doubles.

- Play doubles points and rotate positions one spot at a time.
- With five players, have one player out at net post.
- With six players, have a player out at each net post.

Goal - Move with ball at net, rally crosscourt from baseline.

Progressions

1. Server and returner must stay back.
2. One side can come in on short balls.
3. No lobs, then lobs allowed.



COACHING TIP

Use this time to review different situations that occur in doubles. Wait for situations to develop during a point, then ask players how they responded or could have responded.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

PLAY WITH A FRIEND

Setup

- Call a friend to practice.

Progressions

1. Rally groundstrokes for numbers.
2. Create fun games.

WHATCHA GOT?

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer; yellow balls; cones, poly-spots, medicine balls and TDLs.

I. WARM UP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction, spin.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All activities inside service box on half-court.

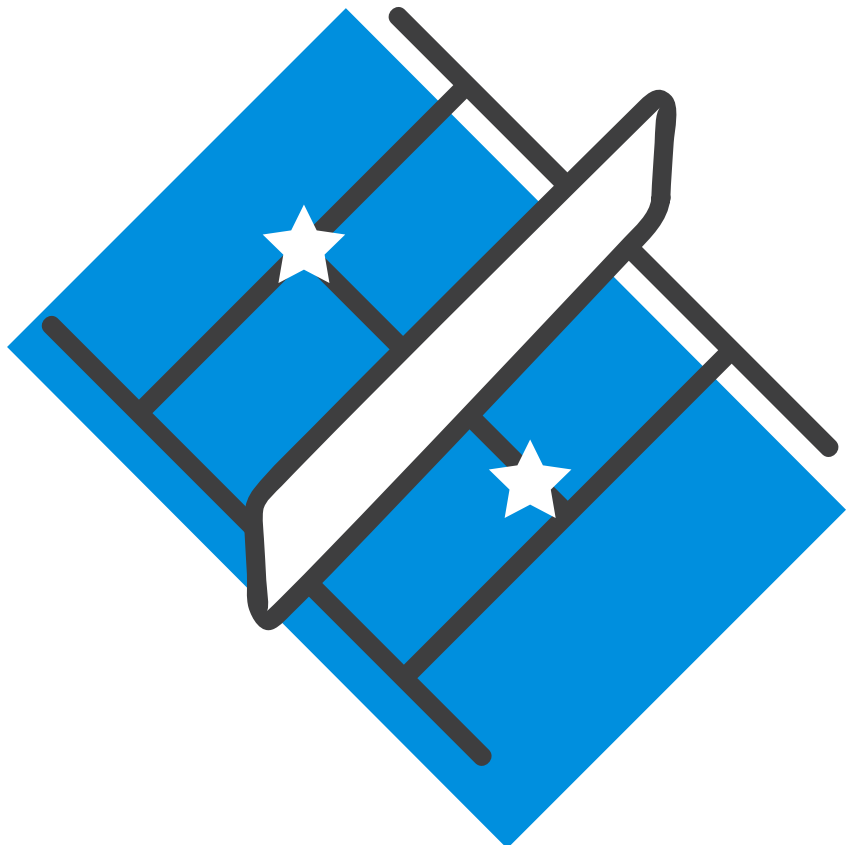
Mission - Rally with groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line rallying easy groundstrokes.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley from middle of service box.
- After one minute, switch roles or activities.

Goal - Change grip and/or hand position between groundstrokes and volleys.

Progressions

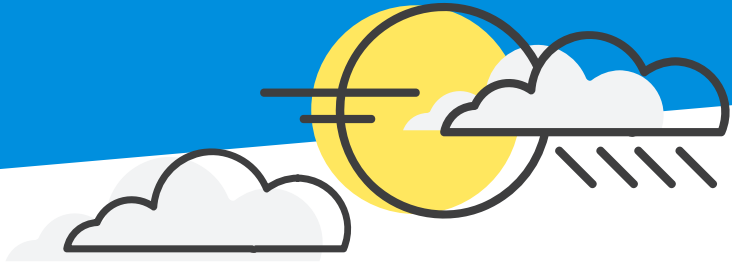
1. One stroke only.
2. Alternate strokes.
3. Hit crosscourt.



II. CHARACTER

GRATITUDE

Tennis is an opportunity, so show appreciation to your parents, coach and teammates.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

BIG BALL TENNIS

Setup

- Split players into two big teams; players choose team name.
- Divide each team into smaller teams of two or three.
- Set up doubles “matches” with two or three players from each team playing against one another.
- Boundaries are service boxes.
- Use a lightweight medicine ball or junior-size basketball.

Mission

- Begin by tossing serve diagonally into appropriate service box.
- Toss all balls from side of body. Must land within court boundaries.
- Catch all balls after bounce and throw from same spot.
- For teams of three, rotate positions every few points.
- Play to a set number of points, then switch opponents.

Progressions

1. Can catch ball in the air.
2. Throw serve overhead like a soccer throw.

FOUR-CORNER TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to four pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other about four feet apart, with four balls.

Mission

- Toss ball with right hand to partner (palm up), who catches in the air with left hand.
- Partner passes ball from left hand to right, and tosses it back to player’s left hand, then repeat.
- Toss and catch to side of body.
- Once successful, add a second ball, continuing to toss ball to partner with right hand and transfer ball from left to right hand.

Progressions

1. Add movement.
2. Add a third ball, then a fourth.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

CONTROL IT!

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Depth and speed on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court. Each court is a team.
- Split court in half from baseline to service line.

Mission - Rally for numbers with depth and speed.

- Rally from baseline.
- Consistency: Count number of balls hit in one minute. Do two rounds.
- Depth: Count number of balls that bounce past service line in one minute. Do two rounds.
- Each round, add scores together and try to beat your team's record.

Goal - Use speed, spin and height for control.

Progressions

1. One stroke.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

Type: Team.

Focus: Consistency and movement.

Setup

Two teams of two to three per court, playing full-court points.

Mission - Win points with consistency.

- Play out point one-on-one, beginning with serve and return.
- Play one point, then rotate players.
- After each player has served, serve to other side.
- Earn points for team based on number of shots—e.g., if point lasts 14 shots, winning player earns 14 points for team; if point lasts two shots, winning player earns two points.
- Play to 50, switch servers and returners, then change opponents or teams.

Goal - Work point and stay patient.

Progressions

1. Play full-court or half-court points.
2. Play up-and-down-the-river format (winning team moves up a court, losing team moves down).



COACHING TIP

For many kids, being on a team is their favorite part of playing tennis. For singles games, look to divide up into teams so kids feel like they are contributing, even if they lose points.

FIRST FOUR

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return, direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, diagonally across net from each other.
- Start on baseline.

Mission - Execute serve, return, third and fourth balls.

- Hit serve, return, and one ground stroke each.
- Server catches fourth ball and starts again.
- Complete four sequences and switch servers, then switch sides of court after a complete rotation.

Goal - Work on serve and split-step, return and split-step with proper recovery.

Progressions

1. Serve to specific half of service box.
2. After all four shots, play out point in a diagonal.



TEACHING TIP

Have players practice their serve with a returner on the other side as often as possible to simulate play situations and keep them more active.

FIRST FOUR LIVE

Type: Cooperative and competitive.

Focus: Serve and return, direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two teams of three to four per court, playing doubles points.
- Players begin in a one-up/one-back doubles formation.

Mission - Execute serve, return, third and fourth balls.

- Hit serve, return, and one ground stroke each in a diagonal, then play out point.
- Net players can not volley until after fourth ball.
- For three on a side, play one point and rotate one spot. For four, play two points and rotate two new players in.
- Play no-ad games and switch serving teams.

Goal - Keep ball away from net player.

Progressions

1. Only net players can volley.
2. Serve to specific half of service box.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

RALLY FOR NUMBERS

Setup

- Find a wall, or hit with a friend.

Progressions

1. Start your practice by hitting for numbers.
2. Serve overhand to a wall and hit until you miss.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls cones, poly-spots, jump ropes, footballs, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction, spin.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All activities inside service box on half-court.

Mission - Rally with groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line rallying easy groundstrokes.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley from middle of service box.
- After one minute, switch roles or activities.

Goal - Split-step and appropriate footwork.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. Alternate strokes.
3. Hit crosscourt.

II. CHARACTER

LEADERSHIP

Lead with your actions.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

JUMP ROPE

Note: Have each player bring a jump rope to practice, or provide one.

Setup

- Players, each with jump rope, spread out around court.

Mission

- In small area, players jump rope in place with single jumps.
- Once successful, coach can call out different movements.
- Players will attempt each for 60 seconds, rest briefly, then try again.

Progressions

1. Move by zig-zagging with feet.
2. Use in and out patterns (jumping jacks).
3. Double jumps.

QUARTERBACK

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to three pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs are on opposite sidelines, one football between them.

Note: If there aren't enough footballs, use a tennis ball, or do station work where players are working on different activities.

Mission

- Partners play catch, working on throwing a spiral.

Progressions

1. Add distance.
2. Add movement like a quarterback—face forward, turn and run back, set and throw.
Note: Continue to next progression only if player is able to execute prior movement.
3. Start facing forward with both hands on ball. Turn sideways with throwing arm up and to side, arm bent at 90 degrees.
4. Turn to side with both hands on ball, then separate hands/arms. Front arm is bent, parallel to ground, with hand to side. Back arm is at 90 degrees with ball behind head.
5. Same preparation, but this time, point tip of ball backward when behind head.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

VOLLEY CONTROLS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All activities inside service box on half-court.

Mission – Volley cooperatively with partner.

- Both players in middle of service box rallying easy volleys.
- Ball should come up off the racquet.
- Players start crosscourt using outside volley.
- After one minute, switch to next progression.
- If players struggle, use an orange or red ball.

Goal – Keep continental grip and one hand on backhand.

Progressions

1. Volley crosscourt, then same from other side.
2. Rally down the line with outside volley, then switch.



TEACHING TIP

Practicing volley patterns is just as important as groundstrokes. Volleying cooperatively with a partner requires control, and is also a great time to work on technique without the coach having to feed balls.

MINI-TENNIS DUBZ

Type: Competitive, two-on-two.

Focus: Continental grip and touch shots.

Setup

- Two teams of two per court.
- Play points as doubles team, boundaries are service boxes.

Mission – Move opponent with control

- Any player starts point with drop-hit.
- Slice and volley all shots using continental grip.
- After drop hit, each side must let ball bounce at least one time before moving forward to volley.
- Players use touch and finesse.
- Play for one minute, then each team rotates one spot to their right or left.

Goal – Use one hand for backhand slice and volley.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. No lobs.

OVERHEAD WARM-UP

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction and Consistency on overheads.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court. One player at net, other at baseline.

Mission - Control overheads with partner.

- Baseliner drop-hits lob; net player hits overhead back to baseliner, who traps/stops the ball and repeats.
- Complete six successful overheads and switch positions.
- Need help? Baseliner moves to 60-foot baseline.

Goal - Move both arms up and turn shoulder simultaneously for overhead.

Progressions

1. Lob one short, then lob one deep.
2. Play a cooperative rally and keep ball going.

LOB AND PLAY

Setup

- Two teams of two to four players per court.
- Begin in one up/one back doubles position.

Mission - Lob net player then play out point.

- Play no-ad doubles games.
- Returner must lob the return.
- Rotate players in every two points. Switch opponents every two games.
- Need help? Start point with drop-hit lob down the line.

Goal - Lob down the line over net player.

Progressions

1. Lob down the line.
2. Returner comes to net if lob is deep.



COACHING TIP

Communication is key when handling a down the line lob. Remind players to speak with each other every time a lob is hit to their side of the court.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

VOLLEY TO WALL

Setup

- Play with red foam ball against garage door or yellow ball against solid wall.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. Alternate forehand and backhand volleys.
3. Add approach shot.

