



NORTHERN

JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS 101

(Frequently Asked Questions)

2019

This is intended to give an introduction to junior tournaments and is NOT a comprehensive explanation of all the requirements. More information can be found at <http://www.usta.com/northernjuniortournaments>.

Part 1 - Introduction

Part 2 - Selecting/signing up for a tournament

Part 3 - Preparing and participating in a tournament

Part 4 - Draw Types

Part 5 – Points

Part 6 – How a ranking is calculated

Part 7 – Find my ranking

PART ONE

WHAT ARE JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS?

USTA Northern offers a year-round schedule of junior tournaments. Play opportunities are either by skill level or age division and spread geographically throughout the Section. Participating in junior tournaments supplements a player's tennis training, opportunity for valuable match-play experience in both singles and doubles and can be a social time to meet other tennis players. Tournament play for ranking points is offered in the boys and girls 12's, 14's, 16's & 18's age divisions. Level 8, green ball tournaments are non- ranking for 12's and 14's. For players ages 7-10, they will take part in our Stars & Trophies tournament system.

DO I NEED A USTA MEMBERSHIP?

Yes, you will need a junior membership to play in a sanctioned junior tournament that is used for ranking purposes. Level 8's and Stars & Trophies tournaments are non-ranking and therefore do not require a USTA junior membership.

You can become a member at the same time you register for a tournament. To become a USTA member, [click here](#).

Note: As a resident of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota or Northwestern Wisconsin, you are part of the Northern Section of the United States Tennis Association (USTA). Northern is one of 17 sections in the national organization.

WHAT IS THE TOURNAMENT STRUCTURE?

Tournaments are organized by boys/girls, skill levels, age groups, singles and doubles.

WHAT LEVEL DO I PLAY AT?

Level 8 non- ranking is the entry level. These lead a player into Level 7 ranking tournaments, but higher levels are also open. Tournaments go up to Level 3 within the Northern Section. You can continue to play at Level 7 until you have 250 points and then you must play at a higher level. Points at Level 7 are capped at 250 points. Anyone with 250 points or more in any age group will not be allowed to play in any Level 7. They must play Level 6 or higher.

- Boys and Girls 12s at Levels 5, 6 and 7 will play with a green ball on a 78' court.
- Boys and Girls 10 and under will play in the Youth Progression Pathway (Stars & Trophies)

WHAT AGE GROUP AM I IN?

Tournaments will have Boys (B) and/or Girls (G) at even numbered age groups. So, if you are 12, you can play in Girls or Boys 12 until the **first** of the month in which you turn 13. A player "ages up" the first of the month of the year of their odd birthday. (A player may want to consider "playing up" in the next age level as they get closer to their odd birthday. Points will count in both age groups until the month of their birthday.)

PART TWO

WHERE DO I FIND TOURNAMENTS?

1. Go to TennisLink
2. Click on Tournaments
3. Use the **Advanced Search** section (which should be pre-filled with sanctioned tournaments, Northern Section, Junior Divisions and All Tournaments). Use the drop down for month and pick the current month and click Search at the bottom. (When you know your tournament ID#, you can do a quick search.)

You'll now see a listing of the tournaments for the month.

Date - is the first day of the tournament

Tournament - gives the name, the Level, the tournament ID# and you'll find the facility/location, age groups, etc.

Location is the town where the tournament is held

Entries Close is the deadline for registering

Status will either be a link to register or draws available

Start your search by looking for the level, sex, age, location that is appropriate, then click on the name of the tournament. You are now on the [tournament director information page](#) that provides more detailed information. It is important to read the important information that has notes pertaining to the tournament.

In the middle of the page, you will find a tab for Applicants. Once registration closes and draws are posted, tabs will be added that say Players, Alternates, Competitors, Draws and Results.

The box on the bottom right provides additional options (i.e. if you need to withdraw before registration closes, etc.)

WHAT IS THE REGISTRATION PROCESS?

Once you decide on a tournament, you register online before the entry deadline. You will need your USTA number or you select the option to "Join USTA Now."

You will receive a confirmation registration e-mail. Typically, if entries close on Sunday night, your credit card will be charged in the next 24 hours. Your name will now appear on the Competitors tab on the tournament director information page. You will receive an e-mail if you are not selected for the tournament.

WHEN DO I FIND OUT WHEN I PLAY?

If registration closed Sunday night, draws are usually posted Wednesday evening. **It is your responsibility to go online and check when you play.** You will find the draws tab on the tournament page.

PART THREE

TOURNAMENT PREPARATION

WHAT ARE THE RULES FOR COMPETITIVE TENNIS?

There are tournaments for novice players through experienced, competitive players. Learning the ins and outs of tournament play will help a player move from novice to more competitive levels. To cover the rules of competitive tennis, the USTA uses **Friend At Court: The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations**. You can find it by clicking [HERE](#). Learning the rules takes time. Here are a few key rules, regulations and common practices to help you get started.

