

KEY RULES

Game Basics: Tennis is played between two players (singles) or four players (doubles). The aim is to hit the ball over the net into the opponent's court and win points when they cannot return it. Play begins with a serve, and the game is played to sets and games depending on the match format.

Serving and Starting Play: The server stands behind the baseline and serves the ball diagonally into the opponent's service box. If the ball hits the net and lands in, it is a let and replayed. Players have two chances to serve legally. The serve alternates between players or teams after each game.

Rallies and Scoring: Players hit the ball back and forth, aiming to keep it inside the court boundaries. A rally continues until one player fails to return the ball, hits it out, or into the net. The scoring system is 15, 30, 40, and game. If both players reach 40, this is called deuce. A player must win two consecutive points after deuce to win the game.

Court Lines and Boundaries: In singles, the inner side lines are used. In doubles, the full width of the court is used. The ball is in play if it touches any part of the line. Each player changes ends after every odd-numbered game in a set to ensure fair play in different court conditions.

Fair Play and Safety: Players should always show respect to opponents and officials. Calling balls in or out honestly is part of fair play. Equipment such as rackets and balls should be checked before use, and players should be aware of space when swinging their rackets. Communication and teamwork are key in doubles games.

NATIONAL GOVERNING BODY (NGB)

Lawn Tennis Association (LTA): The national governing body for tennis in England, responsible for coaching, competitions, and development.

Tennis Scotland: Supports tennis programmes, facilities, and coaching across Scotland.

Tennis Wales: Manages participation, schools' tennis, and community projects across Wales.

Tennis Ireland: Oversees tennis development and national competitions across Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

USEFUL LINKS

Lawn Tennis Association (LTA): lta.org.uk

Tennis Scotland: tennisscotland.org

Tennis Wales: tenniswales.org.uk

Tennis Ireland: tennisireland.ie

International Tennis Federation (ITF): itftennis.com

Your School Games Tennis: yourschoolgames.com/taking-part/our-sports/tennis