OVER AND UNDER

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

7 UP

Type: Cooperative to competitive.

Focus: Forehand and backhand slice.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court and starting on service lines.

Mission - Rally slices.

- Start rally with drop-hit.
- Let ball bounce and use continental grip.
- Attempt seven-ball rally.
- Need help? Use orange or red ball.

Goal - Keep continental grip and one hand on backhand.

Progressions

1. Cooperative, then competitive. First to seven points wins, then switch partners.
Note: For competitive, ball must come up off racquet to encourage touch.
2. All backhands, then all forehands.

II. CHARACTER

COURAGE

Be brave.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

SERPENTINE SHUFFLE

Setup

- Up to four players on each side of net.
- Players start on baseline, spread out across court.
- Place some cones or TDLs in front of net so players know when to stop.

Mission

- Shuffle toward net—two shuffles facing one direction, then two shuffles facing other.
- Make turn from one side to other, facing net.
- On return to baseline, continue facing net when turning. This backward serpentine shuffle helps players develop proper movement for deep groundstrokes and overheads.

FENCE THROWS

Setup

- Players in pairs, one outside fence, other inside.
- Both players are about 10 feet from fence.
- Each pair has two balls.

Mission

- Throw ball over fence so partner can catch without having to move far.
- Throw two balls; partner catches and throws back.

Progression

1. Start with ball on ground behind back foot.



TEACHING TIP

To develop a better slice, kids need to experiment. Create an environment that promotes risk taking and avoid the temptation to play points right away.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

SLICE AND DICE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Forehand and backhand slice.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting in middle of service box.

Mission - Rally with underspin.

- Using continental grip, rally forehands with partner.
- Racquet face is wide open (pointing upward) for extreme underspin.
- Need help? Rally without a net.

Goal - Keep rally going with extra spin.

Progressions

1. Rally backhands.
2. Alternate forehands and backhands.

MINI-TENNIS POINTS

Type: Competitive, one-on-one.

Focus: Touch shots.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All points straight ahead inside service line, alleys included.

Mission - Play all slices.

- Either player starts with drop-hit.
- Play all shots with continental grip and slice; backhands are one-handed.
- Move opponent around short court with touch shots.
- Play for one minute, then each player rotates one spot to their right or left.

Goal - Move opponent with control.

Progressions

1. Play crosscourt.
2. One stroke, alternate strokes.
3. Players can volley.

TOSS/HIT/CATCH: TOPSPIN

Type: Cooperative, teams of three.

Focus: Topspin groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two teams of three on each court.
- Feeder on service line with balls (same side of net as hitter); hitter on 60-foot baseline; catcher on opposite baseline.
- Use TDL or poly-spot to mark “home base” for hitter.

Mission - Play forehand and backhand angle with spin; use appropriate stances.

- Toss ball to hitter’s side (about five feet away) with enough height for hitter to get there and set up.
- Hitter plays topspin crosscourt angle and recovers to spot.
- Toss second ball to same spot, this time player hits down the line with appropriate height and spin.
- Play six balls and change positions. Switch sides of court after complete rotation so players hit forehands and backhands.

Goal - Hit around outside of ball for topspin angle.

Progressions

1. Hit with more height and spin.
2. Racquet-feed (coach or player) from opposite side of net.

CRAZY FEED

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Heavy topspin.

Setup

- Two teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Two play at a time.

Mission - Start point with high-topspin feed.

- Designate one side as attackers, other as defenders.
- Attacker feeds a heavy topspin ball deep, then plays out point. Rotate players every point.
- If attackers win point, they score one; if defenders win, they score two.
- Play first team to seven points, then switch roles.
- After second game, adjust teams or order so players have different opponents.

Goal - Put player on defensive by hitting deep, arcing topspin.

Progressions

1. Feed backhands.
2. Defender feeds high deep ball with little spin to attacker, who hits back with heavy topspin.



COACHING TIP

This is a great game to discuss tactics with players. Be sure to use questions that challenge players to think, “What type of ball are you looking to come in from?”, and, “Can you see yourself doing this during a match?”

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

OVER AND UNDER

Setup

- Play with a friend, or hit against a garage door or solid wall.

Progressions

1. Alternate hitting topspin and slice.
2. One player hits the same shot, and other alternates between topspin and slice.



MOVE IT

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

V GROUNDSTROKES

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Change of direction on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court on opposite service lines.

Mission - Change direction of each shot

- Rally cooperatively. One player hits all balls to forehand side of partner (isolation), partner alternates hitting down the line, then crosscourt.
- Player hitting side to side will move partner a few feet right to left.
- After one minute, switch roles, then isolate backhand side.
- Need help? Use orange ball.

Goal - Find a rally pace you can control with appropriate speed and spin.

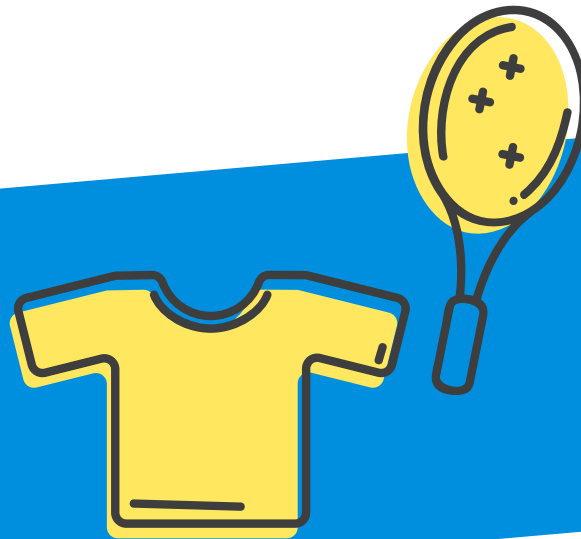
Progressions

1. Slice and topspin from service line.
2. Do Figure 8.

II. CHARACTER

PERSISTENCE

Be committed. Effort and time will yield results.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

COPY CAT

Setup

- Players spread out on court; maximum four on each side of net.

Mission

- Coach picks a player to demonstrate a specific movement, then players copy.

Progressions

1. Crossover recovery. Players lined up from net to behind baseline. Player runs to sideline, shadow strokes, crosses over, then shuffles back to middle. First square stance, then open stance. Complementary skill—carioca.
2. Hop-move approach. Players lined up across baseline. Player demonstrates approach shot off front foot. Complementary skill—side skips.
3. Drop-step, crossover and run for overhead. Players lined up across net. Complementary skill: pivots and carioca.

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs, with a ball and TDL.
- No more than three pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as “home base.”

Mission

- Make catcher move by tossing balls side to side, high/low, and deep/short. Catch on one bounce.
- Catcher uses right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- Once successful, toss balls slightly above catcher’s head. Catch one-handed in the air.
- Switch roles every minute.
- Need help? Allow players to catch with two hands, move closer.

Progressions

1. For high ball, catch with opposite foot and hand.
2. Increase distance between pairs.



TEACHING TIP

There may be a substantial difference in players’ ability to toss and catch. Make sure to challenge each individual separately without bringing attention to the rest of the group.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

FOUR SQUARE RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players on teams.

Focus: Direction on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Four or five players per court, playing as a team
- Divide court into four equal squares using TDLs.

Mission - Rally consistently to same square

- Coach or player picks a specific square to rally to – could be same square on both sides or different square on each.
- Two players go first, rally until they miss, then next two go.
- Players count total number of rallies each time, and add to team score.
- Play court vs court.

Goal - Adjust stroke according to square selected.

Progressions

1. Any stroke, one stroke, alternating strokes.
2. Rally on half-court and create four squares/areas.



COACHING TIP

Many players will struggle with this game, especially hitting to all four squares. Look to add bonus points for rewarding certain behaviors, such as a deep short combination.

FOUR SQUARE

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Deep/short and side to side.

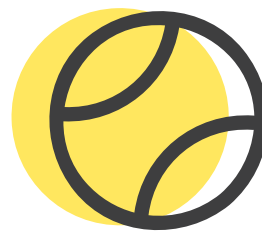
Setup

- Two teams of two or three players on opposite baselines.
- Divide each side of the court into four equal squares using TDLs or poly-spots.

Mission - Move opponent using combinations of shots

- Play points starting with serve. After serve, players can't hit into same square twice in a row.
- Play one point and rotate. Each player serves three points and switch servers and returners.

Goal - Use different spins and speeds to move ball.



V VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Change of direction on volleys.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting in front half of service box.

Mission - Change direction on volley.

- Volley cooperatively: One player hits all balls to forehand volley of partner (isolation), partner alternates volleying down the line, then crosscourt.
- Control volley so partner takes no more than one or two small steps.
- After one minute, switch roles, then isolate backhand side.
- Need help? Use orange ball.

Goal - Use an open face to keep ball in the air.

Progressions

1. Increase distance from net.
2. Use excessive underspin.

HUFF AND PUFF

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Groundstroke change of direction and playing defense.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three players per court.
- Split court in half using TDLs.

Mission - Move opponent side to side.

- Servers cover half-court, returners cover full court. Servers choose which side they will cover.
- Server tries to move opponent around court by taking ball early when possible.
- Returners score point for getting four balls back to servers. Servers score for getting serve in and limiting returners to fewer than four shots. First team to four wins, then switch sides/change servers.

Goal - Serve and take ball early to apply pressure.

Progressions

1. Servers must hit first ball to open court.
2. Servers score bonus point for a winning volley or overhead.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

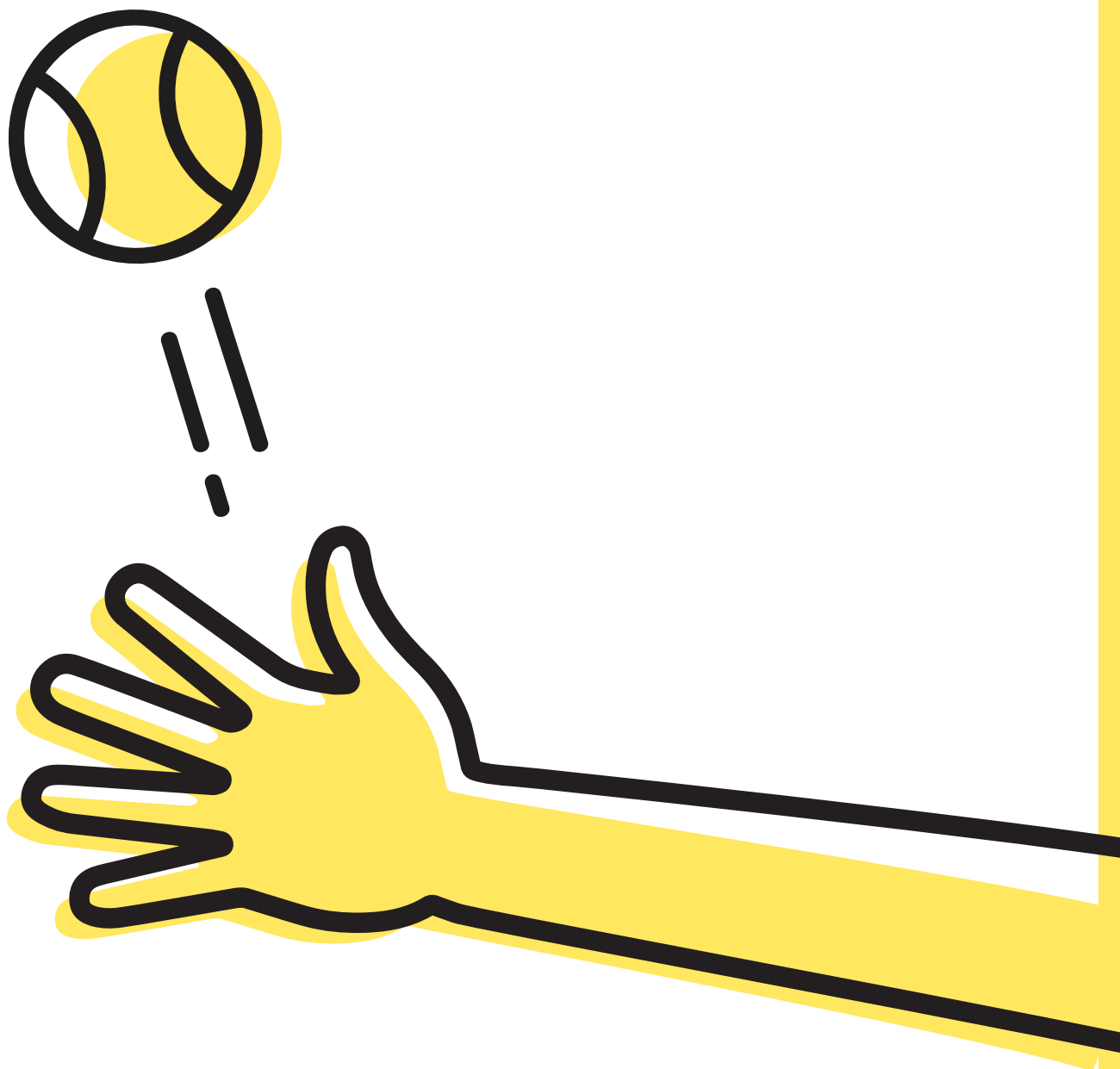
MOVE 'EM

Setup

- Play with a friend or family member.

