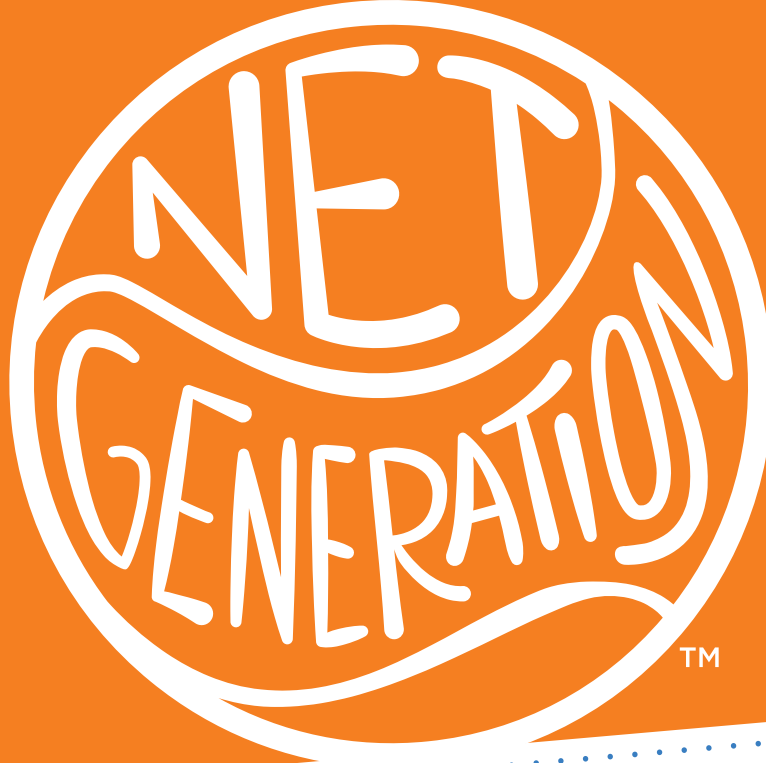




ORANGE BALL

COACH'S CURRICULUM

Orange Ball Practice And Play Plans

ORANGE BALL 03 / ORANGE BALL 02 / ORANGE BALL 01

DEAR COACH,

WELCOME TO NET GENERATION!

On behalf of the USTA, we thank you for supporting Net Generation. You are the key to growing the game, and together, we can shape the future of tennis. Net Generation isn't just a new brand—it's a comprehensive platform and development program for kids ages 5 through 18. By creating a singular platform for tennis that we all can rally behind, and through the support the USTA will offer along the way, we believe we can grow participation, instill the love of the game in future generations, and ensure that tennis remains a vibrant sport in our communities for years to come.

As U.S. Fed Cup and U.S. Davis Cup captains, former professional tennis players, and parents, we are Net Generation ambassadors because we believe this new approach will benefit the growth of youth tennis. We believe that no other sport is meeting the needs of today's discerning parents, players, coaches, and community organizations quite like we will with Net Generation.

By registering and becoming an active part of Net Generation, you will get access to the very best in coaching curriculum, digital tools and resources that make teaching, coaching, planning and playing easier, and marketing resources and support to enhance your programs' visibility. The USTA created Net Generation with you in mind and we hope to hear from you about what is working, what is not, and what materials, curriculum and tools will help you. After all, this is your brand and without your talents as a coach, teacher, and mentor, we cannot inspire kids to get in the game—and stay in it.

This coach's manual is just one item under the Net Generation brand. It's comprehensive, competency-based, collaborative, and packaged conveniently online with additional resources to help you customize your approach to teaching the sport you love.

Again, thank you for being a part of Net Generation! Together, we will shape the future of tennis!

Jim Courier

U.S. Davis Cup Captain
Net Generation Ambassador



Kathy Rinaldi

U.S. Fed Cup Captain
Net Generation Ambassador



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INTRODUCTION

Thank you for registering your to Net Generation. It is great to have you as part of the team where our focus is to have more kids playing tennis more often. Net Generation starts with all of us, and we're here to usher in a new era of tennis in the United States.

Net Generation is the United States Tennis Association (USTA) official youth brand and development program that captures the imagination of parents and children ages 5 through 18. One that taps into the adaptability and creativity children and parents seek when choosing activities.

The following practice and play plans are unique to the USTA and have been developed and designed specifically for you, the coach. In doing so they are:

COMPREHENSIVE

Covers the beginner Red Ball to the advanced Green Ball player.

COMPETENCY BASED

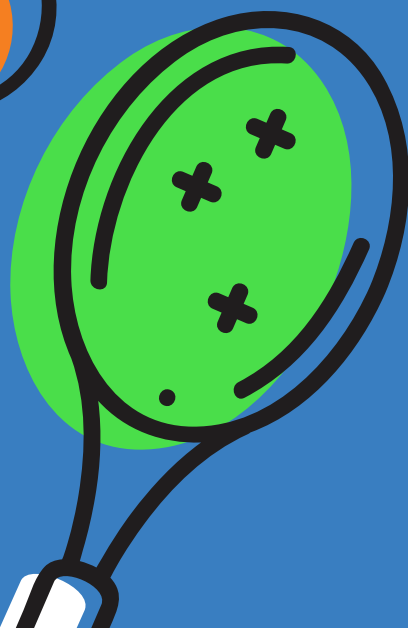
Spells out the skills and knowledge each player should have before moving to the next ball and court size.

COLLABORATIVE

Includes nine levels developed by the USTA Community Tennis and Player Development divisions, USPTA and PTR, and subject matter experts in the field from the U.S. and abroad.

CONVENIENT

Lets you select the method of delivery that works best for you—printed manual, downloadable PDFs, or coaches app.



Inside this manual you'll find three levels of Practice and Play Plans—Orange Ball 3, Orange Ball 2 and Orange Ball 1. Each plan consists of eight chapters. We recommend you use each Practice Plan twice before moving on to the next plan. When you finish all the plans, you can start from the beginning again or move certain players to the next level.

Before you get started, take some time to review the necessary equipment, structure of the plans and descriptions of the activities.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

MEDICINE BALLS

Lightweight medicine balls or junior-size basketball.

ORANGE BALLS

Lower-compression felt ball used on the 60-foot court. Can be multicolored or yellow with orange dot.

RACQUETS

25 inches and smaller for 60-foot court with orange ball.

BALL BUCKETS

40 to 60-quart plastic containers or small plastic paint buckets. The large containers can hold playground balls or orange/green balls, and the small buckets are ideal when players work in small groups and need a limited supply of balls.

POLY-SPOTS AND THROW-DOWN LINES (TDLs)

For targets, recovery spots, court lines, group control, etc.

HULA HOOPS

Available at most big-box stores.

CONES

9-inch and half-cones.



STRUCTURE OF PRACTICE AND PLAY PLANS

WARMUP

Partner-based activities that focus on control and theme of the day.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Athletic: Covers tennis-specific movement, ABCs (agility, balance, coordination), speed, strength and advanced tossing/throwing/catching activities.

Tennis: Focuses on developing all five ball controls (direction, height, depth, speed, spin) and all phases of movement.

GAMES

Skills learned from practices will be applied to tactical situations during games.

CHARACTER

Practices have a character theme that can apply to tennis and life.

PLAY AT HOME

After each lesson, players are assigned specific challenges to practice at home with friends or family, or on the court.



DESCRIPTIONS OF ACTIVITIES



TYPE

Individual: Independent skill development.

Team: Two or more players.

Cooperative: Pairs or groups focused on improving skills together.

Competitive: Scoring and declaring a winner.

Hand/Racquet-Feed: How the ball is introduced into the activity—can be player or coach.

FOCUS

Specific areas to work on.

SETUP

Location of players, balls and equipment.

MISSION

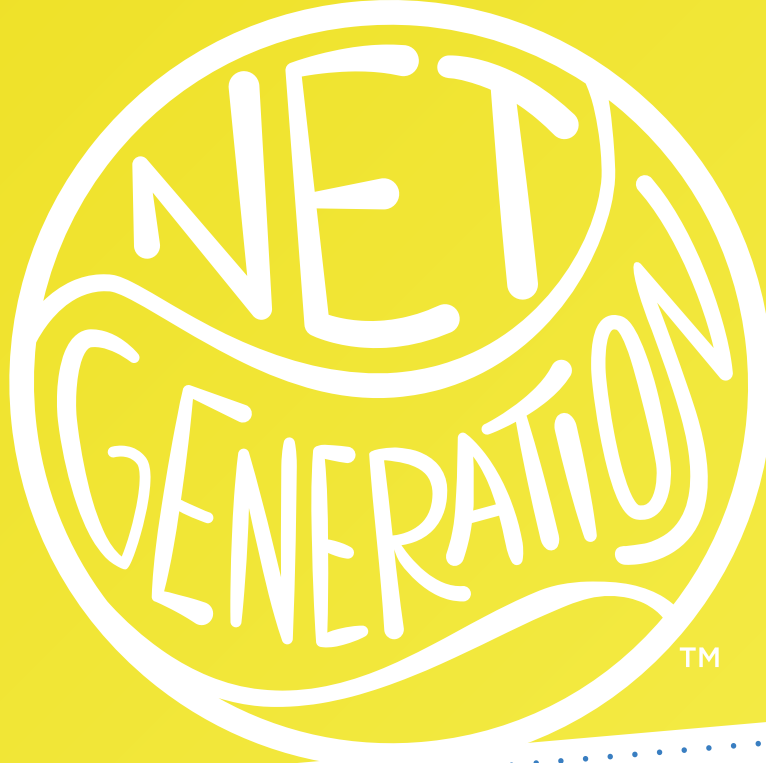
WHAT we want players to do, followed by bullets with specific instructions.

GOAL

HOW we want players to execute the activity, generally related to a specific competency.

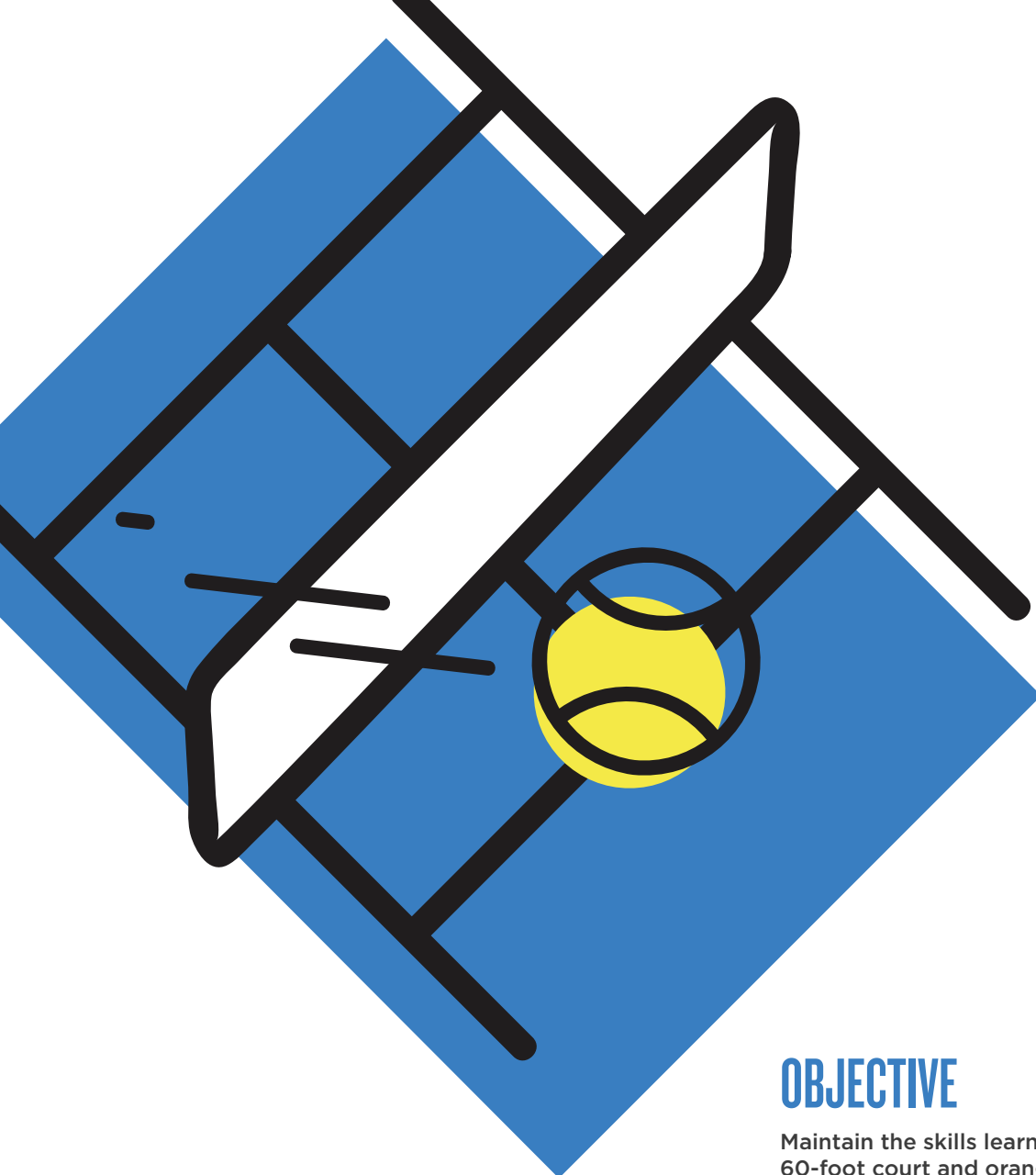
PROGRESSIONS

Specific steps to increase the difficulty of the skill/activity, to be used in subsequent practices or to handle mixed abilities.



ORANGE BALL 03





OBJECTIVE

Maintain the skills learned in Red and adapt to the 60-foot court and orange ball.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Total: 60 minutes

- Warmup: 6 - 8 minutes
- Character: 3 minutes or less
- Skills (athletic and tennis): 25 - 30 minutes
- Games: 15 - 20 minutes
- Play at Home: 3 minutes or less



NOTES:

If practice is 60 minutes, add a short dynamic “warm up” or have players come early.

If practice is longer than 60 minutes, add a dynamic warmup and more point play at the end.

PLANS AT A GLANCE



Warmup	Character	Athletic Skills Development	Tennis Skills Development	Games	Play at Home
01 Keep it Deep	Grade School	Obstacle Course	Squeeze Rally	Serve Plus One	Alternate Wall Rally
	Effort	Jump to the Line		Budge	
		Make 'Em Move			
02 What's Your Record?	Mini-Tennis	Jump Rope to Skip Loops	Control It!	What's It Worth?	Rally for Numbers
		Big-Ball Toss	Four-Ball Challenge		
		Four-Corner Toss			
03 Hit on the Run	Mini-Tennis	Positional Starts	Toss/Hit/Catch	Defend and Recover	Pick a Pro
		One-Leg Toss			
		Quarterback			
04 Over and Under	7 Up	Copycat	Slice and Dice	Crazy Feed	Over and Under
		Get Tall/Get Small	Toss/Hit/Catch: Topspin		
		Fence Throws			
05 Move It!	Quicksand	Jump Rope to Skip Loops	Court Shapes	Four-Square	Two and Two
		Serpentine Shuffle		Black Hole	
		Ball Drops (Crossing Midline)			
06 Party at the Net	Slice and Dice	Red Light/Green Light Runs	Up-and-Back Volley	Charge! Doubles	Volley to Wall
		Vertical Jumps	First Four		
		Make 'em Move			
07 Over My Head	Figure 8 Volley	Obstacle Course	Hi-Lo	Moonballer	Volley with a Friend
		Figure 8 Cone Weaves			
		Three-Ball Throw			
08 Let's Play!	Up-and-Back Volley	Big-Ball Tennis	Four-Ball Challenge	Budge	Bring a Friend
				Crazy Feed	
				All-Positions Doubles	

KEEP IT DEEP

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

GRADE SCHOOL

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Both players start in middle of service box.

Mission—Rally and work your way to baseline.

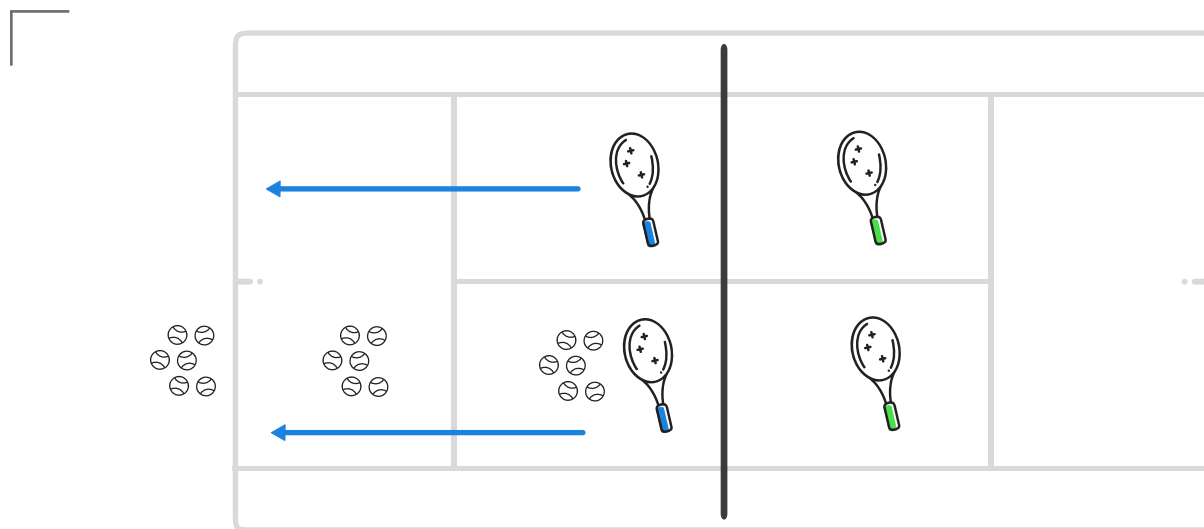
- Rally back and forth. Hit one each and move to first grade.
- Once in first grade, rally two shots each and move to second grade.
- Continue until you reach sixth grade, then move to start over from service line, then baseline.

