



# Public Parks Ambassador Guide

USTA PUBLIC PARKS NATIONAL COMMITTEE  
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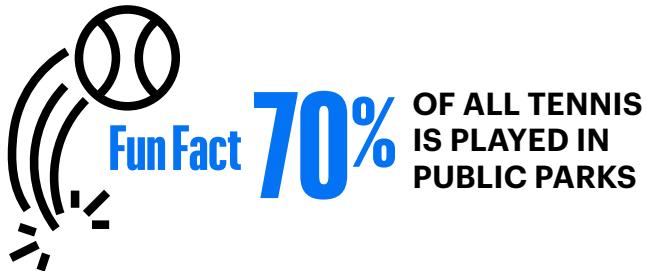
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# What is the Public Parks Tennis Ambassador Guide?

This guide is offered to provide Public Parks Tennis Ambassadors with the necessary information to introduce the game of tennis to both new and returning players in public parks throughout the country. It is a resource intended to leverage existing materials and share common elements rather than creating everything from scratch.

This guide is designed to give the Public Parks Tennis Ambassador the confidence and resources to begin a conversation with prospective players new and returning.

Each section can be delivered by volunteers who are passionate about tennis, using social play, simple rally games, mini courts, and red balls to make tennis easy and fun from the very first hit.





# Who is a Public Parks Tennis Ambassador?

## **PUBLIC PARKS TENNIS AMBASSADORS ARE VOLUNTEERS WHO, AS AVID AND PASSIONATE TENNIS PLAYERS, ARE:**

- Motivated to promote the sport of tennis to people in their communities on behalf of their public park tennis facility. These communities may include their family, friends, coworkers, neighbors, other sports leagues/players, civic associations, local retail operations and other potential players; and/or
- Simply love their local park and would love to see more tennis played on their tennis courts.
- Take on a play-facilitation role, creating a welcoming first experience for new players. This can include running fun, low-pressure sessions using red ball tennis, short courts, and easy rally challenges that help participants feel confident and successful right away.

The ambassadors are a bridge between the public, the parks professional, the community, and USTA.

# Why Promote Tennis in Public Parks?

Most people play tennis in public parks and that's where the majority of the courts are located. You have the opportunity to spread the joy and love of the game of tennis in public parks. Increasing tennis in public parks can be a force multiplier. Promoting tennis in public parks through community outreach and partnerships is crucial for growing the sport for several reasons:

- 1. Community Engagement:** Public tennis parks serve as community hubs where individuals from diverse backgrounds come together. By engaging with these spaces, tennis organizations can connect with a wide range of people, fostering a sense of belonging and community around the sport.
- 2. Accessibility:** Public tennis parks offer a more accessible environment for individuals who might not have access to private clubs or facilities. Outreach efforts in these parks help make the sport more inclusive and available to everyone.
- 3. Promotion of Physical Activity:** Encouraging tennis in public parks promotes physical activity and a healthier lifestyle. Through partnerships and outreach programs, tennis can be positioned as an enjoyable way to stay fit, attracting new players of all ages.
- 4. Talent Identification and Development:** Public tennis parks often serve as starting points for budding talents. Engaging with these spaces allows organizations to identify and nurture young talent, providing them with the resources and opportunities needed to develop their skills further.
- 5. Educational Opportunities:** Outreach programs in public parks can include educational components such as coaching clinics, workshops, and seminars. These initiatives not only improve tennis skills but also educate participants about the values of sportsmanship, teamwork, and dedication.
- 6. Long-term Sustainability:** Building partnerships with local communities and organizations ensures the long-term sustainability of tennis programs. Collaboration can lead to shared resources, funding opportunities, and infrastructure development that benefit both the sport and the community.
- 7. Diversification of the Player Base:** Public parks attract a diverse range of individuals. By reaching out to these spaces, tennis can attract players from various backgrounds, contributing to a more diverse and vibrant player base in the sport.
- 8. Increased Interest and Support:** Active involvement in public tennis parks generates interest and support from the local community. This, in turn, can lead to increased funding, volunteer engagement, and overall support for tennis initiatives at both grassroots and professional levels.