Progressions

1. Hit every second serve return to the open court.
2. Mix in one drop shot per game.



OVER MY HEAD

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and larger, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction, height.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All activities inside service box on half-court.

Mission: Rally with groundstrokes, lobs and volleys.

- Both players on service line rallying easy groundstrokes.
- One player at net, other on service line. Rally lob to high volley.
- Alternate groundstroke to volley, lob to high volley.
- After one minute, switch roles or activities.

Goal: Play all lobs with continental grip.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. Hit crosscourt.
3. Move to baseline.

II. CHARACTER

ASPIRE

Be the best you.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

CROSSOVER SHUFFLE

Setup

- Players spread out from net to baseline, up to five on each side of net.

Mission

- From ready position, execute one crossover into a shuffle and stop, then switch directions, performing same movements back to where you started.
- Start slowly until you develop rhythm, then speed up.
- Goal is to go back and forth with smooth change of direction.

Progressions

1. Go continuously back and forth.

THREE BALL THROW

Setup

- Players in pairs on opposite sides of net, up to three pairs per court.
- On one side of net, players start at net—one on each sideline and one in the middle.
- On same side, place three balls in a straight line for each player—in middle of service box, on service line and on baseline.

Mission

- Starting at net, players with balls on their side turn around, jog to first ball, bend down, grab it and throw, all in one motion. Throw is high to other side of net.
- Turn around and jog to second ball, and so on.
- Players on other side catch all three balls, place them in same positions, and switch roles.
- Need help? Pick up ball, pause, then throw.



TEACHING TIP

This activity has several important movements wrapped into one drill. It includes drop-step/crossover to run back to the ball, load on back leg when bending down, and driving upward with legs while throwing. This is a great way to work on moving back for overheads and exploding up on serve.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

SERVE PLUS ONE

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, playing full court.
- Start on baseline.

Mission - Execute serve, return, and first ball.

- Serve, return, hit one ground stroke to the open court, and returner traps ball.
- Next pair comes up and repeats sequence.
- Returner then serves and continue same sequence.
- Each player completes four sequences, then switches sides of court (deuce to ad).

MOONBALLER

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Volleys and overheads.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three players per court.
- One team is servers, others are returners.

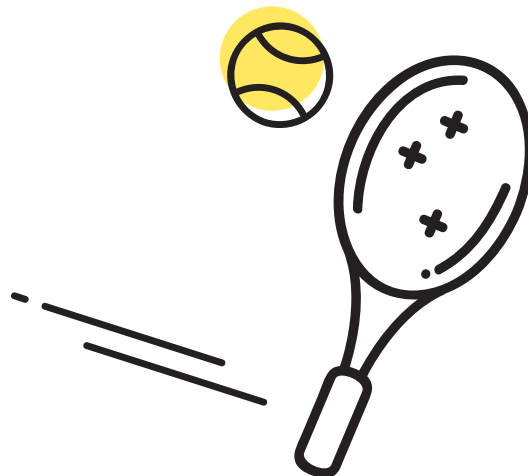
Mission - Return and come in, hit all balls in the air.

- Server gets one serve; returner must come to net.
- Server lobs entire time and returner must play in the air.
- Keep score as servers versus returners.
- Play a designated number of points and switch servers/returners.

Goal - Control overheads to left and right side of court.

Progressions

1. Must return to specific side.
2. Play doubles points.



HI-LO

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Consistency on volleys and overheads.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court. One player at net, other at baseline.

Mission: Control volleys and overheads with partner.

- Baseline player alternates groundstrokes and lobs, beginning with drop-hit groundstroke. Net player volleys back to baseliner, who traps.
- Baseline player drop-hits lob; net player hits overhead back to baseliner who traps and continues sequence.
- Complete four sequences and switch positions.
- Need help? Baseline player moves to 60-foot base line.

Goal: Split-step and move forward to volley.

Progressions

1. Play a cooperative rally and keep ball going.
2. Hit lob with continental grip.

AIRMAIL

Setup

- Two teams of two-to-four players per court.
- Begin in one up/one back doubles position.

Mission: Play points and mix in lobs.

- Play no-ad doubles games, starting with serve and return.
- Each team must lob at least 2x per game.
- Rotate players in every two points. Switch opponents every two games.

Goal: Lob down the line over net player

Progressions

1. Lob must be down the line.
2. Lobber comes to net if lob is deep.



TEACHING TIP

Lobs and overheads can determine the outcome of a doubles match. They can also be the least practiced of all shots, so make sure to incorporate these into every session.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

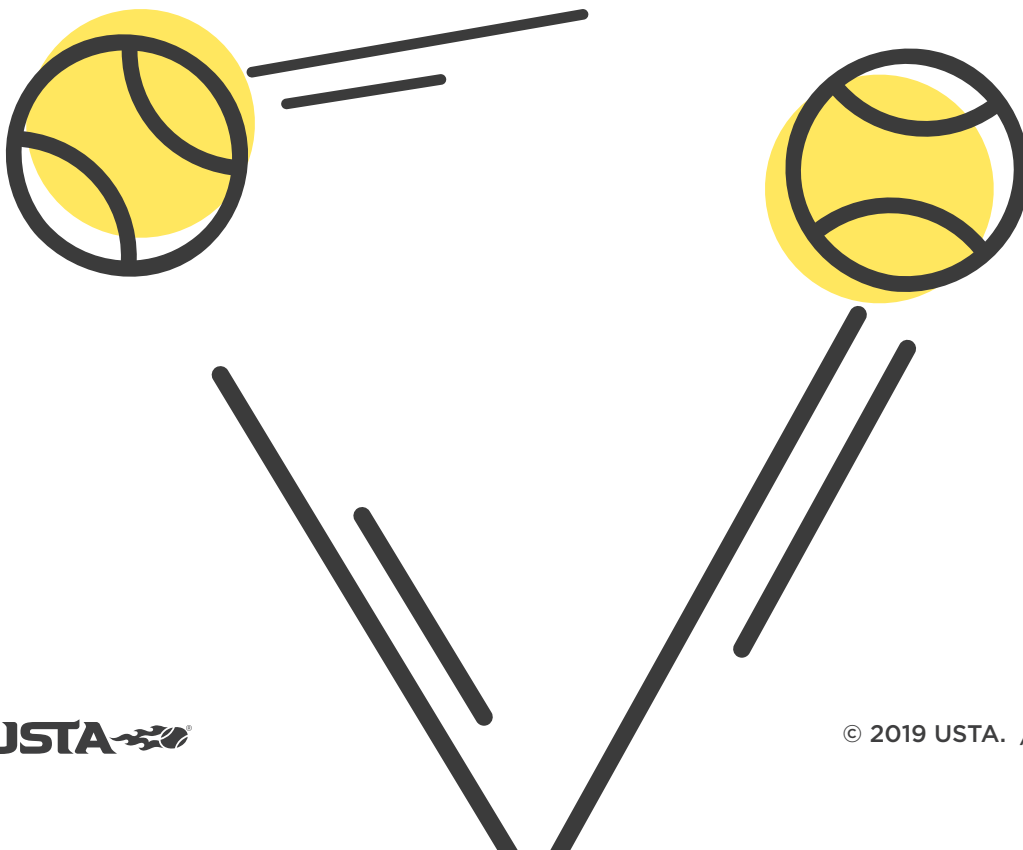
LOB IT

Setup

- Play doubles with friends or family.

Progressions

1. Practice lobbing down the line on returns.
2. Come to the net if the lob is deep.



TEAM UP

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS DUBZ

Type: Competitive, two on two.

Focus: Continental grip on slice and volley.

Setup

- Two teams of two per court.
- Play points as doubles team, boundaries are service boxes.

Mission: Move opponent with control.

- Any player starts point with drop-hit.
- Slice and volley all shots using continental grip.
- After drop hit, each side must let ball bounce at least one time before moving forward to volley.
- Players use all touch and finesse.
- Play for one minute, then each team rotates one spot to their right or left.

Goal: Use one hand for backhand slice and volley.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. No lobs.

II. CHARACTER

TEAMWORK

Teamwork is respecting your peers and working together for a common goal.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

HI-LO TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs with a ball.
- Up to four pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Players face each other four to five feet apart.

Mission

- One player feeds, other catches.
- Toss to catcher, who catches after bounce and tosses back.
- Toss second ball high. Catch in the air above waist level and toss back.
- Catch with right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- After four successful hi-lo catches on each side, switch roles.

Progressions

1. Toss first ball high over catcher's shoulder, second in front of catcher.
2. Toss first ball short, second higher and deeper.

RELAY RACES

Setup

- Two teams of three to five on each side of net.
- Each team lines up behind doubles sideline. If possible, run across two courts and back.

Mission

- When coach says, "Go!", first player runs to opposite sideline and back.
- Next player goes when tagged; must start behind sideline.

Progressions

1. Require specific movement to sideline and back (run, skip, shuffle, etc.).
2. Change starting position (back turned, sitting down, etc.).



TEACHING TIP

With the focus on team, create scenarios where the players have to work together; select a team name and cheer, choose the rules for the game, create a line-up.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

UP AND BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service line.

Mission: Approach, split and volley.

- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball to player 2, who hits approach shot, comes to net, and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits an easy groundstroke back; player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Player 1 lets volley bounce, uses it as approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to player 1, who volleys and retreats.
- Need help? Trap each groundstroke and drop-hit back to partner.

Goal: Work on correct approach footwork, proper grips and ready position

Progressions

1. Start with topspin approach, then slice
2. Use appropriate footwork – carioca move on slice backhand, hop move for topspin approach

TWO ON ONE ATTACK

Type: Competitive.

Focus: Approach in multiple ways.

Setup

- Four or five players on each court.
- Net player and baseliner on one side, covering full-court doubles. Extra players lined up behind baseliner.
- Single player (champ) on opposite baseline covering half-court, middle to doubles line.

Mission: Attack net and play out point.

- Champ gets one serve; returner comes to net. Play out point two on one.
- Champ can't lob first two balls.
- After point, rotate: baseliner to net; net player to back of line.
- After seven points, bring over a new champ.

Goal: Use deep and short volleys to end points.

Progressions

1. Use slice approach off serve.
2. Champ must lob within first two shots.

THREE-LEVEL SERVE

Type: Individual.