Goal—Increase size and length of swing as you move further back.

Progressions

1. One stroke.
2. Ball must bounce past service line to count.

ILLUSTRATION: GRADE SCHOOL



II. CHARACTER

EFFORT

- Enjoy playing and giving your best.
- Rate your own effort.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

OBSTACLE COURSE

Setup

- Use four cones to create an 18x18-foot square in center of court on each side of net. Keep square a safe distance from net.
- Four to six players per square.

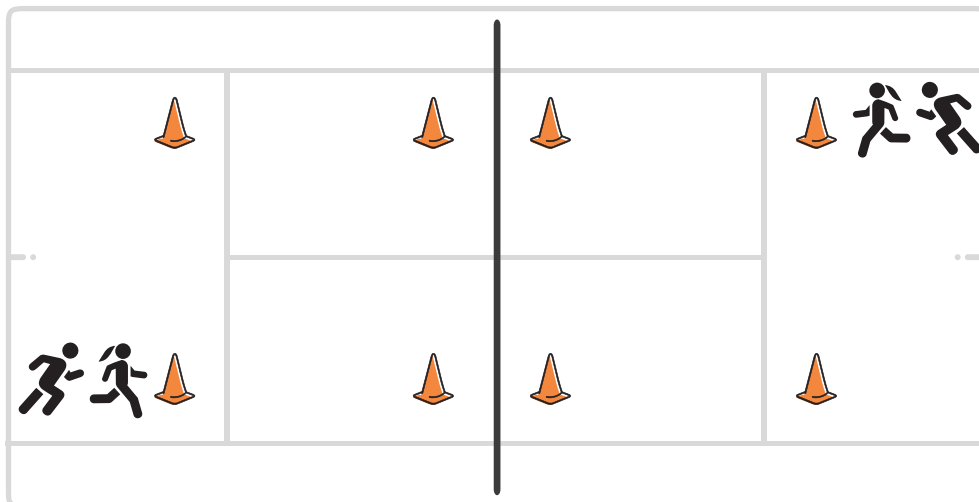
Mission

- Proceed from cone to cone using different movements. Next player goes when previous player reaches second cone.
- After each player has gone twice, change movement.

Progressions

1. Carioca. Alternate facing in at one cone, out at next.
2. Skip. Change direction at each cone—forward, sideways, backward, sideways.
3. Sprint. Run to cone and stop, balanced on one leg, then run to next cone and stop, balanced on other leg.
4. Circles. Run to each cone and make a complete circle around it. Face same direction entire time.

ILLUSTRATION: OBSTACLE COURSE



JUMP TO THE LINE

Setup

- Stand two to three steps behind baseline or sideline.

Mission

- On coach's command, jump as close to line as possible.
- Emphasize low, athletic stance before jump and on landing.

Progressions

1. Jump to line with toes as close as possible.
2. Jump over line with heels as close as possible.
3. Jump sideways close to line.
4. Jump sideways over line.
5. Jump backward.

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs, with orange ball and TDL.
- No more than three pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as "home base."

Mission

- Make catcher move by tossing balls side to side, high/low, and deep/short. Catch on one bounce.
- Catcher uses right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- Once successful, toss balls slightly above catcher's head. Catch one-handed in the air.
- Switch roles every minute.
- Need help? Move closer.

Progressions

1. For high ball, catch with opposite foot and hand.
2. Increase distance between pairs.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

SQUEEZE RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Players start on opposite service lines with two TDLs each.
- Start with doubles line as one boundary and TDLs as other.
- Place TDLs parallel to each other to create a straight line.

Mission—Control rally within court boundaries.

- Start rally with straight-ahead serve and return.
- Rally four balls (two each) in boundary and yell “Squeeze!” Then move TDLs in one racquet length.
- Continue until boundary is too narrow.

Goal—Extend follow-through to help direct ball into boundaries.

Progressions

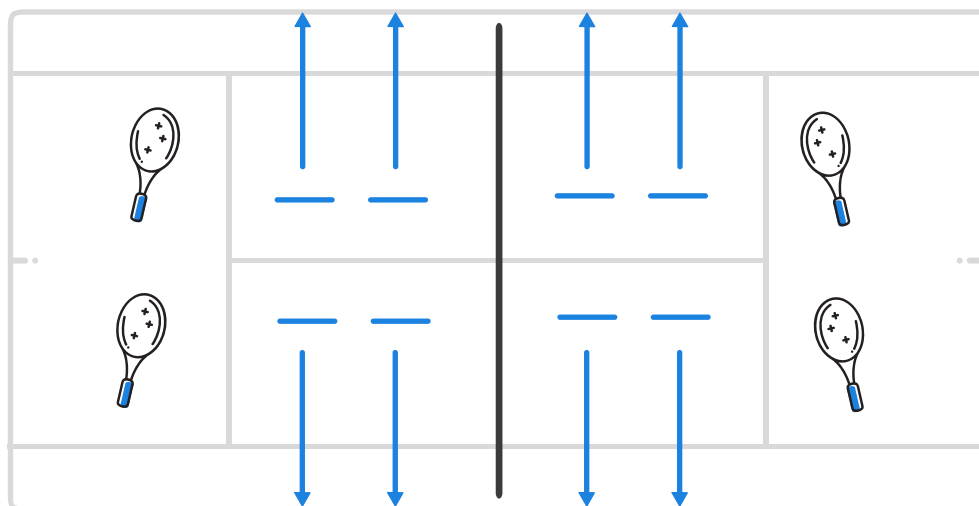
1. Increase number of shots required.
2. Any stroke, then one stroke.
3. Move back to baseline.



TEACHING TIP

When players move from 36- to 60-foot court, avoid changing both the ball and the racquet at the same time. Starting with an orange ball on the service line of the 60-foot court is a great way to begin. Then bring them back to the baseline and change their racquets when they become more comfortable.

ILLUSTRATION: SQUEEZE RALLY



SERVE PLUS ONE

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, each hitting diagonally across net from each other.
- Players start on service line.

Mission—Execute serve, return, and first ball.

- Serve, return, hit one ground stroke, and trap ball.
- Returner serves and continues sequence.
- Each player completes four sequences, then switches sides of court (deuce to ad).
- After a complete rotation, play as a game. Pair scores a point for each three-ball sequence, and a bonus point if server hits first groundstroke past service line.

Goal—Use continental grip on serve with feet in proper position.

Progressions

1. Start on baseline.
2. Serve to specific half of service box.

BUDGE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs, and competitive.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Need at least six players to be effective.
- Players in pairs rallying on half-court, two pairs per court.

Mission—Keep ball in play.

- Coach assigns different number of balls for each court to rally. Points begin with serve.
- An example for six players would be top court must rally 10 straight, middle court must complete eight, and bottom court six.
- Players yell “Budge!” when they reach their rally number.
- If bottom-court players yell “Budge” first, they trade places with middle-court players.
- If middle-court players are successful before top-court players, they trade places with top-court.
- Make adjustments to number of shots required based on how many players are involved.

Goal—Use a combination of spin, height and speed to improve consistency.

Progressions

1. Use single stroke.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

IV. PLAY AT HOME

ALTERNATE WALL RALLY

Setup

Play with foam ball against garage door or solid wall.

Progressions

- Serve overhand to wall, hit one groundstroke and then other. Continue to alternate.
- Serve to left, then right side of wall and then alternate shots.
- Serve to wall and rally with a friend.



WHAT'S YOUR RECORD?

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground ball (light medicine ball or junior basketball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction, spin.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All activities inside service box on half-court.

Mission—Rally with groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line rallying easy groundstrokes.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley.
- After one minute, switch roles or activities.

Goal—Change grip and/or hand position between groundstrokes and volleys.

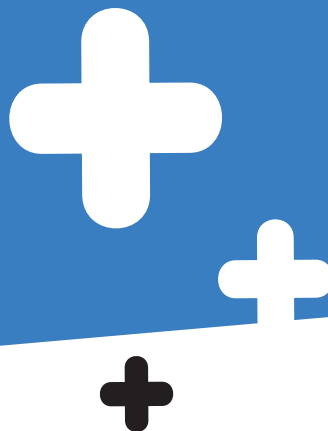
Progressions

1. Hit crosscourt.
2. One stroke only.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

POSITIVITY

- Acknowledge the hard work of others during practice.
- Thank teammates and coaches for their effort.



JUMP ROPE TO SKIP LOOPS

Note: Have each player bring a jump rope to practice, or provide one.

Setup

- Each player with jump rope.
- Set up simple path for players to follow, such as lines of court or cones and markers.

Mission

- Once players have established a baseline of jumping rope in place (single jumps), they can begin to move along designated path.
- Make sure path involves moving forward, to sides and even backward.

Progressions

1. Move forward jumping.
2. Move forward jogging.

BIG-BALL TOSS

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service lines.
- Each pair has playground ball.

Mission

- Partners toss ball back and forth over net, catching after bounce.
- Toss all balls from side of body and catch in front of body.
- After one minute, switch to progressions.

Progressions

1. Both sides toss crosscourt for one minute, then switch to next pattern.
2. Figure 8, one side tosses crosscourt, other side down-the-line.



TEACHING TIP

This activity simulates a forehand and backhand groundstroke. Encourage using a square stance and rotating body open on each toss.

FOUR-CORNER TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to four pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other about four feet apart, with four orange balls.

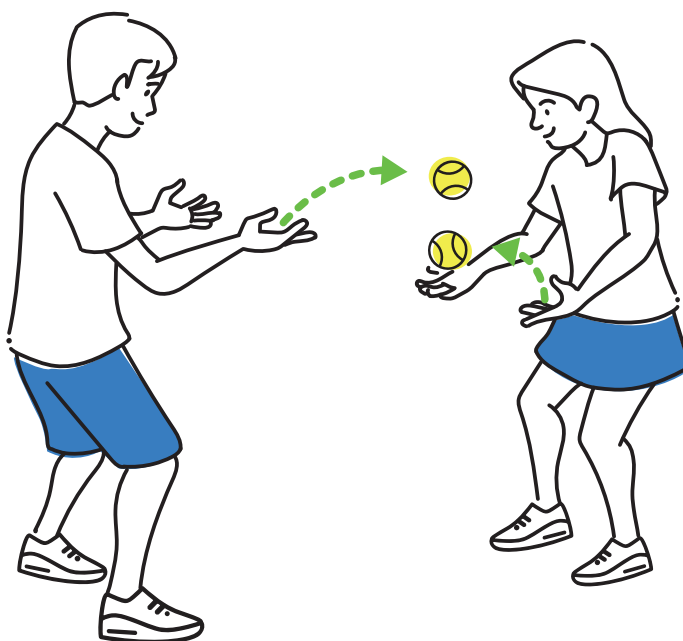
Mission

- Player bounces ball downward (palm down) with right hand to partner, who catches after bounce with left hand.
- Partner passes ball from left hand to right, and bounces it downward back to player's left hand. Repeat.
- Toss and catch to side of body.
- Once successful, add a second ball, continuing to bounce ball to partner with right hand and transfer ball from left to right hand.

Progressions

1. Add a third ball, then a fourth.
2. Catch all balls in the air.

ILLUSTRATION: FOUR-CORNER TOSS



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

CONTROL IT!

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Depth and speed on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Place TDLs about six feet inside service line to split court in half from baseline to net.

Mission—Rally for numbers with depth and speed.

- Rally from baseline.
- Speed—count number of balls hit in one minute. Do two rounds.
- Depth—count number of balls that bounce past TDLs in one minute. Do two rounds.

Goal—Use speed, spin and height for control.

Progressions

1. One stroke.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.
3. For depth, count only shots past service line.

FOUR-BALL CHALLENGE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on baselines.
- Each pair has four balls under net.

Mission—Try for highest rally.

- One player runs up, grabs a ball and drop-hits from baseline. Pairs rally as many balls as they can.
- Once they miss, other player runs and grabs another ball.
- Highest rally out of four is their number.
- Repeat after all four balls are done and try to beat record.

Goal—Use topspin and height over net to improve consistency.

Progression

1. One stroke.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.
3. Make it competitive with court versus court.

WHAT'S IT WORTH?

Type: Team.

Focus: Consistency and movement.

Setup

Two teams of two to three per court, playing full-court points.

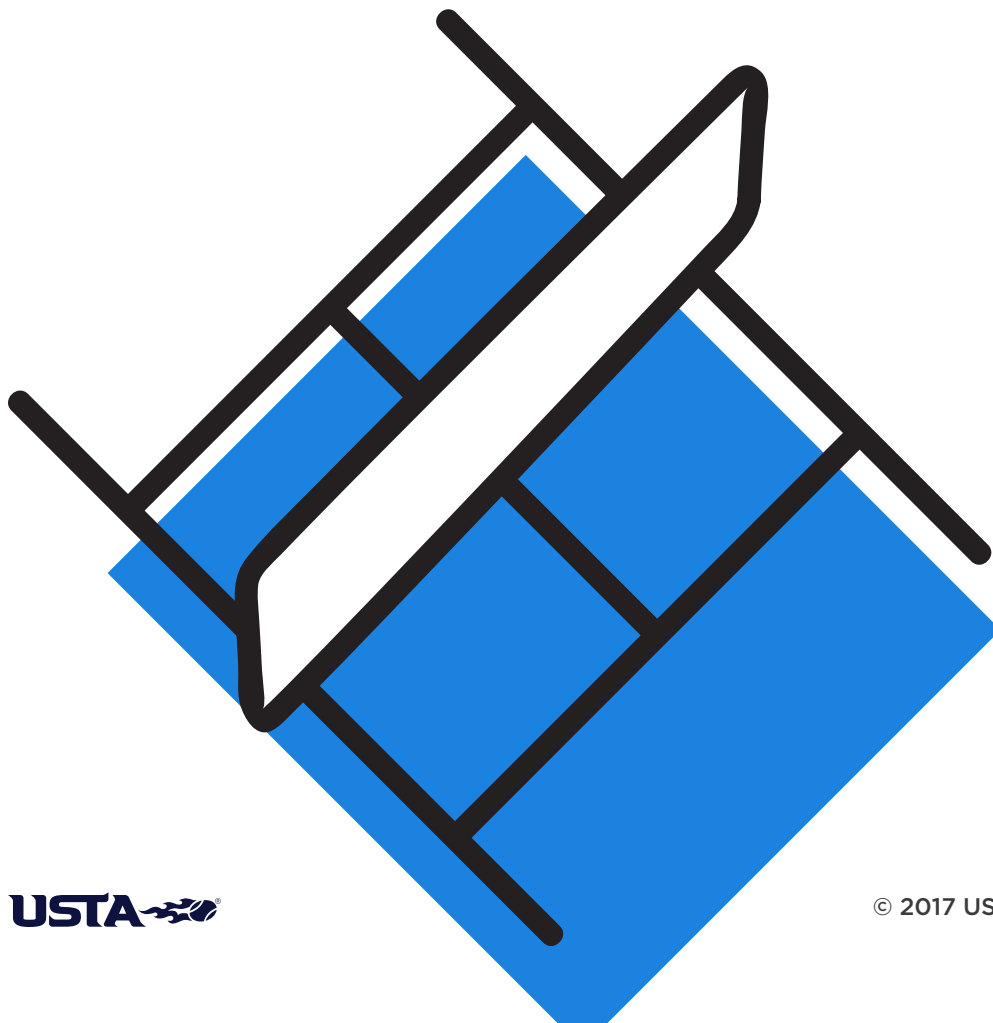
Mission—Win points with consistency.

- Play out point one-on-one, beginning with serve and return.
- Play one point, then rotate players.
- After each player has served, serve to other side.
- Earn points for team based on number of shots—e.g., if point lasts 14 shots, winning player earns 14 points for team; if point lasts two shots, winning player earns two points.
- Play to 50, switch servers and returners, then change opponents or teams.

Goal—Work point and stay patient.

Progressions

1. Play full-court or half-court points.
2. Play up-and-down-the-river format (winning team moves up a court, losing team moves down, up is toward ad side).



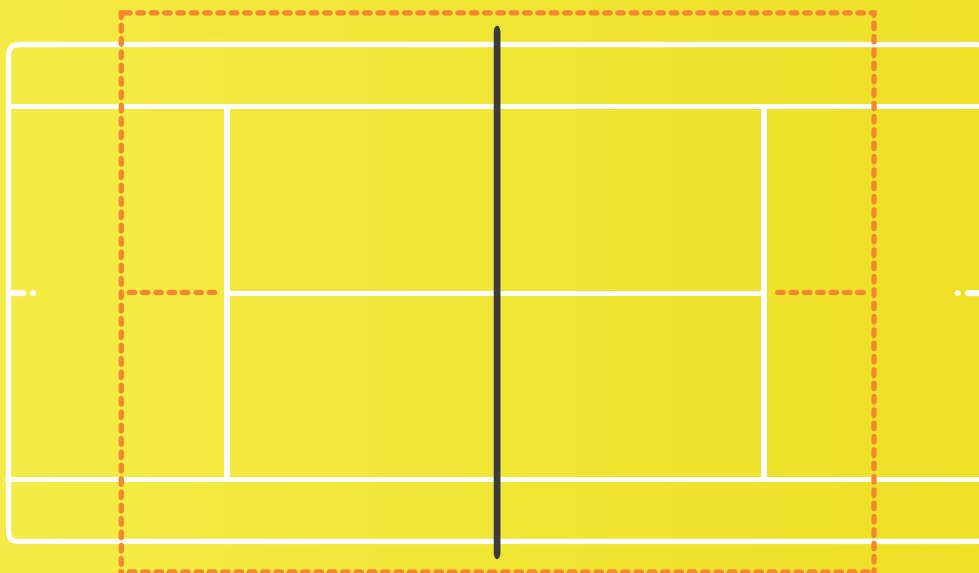


COURT CENTS

You can create two 60x21-foot courts on one 78-foot court with a few TDLs. Remember, this is just for practice and not for sanctioned tournament play on a 60-foot court.

