

Fixing Mistakes During Play

Points Played

- All points played in good faith are counted.
- If an error is noticed during a point (e.g., serving from the wrong side), players must continue playing until the point is finished.
- Corrections can only be made after the point is completed.

Wrong Players on the Court

- If noticed before the first game of all matches are completed, players switch to the correct courts and restart.
- If noticed after, matches continue as started.

Lost Track of Score

- Count all agreed points/games and replay only disputed ones, OR
- Play from a score mutually agreeable to all players, OR
- If no agreement, spin racquet or flip coin to decide.

Missed Change of Ends

- Switch to the correct side immediately.
- Points already played still count.
- If serving, start with first serve (even if a fault was served before switching).

Wrong Receiver

- If players are on the wrong side (deuce instead of ad), finish game as started.
- Next time receiving, switch back to correct positions.

Wrong Server

- In a regular game: If a player serves out of order, switch to the correct server and continue from the current score. Points played still count.
- If the game is finished, the new order stays.
- In a tiebreak:
 - If the mistake is found after an even number of points, fix it immediately.
 - If found after an odd number of points, the order stays.

Line Call Assistance

- Each team may have one Line Assistant on court to help with line calls.
- If only one person is available, a single Line Assistant may be used.
- Line Assistants cannot make calls but may confirm or overrule a call only when asked by a player.
- They may confirm egregious foot faults but cannot make the call themselves.
- Line Assistants cannot interpret other rules and must stand quietly at both ends of the net.
- If two Line Assistants disagree on a call, a let is played.

Equipment & Electronics

Cell phones and smart watches must be placed in airplane mode or turned off during a match. Checking them during play will be considered coaching.



USTA 
PACIFIC NORTHWEST

LEAGUE MATCH RULES & ETIQUETTE

What to do when you don't know what to do



Sportsmanship & Fair Play

Sportsmanship is the foundation of tennis, creating a welcoming and inclusive environment. **Courtesy**, **respect**, and **integrity** are expected from all participants, including players, coaches, and spectators.

- Following the rules and playing fair
- Acting with integrity and respect
- Winning with humility and losing with grace
- Staying composed and accountable
- Giving opponents the benefit of the doubt
- Shaking hands at the end of the match

USTA PNW is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful tennis community. Players are responsible for fair play and upholding the spirit of the game. Whether in victory or defeat, conduct should reflect honor, respect, and sportsmanship always.

USTA Pacific Northwest
League Player Resources



USTA Pacific Northwest
Sportsmanship Expectations

GENERAL MATCH RULES

Lateness

- The official match time is determined by the cellphone clock.
- The late clock starts at match time or when a court is available, whichever is later.
- Warm-up is always 7 minutes, even if a player or team is late.
- Lateness penalties:
 - **Up to 5 minutes:** Loss of toss + 1 game
 - **5:01-10 minutes:** Loss of toss +2 games
 - **10:01+ minutes:** Default
- One Weekend Leagues (OWLs), Playoffs, Sectionals have different penalties: Loss of toss + 3 games at 10:01-15:00, more than 15 minutes: default.

Match Format

- A 10-point match tiebreak (win by 2) replaces third set.
- Indoor matches: Use regular tiebreak.
- Outdoor matches: use Coman tiebreak.

Changing Sides

- Indoors:
 - Change sides on odd games and every 6 points in a tiebreak.
 - Exception: All NWW leagues and S OR One Weekend Leagues: Change sides only between sets and every six points in a tiebreak
- Outdoors:
 - Change sides on odd games and use the Coman tiebreak (1,5,9,13,17, etc.)

Balls

- The home team provides new balls for the match.

Coaching

- No coaching is allowed once warmups have begun.

Spectators

- Captains and players are responsible for their spectators behavior.
- Spectators may cheer respectfully but may **not**:
 - Talk to distract players
 - Coach (verbally or visually)
 - Comment on or signal line calls
 - Sit on court (Exception: Coed and Social Leagues)
 - Get involved in disputes
 - Cheer for errors
- Captains may only clarify a rule if asked by a player

START & STOP OF PLAY

Toss

- Toss a coin or spin a racquet before warm-up to decide:
 - Serve, receive, or defer
 - Which side to start on
- If a player/team defers, the opponent chooses.

Warm-Up

- 7 minutes for all matches, including serves.
- If a player is late but within the default time, they still receive a 7-minute warm-up.
- Warm-up should be cooperative
- No rest break between warm-up and the first serve.

Starting a New Set

- Switch sides if the total game score is odd; stay if even.
- If a tiebreak was played, switch from where you finished.
- The player/team that received first in the tiebreak serves first in the next set (or match tiebreak).

Changeovers and Set Breaks

- Between points = 25 seconds
- Game changeovers = 90 seconds
- Set breaks = 120 seconds.
- No sitting after the first game of any set or during a tiebreak (players may quickly get a drink of water or towel off).

Restroom Breaks

- Players should bring enough water/snacks to avoid unnecessary breaks.
- Restroom breaks should be “reasonable time” (walk briskly, use restroom, wash hands).
- Should be taken on a set break, or if necessary, during a changeover.
- Only in an emergency should they be taken at other times.
- Phones should not be used during restroom breaks.

Medical Timeout

- Up to 3 minutes for evaluation and treatment.
- If taken during a game, time starts when play stops and supplies arrive.
- If taken on a set break or changeover, that time is used first, then medical timeout begins.

Bleeding Timeout

- Up to 15 minutes to stop bleeding and clean up the court.
- If bleeding is not stopped in 15 minutes, the player must retire.
- The opposing team may time the medical or bleeding timeout.

CALLS ON COURT

Calling Out Balls

- If you aren’t sure the ball is out, it is in. Give your opponent the benefit of the doubt.
- A ball that is 99% out is **100% in**.

Partners Disagree

- If doubles partners disagree on a call, the point goes to the opponent. **Do not replay the point**.

Reversing an Out Call

- If a call is reversed because you are unsure, the point goes to the opponent. **Do not replay the point**.

Self-Calls

- Players must make calls on balls coming toward them, including
 - Double bounces (not-ups)
 - Touching the ball or net
 - Crossing the net plane
 - Only the players can make these calls, not the opponent.
 - Play continues unless the player calls it.

Ball On Court

- Any player on court can stop play if a ball rolls onto the court. The point is replayed.
- **Do not** call “ball on” from another court unless it’s a safety concern.
- Wait until a point finishes before returning a ball to another court.

Service Lets & Long 1st Serves

- Any player on the court can call a service let; the serve is retaken.
- If a receiver returns a long first serve, they should return it cooperatively.
- If the server has to chase the ball, proper etiquette is to offer a first serve.

Hindrance

- A player must stop play immediately if they are truly hindered while making a shot.
- Unintentional hindrance (e.g., yelling after being stung) = Replay the point.
- Intentional hindrance (e.g., shouting “C’mon!” during play) = Loss of point.
- Losing a racquet or shoe is not a hindrance.
- If a hat falls off or ball drops from pocket:
 - First time: Opponent can call a let.
 - Second time: Opponent wins the point.
- Partners can talk while the ball is moving toward them, but not when a ball is moving toward their opponent.