

# TENNIS

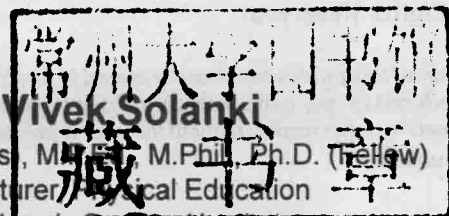
## Skills & Rules



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# TENNIS

## Skills & Rules



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# 1

## INTRODUCTION AND HISTORY OF TENNIS

The history of tennis dates back several thousand years. The game was first created by European monks to be played for entertainment purposes during religious ceremonies. To begin with, the ball was hit with the hand. Soon the leather glove came into existence. This was soon replaced with an adaptive handle for effective hitting and serving of the ball.

Tennis is a sport played between two players (singles) or between two teams of two players each (doubles). Each player uses a strung racquet to strike a hollow rubber ball covered with felt over a net into the opponent's court.

The modern game of tennis originated in the United Kingdom in the late 19th century as "lawn tennis" which has heavy connections to various field/lawn games as well as to the ancient game of real tennis. After its creation, tennis spread throughout the upper-class English-speaking population before spreading around the world. Tennis is an Olympic sport and is played at all levels of society at all ages. The sport can be played by anyone who can hold a racket, including people in wheelchairs. In the United States, there is a collegiate circuit organized by the National Collegiate Athletic Association.



The rules of tennis have changed very little since the 1890s. Two exceptions are that from 1908 to 1960 the server had to keep one foot on the ground at all times, and then the adoption of the tie-break in the 1970s. A recent addition to professional tennis has been the adoption of electronic review technology coupled with a point challenge system, which allows a player to challenge the line (or chair) umpire's call of a point.

Tennis enjoys millions of recreational players and is also a hugely popular worldwide spectator sport, especially the four Grand Slam tournaments (sometimes referred to as the "majors"): the Australian Open, the French Open, Wimbledon, and the US Open.

Tennis as the modern sport can be dated to two separate roots. Between 1859 and 1863, Major Harry Gem and his friend Augurio Perera developed a game that combined elements of rackets and the Basque ball game pelota, which they played on Perera's croquet lawn in Birmingham, United Kingdom. In 1872, along with two local doctors, they founded the world's first tennis club in Leamington Spa. The *Courier* of July 23, 1884 recorded one of the first tennis tournaments, held in the grounds of Shrubland Hall.

In December 1873, Major Walter Clopton Wingfield designed and patented a similar game — which he called sphairistike, from ancient Greek meaning "skill at playing at ball"), and was soon known simply as "sticky" — for the amusement of his guests at a garden party on his estate of Nantclwyd, in Llanellidan, Wales. He likely based his game on the evolving sport of outdoor tennis including real tennis. According to some tennis historians, modern tennis terminology also derives from this period, as Wingfield borrowed both the name and

much of the French vocabulary of real tennis and applied them to his new game.

Lawn tennis in the U.S., 1887The first championships at Wimbledon in London were played in 1877. The first Championships culminated a significant debate on how to standardize the rules.

In America in 1874 Mary Ewing Outerbridge, a young socialite, returned from Bermuda where she met Major Wingfield. She laid out a tennis court at the Staten Island Cricket Club in New Brighton Staten Island, New York. The exact location of the club was under what is now the Staten Island Ferry terminal. The first American National tournament in 1880 was played there. An Englishman named O.E Woodhouse won the singles match. There was also a doubles match which was won by a local pair. There were different rules at each club. The ball in Boston was larger than the one normally used in NY. On May 21, 1881, the United States National Lawn Tennis Association (now the United States Tennis Association) was formed to standardize the rules and organize competitions. The U.S. National Men's Singles Championship, now the US Open, was first held in 1881 at Newport, Rhode Island. The U.S. National Women's Singles Championships were first held in 1887. Tennis was also popular in France, where the French Open dates to 1891. Thus, Wimbledon, the US Open, the French Open, and the Australian Open (dating to 1905) became and have remained the most prestigious events in tennis. Together these four events are called the Majors or Slams (a term borrowed from bridge rather than baseball).

The comprehensive International Lawn Tennis Federation, now known as the International Tennis

Federation, rules promulgated in 1924 have remained remarkably stable in the ensuing eighty years, the one major change being the addition of the tie-break system designed by James Van Alen. That same year, tennis withdrew from the Olympics after the 1924 Games but returned 60 years later as a 21-and-under demonstration event in 1984. This reinstatement was credited by the efforts by the then ITF President Philippe Chatrier, ITF General Secretary David Gray and ITF Vice President Pablo Llorens, and support from IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch. The success of the event was overwhelming and the IOC decided to reintroduce tennis as a full medal sport at Seoul in 1988.

The Davis Cup, an annual competition between men's national teams, dates to 1900. The analogous competition for women's national teams, the Fed Cup, was founded as the Federation Cup in 1963 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the ITF.