- The distance from the middle of the court to the 78-foot-court doubles line is 18 feet.
- The distance from the doubles line to net post is three feet.
- Add those together and you get 21 feet. So, all you need to do is extend the baseline with a TDL, then place two or three TDLs as a sideline.
- Finally, place two TDLs between the service line and baseline to mark off the center, and you're ready to play.
- This means the two courts share a sideline, so remind players to be careful when moving out wide on that side.

ILLUSTRATION: COURT CENTS



VI. PLAY AT HOME

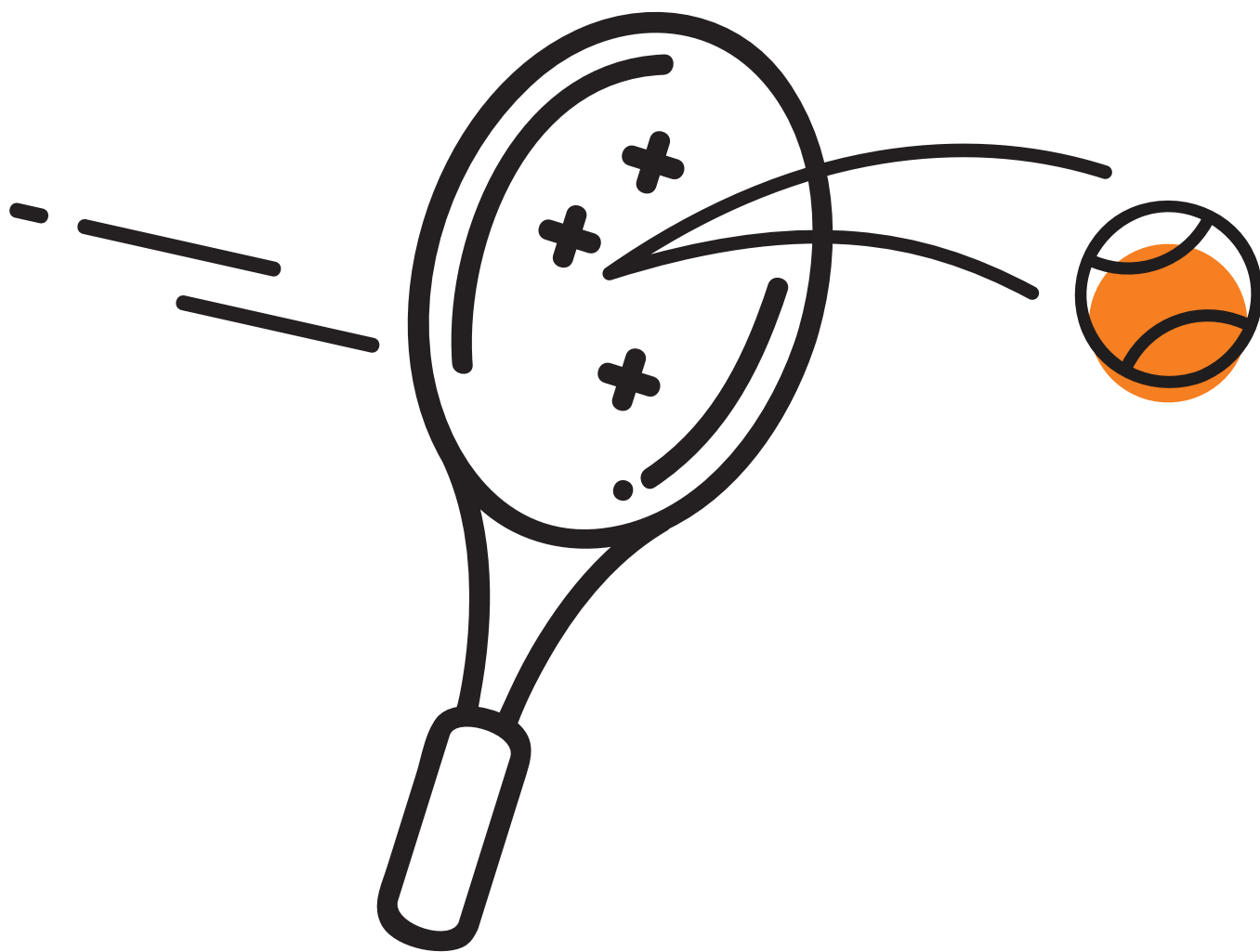
RALLY FOR NUMBERS

Setup

- Play with red foam ball against garage door or solid wall.
- Hit with a partner on driveway or any flat surface.

Progressions

1. Serve overhand to wall and hit until you miss.
2. Find a friend or family member, create a court, and see how many you can hit. Try to break your record.



HIT ON THE RUN

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground ball (light medicine ball or junior basketball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction, spin.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All activities inside service box.

Mission—Rally with groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line rallying easy groundstrokes.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley.
- One minute, then switch roles or activities.

Goal—Change grip and/or hand position between groundstrokes and volleys.

Progressions

1. Hit crosscourt.
2. One stroke only.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

TEAMWORK

Encourage teammates and practice partners.

III. ATHLETIC SKILLS



POSITIONAL STARTS

Setup

Players spread out on sideline on both sides of net. Up to four on each side.

Mission

- Start in various positions, and on coach's command, sprint and stop on opposite sideline in athletic stance.
- Emphasis is on big, strong strides and driving arms.
- When finished, backpedal to starting point.

Progressions

1. Start sideways in athletic stance.
2. Start backward in athletic stance.
3. Stop on opposite baseline, balancing on one leg.

ONE-LEG TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs with orange ball.
- Up to four pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other, four to six feet apart.

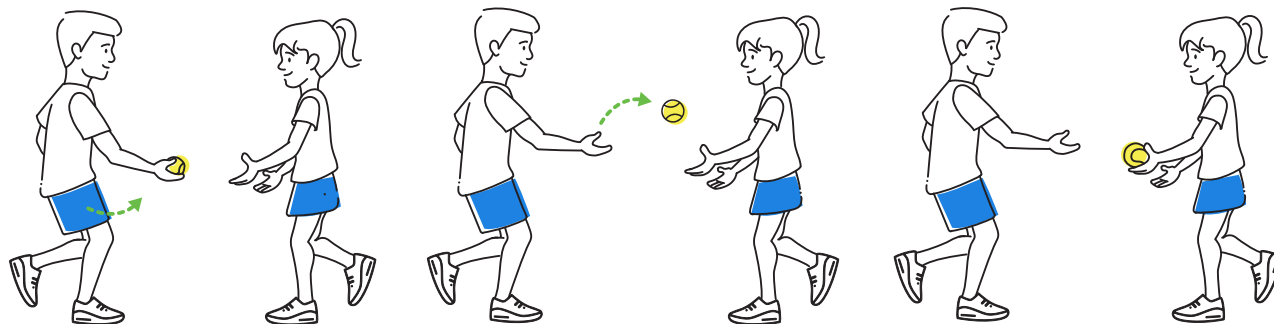
Mission

- Partners stand on one leg and play toss and catch over net.
- Start by tossing ball with limited movement.
- After four successful catches each, continue to progressions.
- Need help? Toss with one hand and catch with two, use bigger ball.

Progressions

1. Toss in crosscourt pattern with limited movement.
2. Figure 8 tosses.
3. Use playground ball.

ILLUSTRATION: ONE-LEG TOSS



QUARTERBACK

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to three pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs are on opposite sidelines, one football between them.

Note: If there aren't enough footballs, use a tennis ball, or do station work where players are working on different activities.

Mission

- Partners play catch, working on throwing a spiral.

Progressions

1. Add distance.
2. Add movement like a quarterback—face forward, turn and run back, set and throw.

Note: Continue to next progression only if player is able to execute prior movement.

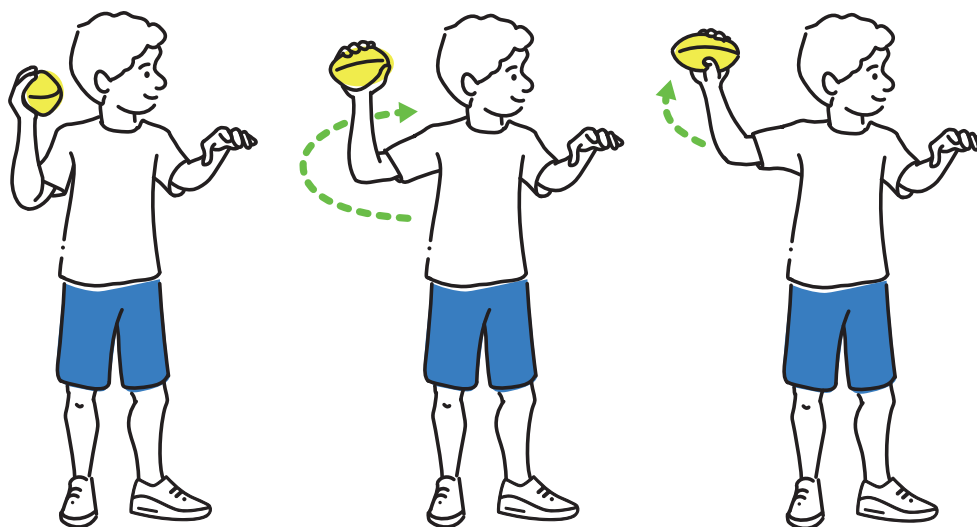
3. Start facing forward with both hands on ball. Turn sideways with throwing arm up and to side, arm bent at 90 degrees.
4. Turn to side with both hands on ball, then separate hands/arms. Front arm is bent, parallel to ground, with hand to side. Back arm is at 90 degrees with ball behind head.
5. Same preparation, but this time, point tip of ball backward when behind head.



TEACHING TIP

Many players will never have thrown a football before. Stay patient with the beginners and encourage them to throw on their own with friends or family. These are basic progressions, so make sure you challenge each player appropriately.

ILLUSTRATION: QUARTERBACK



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

TOSS/HIT/CATCH

Type: Cooperative, teams of three.

Focus: Wide groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two teams of three per court.
- Feeder on service line with balls (same side of net as hitter); hitter in center of baseline; catcher on opposite baseline.
- Use a TDL or poly-spot to mark “home base” for hitter.

Mission—Set up for wide ball with open stance, hit high over net, and recover.

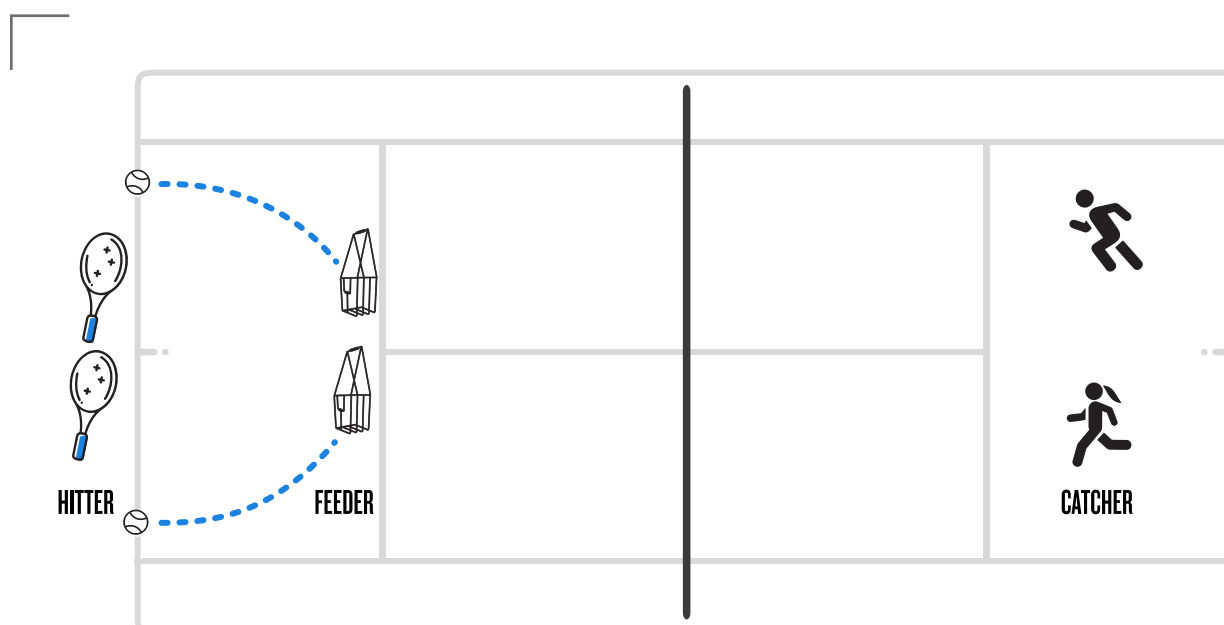
- Feeder tosses wide ball with enough height for hitter to get there and set up.
- Hitter plays a high ball over net with open stance and recovers to spot.
- After six balls, change positions. Switch sides of court after complete rotation.

Goal—Limit amount of steps going to and recovering from wide ball.

Progressions

1. Hit with height and spin.
2. Hand-feed wide and deep.
3. Racquet-feed from opposite side of net.

ILLUSTRATION: TOSS/HIT/CATCH



DEFEND AND RECOVER

Type: Competitive.

Focus: Hitting on run and recovery.

Setup

- Four to six players per court, two players at a time.
- One player from feeding team begins in center of baseline; one player from defending team on opposite sideline.

Mission—Defend wide ball and recover properly.

- Racquet-feed ball to defender's opposite sideline and play out point.
- Defender performs crossover after wide ball and tries to neutralize.
- Rotate players after each point. Play a set number of points, then switch feeding teams.

Goal—Defend by keeping ball deep with spin and height.

Progressions

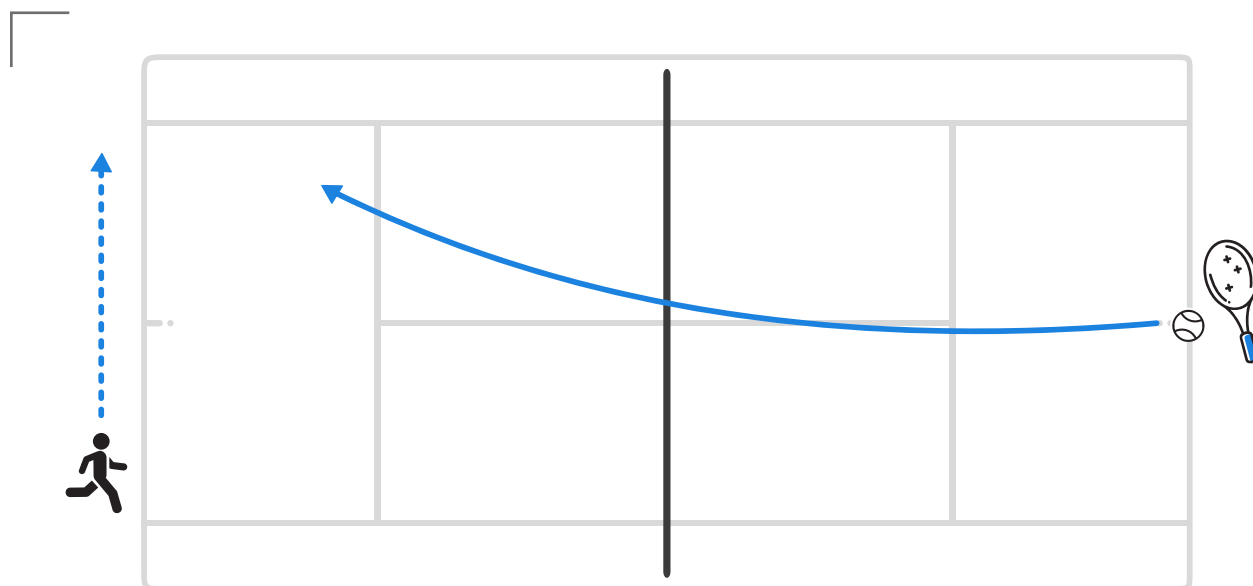
1. Feeder stands on same sideline as hitter (across net) and feeds deep crosscourt.
2. Feed must bounce past service line.
3. Both players start in middle and feeder can feed ball anywhere.



COACHING TIP

At this stage, all players are able to play on the 60-foot court, and are developing more complete games. This doesn't mean they're ready for individual competition. Keeping the competition within a team environment and focusing feedback on what they do well are more important at this age and stage.

