

# USTA YOUTH PROGRESSION

## FAQs



See below for the answers to the most frequently asked questions regarding USTA Youth Progression.

### **HOW TO ACCESS THE PLAYER PAGE**

To access the player page, go to <https://tennislink.usta.com> and click on the “My Tennis” tab. Enter in the player’s USTA number and password to be directed to the player’s “Welcome” screen.

The match information is updated nightly, but players will not see their updated stars and trophy progress until after the automated publish dates (every Tuesday night).

If desired, the player can upload a photo to his/her player page by clicking “Manage Account” directly under the player’s USTA account number in the top right corner of the “Welcome” screen.

If a player continues to play in the division, once he/she accumulates 20 stars and/or trophies, additional stars and/or trophies earned in that division will NOT appear on the player page.

### **HOW TO OPT IN TO THE PLAYER EMAIL NOTIFICATION**

In order to receive inspiring status updates and aging-up notification emails, the contact information on file with USTA Member Services must be accurate and current. To update the email address, login to Tennis Link and click “Manage Account” directly under the player’s USTA account number in the top right corner of the “Welcome” screen. The information can also be updated by contacting USTA Member Services at 1-800-990-8782.

### **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

#### **Why is there a Youth Progression System?**

The USTA has launched the “youth progression pathway,” which was designed to create a greater experience for children beginning and developing in tennis competition, to ensure that young players, ages 7-10 years old, are competing at appropriate levels of play as they progress through competitive stages based on age, participation and achievement. The best-in-class

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system will track the progress of junior players as they advance from the orange level, to the green level, and then to the yellow level competition. The new system serves as a guide for coaches, parents to ensure that kids 10 and under participate in events using the appropriate ball and court for their skill level.

## **Does my child have to be a USTA member to participate in youth progression events?**

Some sections offer entry-level tournaments and Junior Team Tennis programs that do not require membership. However, players will need a USTA account number in order to be tracked (i.e., to accumulate stars and trophies – see below for more information). A free account can be set up by visiting [usta.com/createaccount](https://usta.com/createaccount)

When you're ready to get a paid membership, this number can be upgraded so you can keep your current progression profile and status.

## **What are the stars and trophies you receive as part of USTA Youth Progression? And how does a player earn them?**

A child can advance to another level (i.e., from orange to green or green to yellow) by earning the required amount of virtual participation stars and trophies. Players have to collect a combination of 20 stars and/or trophies to advance to the next level.

Players collect stars for tournament participation and Junior Team Tennis participation. They collect trophies for winning a tournament, reaching the final of a tournament, or

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## What is a Youth Progression Tournament?

Events that appear in TennisLink with Orange Level 1 or Green Level 1 are

Players can collect progression stars and trophies for their participation in these events.

## Which events count toward progression?

Players can receive participation stars by playing in the following events:

- 10U Progression Tournaments
- Junior Team Tennis
- 10U Progression Tournaments

Players collect “bonus trophies” in singles for achievement by either:

- Winning a 10U progression tournament
- Reaching the final

*Note: This can vary from section to section. Please check your section rules.*

## My child played in a doubles tournament but never received any stars?

Players only receive credit for playing 10U singles. Playing doubles in 10U tournaments does not count towards progression.

## My child played in a tournament but never received any stars?

Check to see if the tournament was a progression event (Orange Level 1 or Green Level 1). If it wasn't, then they would not receive any stars. Also, if your child had a bye, they will not receive any credit.

## My child played one match for his/her JTT team but never received any participation stars?

Players must play a minimum of two matches for their team in order to receive any participation stars.

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## **My child played on more than one team in a season but only received credit for one team?**

Players will only receive participation stars for one team per season and a maximum of two seasons per year.

## **How come my child, who is an Orange Level 1 player, was allowed to register for a 10U green Junior Team tennis league?**

Players can play in either 10U orange ball or 10U green ball leagues and receive participation stars in their current level.

## **How can my child receive bonus result trophies?**

Players collect “bonus trophies” in singles for achievement by either:

- Winning a 10U progression tournament
- Reaching the final
- Or via tournament matches won (varies by section; check section rules for details)

## **My child won a match and also was the champion. How come he/she didn't receive the extra bonus trophies? Not all sections count match wins; Please check your section rules.**

Players cannot get double credit for winning an event and for their match wins. The bonus points are given to the highest result they achieve. If they won three matches and also were a finalist or champion, then they will only receive bonus trophies for being the champion or finalist (as they are worth more trophies than would be received for winning three matches).

## **How long do you expect it to take for the average player to progress through each level?**

How a child progresses through the pathway is entirely up to them. We've made the pathway flexible so that more advanced or dedicated players can go through the system faster, while other players might want to take their time and play more events and go through on the participation track. The number of events needed to advance to each level will vary depending on the section.

As is now, decisions of how fast or slow a child will move through the pathway is a collaborative decision made between the player, parent and coach. Counting participation and results will

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ultimately provide a system for parents and coaches to be able to evaluate their child's readiness to move ahead based on their success against their peers.

Designed to help players develop their fundamentals and get the most out of tennis, the progression tracking system rewards players for competing and inspires them to play more often. These requirements are minimum recommendations to ensure each player has the basic skills to move on to the next level. Players are welcome to stay at their current level until they have fully developed their skill set for that specific court. Remember, it's not a race to the yellow ball!

### **My child is 6 years old or younger. Why can't he/she play orange ball events?**

The red ball is the recommended place to start on the pathway at ages 6 and under. The minimum age to start playing an Orange Ball Progression Tournament is 7 years old. Players 6 and under are encouraged to participate in Play Days, Junior Team Tennis and Junior Tournaments using the red ball. The focus should be on fun, team play, skill development and learning the game.

### **Is it true that my child can't start playing yellow ball until 11 or older?**

Players can start playing 12U yellow ball events as soon as they have fulfilled the orange and green pathway requirements. They don't have to wait until age 11. A player could possibly play yellow ball in the 12U divisions as young as age 7 if they advance through the pathway extremely quickly and fulfill the requirements to advance.

### **Does the parent/player or coach make advancement decisions?**

Ultimately, the decision-maker in the child-parent-coach relationship will make the final decision on advancing to the next level. Youth Progression is providing a system for parents, coaches and children to track their participation and results as well as rules for when they can move to a different ball color. We are not forcing players to advance if they choose not to. We are, however, ensuring through this system that children gain experience at each ball color and level. We believe that this will help ensure a positive experience in these early years of competitive play. The goal is to create more American players with a solid foundation and all-court skills. It has been proven that spending more time on orange and green will help develop those skills.