In 1926, promoter C.C. Pyle established the first professional tennis tour with a group of American and French tennis players playing exhibition matches to paying audiences. The most notable of these early professionals were the American Vinnie Richards and the Frenchwoman Suzanne Lenglen. Once a player turned pro he or she could not compete in the major (amateur) tournaments.

In 1968, commercial pressures and rumors of some amateurs taking money under the table led to the abandonment of this distinction, inaugurating the open era, in which all players could compete in all tournaments, and top players were able to make their living from tennis. With the beginning of the open era,

the establishment of an international professional tennis circuit, and revenues from the sale of television rights, tennis's popularity has spread worldwide, and the sport has shed its upper/middle-class English-speaking image (although it is acknowledged that this stereotype still exists).

In 1954, Van Alen founded the International Tennis Hall of Fame, a non-profit museum in Newport, Rhode Island. The building contains a large collection of tennis memorabilia as well as a hall of fame honoring prominent members and tennis players from all over the world. Each year, a grass-court tournament and an induction ceremony honoring new Hall of Fame members are hosted on its grounds.

## **Equipment**

### **Tennis Technology**

Part of the appeal of tennis stems from the simplicity of equipment required for play. Beginners need only a racquet and balls.

### **Racquets**

The tennis racquet comprises a handle and neck joining a roughly circular frame that holds an array of tightly pulled strings. For the first century of the modern game, racquets were of wood and of standard size, and strings were of animal gut. Laminated wood construction yielded more strength in rackets used through most of the 20th century until first metal and then composites of carbon graphite, ceramics, and lighter metals such as titanium were introduced. These stronger materials enabled the production of oversized rackets that yielded yet more power. Meanwhile technology led

to the use of synthetic strings that match the feel of gut yet with added durability.

### ***Balls***

Tennis balls are of hollow rubber with a felt coating. Traditionally white, the predominant color was gradually changed to Optic Yellow in the latter part of the twentieth century to allow for improved visibility.

### ***Miscellaneous***

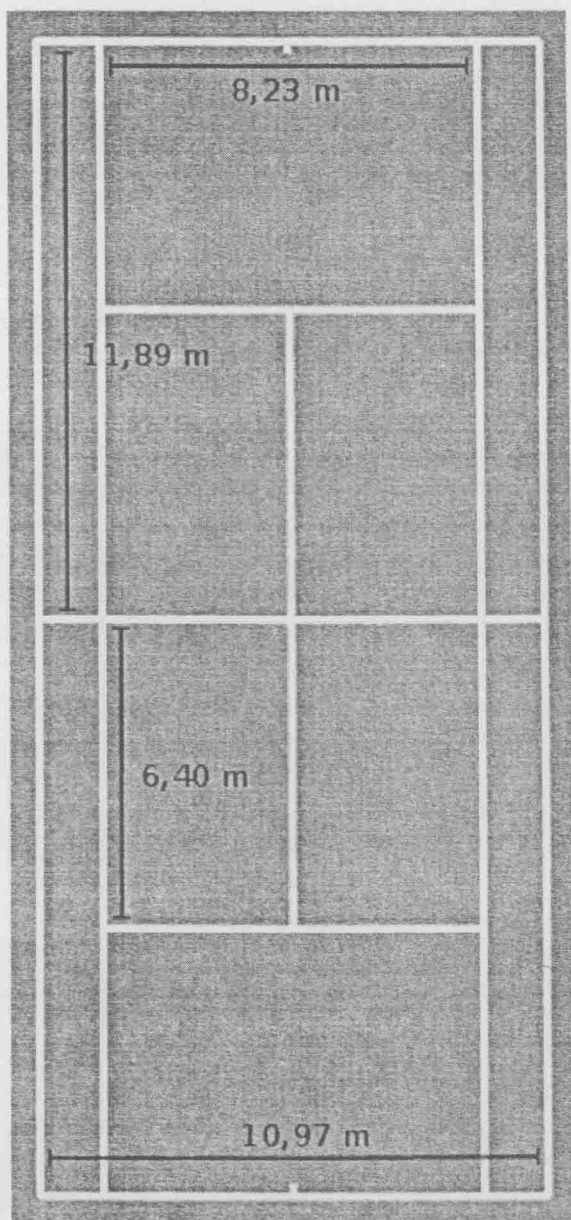
Advanced players improve their performance through a number of accoutrements. Vibration dampers may be interlaced in the proximal part of the string array for improved feel. Racket handles may be customized with absorbent materials to improve the players' grip. Players often use sweat bands on their wrists to keep their hands dry as well. Finally, although the game can be played in a variety of shoes, specialized tennis shoes have wide, flat soles for stability and a built-up front structure to avoid excess wear.