Focus: Racquet-head speed on serve.

Setup

- Three to six players per court.
- All players on baseline on one side of net—half on deuce side, half on ad.

Mission: Serve ball various distances.

- Warmup serves into service box. Serve two and rotate (two players serve at same time from deuce and ad courts).
- Serve ball between service line and baseline twice, then rotate.
- Serve ball between baseline and fence.

Goal: Work on racquet-head speed and hitting up and out on ball.

Progressions

1. Serve three—service box, past service line, past baseline.
2. Divide service box and court into two sides, and serve to specific area.

TRIPLES

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Volleys and passing shots.

Setup

- Two teams of three or four per court.
- Start with three players on each side of net—one at net and two on baseline.
- Extra players behind baseline.

Mission: Be aggressive at net, make passing shots.

- Coach or player feeds first ball to deep player.
- After each point, players rotate one spot.
- Only net player can volley.
- Play games to set number of points, then change teams.

Goal: Use spin on passing shots, close the net and angle volleys.

Progressions

1. Switch to two up/one back to encourage lobs.
2. Use doubles or singles boundaries.

**COACHING TIP**

Let the kids feed! When players start the points, it allows the coach to be active and observe from all angles. The feeds may not be perfect, which is exactly what the game should look like.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN**PLAY DUBZ****Setup**

- Play doubles with friends or family.

Progressions

1. Return and come in off second serve.
2. Come to net when ball lands inside service box.

LET'S PLAY

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS POINTS

Type: Competitive, one on one.

Focus: Touch shots.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All points straight ahead inside service line, alleys included.

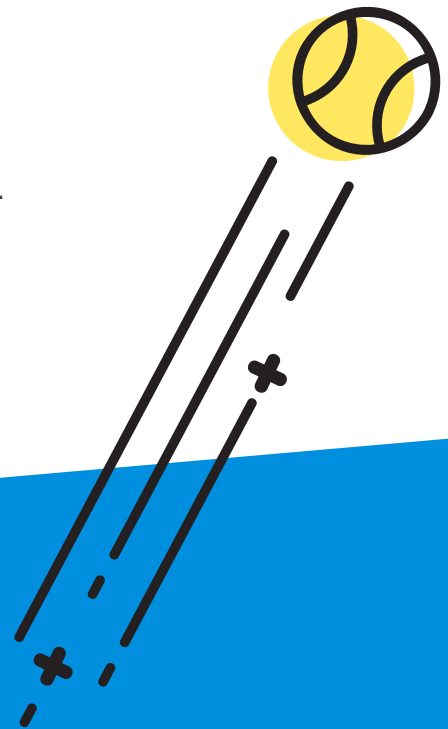
Mission: Play all slices.

- Either player starts with drop-hit.
- Play all shots with continental grip and slice; backhands are one-handed.
- Move opponent around short court with touch shots.
- Play for 1 minute, then each player rotates one spot to their right or left

Goal - Move opponent with control.

Progressions

1. Play crosscourt.
2. One stroke, alternate strokes.
3. Players can volley.



II. CHARACTER

RESILIENCE

Bounce back.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

ULTIMATE TENNIS

Setup

- Create team of four to eight players.
- Play across two courts if possible.
- Boundaries are baselines, opposite doubles lines, and put TDL's three feet from net.
- Setup goals on opposite baselines using two cones, about six feet apart.

Mission

- Players spread out around the court, similar to playing soccer
- Coach throws a ball into play.
- Players must pass the ball to teammates catching in the air.
- To score, players move the ball down the field and throw the ball through the goal.
- Must be at least three passes caught in air before goal can be scored.
- Players are not allowed to touch the opponent.

Progressions

1. Must be at least five passes before goal can be scored.
2. Require specific movement like skips.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

SERVE INDEX

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Serve direction.

Setup

- Players in teams, up to four players per court.
- All players on one side of net—one serving from deuce, other from ad.
- Use TDLs to split each service box into two zones.

Note: Use extra players as returners.

Mission: Serve to each zone.

- Count how many balls it takes to serve successfully to all four zones. This is your "serve index." Add up players' serve-index numbers to get a team serve index.
- Once all players have served to all four zones, start over and strive for lowest team serve index.

Goal: Use spin to add control.

Progressions

1. Only counts if same rituals are used before serve.
2. Righties must use slice for out wide on deuce side and down the "T" on ad side (opposite for lefties).



TEACHING TIP

Don't be afraid to ask the kids what they want, especially towards the end of the session/season. This gives them ownership and helps with retention in your program.

TEAM DEFENDER

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Holding serve.

Setup

- Minimum of six players and two courts, using full court.
- Players in teams of three or four.
- Each team is assigned a court to defend.
- Each team sends one player to compete against another team on a different court, others remain on their court to defend it.

Mission: Use serve offensively.

- Defenders serve to the challenger, play point one on one, then rotate out.
- Only serving side can score, defender can only keep serving team from scoring.
- First team to score a set number of points wins the round.
- After each round, send different player to compete against another team.
- With large numbers, play in diagonals or “Doubles Defender.”

Goal: Use serve and first ball to be offensive.

Progressions

1. Must hit forehand on first ball after serve.
2. Two points for volley/overhead winner.

UP AND DOWN THE RIVER DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Doubles positioning.

Setup

- Players on doubles teams.
- Two teams per court.
- Begin in one-up/one-back doubles position.

Mission: Play a standard doubles formation.

- Play doubles points for designated time.
- One team serves two points, other team serves two points, then change servers.
- When coach calls “time,” winning team moves up a court, losing team moves down a court. When players move, they will split with partner.

Goal: Come to net on short balls.

Progressions

1. On second serve, returners must come in.
2. Net players must hit everything in the air.

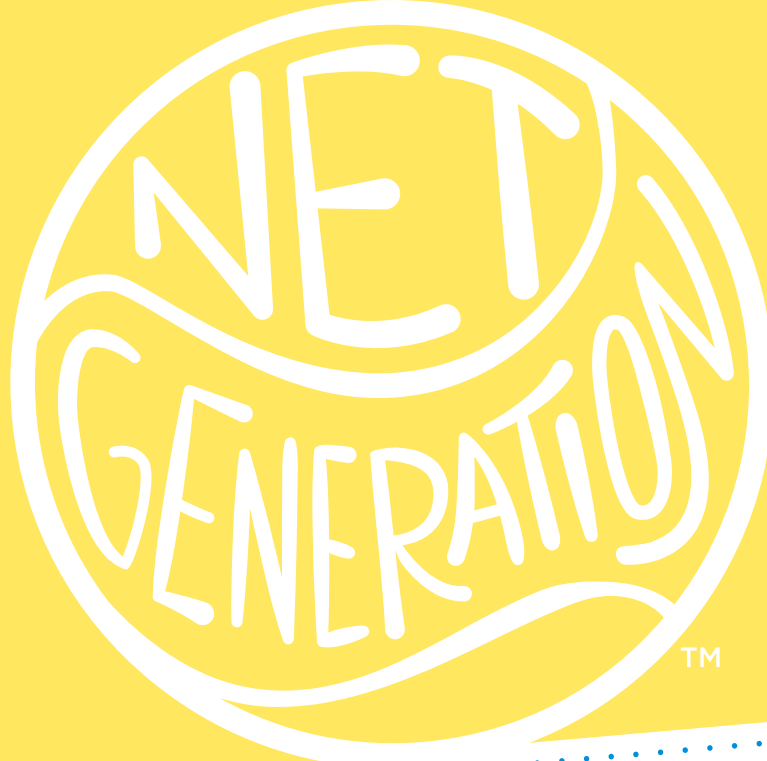


TEACHING TIP

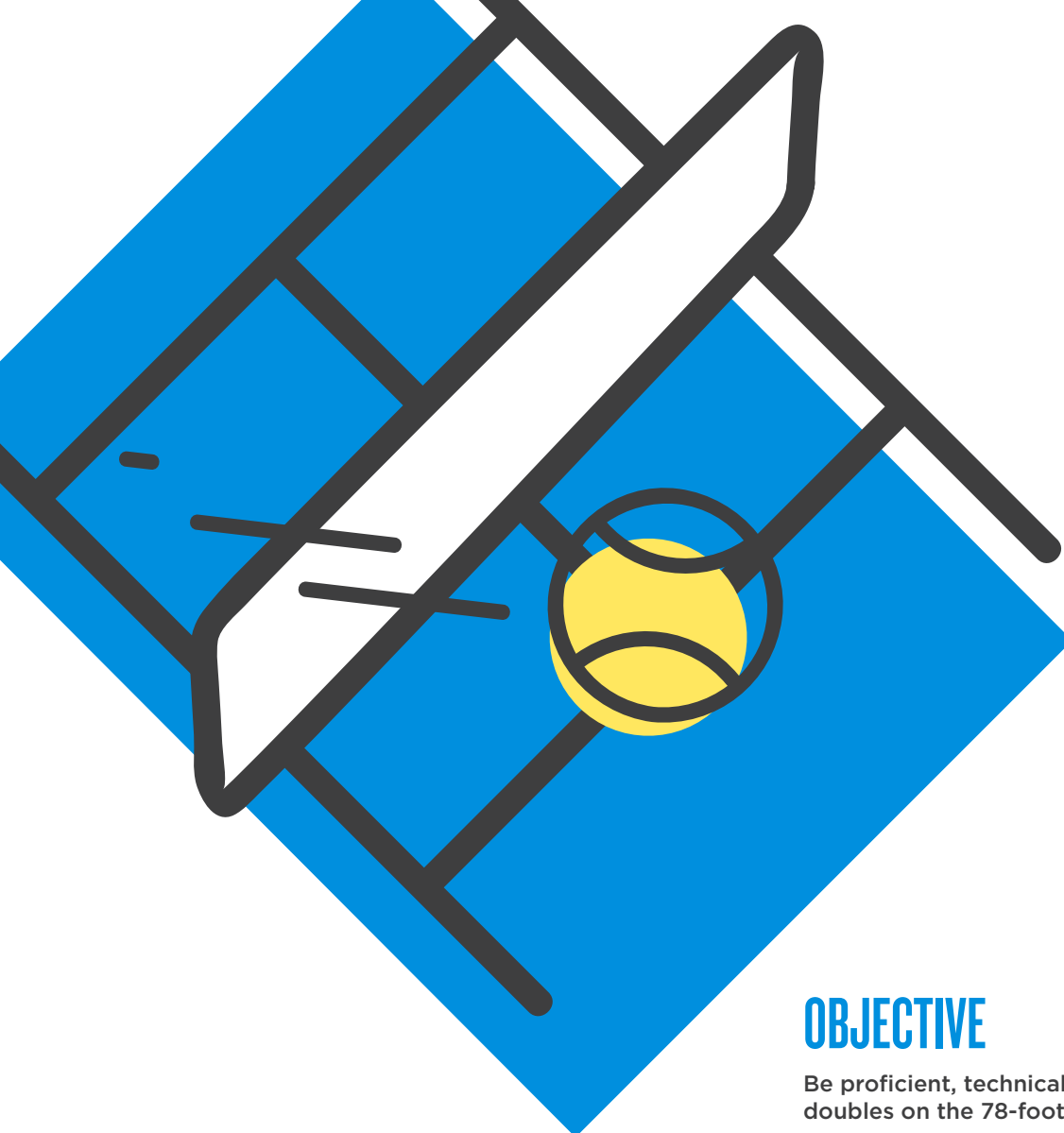
Keep changing partners for doubles so kids get variety and learn how to work together.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

GO WATCH A COLLEGE MATCH.



YELLOW BALL!



OBJECTIVE

Be proficient, technically and tactically, in singles and doubles on the 78-foot court with yellow ball.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Total: 120 minutes

Note: For 2-hour practices, add point play after games.