In summary, promoting tennis in public tennis parks are vital for expanding the reach of the sport, making it more accessible, inclusive, and engaging for individuals of all ages and backgrounds. These efforts can contribute significantly to the sustained growth and development of tennis in the future.

# How Can I Facilitate Play?

As a Parks Tennis Ambassador, it is important to know all of the resources that USTA offers to help facilitate play in public parks and the steps you can take to grow programming and social play in local parks.

Once you have program ideas and are ready to get started; the first step is communicating with the local Parks Agency to see what offerings they have and share how you can help as a Parks Tennis Ambassador, grow programming, and promote play. It is important to work with your local parks agency in order to have them potentially help with resources and help with local connections to promote play to more players.

## STEP 1



- Set up a meeting with the local parks director or person in charge of parks programming.
- Share the health and wellness statistics (found on the USTA website) in regard to Tennis being the World's Healthiest Sport.
- Share programming ideas that you would like to start or help at the local courts. This could be social play, red ball programming, youth clinics, adult leagues, etc.



# Social Play

USTA has many different avenues for players to play. As a Tennis Ambassador, you can invite people to play socially, competitively, or with a team; there are options for every level, age, and socioeconomic group. Check out the resources below to learn more. You can share these resources as part of your outreach. For players you've introduced to the game, consider hosting beginner socials using red balls and short courts before moving them into leagues or tournaments. This gives participants a safe, enjoyable transition into more active play.



## FIND A PLACE TO PLAY

Here, you can type in a city or a zip code and see all of the different places in your area that have tennis courts. All of the information like how many courts, number of courts, surface, public or private will be listed along with contact information.



## ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO SIGN UP FOR A FREE USTA ACCOUNT

Once people have been playing informally for a while, they may want to become a paying member for a full USTA membership. This allows them to participate in leagues, tournaments and other programs. All youth memberships are free (age 18 and under). Use the following QR code to learn more about memberships.



## RED BALL TENNIS

As a Parks Ambassador, an easy way to get people interested in tennis is by organizing a Red Ball Tennis Event. Red Ball is a FUN social experience designed to bring new players to your courts and have them playing the game in 10 minutes.



## ORGANIZED TENNIS PLAY

The link to the left will take you to all of the opportunities for youth tennis.

## COACHING



The USTA has officially launched USTA Coaching, Inc., a new entity established to elevate and support the coaching community nationwide. USTA Coaching offers a comprehensive, inclusive and scalable solution to support every type of coach, from parents looking to introduce tennis to their children to full-time professionals. This first-of-its-kind national platform is designed to transform the tennis coaching experience through a modern holistic approach—offering certification, flexible training through a robust online learning hub, community-building opportunities and a wide range of exclusive benefits that support coaches at every level.



## USTA LEAGUES

This site will allow you and others to search for junior and adult leagues in your area as well as find or register for a team. This would give players a safe, enjoyable transition into more competitive play.

# Create Partnerships

You can use your existing relationships or establish new relationships in your community examples:

## COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Community outreach is essential for any Tennis Ambassador. Any community organization that you are part of or you know of, including but not limited to:

### Partnerships and possible programming

- Community Tennis Association
- Boys and Girls clubs
- YMCA, YWCA
- Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts
- Service Clubs
- Home School Organizations

### Public Exposure

- Businesses
- Retail locations
- Local events
- Speaking engagements
- Could include a tennis hit on site
- Social gathering locations

## CORPORATE AND PUBLIC EMPLOYEE GROUPS

Communities to reach out to can include teams of coworkers at private and public sector organizations. A Tennis Ambassador may want to host an event. Some ideas include:

- Police vs. Fireman challenge
- Business vs. business
- Public invitation
- Non sanctioned tournaments (adults and juniors)
  - Round robin

# Share the Game With Others

Unlock a lifetime of enjoyment and opportunity for players of all ages, levels, and abilities when you run these USTA socials, tournaments, and programs.

### Here a few ideas you can try with any of the groups above:

- Beginner Tennis Community Day
- Red Ball Tennis Event
- Family Inclusivity Event
- Fun games that do not require well-developed tennis skills



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