### ***Manner of Play***

#### ***Court***

##### ***Tennis Court***

The dimensions of a tennis court, in metric units. (See imperial version). Tennis is played on a rectangular, flat surface, usually grass, clay, a hardcourt of concrete and/or asphalt and occasionally carpet (indoor). The court is 78 feet (23.77 m) long, and its width is 27 feet (8.23 m) for singles matches and 36 ft (10.97 m) for doubles matches. Additional clear space around the court is required in order for players to reach overrun balls. A net is stretched across the full width of the court,



parallel with the baselines, dividing it into two equal ends. The net is 3 feet 6 inches (1.07 m) high at the posts and 3 feet (91.4 cm) high in the center.

The modern tennis court owes its design to Major Walter Clopton Wingfield who, in 1873, patented a court much the same as the current one for his stické tennis (sphairistike). This template was modified in 1875 to the court design that exists today, with markings similar to Wingfield's version, but with the hourglass shape of his court changed to a rectangle.

### ***Lines***

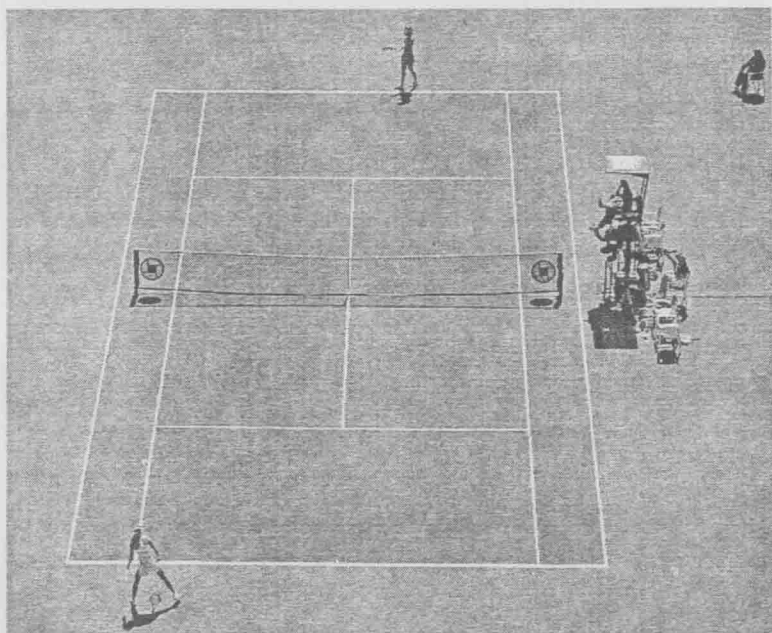
The lines that delineate the width of the court are called the baseline (farthest back) and the service line (middle of the court). The short mark in the center of each baseline is referred to as either the hash mark or the center mark. The outermost lines that make up the length are called the doubles sidelines. These are the boundaries used when doubles is being played. The lines to the inside of the doubles sidelines are the singles sidelines and are used as boundaries in singles play. The area between a doubles sideline and the nearest singles sideline is called the doubles alley, which is considered playable in doubles play. The line that runs across the center of a player's side of the court is called the service line because the serve must be delivered into the area between the service line and the net on the receiving side. Despite its name, this is not where a player legally stands when making a serve. The line dividing the service line in two is called the center line or center service line. The boxes this center line creates are called the service boxes; depending on a player's position, he will have to hit the ball into one of

these when serving. A ball is out only if none of it has hit the line or the area inside the lines upon its first bounce. All the lines are required to be between 1 and 2 inches (51 mm) in width. The baseline can be up to 4 inches (100 mm) wide if so desired.

### **Play of a Single Point**

#### ***Point (Tennis)***

Two players before a serve. The players (or teams) start on opposite sides of the net. One player is designated the server, and the opposing player, or in doubles one of the opposing players, is the receiver. Service alternates between the two halves of the court. For each point, the server starts behind his baseline, between the center mark and the sideline. The receiver may start anywhere on their side of the net. When the receiver is ready, the





server will serve, although the receiver must play to the pace of the server.

In a legal service, the ball travels over the net (without touching it) and into the diagonally opposite service box. If the ball hits the net but lands in the service box, this is a let or net service, which is void, and the server gets to retake that serve. The player can serve any number of let services in a point and they are always treated as voids and not as faults. A fault is a serve that is long, wide, or not over the net. There is also a "foot fault", which occurs when a player's foot touches the baseline or an extension of the center mark before the ball is hit. If the second service is also faulty, this is a double fault, and the receiver wins the point. However, if the serve is in, it is considered a legal service.

A legal service starts a rally, in which the players alternate hitting the ball across the net. A legal return consists of the player or team hitting the ball exactly once before it has bounced twice or hit any fixtures except the net, provided that it still falls in the server's court. The ball then travels back over the net and bounces in the court on the opposite side. The first player or team to fail to make a legal return loses the point.

## **Scoring**

### ***Tennis Score***

A tennis match is determined through the best of 3 or 5 sets. Typically for both men's and women's matches, the first player to win two sets wins the match. At certain important tennis tournaments for men, including all four Grand Slam tournaments and the final of the