

TENNIS - CODE OF ETIQUETTE AND PRACTICE

General Points

Turn up on time to play; RULE 23 requires that scheduled matches shall commence **by 6.30pm**.

Talk quietly if you are near tennis courts that are in use.

Do not walk behind a court during an active point. Pass as quickly as possible after a point has finished.

Do not disturb people on any court until they have finished.

Before starting to play, ensure any equipment you are not using (spare rackets, clothing, drinks, etc.) are out of the way.

Do not criticise your partner or opponent, be positive and offer encouragement instead.

Line calls can be hard to see from the other side of the court so you must call your own lines, ensuring your opponent can hear you - pointing with an outstretched arm also helps. A ball that touches any part of the line is good, so you don't have to say anything, but you could say "**Yep!**" as an acknowledgement.

If you have a disagreement with your opponent, offer a let. This means you replay the point whether it's a first or second serve.

Apologise if you accidentally hit an opponent with the ball, it is only common courtesy.

Always respect the line calls of your opponent because they are nearer than you.

Tennis Ball Collection/Distribution

Too much time can be wasted by not being efficient enough looking after tennis balls during a game. Here are some tips to help speed up this process and get tennis balls to the server as quickly as possible:

Keep tennis balls in your hand, in a pocket, in a ball clip, at the back centre of the court against the fence or in the net.

If there is a brief pause in play (even between points) look around for any tennis balls you could collect before the server wishes to start serving again.

If the server requires a tennis ball, the player closest to a ball should get it and pass it the server.

Often a ball from another court will end up on your court. To return a ball simply roll it safely to the back of the court and not direct to a player unless he/she requests it.

Tennis balls will end up scattered over the court during play, so you should retrieve balls for your partner and your opponent to keep the game flowing.

Do not pass a ball over the net to the back fence. Apart from the possibility of it bouncing off the fence and back onto the court, you could just as easily have kept the ball and passed it over the net to the server as he/she required it!

Score Keeping

The server should announce the score at the start of each game, and also at the start of the second point and each point that follows in each game. It is then up to the receiver if he or she cannot hear the server's score announcement to ask the server to speak louder. It is too late to correct any scoring errors once one player believes he/she has won the game!

Line Calls

If you are unsure as to whether your opponent's shot was in or out ask for the views of the other players.

Both you and your partner take responsibility for monitoring and reporting line calls on your own side of the court, unless your partner's vision is compromised and the call is an obvious one.

If a player serves the ball fast it can be difficult for the person returning the serve to see whether the serve was in or not, particularly if it is on or close to a line.

Therefore, your partner - the non receiver should make a call as to whether the ball was long or not.

In making a line call a player should not enlist the aid of a spectator or someone playing on an adjacent court.

It is both the obligation and prerogative of players to call all shots landing on, or aimed at, their side of the net, to help your opponents make calls when the opponent requests it, and to call against yourself any ball that you clearly see is out on your opponent's side of the net.

All players being human, they will all make mistakes, but they should do everything they can to minimize these mistakes, including helping an opponent. No player should question an opponent's call unless asked. When an opponent's opinion has been requested and he has given a positive opinion it must be accepted; if neither player has an opinion the ball is considered good. Obviously, aid from an opponent is available only on a call that terminates a point. In accordance with the laws of parallax, the opinion of a player looking down a line is much more likely to be accurate than that of a player looking across a line. When you are looking across a line don't call a ball out unless you can clearly see part of the court between where the ball hit and the line. This means if you are half a court or so away and a ball lands within two inches of a line it is almost impossible for you to call it with accuracy. A player who stands on one base line and questions a call concerning a ball that landed near the other base line is probably being ridiculous.

In returning service the partner of the receiver should call the service line for him, with the receiver calling the centre line and the side line, although either partner may make an out call on any shot (service or other) that they clearly see as out. It is difficult for the receiver, who is looking across the service line, to call with accuracy a shot that lands near that line.

If your opponent makes a call that you disagree with ask "Are you sure". Don't say "That was wrong" (or words to that effect). If your opponent replies "Yes, I'm sure", then relent. Your opponent will probably ask for your opinion and a decision to 'play

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Body Language

Tennis can be a frustrating game if you are not getting your serves in or not hitting your shots, but try to remain upbeat and happy. Your opponent and/or doubles partner doesn't want to be playing tennis with someone who is miserable so cheer up! You are more likely to play better tennis if you are calm, relaxed, focussed, and in a positive frame of mind.

Foot Faults

Foot faulting can be contentious and it often makes for ill feeling when a server is challenged. The Rules of Tennis state that a foot fault occurs if a server:

Changes position by walking or running, although slight movements of the feet are allowed;

Touches the baseline, or the court, with either foot;

Touches the area on the other side of an imaginary extension of the sideline;

Touches the imaginary extension of the center mark with either foot.

If you are absolutely sure that an opponent is foot faulting regularly, politely mention it at change of ends. If you receive such feedback and you believe your opponent may be correct then graciously accept it and be aware for your next service game. Whichever way do try not to allow such a matter to cause ill feeling on the court.