

First Service Doubles

GAME SUMMARY



First Service Doubles (FSD) is a tennis game played by athletes and their support dogs. FSD is designed for Veterans, First Responders, and anyone 15+ with physical disabilities or invisible injuries and their support dog. Service, Therapy, Emotional Support, Working, Sporting, or any well-trained dog is welcome.

Key Parameters:

Any size support dog may be used as long as it meets the minimum requirements of the American Kennel Club's Canine Good Citizen. Orange balls will be utilized initially with a 60' court. Game may progress to a 78' (full size) as skills progress. Commands will be specific to each team (athlete and dog).

Game Structure:

- Doubles team of athlete and support dog share a side of the net
- Doubles court lines are used
- Athlete begins game with serve from deuce side
 - Support dog starts at "home position" (i.e. corner of baseline and doubles sideline) on ad side. If dog moves from "home position" it is not a fault or point, just a re-do.
 - Opposing team starts with athlete in return position on opposite deuce side and support dog in home position on opposite ad side
 - After each point, athlete moves between deuce and ad sides to serve and dog moves between ad and deuce sides as in traditional doubles play.
- Rally begins with standard tennis play
 - Support dog remains in home position until command is given from athlete (doubles partner)
 - Command may be unique to the team
 - Command may be verbal or non-verbal using a hand sign
 - Commands are given for the following actions:
 - Play – Dog enters "field of play" anywhere within the doubles lines
 - Up – Dog plays between net and support line (advanced teams)
 - Back – Dog plays between service line and baseline (advanced teams)
 - Hold – Dog remains in field of play during rally
 - Catch – Catching the ball
 - "Catch Air" – Catching out of the air with no bounces (advanced teams)
 - "Catch One" – Catching the ball after one bounce (advanced teams)
 - "Catch Two" – Catching the ball after two bounces (advanced teams)
 - Retrieve – Dog retrieves the ball and returns it to partner for next serve
 - Home – Dog returns to home position to start next point
 - A minimum of one rally exchange must occur between athletes before support dog partner may be called from "home position" into "field of play."

Game Structure (contd):

- Scoring

First Service Doubles

GAME SUMMARY

- First team to 12 points wins the game
 - Upon reaching 12, opposing team serves
 - First team to 4 games wins set
 - Must win by 2, therefore 5-3 may be final score
 - At 4 All, a tie-break game (essentially one more game to 12 is played to determine set). One game for everything.
- For advanced play - must finish EXACTLY on 12 points to win
 - Going over 12 does not result in loss of points - the team simply remains at current point total
- Traditional points by the athlete are won or lost in the same manner as traditional tennis
 - Ace, return error, winner, out or into the net
- Support dog points are won only. For points to be earned the dog must catch the ball and at least one paw must start OR finish inside the doubles lines. Points are earned in the following manner:
 - 3 points are earned when the dog catches the ball out of the air (without any bounces)
 - 2 points are earned when the dog catches the ball after one bounce. The ball must bounce within the doubles lines.
 - 1 point is earned when the dog catches the ball after two bounces. The ball must bounce at least once within the doubles lines.
 - If dog attempts a 3-point catch or 2-point catch but errors yet still catches the ball within the one or two bounce range, the team is awarded the point total matching the catch.
- For advanced play – Support dog attempts to catch but not executed, the opposing team is awarded 1 point.

Considerations:

- Extend time between sets from 90 seconds to 2 minutes to allow for water break for support dog
- Extra balls may be rotated into game if soggy from dog saliva
- Support dog may need bathroom break during game to avoid on-court accidents

For information on how you can get involved, please contact Zoy Brown at zoy@midwest.usta.com.