

# ADVOCATING FOR: WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

*Advocacy for tennis involves taking our knowledge and passion for tennis and connecting it to the needs of communities, schools, colleges, and local governments. Advocacy is the ability to demonstrate to decision-makers how tennis programs can benefit the community.*



To get started, contact your local USTA representative, or go to

**USTA.COM**

for more tools and resources on starting a veteran, adaptive or wheelchair tennis program.

## INTRODUCTION

***Tennis strives to be an inclusive sport.***

Advocating for tennis in your community can help increase participation in the sport by under-served populations. Tennis is likewise a game that can be adapted for any mental, physical or emotional disability. One of the key Paralympic sports is wheelchair tennis. With more than 40 years of history, it is the most professional and integrative of all the adaptive sports. There is a worldwide, ITF-sanctioned professional circuit with more than 150 tournaments. In the USA, there are more than 10 sanctioned wheelchair tennis tournaments as well.

## KEY POINTS OF EMPHASIS:

- There is only one main rule difference between able-bodied tennis and wheelchair tennis. The wheelchair players get two bounces.
- Wheelchair tennis players are eligible to compete in any USTA-sanctioned event including adult leagues and tournaments, wheelchair tennis tournaments, high school tennis teams, and even in college.
- There are at least 150 programs nationwide that wheelchair players can join.
- The only eligibility requirement to play wheelchair tennis is that one must have a permanent physical impairment from the waist or below.

## WHEELCHAIR TENNIS TIPS

You can get started by creating an account on [usta.com](http://usta.com), and completing your Safe Play program for easy-to-use curricula and equipment opportunities.

1. To create your program, tennis wheelchairs are required. To obtain the wheelchairs, options can include fundraising or developing partnerships with other adaptive sports organizations in the area.
2. It is essential to have a good tennis coach who has taken a course in wheelchair tennis in order to drive programming.

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