- Dynamic Stretch and Warm-up: 10 - 15 minutes
- Athletic Skills: 15 - 20 minutes
- Tennis Skills: 10 - 12 minutes each (20 - 24 minutes total)
- Games: 15 - 20 minutes each (30 - 40 minutes total)
- Point Play: 20 - 30 minutes
- Static Stretch and Play-on-your-own Review: 8 minutes or less

Note: For all chapters, there will be a cooperative tennis skill that will lead to a game, then another cooperative skill that will lead to a game.



NOTES:

Suggested Session Time: 90 minutes to 2 hours

For this level, a dynamic stretch at the beginning and static stretch at the end are important. If properly trained, players can do these outside of the practice session.

PLANS AT A GLANCE



	Warmup	Character	Athletic Skills	Tennis Skills	Games	Play on Your Own
01 Open it Up	Mini-Tennis Angles	Confidence	Jump Rope Shuffle Toss	Tempo Drill Serve Plus One	Sideline Up and Down the River Doubles	Angle the Angler
02 Ridiculous Return	Mini Tennis	Gratitude	Big Ball Tennis Make 'Em Move	First Four TEAM Up and Back Volley	Team Up and Down the River Charge! Doubles	Step Up
03 Spin It	Over/Under	Courage	Obstacle Course One-leg toss	Roll and Rally Figure 8 Slice	Crazy Feed Leave It	Drop Shot
04 Attack Mode	Island Tennis	Leadership	4X4 Tag Fence Throws	Tempo Drill Accordion Volley	Absorb and Rip Offense/Defense	Return and Come In
05 Offense/Defense	Figure 8	Persistence	Copy Cat Hi-Lo Toss	Traffic Lights Chip-Lob Rally	Black Hole One Side Attack	Serve and Volley
06 Who's the Boss	Drop the Dropper	Aspire	Knee Tag Big Ball Tennis	Team Rally Return the Cannon	I'm The Boss Attack Dubz	Big Forehand
07 Dubz Rules	Juggle Volley	Teamwork	Jump Rope Make 'Em Move	Call the Bounce Up and Back Volley	Gladiator Dubz Poach and Play	Poach and Play
08 Prime Time	Mini-Tennis Dubz	Resilience	Players Choice	Five-Minute Warmup Sideline Ping Pong	Depth Drill Ping Pong Dubz	Play a Tournament

OPEN IT UP

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, jump ropes, and TDs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS ANGLES

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke depth and width.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court.
- All activities inside service lines.
- Use TDs to split service box in half horizontally.
- TDs in service box are baseline.

Mission

- Rally crosscourt angles.
- Pairs rally crosscourt angles with outside stroke only.
- Switch sides after two minutes.
- Need help? One player will block ball back crosscourt, other hits topspin angle.

Goal—Make partner move outside the doubles line.

Progressions

1. With service line as baseline, alternate rallies between short, sharp angles and deep between TDs and service line.
2. Play points with bonus for hitting into alley.



II. CHARACTER

CONFIDENCE

Believe in yourself and your abilities.

III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

JUMP ROPE

Note: Have each player bring a jump rope to practice, or provide one.

Setup

- Players, each with jump rope, spread out around court.

Mission

- In small area, players jump rope in place with single jumps.
- Once successful, coach can call out different movements.
- Players will attempt each for 60 seconds, rest briefly, then try again.

Progressions

1. Move by zigzagging with feet.
2. Use in-and-out patterns (jumping jacks).
3. Double jumps.

SHUFFLE TOSS

Setup

- Three or four pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs facing each other on doubles sideline with one ball.

Mission

- While shuffling from sideline to sideline, bounce ball downward (palm down) back and forth with partner, watching between bounces. Use only one hand to bounce and catch—either hand.
- After two successful times to sideline and back, toss and catch in the air.

Progressions

1. Left hand only, right hand only.
2. Different hand than partner.
3. Alternate two straight on bounce, two straight in the air.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

TEMPO DRILL

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction and consistency on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission—Rally ball into doubles alley.

- Pairs rally back and forth in their doubles alley.
- Recover outside of alley after each shot.
- Count number of balls that land in alley in one minute, play court vs. court.

Goal—Stay consistent, hitting with square stance and good extension.

Progressions

1. One stroke, alternate strokes.
2. Topspin only, slice only.
3. How many in a row can you achieve?

SIDELINER

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Angle groundstrokes.

Setup

- Teams of three or four on opposite sides of net.
- Use TDs to split court in half. Alleys count.

Mission - Move opponent outside doubles sideline.

- Play all points crosscourt.
- Start with serve and return. After that, must hit outside stroke.
- Score points for team by winning point and forcing opponent outside sideline.
- Play one point, switch sides of court
- Play games to 10, switch serving team.

Goal - Use spin and proper height to move ball off court.

Progressions

1. Every ball must bounce.
2. Play full court.

SERVE PLUS ONE

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return, direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, each hitting diagonally across net from each other.
- Service box split in half with TDLs.

Mission - Execute serve, return and first ball.

- Player calls spot to serve to (wide or “T”).
- Serve, return, hit one ground stroke and trap ball.
- Returner serves and continues sequence.
- Score a point for each successful three-ball sequence.
- Play games, court vs court.

Goal - Use continental grip and utilize spin on serve.

Progressions

1. Play full court, groundstroke is hit open court.
2. Server must hit forehand open court.



COACHING TIP

The focus for this level is on use of the lower body. Players need to be in an athletic position for all throws, with good posture and a balanced head.

UP AND DOWN THE RIVER DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Doubles positioning and angles.

Setup

- Players on doubles teams.
- Two teams per court.
- Begin in one up/one back doubles position.

Mission - Pull opponent off court and hit to open space.

- Play doubles points for designated time.
- One team serves two points, other team serves two points, then change servers.
- All serves are out wide.
- Returning team tries to angle the return, pulling server outside of doubles line.
- When coach calls “time,” winning team moves up a court, losing team moves down a court. When players move, they will split with partner.

Goal - Play two shot combinations using topspin angle and deep drive.

Progressions

1. Server comes in on first serve.
2. Returner can hit deep crosscourt or short angle.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

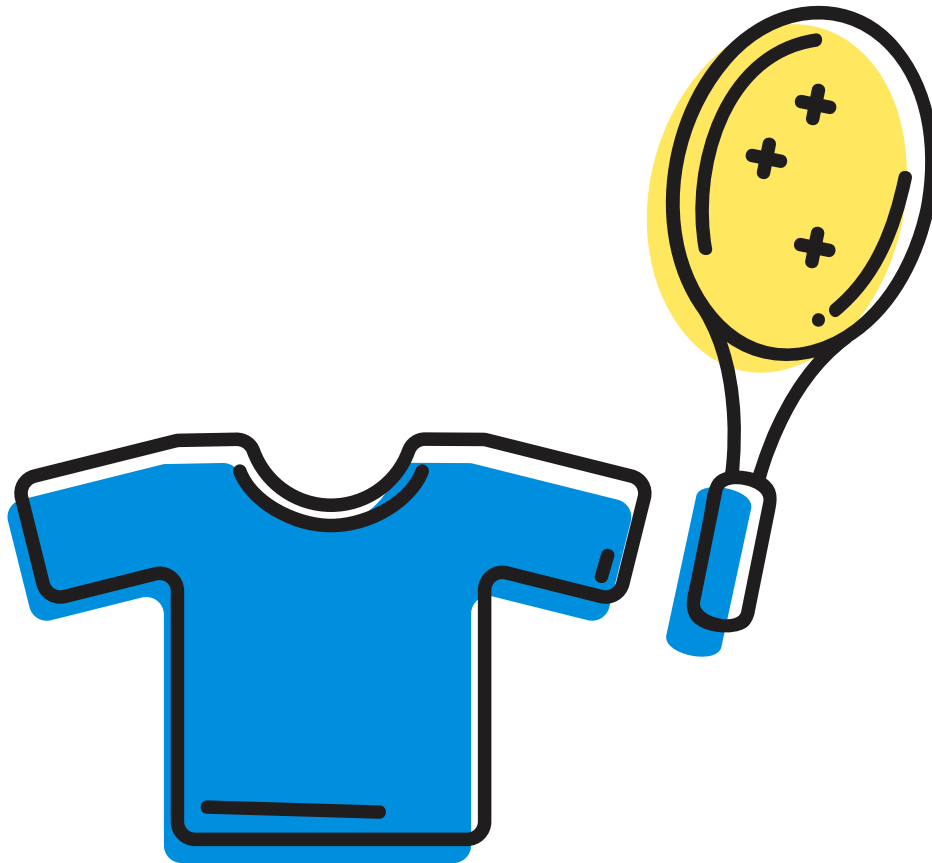
ANGLE THE ANGLER

Setup

- Warm-up diagonally before playing singles or doubles.

Progressions

1. See how wide you can angle.
2. Use topspin and slice.
3. Once successful, go for more angle!
4. Try it during your practice matches on wide serves.



RIDICULOUS RETURN

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, medicine balls, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke footwork.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court and hitting inside service box.

Mission - Take time away from opponent by taking it early.

- Both players with toes on service line, rallying groundstrokes. Can't step backward.
- One player moves to net for groundstroke-to-volley rally.
- After two minutes, switch roles or activities.

Goal - Use compact backswing when taking ball on the rise.

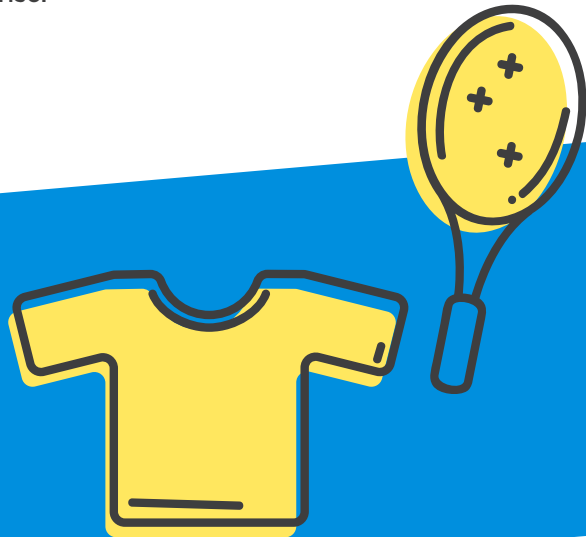
Progressions

1. See how many hits in 20 seconds.
2. Hit crosscourt.
3. One stroke only.

II. CHARACTER

GRATITUDE

Tennis is an opportunity so show appreciation to your parents, coach, and teammates.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS



BIG BALL TENNIS

Setup

- Split players into two big teams; players choose team name.
- Divide each team into smaller teams of two or three.
- Set up doubles “matches” with two or three players from each team playing against one another.
- Boundaries are service boxes.
- Use a lightweight medicine ball or junior-size basketball.

Mission

- Begin by tossing serve diagonally into appropriate service box.
- Toss all balls from side of body. Must land within court boundaries.
- Catch all balls after bounce and throw from same spot.
- For teams of three, rotate positions every few points.
- Play to a set number of points, then switch opponents.

Progressions

1. Can catch ball in the air.
2. Throw serve overhead, like a soccer throw.

TEACHING TIP

For teenagers, using ground force is essential for effective groundstrokes. Encourage kids to toss with their legs, and control their arms at all times.

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs, with a ball and TDL.
- No more than three pairs, spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as “home base.”

Mission

- Start off catching all balls in the air, like a volley.
- Toss to forehand side about five feet away, with enough height so catcher has to take two steps. Catch at chest level.
- Catcher steps with outside foot first, then diagonally with front foot.
- All catches made with opposite foot and hand.
- Switch roles every minute, then switch to backhand side.