ILLUSTRATION: DEFEND AND RECOVER



VI. PLAY AT HOME

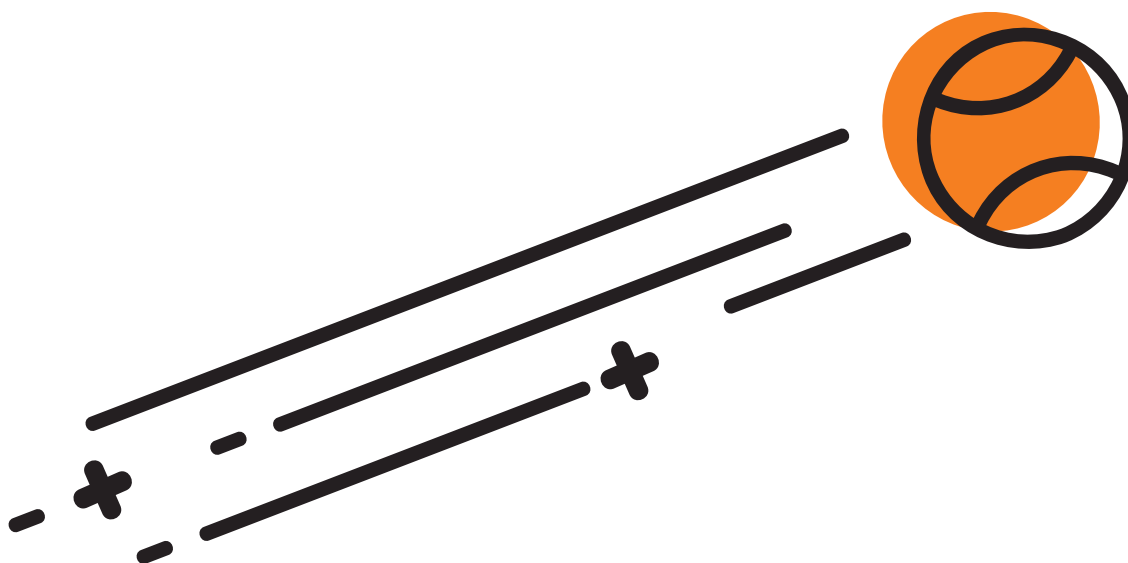
PICK A PRO

Setup

Pick your favorite pro.

Progressions

1. Hit against wall, imitating your favorite pro's serve and groundstrokes.
2. Create scores and situations, such as five-all in fifth set at US Open. What would you do to win match?



OVER AND UNDER

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

7 UP

Type: Cooperative to competitive.

Focus: Forehand and backhand slice.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service lines.

Mission—Rally slices.

- Alternate starting rally with drop-hit.
- Let ball bounce and use continental grip.
- Attempt seven-ball rally.
- Need help? Move closer to net or use red ball.

Goal—Keep non-dominant hand on racquet throat in ready position before every shot.

Progressions

1. Cooperative, then competitive. For competitive, ball must come up off racquet to encourage touch. First to seven points wins, then switch partners.
2. All backhands, then all forehands.

II. CHARACTER

TEAMWORK

Acknowledge teammates' improvement.

III. ATHLETIC SKILLS



COPY CAT

Setup

- Players spread out on court; maximum four on each side of net.

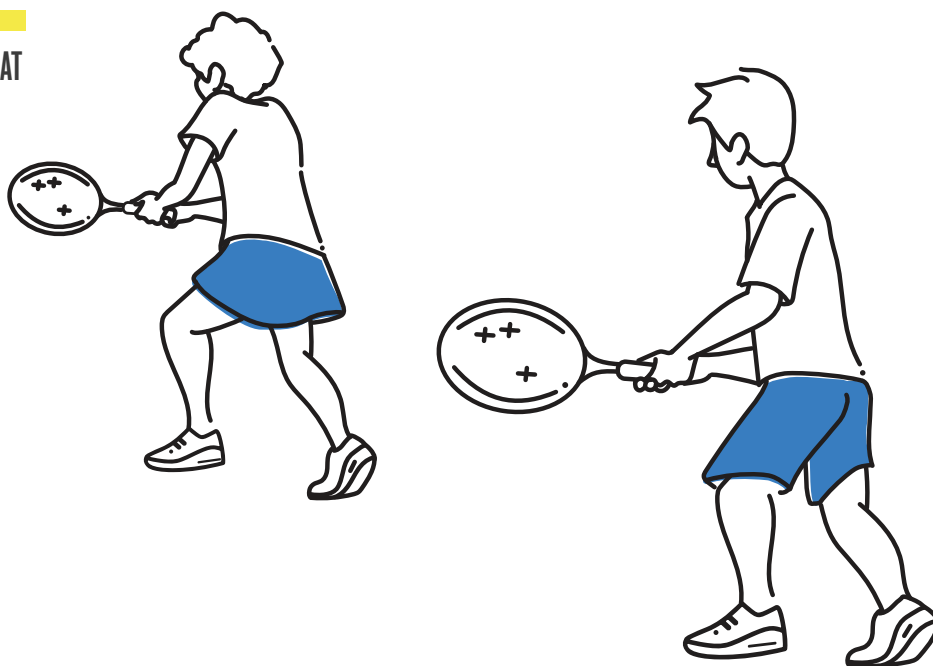
Mission

- Coach demonstrates a specific movement, then players copy.

Progressions

1. Crossover recovery. Players lined up from net to behind baseline. Coach runs to sideline, shadow strokes, crosses over, then shuffles back to middle. First square stance, then open stance. Complementary skill—carioca.
2. Hop-move approach. Players lined up across baseline. Coach demonstrates approach shot off front foot. Complementary skill—side skips.
3. Drop-step, crossover and run for overhead. Players lined up across net. Complementary skill: pivots and carioca.

ILLUSTRATION: COPY CAT



GET TALL/GET SMALL

Setup

Players spread out around court.

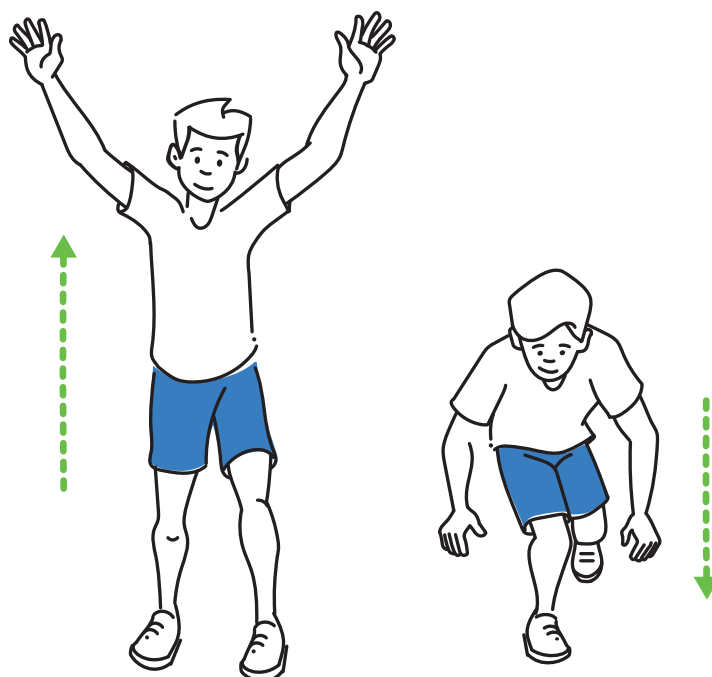
Mission

- Stand on one leg with arms above head attempting to get as tall as possible.
- On coach's command, drop into athletic stance on both feet.
- During drop, hands move aggressively from over head to past hips.

Progressions

1. Alternate legs each time you reach up.
2. Stay on one leg entire time and come down into quarter squat.

ILLUSTRATION: GET TALL/GET SMALL



FENCE THROWS

Setup

- Players in pairs, one outside fence, other inside.
- Both players are about 10 feet from fence.
- Each pair has two balls.

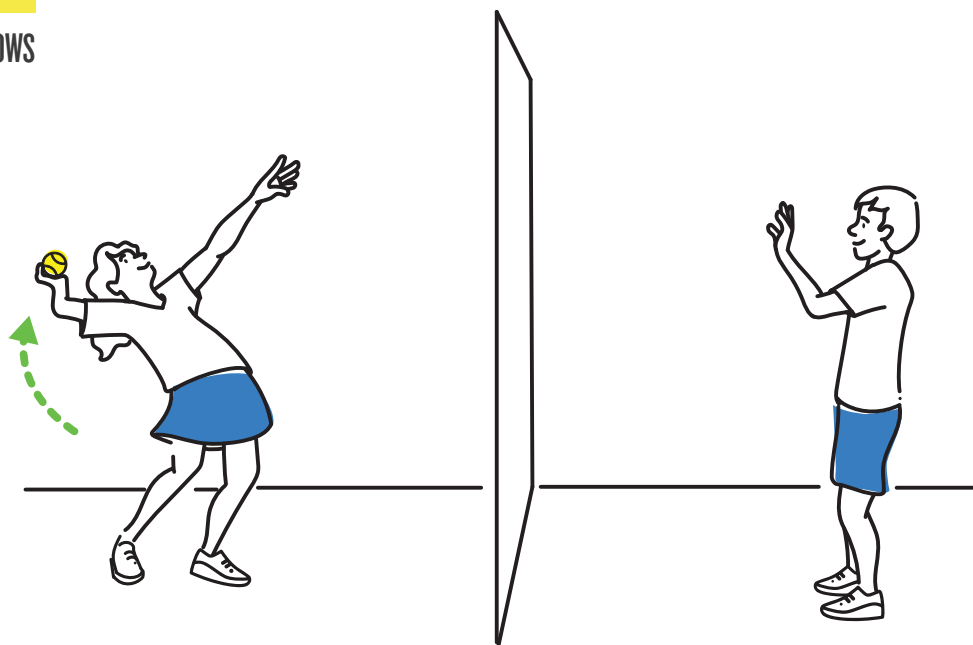
Mission

- Throw ball over fence so partner can catch without having to move far.
- Throw two balls; partner catches and throws back.

Progression

Start with ball on ground behind back foot.

ILLUSTRATION: FENCE THROWS



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

SLICE AND DICE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Forehand and backhand slice.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting in middle of service box.

Mission—Rally with underspin.

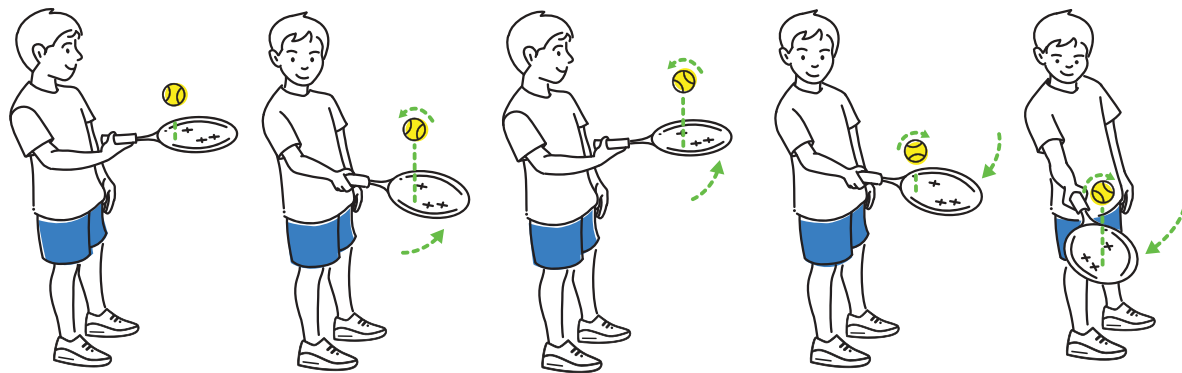
- Using continental grip, rally forehands only with partner.
- Racquet face is wide open (pointing upward) for extreme under-spin.
- Need help? Rally without a net.

Goal—Keep rally going with extra spin.

Progressions

1. Rally backhands.
2. Alternate forehands and backhands.

ILLUSTRATION: SLICE AND DICE



TOSS/HIT/CATCH: TOPSPIN

Type: Cooperative, teams of three.

Focus: Topspin groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two teams of three on each court.
- Feeder on service line with balls (same side of net as hitter); hitter on baseline; catcher on opposite baseline.
- Use TDL or poly-spot to mark “home base” for hitter.

Mission—Play forehands and backhands with spin and height over net; use appropriate stances.

- Toss ball to hitter’s side (about five feet away) with enough height for hitter to get there and set up with square stance.
- Hitter plays topspin ball crosscourt and recovers to spot.
- Toss second ball further out wide with enough height for hitter to get there and set up, this time with an open stance, and recover with crossover step.
- Play six balls and change positions. Switch sides of court after complete rotation so players hit forehands and backhands.

Goal—Upper body remains same regardless of square or open stance.

Progressions

1. Hit with more height and spin.
2. Racquet-feed (coach or player) from opposite side of net.



TEACHING TIP

To further develop skills, players need extra repetitions. When they’re struggling to learn a new skill, it’s important to close the environment and hand- or racquet-feed. Usually, players can do the feeding, but if they struggle, the coach can step in.

V. GAMES

CRAZY FEED

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Heavy topspin.

Setup

- Two teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Two play at a time.

Mission—Start point with high-topspin feed.

- Designate one side as attackers, other as defenders.
- Attacker feeds a heavy topspin ball deep, then plays out point. Rotate players every point.
- If attackers win point, they score one; if defenders win, they score two.
- Play first team to seven points, then adjust teams or order so players have different opponents.

Goal—Put player on defensive by hitting deep, arcing topspin.

Progressions

1. Feed backhands.
2. Defender feeds high deep ball with little spin to attacker, who hits back with heavy topspin.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

OVER AND UNDER

Setup

Play with red foam ball against garage door or solid wall.

Progressions

1. Alternate hitting topspin and slice.
2. Use red ball, then orange ball.
3. Play on driveway with a friend and alternate spins.



MOVE IT!

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground ball (light medicine ball or junior basketball); jump ropes; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

QUICKSAND

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Depth on groundstrokes.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service lines.

Mission—Keep ball deep.

- Players rally for specific number of shots inside service box, keeping feet behind service line (service box is quicksand).
- Once pairs complete specified number of shots, they put a ball next to net, outside of net post.

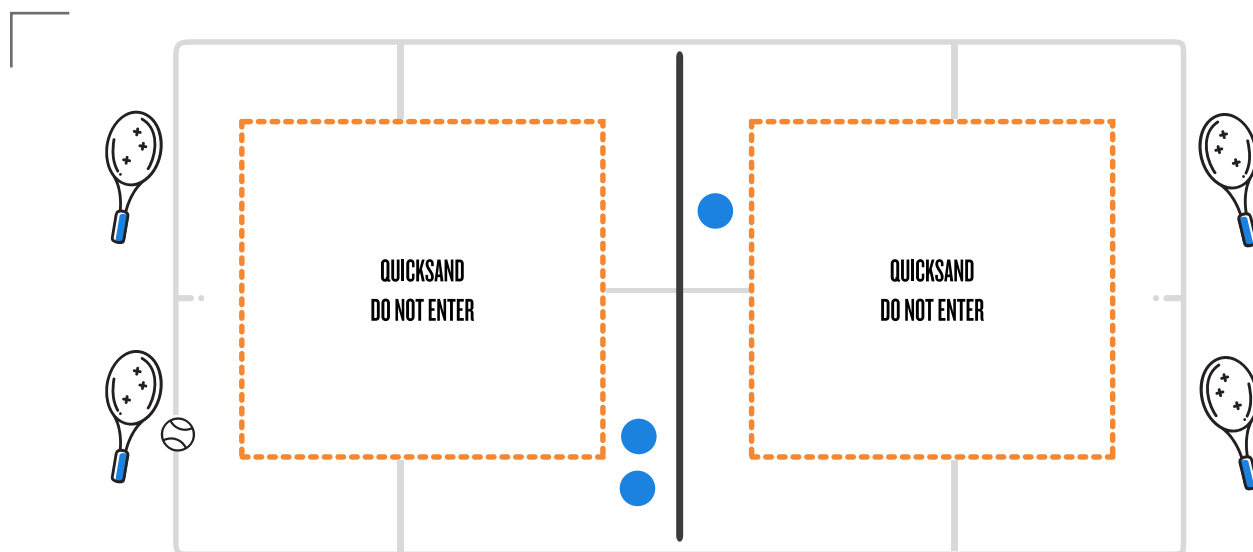
- First pair to get four balls in scoring area wins. Start another game from baseline, with inside baseline as quicksand.

Goal—Hit with more height and spin so ball stays deep.

Progressions

1. Start with rally of four shots, then five, etc.
2. Same activity with three players (two against one). Single player must change direction and keep ball deep.

ILLUSTRATION: QUICKSAND



II. CHARACTER

POSITIVITY

- Use positive words and body language during practice.
- Substitute “I can’t...” with “I will...”

III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

JUMP ROPE TO SKIP LOOPS

Note: Have each player bring a jump rope to practice, or provide one.

Setup

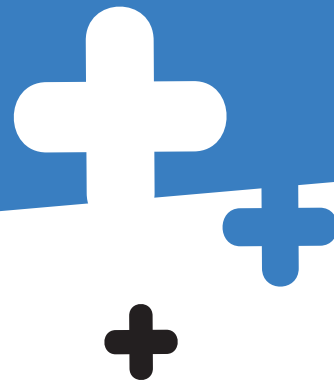
- Each player with a jump rope.
- Set up simple path using court lines or cones and markers.

Mission

- Once players have established a baseline of jumping rope in place (single jumps), they can begin to move along designated path.
- Make sure path involves moving forward, sideways, and even backward.

Progressions

1. Move forward by jumping.
2. Move forward by jogging.



SERPENTINE SHUFFLE

Setup

- Up to four players on each side of net.
- Players start on baseline of 78-foot court, spread out across court.
- Place some cones or TDLs in front of net so players know when to stop.

