

What Makes a Good Captain Great

USTA NORCAL • Adult Leagues

What Makes a Good Captain Great!

May 24, 2023

1. **Make it fun.**
2. **Build team spirit!**
3. **Demonstrate good sportsmanship.**
4. **Let your team members know what your “goals” are for the team. Competitive vs Social.**
5. **Keep everyone informed. Communicate, Communicate!**
6. **Familiarize yourself with adult league rules.**
7. **Mentor a Co-Captain.**
8. **Be there for your team.**
9. **Give full effort all the time.**
10. **Stay positive!**

1. **Make it fun!** Even when your team is at the bottom of its division, make sure everyone is having fun and feeling appreciated. If team members don't enjoy themselves, even when they're losing, they'll find some other team where they do have a good time. So have a team name! Have team colors! Have an end-of-season party! As the captain, try to do whatever you can to develop some camaraderie among your team members. This will not only help make playing league tennis fun, but it will help ensure that you retain team members for future seasons.



2. **Build team spirit.** Your team will work better when you are happy together. Find ways to build team spirit and encourage your teammates to interact with one another away from practices and games.

3. Demonstrate good sportsmanship.

On and off the court, you should treat your opponents with respect. After the game is over, be sure to shake their hands as well. No matter how contentious the game, congratulate them on a good contest. Let your teammates know it is okay and important to be respectful of everyone playing.

4. Let your team members know what your “goals” are for the team. Competitive vs. Social. If you just want to have fun and the team is laid back and relaxed, let everyone know. If you’re hoping to win your division, move up in the rankings, or desperately need to make points just to stay where you are, tell your team members. It not only helps explain what your strategy is, it also lets people know whether or not this is the right team for them. When team members don’t understand why they’re being put in a particular spot in the line-up or why the lines are being played the way you’re playing them, it can cause misunderstandings, hurt feelings, or further issues.

5. Keep everyone informed. Let your team members know what’s going on so they feel included and can contribute in every way possible. Let each member know when and where the team is playing each week so they can make plans. Get the line-ups out ASAP to avoid last minute changes and possible defaults. Keep everyone updated on how the team is doing each week and where you stand in the rankings so no one is surprised or disappointed at the end of the season.

6. Familiarize yourself with adult league rules. If you haven’t done this already, you should do it now. Part of being a captain is making sure the rules are followed and this may mean you have to resolve on-court disputes on behalf of your team. League matches are not officiated and if the players on the court cannot resolve a dispute, they may have to turn to the captains. Review the rules now, before those disputes arise, and then be prepared to back up your team members when necessary. It is helpful to keep a copy of the Rules of Tennis, the Code and your Local Area League rules in your tennis bag at all times so you can be sure of exactly what the rules say for your particular situation.

7. Mentor a Co-Captain. This seems like it may be additional work, however this can be the perfect opportunity to share the work load and mentor someone else at the same time. You do not have to do all of the work yourself. If you have been a captain before you know this can be quite time consuming. This is the perfect opportunity to show someone else how it is done. One person can handle the match scheduling and communications while the other plans practices, handles food assignments etc.

8. Be there for your team. This seems like the easy step, but it can often be the most difficult. As team captain, you should really try to be available at every match. Of course, you may not be able to be there on court each and every week. You may actually have to do something NOT pertaining to tennis every once in a while! But, most of the time, you should be there to support and help your team. Your team needs you not just to keep track of the score sheet. Team members may also need you to resolve disputes and to “handle” the opposing team’s captain and members.



9. Give full effort all the time. The most important part of being a captain is leading by example. Because you are the captain, your teammates will look up to you and follow your lead whether you want them to or not. No matter the situation, your teammates need to see you fully committed to the success of the team.

10. Stay positive! Don’t let your teammates believe they can’t win or be successful. Encourage your teammates, let them know you believe things will go well.