

# Tennis Rules

## Tournament Structure

- Preliminary Matches followed by Single Elimination Tournament
- Divisions- Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced
  - Women's Singles
  - Women's Doubles
  - Men's Singles
  - Men's Doubles
  - Coed Doubles
  - Faculty/Staff
- All matches played at the recreation tennis courts near the Murray Case Sells Swim Complex.

## Tennis Information

- All participants must provide a valid OU ID (with picture) prior to each contest.
  - No OU ID = No Play

## The Game

- 1) The match will be first player/team to win 6 games, and the player/team must win by at least 2 games. If the match is tied at 5-5, the winner must win 7-5. If the match is tied at 6-6, the winner must win 8-6 and so on until a player/team wins by two games.
- 2) Players/teams will change sides after every odd number game (after the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> game, etc.).
- 3) The choice of ends and the choice to be server or receiver in the first game shall be decided by toss before the warm-up starts. The player/team who wins the toss may choose:
  - a. To be server or receiver in the first game of the match, in which case the opponent(s) shall choose the end of the court for the first game of the match.
  - b. The end of the court for the first game of the match, in which case the opponent(s) shall choose to be server or receiver for the first game of the match.
  - c. To require the opponent(s) to make one of the above choices.
- 4) Unless a fault or a let is called, the ball is in play from the moment the server hits the ball, and remains in play until the point is decided.
- 5) If a ball touches a line, it is regarded as touching the court bounded by that line.
- 6) If the ball in play touches a permanent fixture after it has hit the correct court, the player who hit the ball wins the point. If the ball in play touches a permanent fixture before it hits the ground, the player who hit the ball loses the point.
- 7) At the end of each standard game, the receiver shall become the server and the server shall become the receiver for the next game.

## Service

- 1) The server shall release the ball by hand in any direction and hit the ball with the racket before the ball hits the ground. The service motion is completed at the moment that the player's racket hits or misses the ball. A player who is able to use only one arm may use the racket for the release of the ball.
- 2) When serving in a standard game, the server shall stand behind alternate halves of the court, starting from the right half of the court in every game.
- 3) In a tie-break game, the service shall be served from behind alternate halves of the court, with the first served from the right half of the court.
- 4) The service shall pass over the net and hit the service court diagonally opposite, before the receiver returns it.
- 5) If the first service is a fault, the server shall serve again without delay from behind the same half of the court from which that fault was served, unless the service was from the wrong half.
- 6) The server shall not serve until the receiver is ready. However, the receiver shall play to the reasonable pace of the server and shall be ready to receive within a reasonable time of the server being ready.
- 7) A receiver who attempts to return the service shall be considered as being ready. If it is demonstrated that the receiver is not ready, the service cannot be called a fault.
- 8) The service is a let if:
  - a. The ball served touches the net, strap or band, and is otherwise good; or, after touching the net, strap or band, touches the receiver or the receiver's partner or anything they wear or carry before hitting the ground.
  - b. The ball is served when the receiver is not ready.
- 9) In the case of a service let, that particular service shall not count, and the server shall serve again, but a service let does not cancel a previous fault.
- 10) In all cases when a let is called, except when a service let is called on a second service, the whole point shall be replayed.

## Faults

- 1) Foot Fault
  - a. During the service motion, the server shall not:
    - i. Change position by walking or running, although slight movements of the feet are permitted.
    - ii. Touch the baseline or the court with either foot.

- iii. Touch the area outside the imaginary extension of the sideline with either foot.
- iv. Touch the imaginary extension of the center mark with either foot.

2) Service Fault

- a. The server breaks the Serving or Foot Fault Rules.
- b. The server misses the ball when trying to hit it.
- c. The ball served touches a permanent fixture, singles stick or net post before it hits the ground.
- d. The ball served touches the server or server's partner, or anything the server or server's partner is wearing or carrying.

### Scoring/Open Play

8) Player Loses Point

- a. The point is lost if:
  - i. The player serves two consecutive faults.
  - ii. The player does not return the ball in play before it bounces twice consecutively.
  - iii. The player returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, before it bounces, an object, outside the correct court.
  - iv. The player returns the ball in play so that, before it bounces, it hits a permanent fixture.
  - v. The receiver returns the service before it bounces.
  - vi. The player deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on the racket or deliberately touches it with the racket more than once.
  - vii. The player or the racket, whether in the player's hand or not, or anything which the player is wearing or carrying touches the net, net posts/singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, or the opponent's court at any time while the ball is in play.
  - viii. The player hits the ball before it has passed the net.
  - ix. The ball in play touches the player or anything that the player is wearing or carrying, except the racket.
  - x. The ball in play touches the racket when the player is not holding it.
  - xi. The player deliberately and materially changes the shape of the racket when the ball is in play.
  - xii. In doubles, both players touch the ball when returning it.

9) A Good Return

- a. It is a good return if:
  - i. The ball touches the net, net posts/singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, provided that it passes over any of them and hits the ground within the correct court.
  - ii. After the ball in play has hit the ground within the correct court and has spun or been blown back over the net, the player reaches over the net and plays the ball into the correct court.
  - iii. The ball is returned outside the net posts, either above or below the level of the top of the net, even though it touches the net posts, provided that it hits the ground in the correct court.
  - iv. The ball passes under the net cord between the singles stick and the adjacent net post without touching either net, net cord or net post and hits the ground in the correct court.
  - v. The player's racket passes over the net after hitting the ball on the player's own side of the net and the ball hits the ground in the correct court.
  - vi. The player hits the ball in play, which hits another ball lying in the correct court.

### Doubles Modifications

- 1) The team due to serve in the first game of each set shall decide which player shall serve for that game. Similarly, before the second game starts, their opponents shall decide which player shall serve for that game. The partner of the player who served in the first game shall serve in the third game and the partner of the player who served in the second game shall serve in the fourth game. This rotation shall continue until the end of the set.
- 2) The team which is due to receive in the first game of a set shall decide which player shall receive the first point in the game. Similarly, before the second game starts, their opponents shall decide which player shall receive the first point of that game. The player who was the receiver's partner for the first point of the game shall receive the second point and this rotation shall continue until the end of the game and the set.
- 3) After the receiver has returned the ball, either player in a team can hit the ball.

### Additional Rules

- 1) If a player is hindered in playing the point by a deliberate act of the opponent(s), the player shall win the point. However, the point shall be replayed if a player is hindered in playing the point by either an unintentional act of the opponent(s), or something outside the player's own control (not including a permanent fixture).
- 2) As a principle, play should be continuous, from the time the match starts (when the first service of the match is put in play) until the match finishes.

For rules not specifically mentioned above refer to International Tennis Federation Official Rules.