Mission

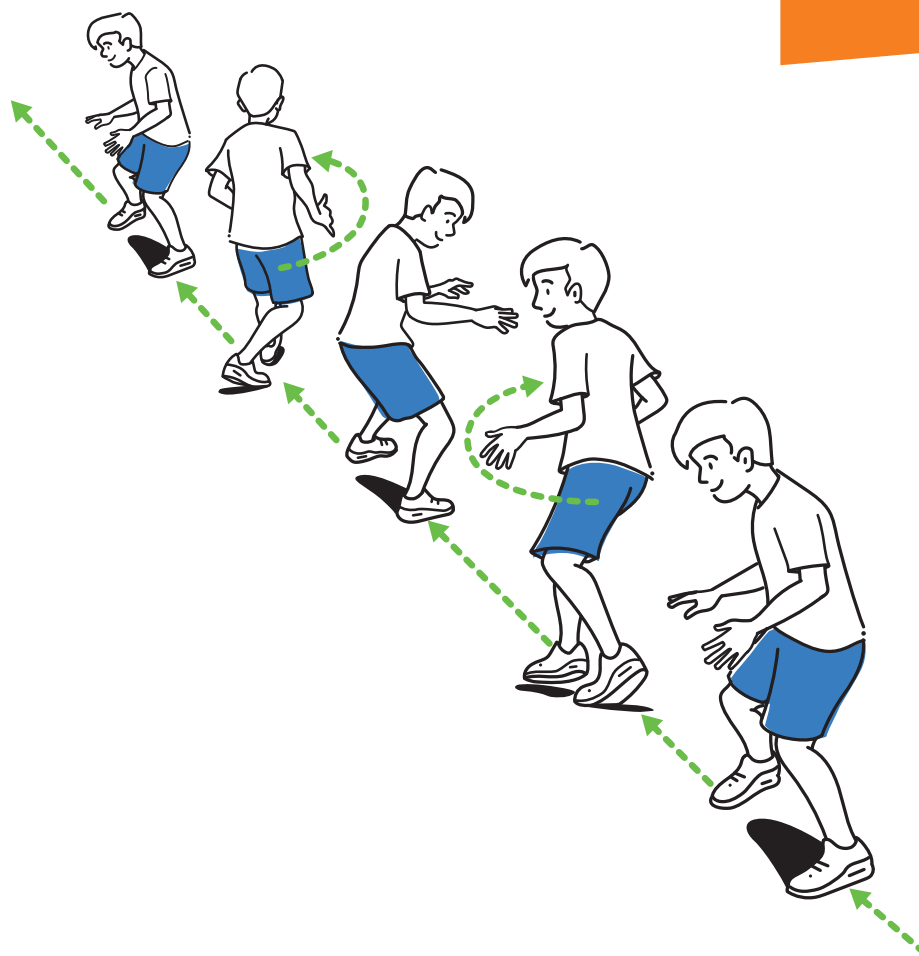
- Shuffle toward net—two shuffles facing one direction, then two shuffles facing other.
- Make turn from one side to other, facing net.
- On return to baseline, continue facing net when turning. This backward serpentine shuffle helps players develop proper movement for deep groundstrokes and overheads.



TEACHING TIP

Whenever players are pivoting backward, they're moving to their blind side. Whether they're riding a skateboard or going back for an overhead, this is a very difficult movement at first. Take time to break this down for the players who struggle.

ILLUSTRATION: SERPENTINE SHUFFLE



BALL DROPS (CROSSING MIDLINE)

Setup

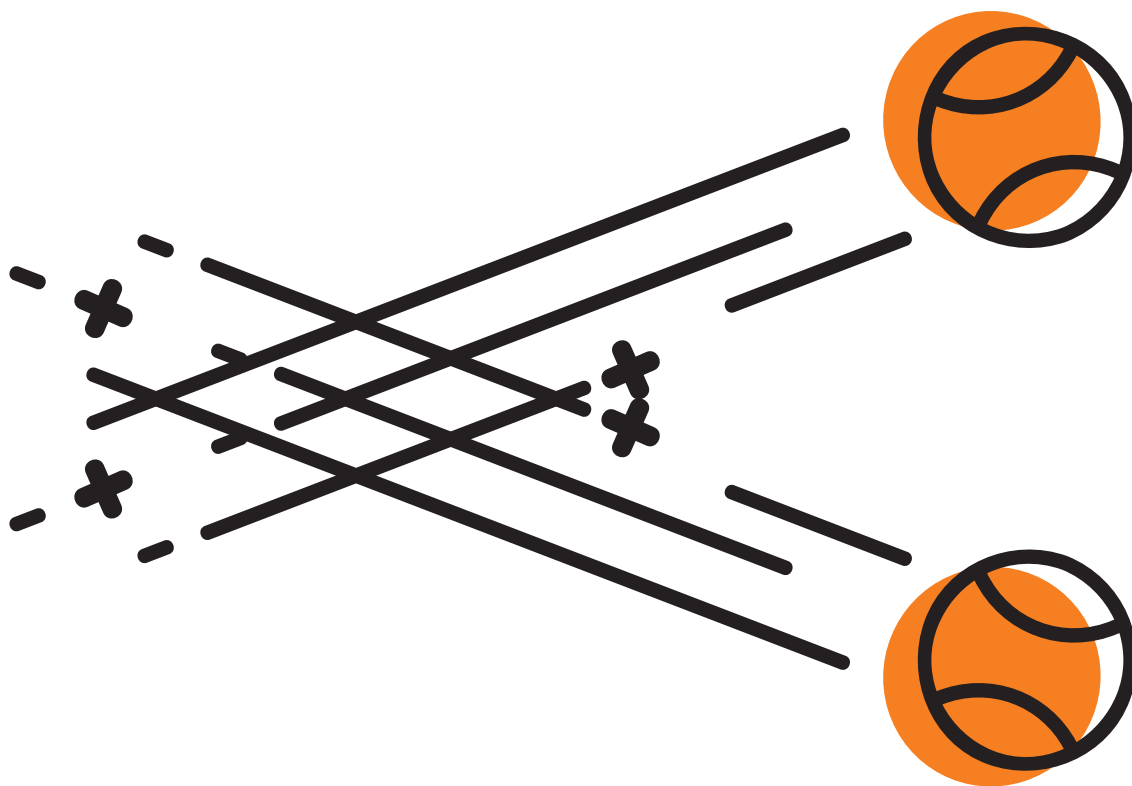
- Players in pairs spread out around court.
- One player has two orange balls; partner is catcher.
- Pairs start about two to three feet apart.

Mission

- Hold both balls straight out at shoulder level in “V” position, palms down.
- Drop one ball. Partner catches on one bounce with one hand across body (right hand on left side, left hand on right).
- Catcher can lift heel off ground on opposite side to catch, but must maintain foot positioning.
- After four successful catches on one side, switch to other side, then switch roles.
- Need help? Catch with two hands, use playground ball.

Progressions

1. Alternate catching one on left side then one on right.
2. Add a little movement and use an open stance to catch.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

COURT SHAPES

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Divide court according to existing lines and add TDLs to split court in half horizontally and vertically (see diagram).
- Two pairs per court, starting off hitting straight ahead.

Mission—Rally consistently to same area.

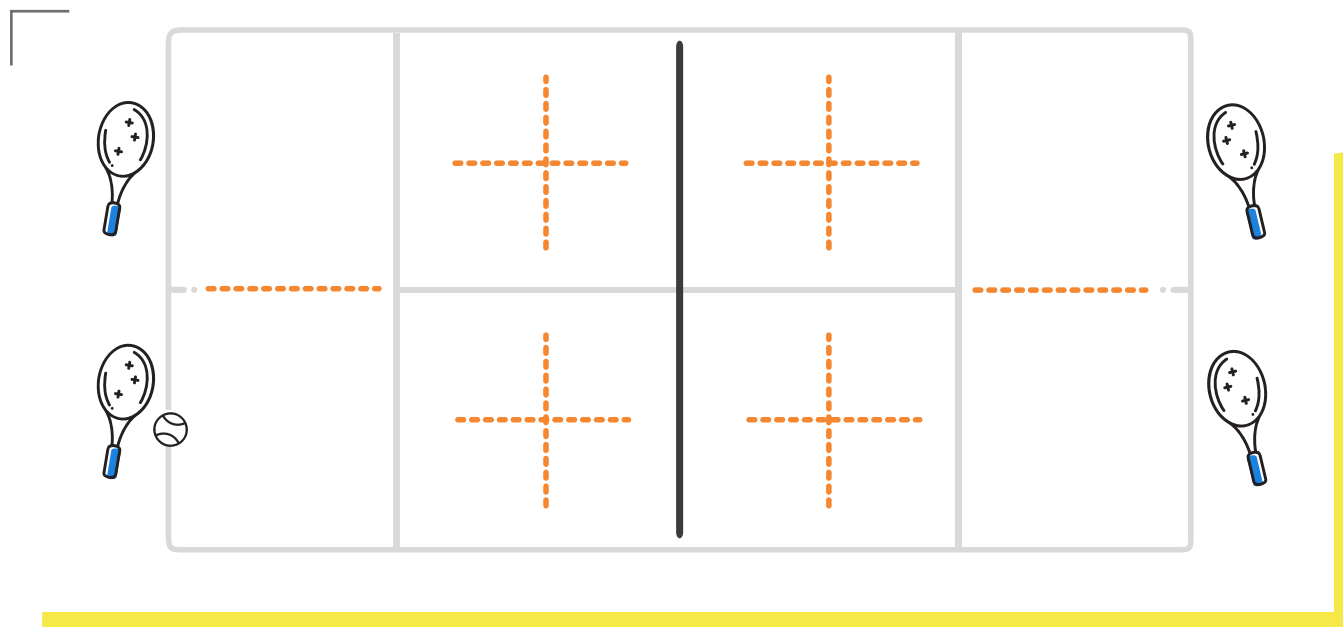
- Coach picks specific spot to rally to—could be same spot on both sides or different spot on each.
- Need help? Use shorter spaces.

Goal—Adjust length of stroke according to space selected.

Progressions

1. Any stroke, one stroke, alternating strokes.
2. Hit crosscourt.

ILLUSTRATION: COURT SHAPES



FOUR-SQUARE

Type: Cooperative or competitive, partner or team.

Focus: Deep/short and side to side.

Setup

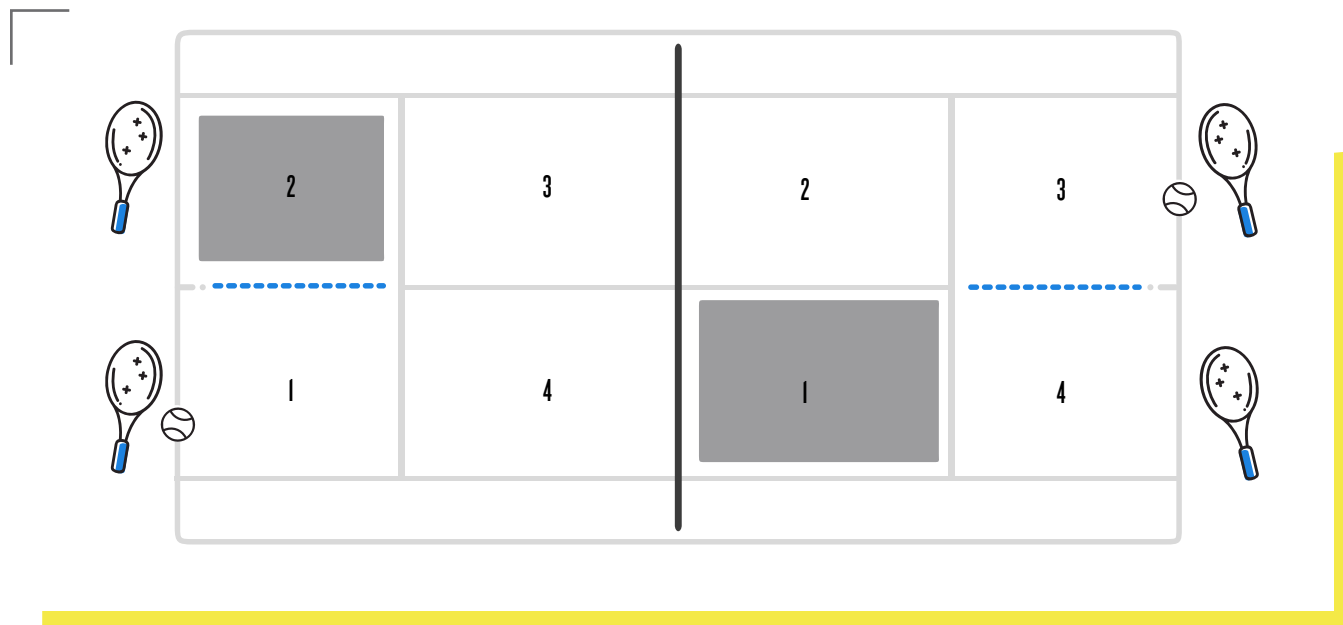
- Four players per court for cooperative, up to six players for competitive.
- Divide court into four equal squares using TDLs or poly-spots.

Mission—Move opponent side to side and deep/short.

Play points starting with serve. After serve, players can't hit into same square twice in a row.

Goal—Use different spins and speeds to move ball.

ILLUSTRATION: FOUR-SQUARE



BLACK HOLE

Setup

Same as Four-Square, except players select a square opponents can't hit to.

Progressions

1. Start with cooperative, then move to competitive.
2. Require slice for short boxes.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

TWO AND TWO

Setup

Play with red foam ball against garage door or solid wall.

Progressions

1. Serve overhand to wall, then hit two forehands and two backhands.
2. After serve, hit first shot straight ahead.
3. Hit next shot crosscourt with same stroke, and next shot straight ahead with other stroke.
This will be a down-the-line and crosscourt pattern.

PARTY AT THE NET

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

SLICE AND DICE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction and spin.

Setup

- One pair per half-court.
- All players in middle of service.

Mission—Use spin on groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line, rallying with slice.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley, focusing on underspin.
- After one minute, switch roles or activities.
- Need help? Rally without a net.

Goal—Hit volleys and slice with extreme open racquet face.

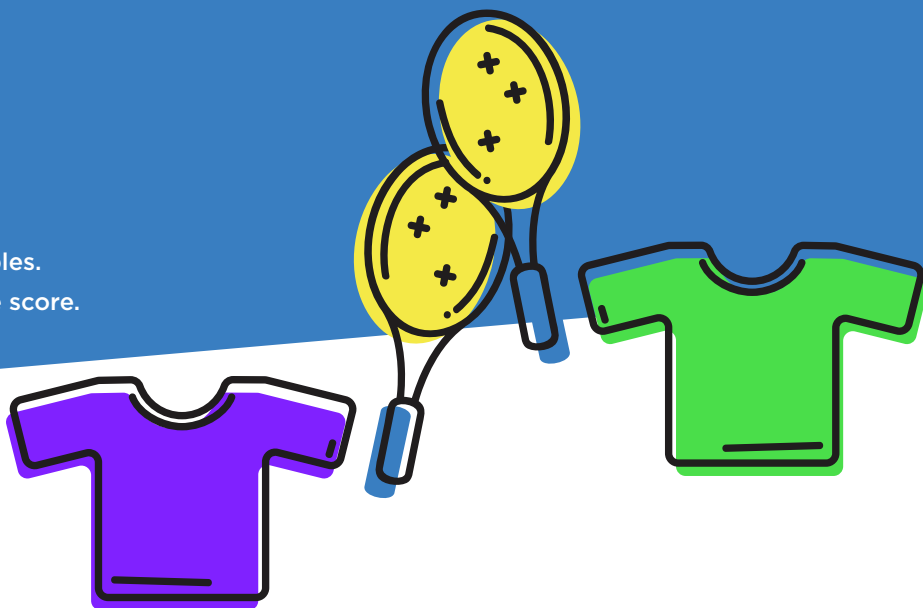
Progressions

1. Straight ahead then crosscourt.
2. One stroke only.

II. CHARACTER

TEAMWORK

- Talk to your partner when playing doubles.
- Encourage each other regardless of the score.



RED LIGHT/GREEN LIGHT RUNS

Setup

- Up to four players on each side of net.
- Players spread out on baseline of 78-foot court.
- Place some cones or TDLs in front of net so players know when to stop.

Mission

- Name a specific movement such as skip, lunge walk, bear walk or shuffle. Then use red light/green light commands. Go fast when coach calls out “green light,” slow down for yellow, stop for red.
- Once majority of players get to net, turn around and start again in other direction.

Progressions

1. Slowly introduce new moves and colors. Blue light for best dance move, pink light means hop like a bunny, black light means sprint to net or baseline.
2. Let players create their own lights.

VERTICAL JUMPS

Setup

Players spread out around court.

Mission

- Jump vertically as high as possible as if attempting to grab a rebound in basketball.
- Land as quietly as possible in a good athletic position.

Progressions

1. Jump and spin 180 degrees, landing in athletic position. Pause after each jump to get your balance.
2. Attempt to jump and spin 360 degrees, landing in athletic position.

Note: When doing spin jumps, have players start with both toes touching a line, to serve as a reference point when landing.

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs, with one orange ball and a TDL.
- Up to three pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Players face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One player feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as “home base.”

Mission

- Make catcher move by tossing balls side to side, high/low and deep/short. Catch one-handed on one bounce and recover to spot.
- Catch with right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- Switch roles every minute.
- Need help? Move closer.

Progressions

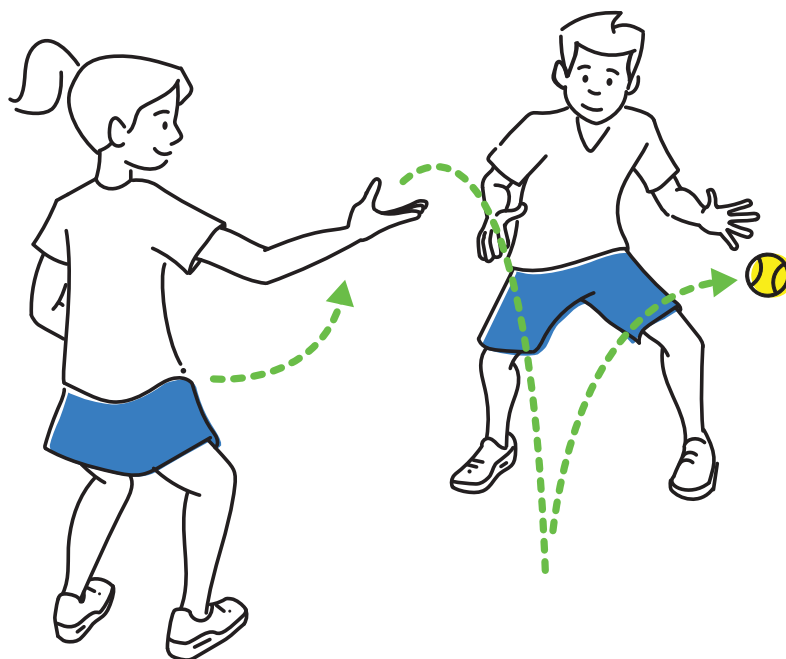
1. Require specific hand and foot for each side, e.g., when catching on right side, use right foot and right hand, then right foot and left hand.
2. Toss each ball slightly above head of catcher, who catches in the air one-handed.
3. Increase distance between feeder and catcher.