Progressions

1. Add a groundstroke/volley combination—catch first ball after bounce, second in the air.
2. Stand farther apart.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

FIRST FOUR TEAM

Type: Cooperative with partner, Team.

Focus: Serve and return, direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, diagonally across net from each other.
- Players start on baseline.

Mission - Execute serve, return, third and fourth balls.

- Hit serve, return and one ground stroke each.
- Server catches fourth ball and starts again.
- Score a point for each successful four-ball sequence.
- Play games court vs court.
- After four attempts switch servers, then switch sides of court after complete rotation.

Goal - Work on serve and split-step; return and split-step with proper recovery.

Progressions

1. Serve to specific half of service box.
2. All four balls to specific sides.

TEAM UP AND DOWN THE RIVER

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Aggressive Return.

Setup

- Teams of two on opposite baselines.
- Play full court singles points.

Mission - Move opponent with return.

- Play singles points for designated time.
- One team serves two points, other team serves two points.
- Server gets one serve. Returner stands inside baseline and moves server by driving ball to a corner.
- Winning player stays in for extra point. Losing player rotates out.
- When coach calls “time,” winning team moves up a court, losing team moves down a court. When players move, they will split with partner.
- Need help? Serve underhand or with drop hit.

Note: For odd numbers, can have teams of three and spin for partners when switching courts.

Goal - Take return of serve on the rise.

Progressions

1. Returner must hit forehand on return.
2. Return and come to net.

UP AND BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court and starting on service line.

Mission - Approach, split and volley.

- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball to Player 2, who hits approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits an easy groundstroke back; Player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Player 1 lets volley bounce, uses it as approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to Player 1, who volleys and retreats.
- Need help? Trap each groundstroke and drop-hit back to partner.

Goal - Work on correct approach footwork, proper grips and ready position.

Progressions

1. Start with topspin approach, then slice.
2. Use appropriate footwork – carioca move on slice backhand, hop move for topspin approach.

CHARGE! DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Two at net in doubles.

Setup

- Four to eight players per court.
- Players in teams of two to four.

Mission - Approach and volley in doubles.

- Serving team gets one serve; receiver comes to net after return.
- Play four points with same serving team and rotate.
- If four players per side, rotate team after each point. With three, rotate one spot. With just two per side, play multiple points in a row.

Goal: Return serve and split-step inside service line.

Progressions

1. Serving team can't lob.
2. Topspin approach, then slice.



COACHING TIP

Encourage the server to lob down the line occasionally on the second ball. This will force the receiver to learn to split-step and cover behind their partner.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

STEP UP

Setup

- Play singles or doubles points.
- Stand right behind service line to return second serves.

SPIN IT

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDs.

I. WARMUP

OVER/UNDER

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Alternating topspin and slice.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- Players on service line.

Mission - Keep rally going while changing spins.

- One side hits easy topspin groundstroke, other alternates topspin and slice.
- Switch roles after two minutes.

Goal - Switch grips and/or hands when moving from slice to topspin.

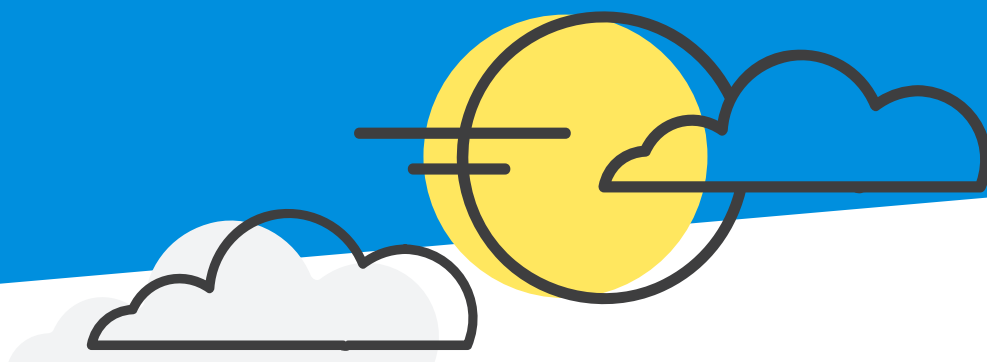
Progressions

1. Straight ahead, then crosscourt.
2. Straight ahead, then outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

COURAGE

Be brave.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

OBSTACLE COURSE

Setup

- Use four cones to create a 20x20-foot square in center of court on each side of net. Keep square a safe distance from net.
- Four to six players per square.

Mission

- Proceed from cone to cone using different movements. Next player goes when previous player reaches second cone.
- After each player has gone twice, change movement.

Progressions

1. Carioca. One round facing in, next facing out.
2. Skip. Change direction at each cone— forward, sideways, backward, sideways.
3. Sprint. Run to cone and stop, balanced on one leg, then run to next cone and stop, balanced on other leg.
4. Circles. Run to each cone and make a complete circle around it. Face same direction as player circles the cone.

ONE-LEG TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs with a lightweight medicine ball or junior-size basketball.
- No more than four pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other four to six feet apart.

Mission

- Each player catches on two feet, tosses on one.
- Catch in center of body facing forward.
- Toss with two hands from side of body, turning shoulder on each toss.
- After four successful tosses and catches each, switch to other foot.
- Need Help? Toss a yellow ball.

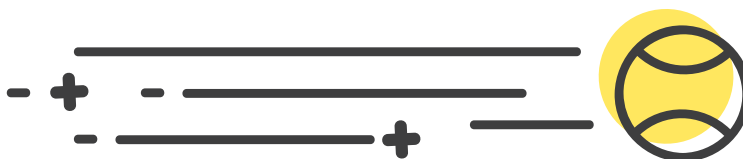
Progressions

1. Toss in crosscourt pattern with limited movement.
2. Figure-8 tosses.
3. Toss and catch on one leg.



TEACHING TIP

This is a great activity to get creative. Once players are comfortable, add new movements, change movements at every cone, or let the kids be the leaders and decide.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

ROLL AND RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstrokes on the rise.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission - Rally and roll off different balls.

- One side rolls ball with high topspin, other takes ball on the rise, any stroke.
- On-the-rise side takes deep balls early and midcourt balls on the rise when possible.

Goal - Stay consistent while changing height and spin.

Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

CRAZY FEED

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Heavy topspin.

Setup

- Two teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Two play at a time.

Mission - Start point with high, topspin feed.

- Designate one side as attackers, other as defenders.
- Attacker feeds a heavy topspin ball deep, then plays out point. Rotate players every point.
- Attacker can choose to come to net after the bounce.
- If attackers win point, they score one; if defenders win, they score two.
- Play first team to seven points, then switch roles.
- After second game, adjust teams or order so players have different opponents.

Goal - Put player on defensive by hitting deep, arcing topspin.

Progressions

1. Feed backhands.
2. Defender feeds high, deep ball with little spin to attacker, who hits back with heavy topspin.



COACHING TIP

Use questions to confirm the players' understanding and intent. "Which type of ball are you looking to back up on?" "Could you take their return out of the air?"

FIGURE 8 SLICE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Change of direction on slice.

Setup

- Two pairs per court on opposite service lines.

Mission - Change direction on every ball.

- Rally cooperatively with a slice - one side hits down the line, other crosscourt.
- Move partner a few feet, right to left, using outside stroke.
- After each side has hit down the line and crosscourt, do same from 60-foot baseline.

Goal - Find a rally pace you can control with appropriate speed and spin.

Progressions

1. Slice and topspin from service line.
2. One side hits all forehands.

“LEAVE IT”

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Heavy topspin and drop shots.

Setup

- Teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Use TDLs to split court in half.
- All players on baseline.

Mission - rally groundstroke with topspin and height, use slice on drop shot.

- Play points in a diagonal; either side starts with drop-hit.
- If during rally, a player feels his/her shot will either hit fence before bouncing a second time, or bounce twice inside the service line, player calls “leave it” and rally stops.
- If player effectively executes a “leave it,” then five points are earned. If “leave it” is called and not achieved, opponent gets one point.
- If opponent plays the ball after hearing “leave it,” then player is awarded five points.
- Play to a set number of points, then rotate opponents and/or teammates.

Goal: Back opponent up with “heavy” deep ball (speed and spin), and use continental grip for drop shot.

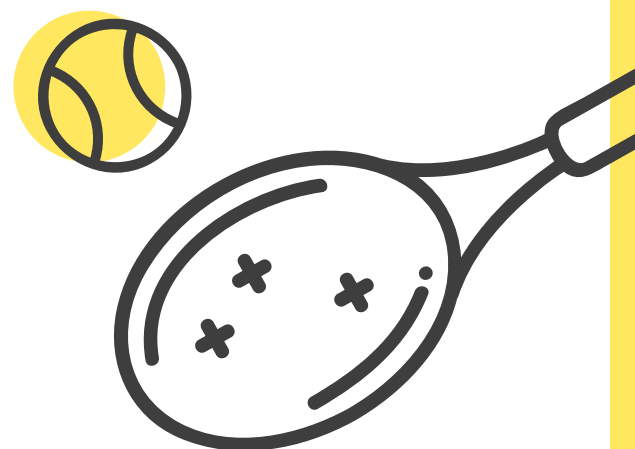
Progressions

1. Play straight ahead.
2. Play full court.
3. Start point with serve.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

DROP SHOT

- Play points or a practice match.
- Score two for points won with drop shot.



ATTACK MODE

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

ISLAND TENNIS

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Take balls on the rise.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court and hitting inside service box.
- The island is the service box boundaries of court. Outside of service box is water.

Mission - Hit every ball standing inside court.

- Start with a drop-hit and play points; all balls must bounce.
- Win points when opponent steps in water or misses a shot.
- Play for designated time, then rotate opponents.

Goal - Take deep balls as they come off the ground, and cut off angles on sideline.

Progressions

1. Change size of island.
2. Only one side plays Island Tennis.

II. CHARACTER

LEADERSHIP

Lead with your actions.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

4X4 TAG

Setup

- Create a square on each side of net using baseline and sidelines, and adding TDLs or cones in front of net.
- Up to eight players on each side of net. Half of group on one corner of square, other half on opposite corner.

Mission

- One player from each team in box—tagger and avoider.
- Avoider attempts to dodge tag for seven seconds. Game is over when someone is tagged or steps out of playing area.
- When finished, players go to back of opposite line and next two begin.

Progressions

1. Shrink square.
2. Create a different shape.

FENCE THROWS

Setup

- Players in pairs—one outside fence, other inside.
- Both players about 10 feet from fence.
- Each pair has two balls.

Mission

- Throw over fence so partner can catch ball without having to move far.
- Throw two balls; partner catches and throws back.

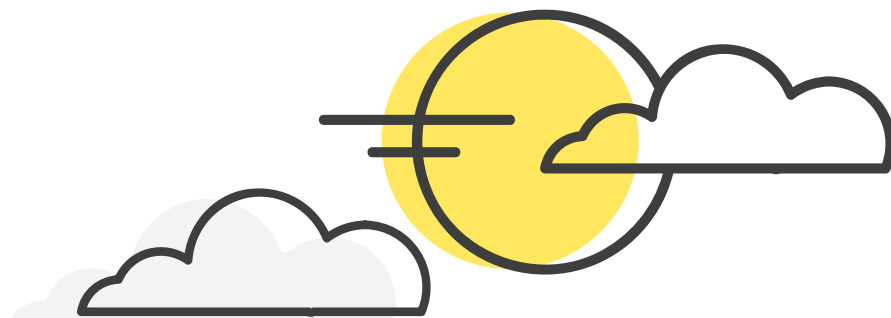
Progression

1. Start with ball on ground behind back foot.
2. Move closer or further away from fence.



TEACHING TIP

Make sure players are turned sideways for the throw, and the back shoulder starts lower and finishes higher than the front shoulder (shoulder over shoulder).



IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

TEMPO DRILL

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Consistency and spin on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission - Hit as many balls as possible in a set period of time.

- See how many balls you can rally in one minute using one ball.
- If you miss, start again at same number.
- Repeat and try to beat record.

Goal - Hit with spin and speed to increase numbers.

Progressions

1. Straight ahead then crosscourt.
2. Straight ahead with one stroke.
3. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

ABSORB AND RIP

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Big forehand and continental-grip defense.

Setup

- Teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Use TDLs to split court in half.
- All players on baseline.

Mission - Defend and rip.

- Play points straight ahead; either side starts with drop-hit.
- “Juggle” first ball by hitting it up in the air off of bounce, let it bounce again and rip next ball.
- Use continental grip on juggle ball. Can hit it up and forward as long as it’s a groundstroke.
- Winners stay in for two points.
- Play to a set number of points, then rotate opponents and/or teammates.

Goal - Use spin on first ball to take pace off and set up for next ball.

Progressions

1. All forehands.
2. Backhand (one hand) on first ball, forehand on second.
3. Play crosscourt points.



COACHING TIP

When stepping into the court to rip, have players look to take the ball on the rise and above the waist.

ACCORDION VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Volley direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court, using half court.

Mission - Keep volley going from different positions on court.

- Rally volleys cooperatively, beginning from service line, any stroke.
- After five successful rallies in the air, move to middle of service box (without stopping rally), then close to net.
- After five successful rallies from close to net, move back to middle of service box, then service line.

Goal - Keep rally going as players move from one spot to next.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. More than five rallies.

OFFENSE/DEFENSE

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Transitioning to net and making passing shots.

Setup

- Four to six players per court.
- Four players start on baseline.
- Extra balls at bottom of net on each side.

Mission - Take over net.

- Either team feeds to start baseline point, winning team then runs to net.
- Net team grabs a ball and feeds deep, past service line, to start next point.
- Only net team can win points.
- When players on net team lose, they backpedal and baseline team runs up and feeds deep ball.
- Play to a set number of points and rotate opponents and/or partners.

Goal - Use deep and short volleys to end points.

Progressions

1. Player feeds or coach feeds (coach feeds with smaller numbers).
2. Feed must land past service line.
3. Play with or without lobs allowed.

Note: For coach feed, coach stands next to net and feeds deep ball to baseline team. If team wins, coach feeds approach shot.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

RETURN AND COME IN

Setup

- Play singles or doubles points.
- Return and come to net on all second serves

OFFENSE/DEFENSE

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

FIGURE 8

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Change of direction on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court on opposite service lines.
- Use middle to doubles sideline.

Mission - Change direction on every ball.

- Rally cooperatively - one side hits down the line, other crosscourt.
- Move partner a few feet, right to left, using outside stroke.
- After each side has hit down the line and crosscourt, do same from baseline.

Goal - Find a rally pace you can control with appropriate speed and spin.

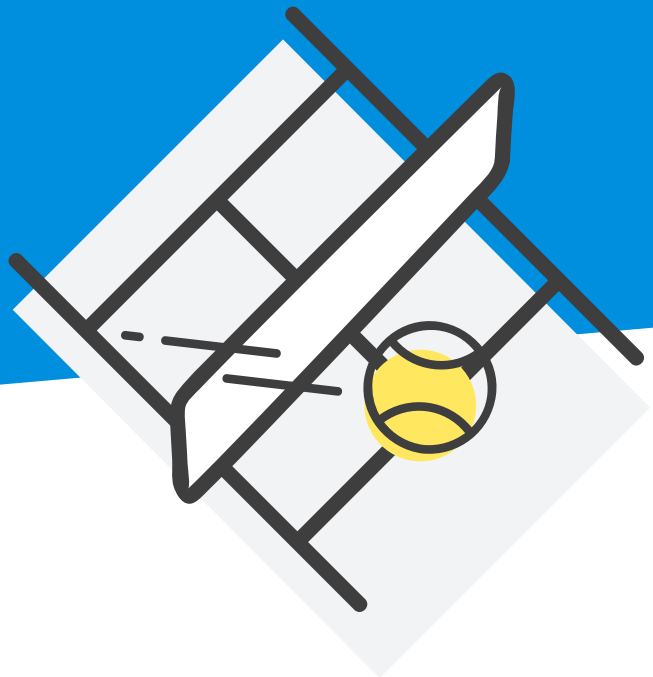
Progressions

1. Slice and topspin from service line.
2. One side hits all forehands.

II. CHARACTER

PERSISTENCE

Be persistent; effort and time will yield results.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

COPY CAT

Setup

- Players spread out on court; maximum four on each side of net.

Mission

- Coach picks a player to demonstrate a specific movement, then players copy.

Progressions

1. Crossover recovery. Players lined up from net to behind baseline. Player runs to sideline, shadow strokes, crosses over, then shuffles back to middle. First square stance, then open stance.
2. Hop-move approach. Players lined up across baseline. Player demonstrates approach shot off front foot, split-step, then volley.
3. Drop-step, crossover and run for overhead. Players lined up across net.
4. Players in line across baseline. Perform three backhand slice approaches with carioca move to net, turn around and do three more backhand slice approaches to baseline.

HI-LO TOSS

Setup

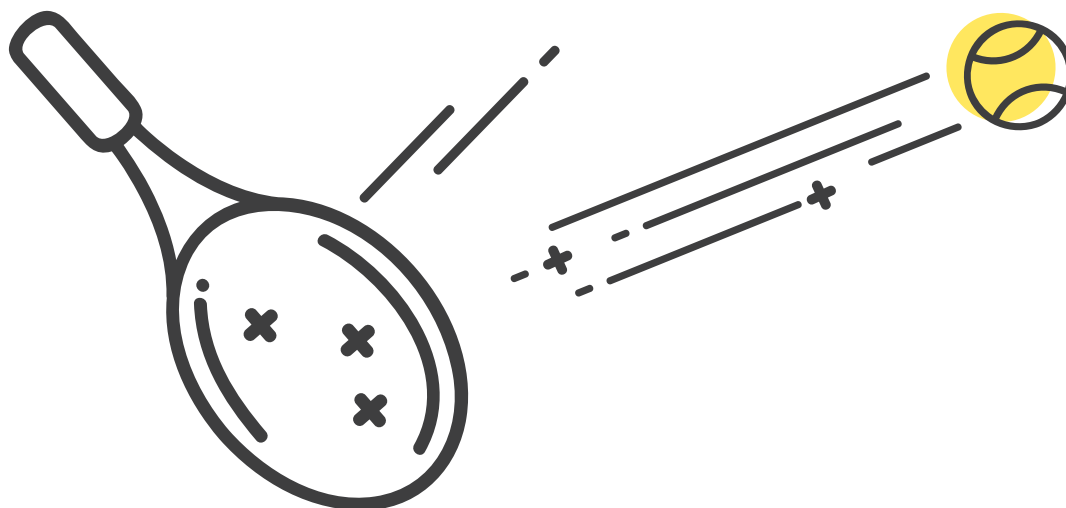
- Players in pairs with a ball.
- Up to four pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Players face each other, four to five feet apart.

Mission

- One player feeds, other catches.
- Catch first ball in the air above waist level, second after bounce.
- Catch with right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- After four successful high-low catches on each side, switch roles, then move to next progression.

Progressions

1. Toss first ball high over catcher's shoulder, second in front of catcher.
2. Toss first ball short and high, second over shoulder.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Ball recognition.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Split court in half using TDLs. Alleys count.
- Use TDLs to set up three zones—defense (red), neutral (orange) and offense (green).

Mission - Call out ball location before it bounces.

- Rally in down-the-line direction, starting on baseline.
- Call out red, orange or green before ball bounces on your side.

Goal - Recognize depth of ball before it crosses net.

Progressions

1. Rally crosscourt with outside stroke.
2. Create point system and play cooperative games with partner.



TEACHING TIP

Once players get better with the drill, challenge them to call the ball out even sooner – when it crosses the net, or even before it crosses the net.

BLACK HOLE

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Deep/short and side to side.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three players on opposite baselines.
- Divide each side of the court into four equal squares using TDLs or poly-spots.

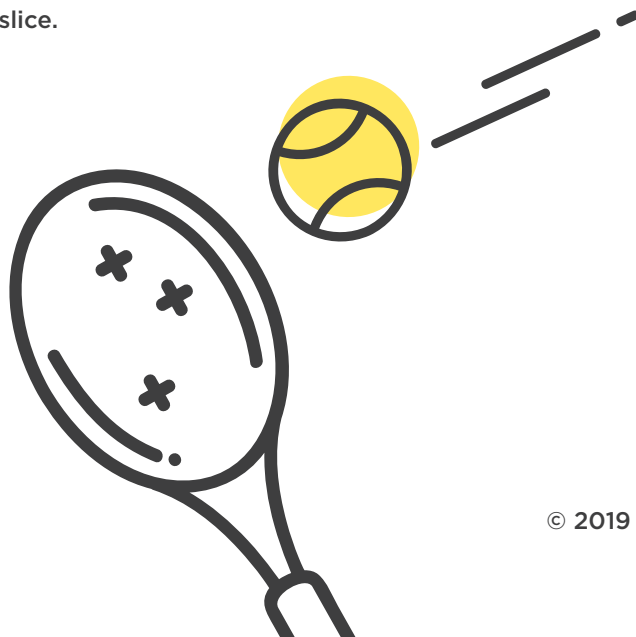
Mission - Move opponent using combinations of shots.

- Play points starting with serve. After serve, players can't hit into same square twice in a row.
- In addition, players pick one square opponent cannot hit to (black hole). Use a cone or poly spot to mark the square.
- Play one point and rotate. Each player serves three points, and switch servers and returners.

Goal - Use different spins and speeds to move ball.

Progressions

1. Must hit short ball with slice.
2. Can come to net.



CHIP-LOB RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Chip lob.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court.
- One player at net, other at baseline.

Mission - Rally lobs and overheads.

- Drop-hit lob using continental grip to net player, who plays controlled overhead back to lobber.
- Attempt continuous rally of chip lobs and overheads.
- Rotate positions every minute.
- Need help? Chip lob, overhead, trap, repeat.

Goal - Use continental grip and one-handed backhand for chip lobs.

Progressions

1. Change pattern to lob/overhead/groundstroke/volley/lob.
2. Play two on one, with two lobbers and one net player. Net player alternates sides on overhead.

ONE SIDE ATTACK

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Get to net.

Setup

- Two teams of three to four players on each side of net.
- One up/one back formation.

Mission - Serve and volley on first serve, return and come in on second.

- Play out points with serving team serving and volleying on first serve.
- Second serve, servers stay back and returning team comes in.
- For three on a side, play one point and rotate one spot. For four, play two points and rotate two new players in.

Goal - Take control of net with partner and put ball away.

Progressions

1. Allow servers to play two back.
2. Returners must chip and charge.



COACHING TIP

When coming to net, keep it simple. Low volley go deep, high volley angle off the court.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

SERVE AND VOLLEY

Setup

- Play singles or doubles points.
- Serve and volley on all first serves.

WHO'S THE BOSS?

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, medicine, balls and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

DROP THE DROPPER

Type: Competitive, players in pairs.

Focus: Drop shots and touch.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Boundaries are service boxes.
- Play all points straight ahead.

Mission - Play a better drop shot than your opponent.

- Start point with a drop-hit.
- Hit a drop shot and recover back to service line, touching line with foot.
- Play continues until someone misses or can't get to ball.
- Play to seven, then switch opponents.

Goal - Play all shots with continental grip and try to make ball stop on bounce.

Progressions

1. Play crosscourt.
2. Anywhere in service box, as long as you slice.

II. CHARACTER

ASPIRE

Be the best *you*.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

KNEE TAG

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to four on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other in athletic stance, two to three feet apart.