Before You Play

- Arrive at your match site 30 minutes ahead of the scheduled time.
- Once there, ask for the "tournament desk" (often, the tournament operates separately from the host facility; asking for the "tournament desk" will get you where you need to go.)
- Once at the tournament desk, check in for the event. This lets the tournament staff know you have arrived. Depending on the event, you'll receive player information and may get a T-shirt, bag tag, or some other player gift.
- Match check-in, not to be confused with tournament check-in, is done prior to the start of each of your matches. At match check-in, you are letting the tournament staff know you are ready to play. If you need to get water, use the restroom, stretch or warm-up, do these things prior to your match check-in.
- Check-in for your match 15 to 20 minutes prior to the scheduled match time.
- Make sure to ask about the match format: For instance, if you split sets, do you play a full third set, or a match tiebreak? Do you know how to play a match tiebreak? If not, make sure it's clarified now! Match tiebreaks are the first to 10 points by a 2-point margin. But make sure. Note: *Before* you begin playing a match tiebreak, you are allowed to get an official to assist you, if needed.
- Once you check in for your match, you must remain within earshot of the tournament desk-your match could be called at any moment.

On the Court

- You are entitled to a 5-minute warm up, which includes your serves.
- The server calls the score prior to serving the point. Call out your score loud enough so your opponent can hear you.
- Change ends after you complete odd games; 1, 3, 5, etc.
- If disputes arise, put down your racquet and go get an official.
- Never ask a spectator to call lines or settle disputes.
- Once the match is over, walk to the net to shake hands with your opponent.
- The winner is responsible for reporting the score and turning in the tournament tennis balls.
- Both players are responsible for knowing when their next match times are.

Miscellaneous

- If the format calls for a third-set tiebreak, then the schedule may call for you to play three matches in one day.
- If the tournament offers doubles, and if you are winning in singles, be prepared to play three singles matches and one doubles match in one day.
- Never leave your cell phone on.

What to Bring on Court

- A tennis bag with at least one or more tennis racquets.
- A cooler with ice, sports drinks and water.
- A small first aid kit, allowable medications, adhesive bandages.
- A spare pair of shoes, socks, hat or visor, T-shirt.
- Individually wrapped power or granola bars-only food you know won't upset your stomach. Don't eat if you aren't hungry.
- Individually wrapped Skittles or soft mints or some type of candy that won't melt. Some players find this helpful when playing long matches.

Parent Guidelines

- Make sure players arrives at the match site 30-minutes ahead of the scheduled time - allow for traffic, construction, parking, etc.
- You are not allowed to make or criticize line calls, provide instruction, keep score or make any disparaging remarks.
- Good sportsmanship and role modeling are first priority for a positive experience.
- Always be supportive of your child win or lose!

PART FOUR

Draw Types

Abbreviation	Description
FIC – R16	Full Feed-in Consolation through the round of 16's – players losing in the quarterfinals are fed back into their own draw.
FIC-QF	Full Feed-in Consolation - continue to feed into consolation through quarterfinals.
FMLC	First Match Losers Consolation - player losing their first match feeds into consolation (Level 7 - 3 points per each win in the consolation bracket. Level 6 - 4 points per each win in the consolation bracket.)
MFC	Modified Feed-in Consolation - usually a small draw. Losers in first and second round move into consolation
RR	Round Robin - small draw, usually 5 players or less who play each other
SE	Single Elimination

PART FIVE

HOW DO I EARN POINTS?

A player must win a match to receive any points for a tournament. (Byes do not qualify as wins.) The number of points awarded depends on the tournament in which the player is participating in as follows:

- the Level being played;
- how many matches are won in the main draw and/or the consolation bracket; and
- the type of tournament format.

Points information for junior tournaments can be found at:

<https://www.usta.com/content/dam/usta/sections/northern/pdf/Points%20Tables.pdf>

Points earned in a higher division count towards a player's standing in the player's current age division as well as in the age division of the tournament itself.

PART SIX

HOW IS A RANKING CALCULATED?

A player's ranking is based on a combination of the following:

- the player's **best** six (6) singles tournament results during the last twelve (12) months, and
- 15% of the players **best** six (6) doubles tournament results during the last twelve (12) months.

This is an ongoing/rolling twelve (12) month period.

If a player has won matches in more than six (6) tournaments in either singles or doubles, tournament results with lower points will drop off when the tournament results are higher from a recent tournament.

How to find your ranking is explained in the next section.

Part SEVEN

WHERE DO I FIND MY RANKING?

1. Log onto www.usta.com/northernjunortournaments
2. Scroll down to "Find Your Ranking and Points" – Click the link - you are now in TennisLink and will see Find a Ranking or Player Record. You may also click [here](#) to go directly to the page.
4. Under Rankings Search, select
 - Northern Section
 - Year
 - Division: Junior or use drop down to select specific age group
 - List Type: All list types
 - FIND IT! (Singles and doubles lists are the same.)
5. Click on list based on girls or boys and age level - use most recent published date on the far right. (Singles and doubles list are the same.)
6. Click on Name (instead of Rank).
7. Choose the alphabet of the last name on the right.
8. Click on name to see history for last 12 months - displays record and points.

NOTE: If there was a win in a tournament, but it reads that it does not count towards the total, it is because only the top 6 singles tournaments and 15% of the top 6 doubles tournaments count towards ranking points.

Have a question?
Contact the USTA Northern section office at:

952.887.5001 ext. 0
email: admin@northern.usta.com