TEACHING TIP

Using an open stance and catching with opposite hand requires separation of the hips and shoulders, which can be challenging. This is the same move as an open stance groundstroke, so the more players work on this, the more they'll get their shoulders turned on open-stance groundstrokes.

ILLUSTRATION: MAKE 'EM MOVE



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

UP-AND-BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service line.

Mission—Approach, split and volley.

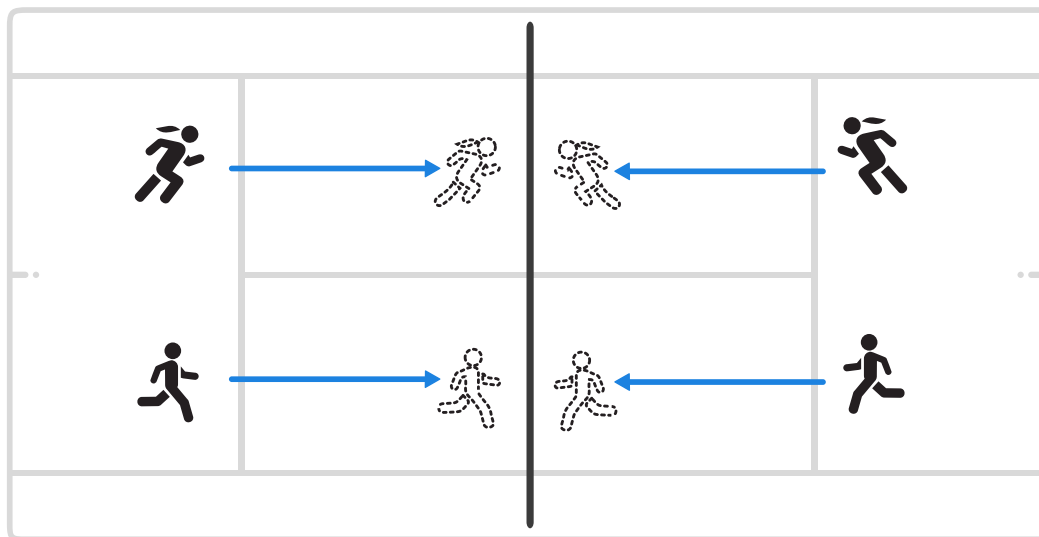
- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball to player 2, who hits approach shot, comes to net, and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits an easy groundstroke back; player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Player 1 lets volley bounce, uses it as approach shot, comes to net, and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to player 1, who volleys and retreats.
- Need help? Trap each groundstroke and drop-hit back to partner.

Goal—Work on correct approach footwork, proper grips, and ready position.

Progressions

1. Start with topspin approach, then slice.
2. Use appropriate footwork—carioca move on slice backhand, hop move for topspin approach.

ILLUSTRATION: UP-AND-BACK VOLLEY



FIRST FOUR

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return, direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, diagonally across net from each other.
- Start on baseline.

Mission—Execute serve, return, third and fourth balls.

- Hit serve, return, and one ground stroke each.
- Server catches fourth ball and starts again.
- Complete four sequences and switch servers, then switch sides of court after a complete rotation.

Goal—Work on serve and split-step, return and split-step with proper recovery.

Progressions

1. Serve to specific half of service box.
2. All four balls to specific sides.
3. After all four shots, play out point.

V. GAMES

CHARGE! DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Two at net in doubles.

Setup

- Four to eight players per court.
- Players in teams of two or three.

Mission—Approach and volley in doubles.

- Serving team serves once; receiver comes to net after return.
- Play four points with same serving team and rotate.
- If four players per side, rotate team after each point. With three, rotate one spot. With just two per side, play multiple points in a row.

Goal—Return serve and split-step inside service line.

Progressions

1. Serving team can't lob.
2. Topspin approach, then slice.



COACHING TIP

This is a good time to discuss shading at the net in doubles (following the ball). If you use questions (guided discovery), the kids will learn faster.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

VOLLEY TO WALL

Setup

Play with red foam ball against garage door or solid wall.

Mission—Keep ball going off wall without bounce.

Progressions

1. One stroke only.
2. Alternate forehand and backhand volleys.
3. Add approach shot.



OVER MY HEAD

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

FIGURE 8 VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Change of direction on volleys.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting in front half of service box.

Mission—Change direction on every volley.

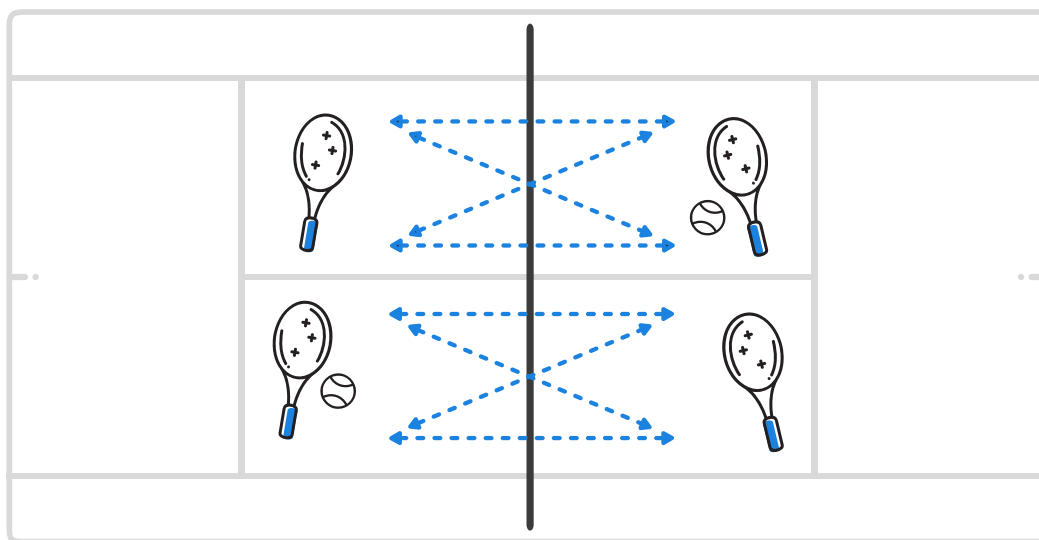
- Volley cooperatively; one side of net volleys down the line, other volleys crosscourt.
- Control each shot so partner takes no more than one step.
- One minute in each pattern, then switch. Total of two rounds.

Goal—Use an open face to keep ball in the air.

Progressions

1. Increase distance from net.
2. One side hits all forehand or all backhand volleys.

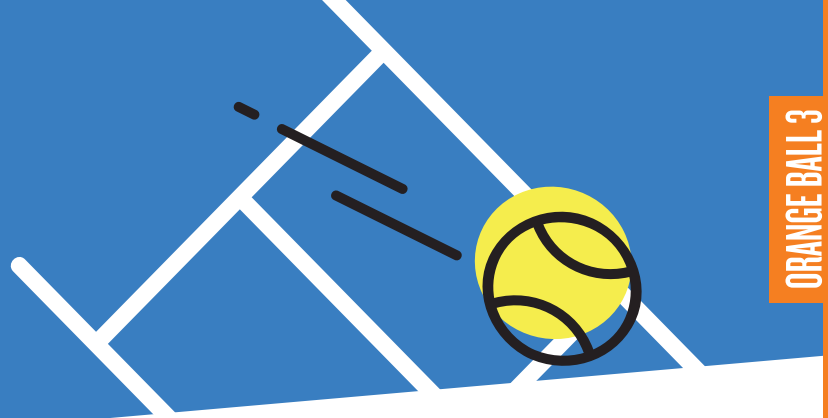
ILLUSTRATION: FIGURE 8 VOLLEY



II. CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY

- When serving, be prepared with two tennis balls.
- Make line calls immediately and clearly so your opponent can hear.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

OBSTACLE COURSE

Setup

- Use four cones to create an 18x18-foot square in center of court on each side of net. Keep square a safe distance from net.
- Four to six players per square.

Mission

- Proceed from cone to cone using different movements. Next player goes when previous player reaches second cone.
- After each player has gone twice, change movement.

Progressions

1. Carioca. Alternate at each cone, facing in then out.
2. Skip. Change direction at each cone—forward, sideways, backward, sideways.
3. Sprint. Run to cone and stop, balanced on one leg; then run to next cone and stop, balanced on other leg.
4. Circles. Run to each cone and make a complete circle around it. Face same direction entire time.

FIGURE 8 CONE WEAVES

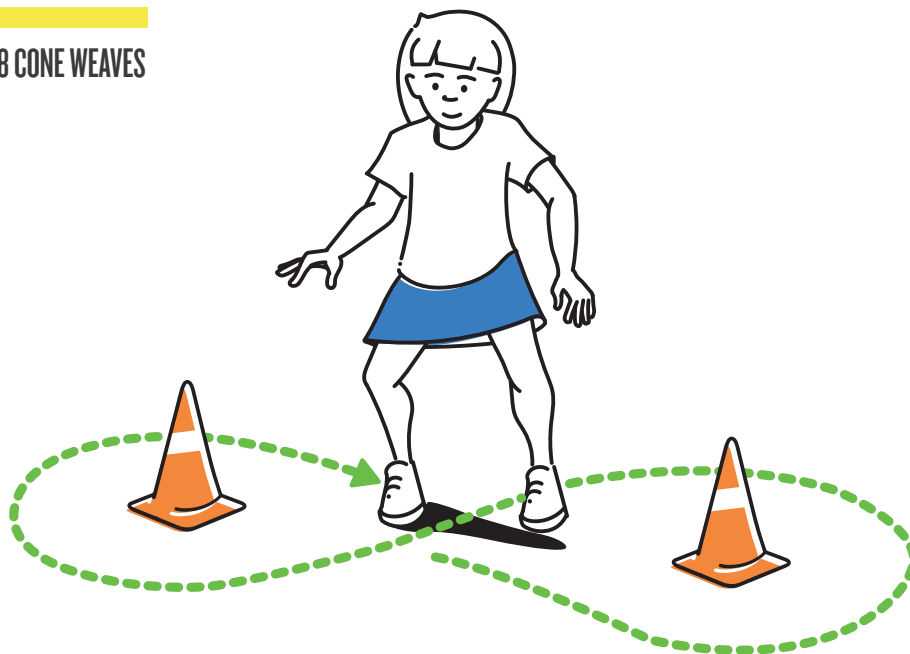
Setup

Players in pairs with two cones or balls between them. Place cones about four feet apart.

Mission

- One player at a time side-shuffles around cones in a figure 8 pattern.
- After four complete figure 8's, next player goes.
- After three sets, switch movement to forward and backward through cones in a figure 8.

ILLUSTRATION: FIGURE 8 CONE WEAVES



THREE-BALL THROW

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to three pairs per court.
- On one side of net, players start at net—one on each sideline and one in the middle.
- On same side, place three balls in a straight line for each player—in middle of service box, on service line and on baseline.

Mission

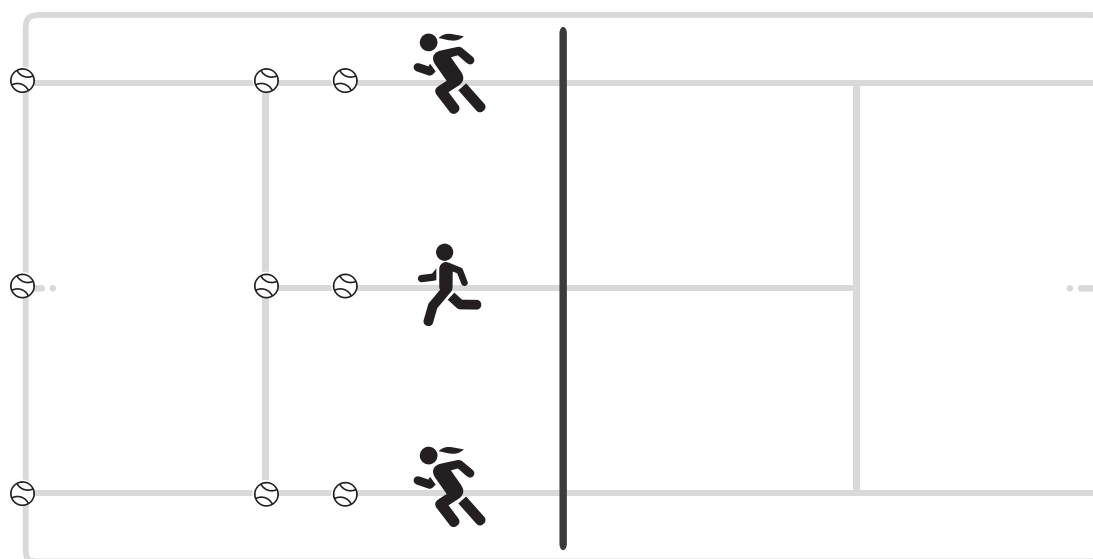
- Starting at net, players with balls on their side turn around, jog to first ball, bend down, grab it and throw, all in one motion. Throw is high to other side of net.
- Turn around and jog to second ball, and so on.
- Players on other side catch all three balls, place them in same positions, and switch roles.
- Need help? Pick up ball, pause, then throw.



TEACHING TIP

This activity has several important movements wrapped into one drill: drop-step/crossover to run back to the ball, load on back leg when bending down, and driving upward with legs while throwing. This is a great way to work on moving back for overheads and exploding up on serve.

ILLUSTRATION: THREE-BALL THROW



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

HI-LO

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Consistency on volleys and overheads.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court. One player at net, other at baseline.

Mission—Control volleys and overheads with partner.

- Baseliner alternates groundstrokes and lobs, beginning with drop-hit groundstroke. Net player volleys back to baseliner, who traps.
- Baseliner drop-hits lob; net player hits overhead back to baseliner, who traps and continues sequence.
- Complete four sequences and switch positions.
- Need help? Baseliner moves to service line.

Goal—Split-step and move forward to volley.

Progressions

1. Play a cooperative rally and keep ball going.
2. Hit lob with continental grip (first as drop-hit, then rally).

V. GAMES

MOONBALLER

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Volleys and overheads.

Setup

- Four to six players per court, playing full-court points.
- One or two servers, rest are returners.

Mission—Return and come in, hit all balls in the air.

- Server gets one serve; returner must come to net.
- Server lobs entire time and returner must play in the air.
- Keep score as servers versus returners.
- Play a designated number of points and rotate positions.

Goal—Control overheads to left and right side of court.

Progressions

1. Must serve to specific side.
2. Must return to specific side.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

VOLLEY WITH A FRIEND

Setup

Make your own court on driveway or any flat surface.

Progressions

1. Practice volleys with friend or family member.
2. Rally volleys for numbers.
3. Create fun games.

LET'S PLAY!

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 23 to 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground ball (light medicine ball or junior basketball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

UP-AND-BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting behind service lines.

Mission—Approach, split-step and volley.

- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball to player 2, who hits approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits an easy groundstroke back, player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Player 1 lets volley bounce, uses it as approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to player 1, who volleys and retreats.
- Need help? Trap each groundstroke and drop-hit back to partner.

Goal—Work on correct approach footwork, proper grips and ready position.

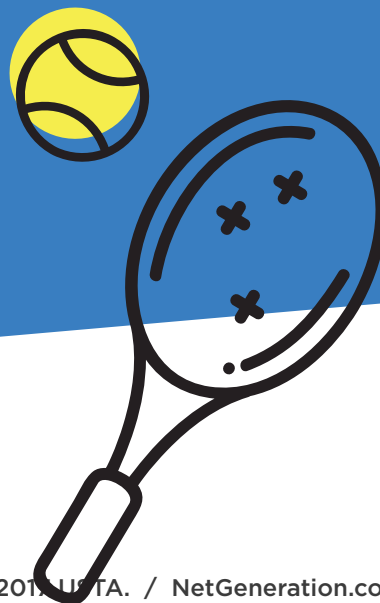
Progressions

1. Start with topspin approach, then slice.
2. Use appropriate footwork—carioca move on slice backhand, hop move (on front foot) for topspin approach.

II. CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY

- Prepare for match play: Pack your own racquet, towel, and water bottle.
- Carry your own bag to and from matches.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

BIG-BALL TENNIS

Setup

- Split players into two big teams; players choose team name.
- Divide each team into smaller teams of two or three.
- Set up “matches” with two or three players from each team playing against one another.
- Play matches in front of service line (doubles alleys are good) using playground ball.

Mission

- Begin by tossing serve into appropriate service box.
- Toss all balls from side of body. Must land within court boundaries.
- Catch all balls after bounce and throw from same spot.
- For teams of three, rotate positions every few points.
- Play to a set number of points, then switch opponents.
- Need help? Shrink court size, allow two bounces.

Progressions

1. Can catch ball in the air.
2. Throw serve overhead like a soccer throw.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

FOUR-BALL CHALLENGE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on baselines.
- Each pair has four balls under net.

Mission—Try for highest rally.

- One player runs up, grabs a ball and drop-hits from baseline. Pairs rally as many balls as they can.
- Once they miss, other player runs and grabs another ball.
- Highest rally out of four is their number.
- Repeat after all four balls are done and try to beat record.