Mission

- Attempt to tag opponent's knee while avoiding being tagged.
- Stay on your feet at all times.
- Can't use hands to block tag.
- After 60 seconds, player with most touches wins. Rotate opponents each game or play two out of three.
- Emphasize moving feet and staying in athletic stance during play.

Progressions

1. Set playing boundaries and experiment by changing court size.
2. Use only one hand.

BIG BALL TENNIS

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- Play matches inside service boxes. One big ball per court.

Mission

- Begin by tossing serve into appropriate service box.
- Toss all balls from side of body. Must land within court boundaries.
- Catch all balls after bounce and throw from same spot.
- For teams of three, rotate positions every two points.
- Play to set number of points, then switch opponents.

Progressions

1. Can catch ball in the air.
2. Throw serve overhead, like soccer throw.



TEACHING TIP

To increase the connection to tennis, require players to catch and toss in a continuous motion.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

TEAM RALLY

Type: Cooperative, Team.

Focus: Consistency and spin on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Teams of four to six players per court
- Split court in half using TDLs. Alleys count.

Mission - Hit as many balls as possible in a set period of time.

- Two pairs rally straight ahead.
- If someone misses, start again at same number, and extra player rotates in.
- Rally for a specific time, count team total, compete against other courts.

Goal - Hit with spin and speed to increase numbers.

Progressions

1. Any stroke, then only forehands.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

I'M THE BOSS

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Forehand change of direction.

Setup

- Two or three players per team, full-court points.
- Serving team members are “bosses.”

Mission - Change direction of groundstroke.

- Begin points with serve from baseline.
- Play return crosscourt to server and continue point crosscourt with outside strokes.
- Boss can change direction (with forehand only); returners must hit everything crosscourt.
- After initial change of direction, play is open.
- Boss gets bonus point for changing direction with forehand and winning point.
- On ad side points (for righties), boss can change direction with inside-in forehand.
- Play games to seven, then switch servers.

Goal - Wait for short ball or sitter on baseline to change directions.

Progressions

1. Server can choose which stroke to change direction with.
2. Both sides can be boss.

RETURN THE CANNON

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Racquet-head speed on serve.

Setup

- Two teams of three to four players on each side of net.
- One team serves; other returns.
- Use TDLs to split court in half. Play all points crosscourt.

Mission - Serve aggressively and return back to server.

- Standing on service line, try to hit unreturnable serve.
- Server wins point if returner can't return crosscourt.
- Returner wins point for returning crosscourt.
- Switch sides of court after each point.
- Play first team to seven, switch roles.

Goal - Use spin, speed and direction on serve.

Progressions

1. Play out point on half court. Returner scores two points for winning rally.
2. Serve between service line and baseline.

ATTACK DUBZ

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Big return.

Setup

- Two teams of three to four players on each side of net.
- One up/one back formation.

Mission - Return at net player

- Serving team gets one serve, returner hits return at net player straight ahead; play out point.
- For three on a side, play one point and rotate one spot. For four, play two points and rotate two new players in.
- Play games to seven and switch servers.

Goal - Take return early and look to come in.

Progressions

1. Must use forehand on return.
2. Returner must come to net.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

BIG FOREHAND

Setup

- Play singles or doubles points.
- Score two points when hitting a forehand winner.

DUBZ RULES

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, jump ropes, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

JUGGLE VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Touch on volleys.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court, using half court.
- Players in front half of service box.

Mission - Play a self-volley, then volley to partner.

- Volley cooperatively. First, self-volley straight up in the air, then volley to partner.
- Partner then self-volleys and volleys back to partner.

Goal - Adjust racquet face for different volleys.

Progressions

1. Increase distance from net.
2. Self-volley with one stroke, volley with other.



TEACHING TIP

Encourage players to hold the racquet loosely to develop soft hands and a better feel for open racquet face skills.

II. CHARACTER

TEAMWORK

Teamwork is respecting your peers and working together for a common goal.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

JUMP ROPE

Note: Have each player bring a jump rope to practice, or provide one.

Setup

- Players, each with jump rope, spread out around court.

Mission

- In small area, players jump rope in place with single jumps.
- Once successful, coach can call out different movements.
- Players will attempt each for 60 seconds, rest briefly, then try again.

Progressions

1. Move by zigzagging with feet.
2. Use in and out patterns (jumping jacks).
3. Double jumps.

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs with a ball.
- Maximum three pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One feeds, other catches.

Mission

- Feeder tosses while moving; catcher catches after bounce and keeps following feeder.
- Feeder can toss and move backward, forward or sideways.

Progressions

1. Add groundstroke/volley combination—catch first ball after bounce, second in the air.
2. Must catch with specific hand.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

CALL THE BOUNCE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Ball recognition.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- All players spread out on baseline.

Mission - Call out where ball will land.

- Rally straight ahead with partner.
- As ball comes back, call out “up,” “back,” or “stay,” then move to that spot (or stay) to return shot.
- Follow really short “up” ball to net, finish rally and move back.

Goal - Call location and move to ball as it crosses net.

Progressions

1. Straight ahead, then crosscourt.
2. One stroke, alternate strokes.

GLADIATOR DUBZ

Type: Competitive, doubles

Focus: Doubles positioning and approaching net

Setup

- Pair up players, up to four pairs per court. Make pairings as even as possible.
- One team on one side (Champs); other teams lined up on opposite side behind baseline (Challengers).
- Start in one up/one back formation.

Mission - come to net off of short ball

- Challengers serve to Champs and play point. After serve, if ball bounces inside service box, baseliner must come to net.
- Serve to same side until new Champs come over, then switch sides.
- After each point, Challengers rotate to back of line, next team moves up.
- For odd numbers, keep Challengers in two lines. Switch lines after each point and play with different partner each time.
- Challengers keep their point score. When Challenger gets two points and before serving the ball, they shout, “Gladiator”.
- If they shout “Gladiator” and win point, they take Champs spot.
- If they don’t shout “Gladiator” and win point, they don’t take Champs spot.
- Challengers count down 3-2-1 and then serve, when new Champs come over.

Goal - take short ball on the rise and split-step inside service line.

Progressions

1. Challengers take over if point is won with volley/overhead.
2. Let players decide what ball to approach on.

UP AND BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Slice approach and volley.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service line.

Mission - Approach, split and volley.

- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball to player 2, who hits slice approach shot, comes to net, and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits an easy groundstroke back; player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Player 1 lets volley bounce, uses it as slice approach shot, comes to net, and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to player 1, who volleys and retreats.

Goal - Work on correct approach footwork, proper grips and ready position.

Progressions

1. Alternate between topspin and slice approach.
2. Use appropriate footwork – carioca move on slice backhand, hop move for topspin approach.

POACH AND PLAY

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Poaching and diagonal movement at net for doubles.

Setup

- Four to six players per court, starting in one up/one back formation.
- Start with coach as returner.

Mission - Poach off first serve.

- Start point with serve; return must go crosscourt.
- Server's partner moves diagonally forward as serve bounces, and intercepts return as volley. Play out point.
- Adjust scoring and rotations to number of players. Ensure equal time on deuce and ad courts.

Goal - Time poach so that movement to volley is continuous.

Progressions

1. Players return serves.
2. Returner's partner poaches off second-serve return.
3. Returner can hit crosscourt or down the line; net player can fake, stay or poach.



COACHING TIP

To develop a good poaching mindset, tell players to poach as if they are alone on his/her side of the court.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

POACH AND PLAY

Setup

- Play a doubles practice match
- Poach a minimum of one time per game when partner serves

PRIME TIME

Equipment: 26-inch racquets and longer, yellow balls, cones, poly-spots, and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS DUBZ

Type: Competitive, two on two.

Focus: Continental grip on slice and volley.

Setup

- Two teams of two per court.
- Play points as doubles team, boundaries are service boxes.

Mission - move opponent with control.

- Any player starts point with drop-hit.
- Slice and volley all shots using continental grip.
- After drop hit, each side must let ball bounce at least one time before moving forward to volley.
- Players use all touch and finesse.
- Play for one minute, then each team rotates one spot to their right or left.

Goal - Use one hand for backhand slice and volley.

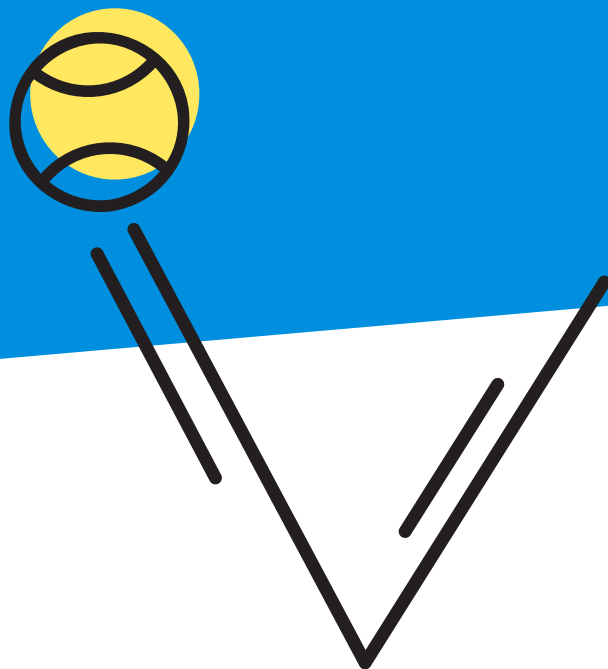
Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. No lobs.

II. CHARACTER

RESILIENCE

Bounce back.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

PLAYER'S CHOICE

- Let two players pick a different athletic skill that's already been done in practice, or even create one.
- Be sure to select players who have demonstrated good character during session.



TEACHING TIP

Ask the other players in the group to identify the purpose of the activities that were selected.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

FIVE-MINUTE WARMUP

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Managing a timed warmup.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- Players start on baseline.

Mission—Hit serves, returns, groundstrokes, volleys and overheads.

- Players start at baseline and have five minutes to hit all strokes.
- Coach keeps track of time. First round, coach won't call out time until end. Second round, give two-minute, then one-minute warning.

Goal—Hit all strokes within five-minute period.

DEPTH DRILL

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Depth and spin on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission - Keep groundstrokes deep.

- Rally, aiming past service line.
- Set a time and see how many balls are hit past the service line.
- Repeat and try to beat record.

Goal - Hit with height, spin and speed for consistent depth.

Progressions

1. Straight ahead then crosscourt.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

SIDELINER PING PONG

Type: Competitive, Team.

Focus: Width on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Divide group into doubles teams. Four teams per court
- Play games diagonally on half court.
- Use extra TDLs to split court in half; alleys count.

Mission - Move opponent outside sideline.

- Play all points crosscourt, both pairs hitting simultaneously.
- Use ping pong doubles format—partners alternate hitting balls.
- Start point with a serve; players must hit their outside stroke.
- All balls must bounce.
- Score points for your team by winning point and forcing opponent outside sideline.
- Play to seven, then change servers.

Goal - Use spin and height to take ball off court.

Progressions

1. Volleys are allowed.
2. Play full court.

PING PONG DUBZ

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Doubles positioning and angles.

Setup

- Players on teams of two.
- Two teams per court.

Mission - Hit a shot and rotate.

- Play points for designated time.
- One team serves two points, other team serves two points, then change servers.
- Singles points are played; use ping pong doubles format - partners alternate hitting balls.
- Players can stand anywhere they want after hitting the ball.
- When coach calls “time,” winning team moves up a court, losing team moves down a court. When players move, they will split with partner.

Goal - Create difficult situations for the opponent.

Progressions

1. No volleys are allowed.
2. Players must hit one stroke.

V. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

PLAY A TOURNAMENT!

TOGETHER WE WILL

**GROW
THE GAME**