Goal—Use topspin and height over net to improve consistency.

Progression

1. One stroke.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.
3. Make it competitive with court versus court.

BUDGE

Type: Cooperative and competitive, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke consistency.

Setup

- Need at least six players to be effective.
- Players in pairs rallying on half-court.

Mission—Keep ball in play.

- Coach assigns a different number of balls for each court to rally. Points begin with serve.
- An example for six players would be top court must rally 10 straight, middle court must complete eight, and bottom court six.
- Players yell “Budge!” when they reach their rally number.
- If bottom court players yell “Budge” first, they trade places with players on middle court.
- If middle-court players are successful before top-court, they trade places with top-court.
- Make adjustments to number of shots required based on how many players are involved.

Goal—Use a combination of spin, height and speed to improve consistency.

Progressions

1. Single stroke.
2. Crosscourt with outside stroke.

CRAZY FEED

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Heavy topspin.

Setup

- Two teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Two play at a time.

Mission—Start point with high-topspin feed.

- Designate one side as attackers, other as defenders.
- Attackers feed a heavy topspin ball deep, then play out point. Rotate players every point.
- Attackers score one for winning point, defenders score two.
- Play first team to seven, then adjust teams or order so players have different opponents.

Goal—Put player on defensive by hitting deep, arcing topspin.

Progressions

1. Feed backhands.
2. Defender feeds high deep ball with little spin to attacker, who hits back with heavy topspin.

ALL-POSITIONS DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Doubles positioning.

Setup

- Four to six players per court.
- Players begin in a one-up/one-back doubles formation.

Mission—Learn to play all four positions in doubles.

- Play doubles points and rotate positions one spot at a time.
- With five players, have one player out at net post.
- With six players, have a player out at each net post.

Goal—Move with ball at net, rally crosscourt from baseline.

Progressions

1. Server and returner must stay back.
2. One side can come in on short balls.
3. No lobs, then lobs allowed.



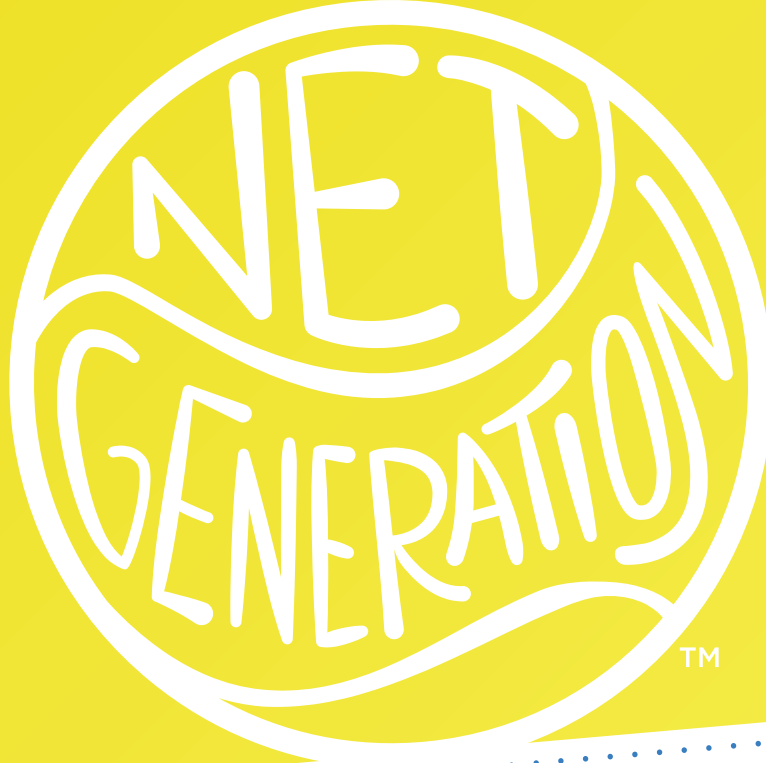
COACHING TIP

Be careful not to overload the players with information. For each position, their assignment should be simple. Also, be sure to keep rewarding players for doing the right thing.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

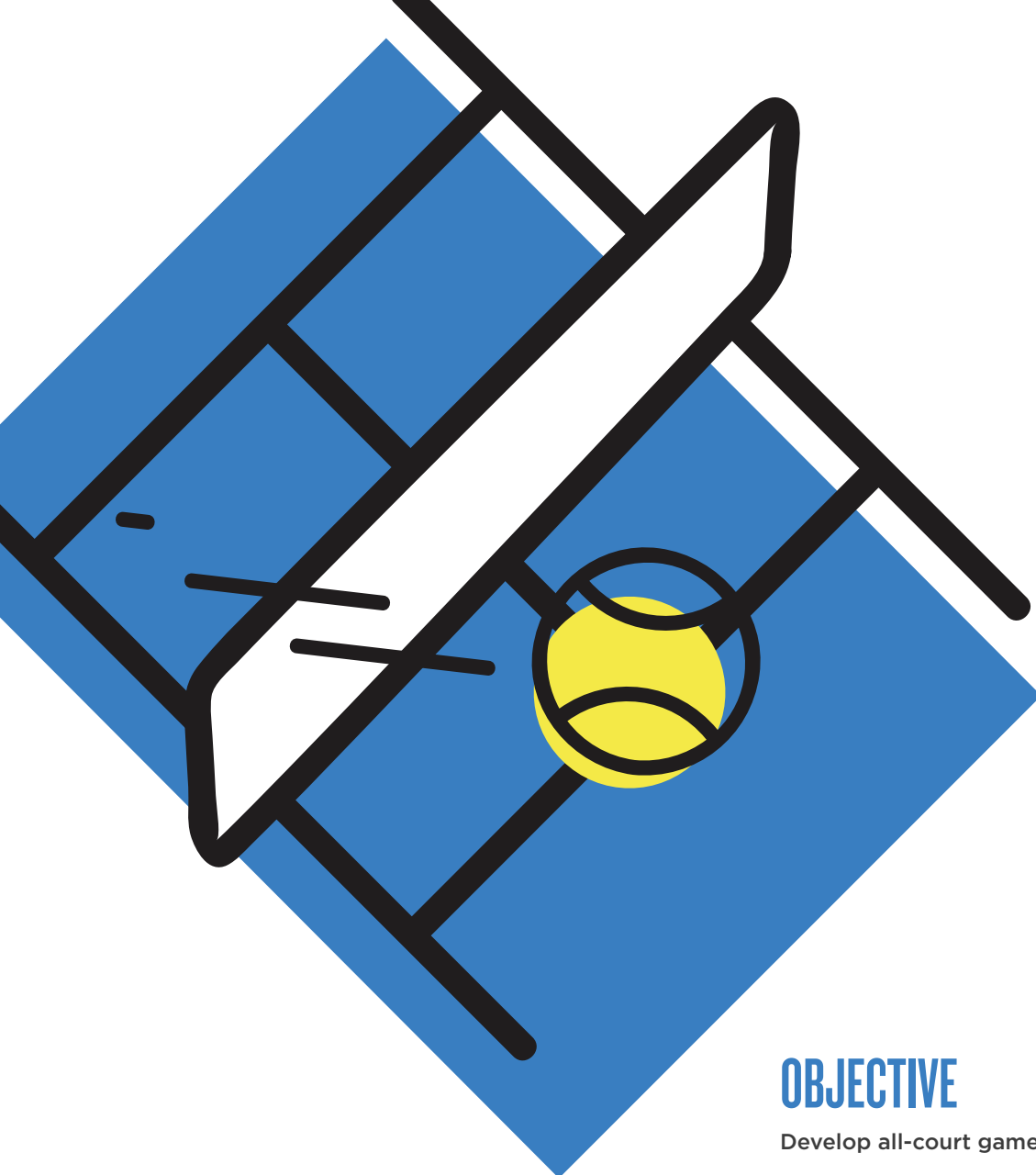
BRING A FRIEND

For next practice or session, bring a friend who wants to learn to play.



ORANGE BALL 02





OBJECTIVE

Develop all-court game on 60-foot court.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Total: 90 minutes

- Warmup: 6 - 8 minutes
- Character: 3 minutes or less
- Skills (athletic and tennis): 30 - 35 minutes
- Games: 25 - 30 minutes
- Play at Home: 3 minutes or less



NOTES:

For this level, a dynamic stretch at the beginning and static stretch at the end are important. If properly trained, players can do these outside the practice session.

PLANS AT A GLANCE



	Warmup	Character	Athletic Skills Development	Tennis Skills	Games	Play at Home
01 Put the Ball Where I Want	Mini-Tennis	Responsibility	Agility Course Three-Cone Touch Shuffle Toss	Two On Ones Serve Index	Keep-Away Point Play	Two and Two
02 Higher and Faster	Control It!	Positivity	Positional Starts Big-Ball Toss Four-Corner Toss	Wide and Deep Combo First Four	Crazy Feed Point Play	Over and Under
03 Slice and Dice 'em	7 Up	Positivity	Agility Course Rock-Paper-Scissors to a Target Quarterback	Short-Ball Scramble Three-Level Serve	Drop and Play Point Play	Slice and Dice
04 Attack!	Mini-Tennis	Respect	Skips—Height and Distance Twist and Catch Fence Throws	Up-and-Back Volley Hi-Lo Volley	Team Defender Point Play	Attack!
05 Stay-Defend-Go	Figure 8 Volley	Play Fair	Skating Multi-Jumps Ball Drops	Chip-Lob Rally Traffic Lights	Traffic Lights Live Huff and Puff	Trick Shots
06 Ridiculous Return	Mini-Tennis	Respect	Serpentine Shuffle One-Leg Toss Grab and Throw	Chip-Lob Rally First Four	Serve Index Attack!	Take It Early
07 I Love Doubles	Mini-Tennis Doubles	Positivity	Copy Cat Compass Jumps Hi-Lo Toss	Five-Minute Warmup Hi-Lo	One-Up/One-Back Doubles	Play Some Dubs!
08 Let's Play	Mini-Tennis	Respect	Make 'Em Move Player's Choice	Five-Minute Warmup	Four-Square Huff and Puff Attack! Dubs	Watch Pro Tennis

PUT THE BALL WHERE I WANT

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction, spin.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting inside service box.

Mission—Rally with groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line rallying easy groundstrokes.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley.
- One minute, then switch roles or activities.

Goal—Continuous movement of feet and split-step on partner's contact.

Progressions

1. Hit crosscourt.
2. One stroke only.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY

Call a friend to play.



AGILITY COURSE

Setup

- Set up an agility course on both sides of net using full 78-foot court.
- Create a zigzag pattern in both alleys: Space cones eight feet apart from baseline to net on doubles lines. Same on singles lines, starting four feet past first cone on doubles lines.
- Up to eight players on each side of net, starting in a line on far right side of baseline.

Note: If you don't have enough cones, use balls or poly-spots.

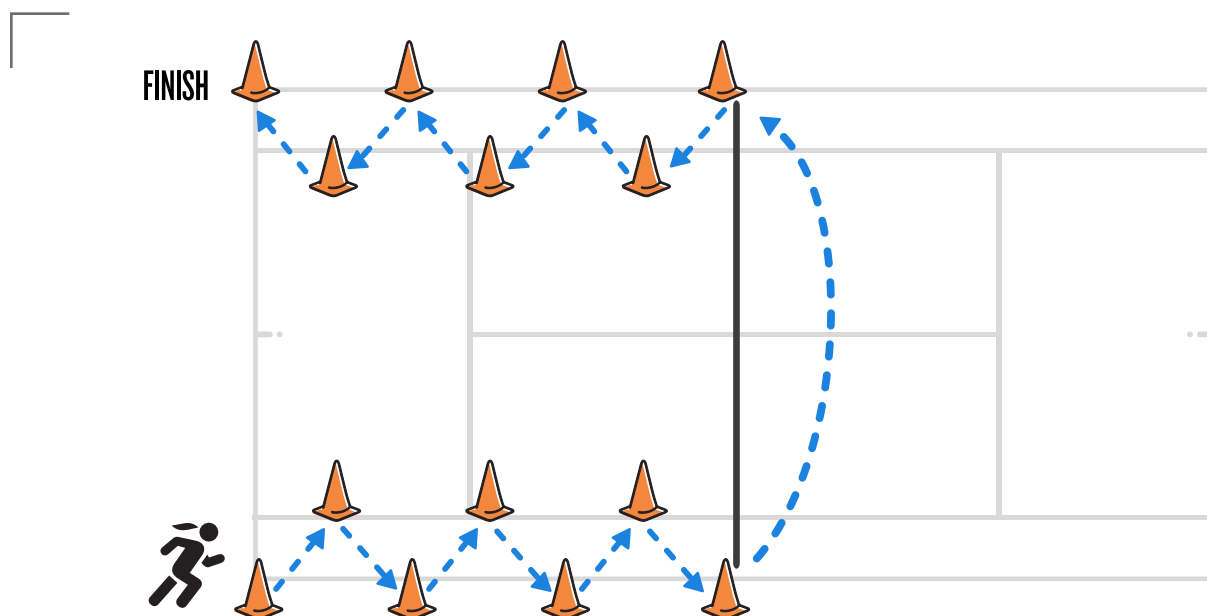
Mission

- Run to first cone, move around the outside, and circle once around cone, facing net entire time.
- After continuing this pattern to net, side-shuffle across court facing net.
- At halfway point (center service line), spin and face other direction.
- Perform same movement through cones on left side of court, then return to back of line.
- Next player goes when previous player reaches fourth cone.
- Need help? Increase space between cones.

Progressions

1. Shuffle in and out of cones.
2. Run in zigzag pattern around cones.
3. Switch from bear walk to crab walk at each cone.

ILLUSTRATION: AGILITY COURSE



THREE-CONE TOUCH

Setup

- Players in pairs.
- Place two cones on a line and a third between and in front of them to form a “V” (no more than two feet between cones).

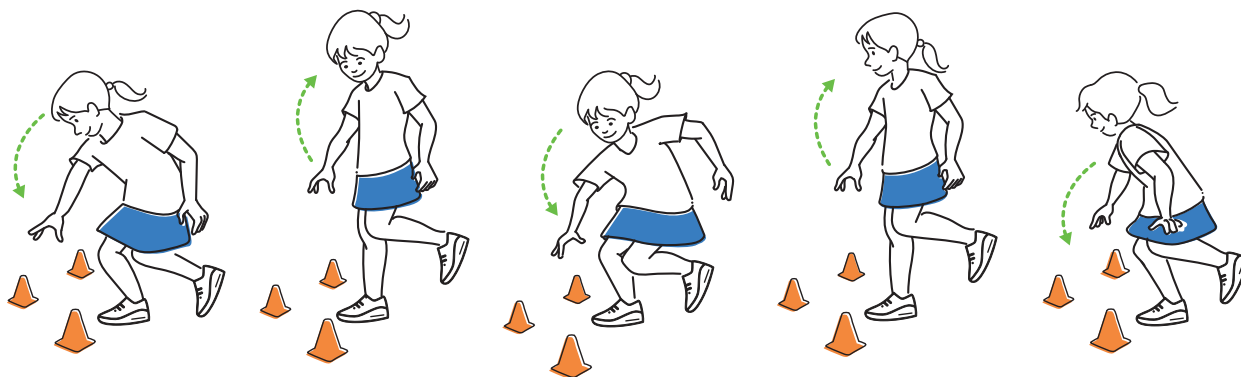
Mission

- Stand between two cones facing third and squat on one leg.
- Touch all three cones with opposite hand, standing up after each touch.
- Do two sets and switch with partner.
- After two sets each, repeat with opposite foot and hand, then switch with partner.

Progressions

1. Right leg/right hand.
2. Left leg/left hand.
3. Place a ball on one cone. Squat on one leg, pick up ball, stand up, then squat on same leg and place ball on next cone.

ILLUSTRATION: THREE-CONE TOUCH



SHUFFLE TOSS

Setup

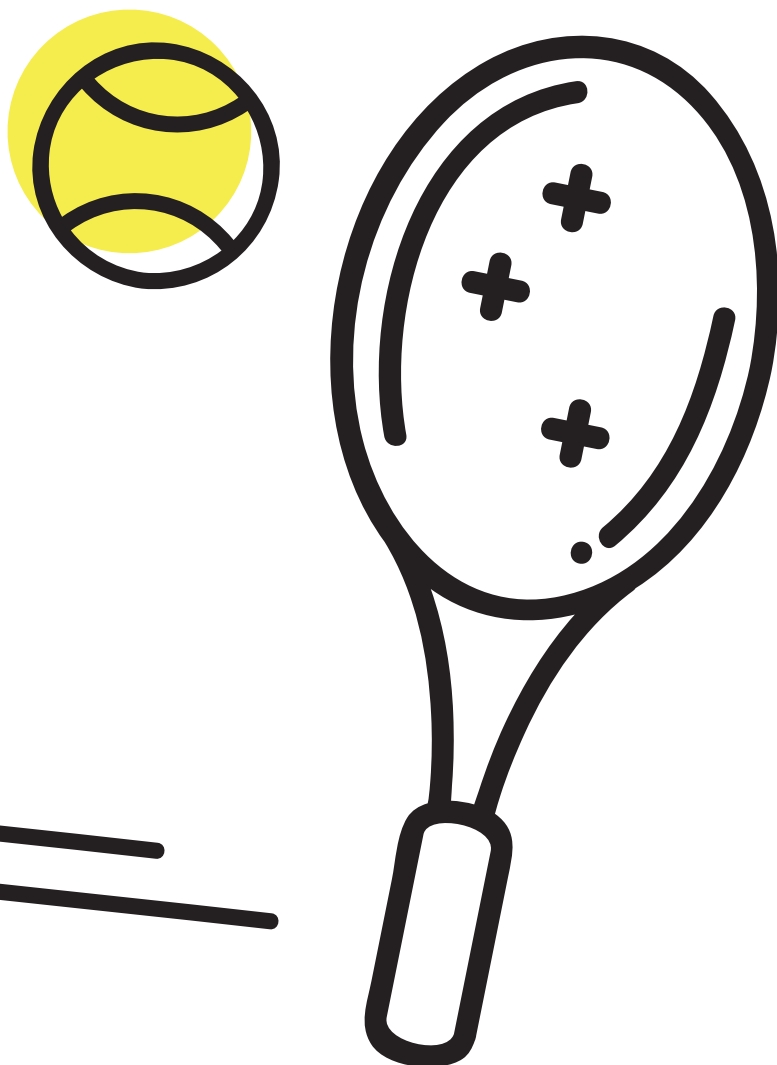
- Three to four pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs on sideline facing each other, with one orange ball.

Mission

- While shuffling from sideline to sideline, bounce ball downward (palm down) back and forth with partner, catching between bounces.
- Use lead hand only to toss and catch. So if you're moving left, use left hand. Change hands when returning from opposite sideline.

Progressions

1. Catch all balls in the air.
2. Alternate two straight on a bounce, two straight in the air.



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

TWO ON ONES

Type: Cooperative, groups of three.

Focus: Change of direction and spin.

Setup

- Three players per court, or if necessary, two groups of three.
- Two players on one side of net, one on other. All players on baseline.

Mission—Single player alternates shots left and right.

- Any player drop-hits to begin rally.
- Single player alternates groundstrokes side to side.
- Rotate positions every minute.

Goal—Consistent topspin on both groundstrokes.

Progressions

1. One stroke only for single player (stroke isolation).
2. Side with two players hits outside stroke and must recover properly.
3. Competitive points.

SERVE INDEX

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Serve direction.

Setup

- Players in teams, up to four players per court.
- All players on one side of net—one serving from deuce, other from ad.
- Use TDLs to split each service box into two zones.

Note: Use extra players as returners.

Mission—Serve to each zone.

- Count how many balls it takes to serve successfully to all four zones. This is your “serve index.” Add up players’ serve-index numbers to get a team serve index.
- Once all players have served to all four zones, start over and strive for lowest team serve index.
- Need help? Move inside baseline.

Goal—Use spin to add control.

Progressions

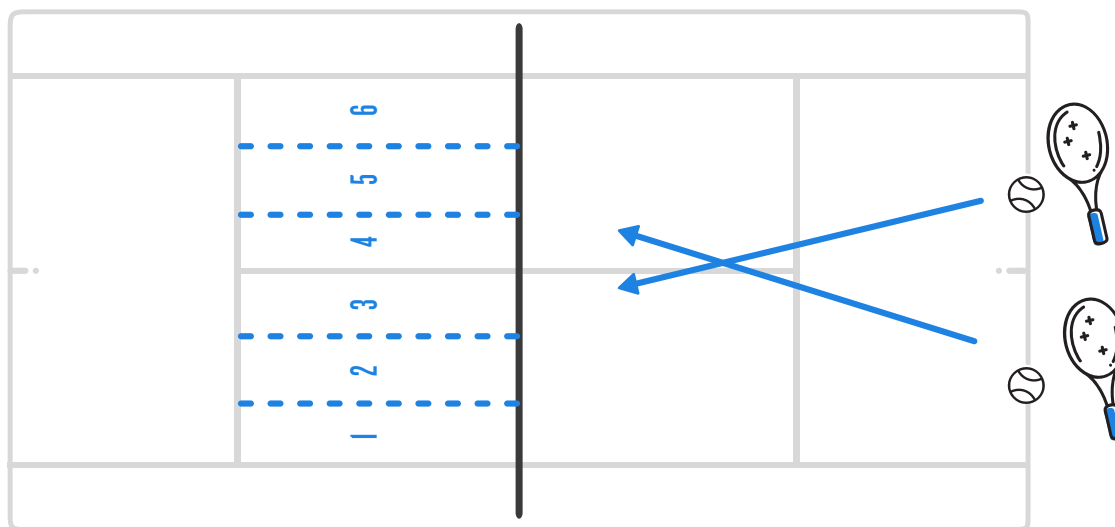
1. Only counts if same rituals are used before serve.
2. Must use slice for out wide on deuce side and down the “T” on ad side (opposite for lefties).



TEACHING TIP

Players need to connect location of split-step with direction of ball. For this activity, use poly-spots or TDLs to indicate the recovery location for the single player.

ILLUSTRATION: SERVE INDEX



KEEP-AWAY

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Using width on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three on opposite sides of net.
- Use TDLs to make a big square around center mark of baseline in each back court. This area will be known as “the middle.”

Mission—Keep ball out of the middle.

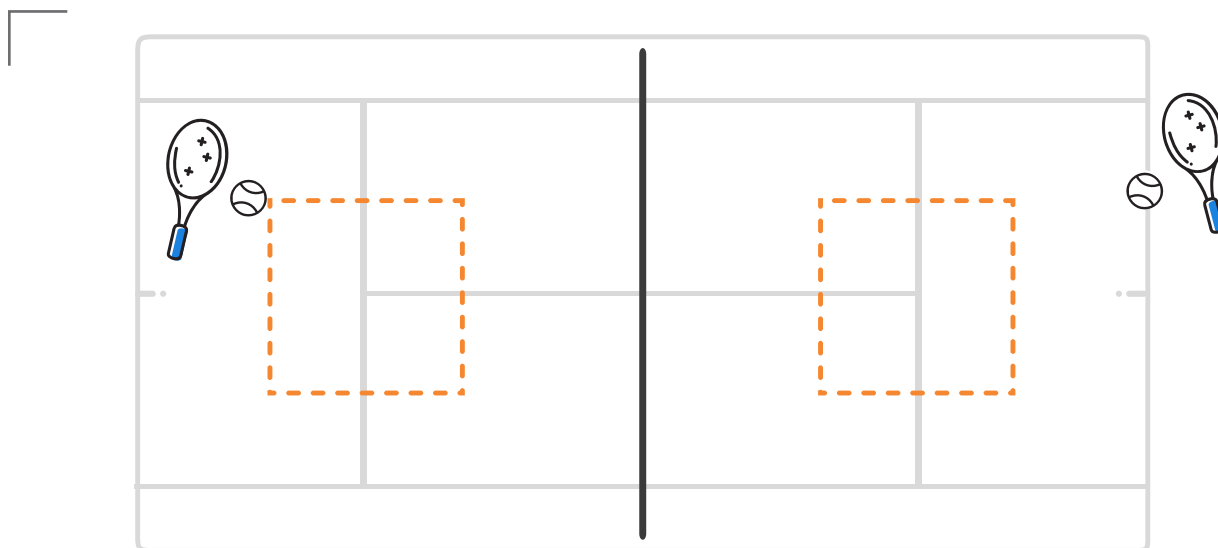
- Play starts with a serve (one per server). Players lose a point if they hit twice in the middle.
- Play first to seven wins, then switch servers/returners. After both sides have served, adjust teams or order so players have different opponents.

Goal—After serve and return, step in and drive ball to deep corners or use short angles.

Progressions

1. Can't hit any balls into middle.
2. Bonus point if opponent moves outside sideline.

ILLUSTRATION: KEEP-AWAY



POINT PLAY

Note: Whenever there's time left, or practice lasts 90 minutes, add point play.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three using full court.
- One team serves, other returns.

Mission—Play points with serve and return.

- Play out games as a team.
- Play one point and rotate if three on a team, two points and rotate if two on a team.
- After game is over, switch servers.

Goal—Apply day's theme into point play (keep it out of the middle).

IV. PLAY AT HOME

TWO AND TWO

Type: Individual or partner.

Setup

Play with red or orange ball against garage door or solid wall.

Mission—Serve overhand to wall, then hit two forehands and two backhands. This will be a down-the-line and crosscourt pattern.

HIGHER AND FASTER

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground balls (light medicine ball or junior basketball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

CONTROL IT!

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Depth, speed, and spin on groundstrokes.

Setup

- Two pairs per court hitting crosscourt. Alleys count.
- Split court in half widthwise using two TDLs between service line and baseline, then split court in half lengthwise using a few more TDLs six feet inside service line.

Mission—Rally for numbers and keep ball deep.

- Warm up from service line.
- Move to baseline and rally crosscourt using outside stroke only.
- Spin. Count number of balls hit in a row with spin (allow at least two minutes).
- Speed. Count number of balls hit in a row in one minute. Do two rounds.
- Depth. Count number of balls that bounce past TDLs in one minute. Do two rounds.

Goal—Make “consistency connection” with balance of speed, spin and net clearance.

Progressions

1. Outside stroke, then inside stroke.
2. For depth, count only shots past service line.



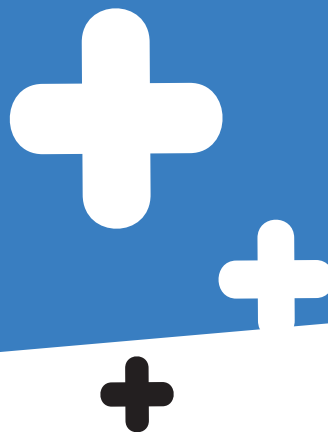
TEACHING TIP

Controlling spin, speed and height is a necessity on the 60-foot court. To be successful in these drills, players will need to make adjustments—hitting with more spin and height to be consistent, or hitting with spin and speed to hit more balls in a short period of time.

II. CHARACTER

POSITIVITY

- Tell your coach and parents what you enjoy about tennis.
- Smile on the court.



POSITIONAL STARTS

Setup

- Players spread out on sideline on both sides of net. Up to four per side.

Mission

- Start in various positions, and on coach's command, sprint and stop on opposite sideline in athletic stance.
- Emphasis is on big, strong strides and driving arms.
- Do each movement twice, then switch.

Progressions

1. Start sideways in athletic stance.
2. Start backward in athletic stance.
3. Start on one leg; switch legs each time.

BIG-BALL TOSS

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service line.
- Each pair has playground ball.

Mission

- Partners toss ball back and forth over net, catching after bounce.
- Toss over net from side of body and catch in front of body.
- Switch patterns every minute.

Progressions

1. Square-stance throws, forehand only, backhand only, alternate.
2. All open-stance throws.
3. Crosscourt with movement, all open-stance.

FOUR-CORNER TOSS

Setup

- Maximum four pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other about four feet apart, with four orange balls.

Mission

- Player bounces a ball downward (palm down) with right hand to partner, who catches after bounce with left hand.
- Partner passes ball from left hand to right, and bounces it downward back to player's left hand. Repeat.
- Toss and catch ball to side of body.
- Once successful, add a second ball, continuing to bounce ball to partner with right hand and transfer ball from left to right hand.

Progressions

1. Add a third ball, then a fourth.
2. Introduce lateral movement while tossing balls.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

WIDE AND DEEP COMBO

Type: Hand feed, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke controls (direction, height, depth, speed and spin) and stances.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, court split in half with TDLs.
- One hitter on each baseline starting in middle with two balls each. Partners stand behind them.
- One side hits forehand, other hits backhand.

Mission—Hit with height and spin from wide and deep positions on court.

- Self-feed first ball wide with enough height to get there and set up. Using an open stance, hit with height and spin, and work on crossover recovery.
- Self-feed second ball wide and deep. Using a semi-open or open stance, hit with increased height and spin, deep to either side.
- Hit six balls each (three two-ball sequences) and switch with partner.

Goal—Move to and from deep ball on a diagonal with appropriate stances.

Progressions

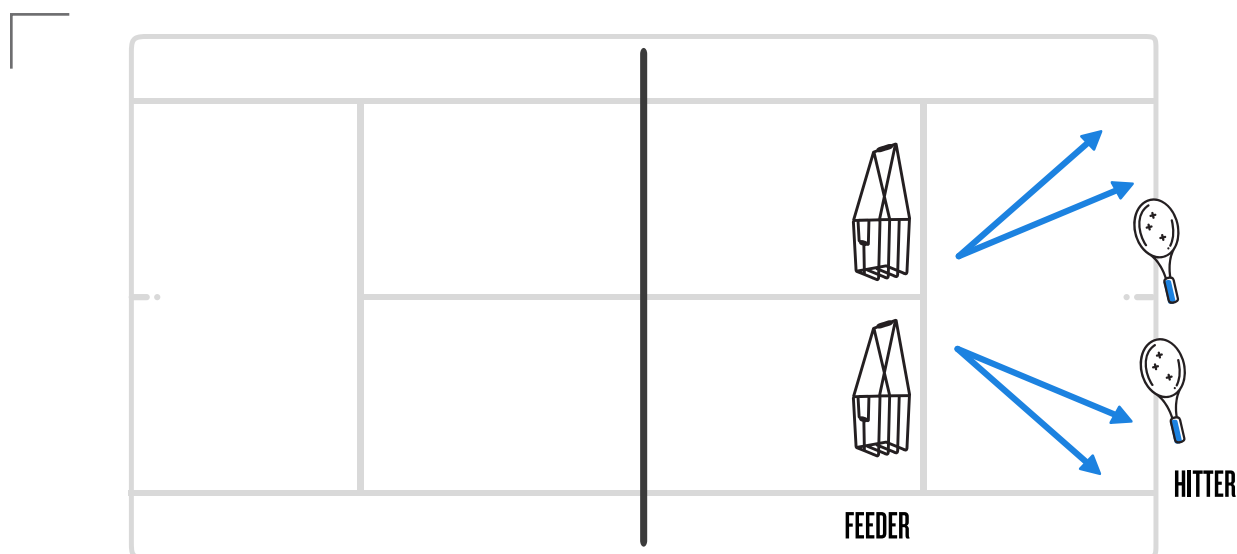
1. Partner hand-feeds.
2. Partner racquet-feeds.



TEACHING TIP

Avoid temptation to feed ball for players. When players feed, coach can observe from all angles and demonstrate to each player without stopping activity.

ILLUSTRATION: WIDE AND DEEP COMBO



FIRST FOUR

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, diagonally across net from each other.
- Players start on baseline.

Mission—Execute serve, return, third and fourth ball.

- Hit serve, return and one ground stroke each.
- Server catches fourth ball and starts again.
- Complete four sequences and switch servers, then switch sides of court after complete rotation.

Goal—Work on serve and split-step, return and split-step with proper recovery.

Progressions

1. Serve to specific half of service box.
2. All four balls to specific sides.
3. Play out points after fourth shot.

V. GAMES

CRAZY FEED

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Heavy topspin.

Setup

- Teams of three or four on opposite baselines.
- Two play at a time.

Mission—Put opponent on defensive with high topspin.

- Designate one side as attackers, other as defenders.
- Attackers self-feed deep ball from behind baseline and hit high and deep to opponent's weakness.
- Play out point. Attacker can't come to net off feed.
- Rotate players every point.
- Attackers score one for winning point, defenders score two.
- Play first team to seven, then adjust teams or order so players have different opponents.

Goal—Attack opponent's weakness with high, deep topspin ball.

Progressions

1. Self-feed with backhand.
2. Defender feeds high, deep ball with little spin to attacker, who hits back with heavy topspin.

POINT PLAY

Note: Whenever there's time left or practice lasts 90 minutes, add point play.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- One team starts as servers, other as returners.

Mission—Play points with serve and return.

- Play out games as a team.
- Play one point and rotate if three on a team, two points and rotate if two on a team.
- After game is over, switch servers.

Goal—Apply day's theme into point play (play high with spin on deep balls).

VI. PLAY AT HOME

OVER AND UNDER

Type: Individual or partner.

Setup

Play with red or orange ball against garage door or solid wall.

Progressions

1. Alternate hitting topspin and slice.
2. Use red ball, then orange ball.
3. Play on driveway with a friend, and alternate spins.



SLICE AND DICE 'EM!

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

7 UP

Type: Cooperative to competitive.

Focus: Forehand and backhand slice.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service line.

Mission—Rally slices.

- Alternate starting rally with drop-hit.
- Let ball bounce and use continental grip. Keep non-dominant hand on throat while in ready position.
- Attempt seven-ball rally.

Goal—Keep non-dominant hand on throat in ready position before every shot.

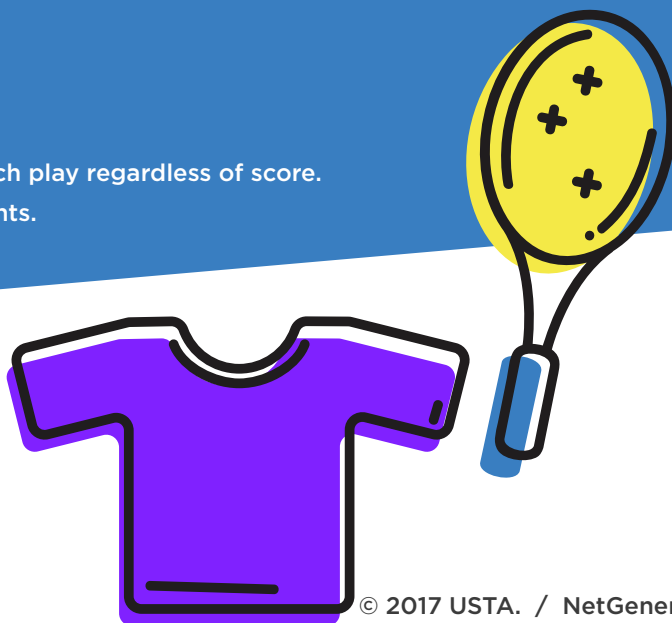
Progressions

1. Cooperative, then competitive. For competitive, ball must come up off racquet to encourage touch. First to seven wins, then switch partners.
2. All backhands, then all forehands.

II. CHARACTER

POSITIVITY

- Use positive body language during match play regardless of score.
- Keep head and racquet up between points.



AGILITY COURSE

Setup

- Create an agility course on both sides of net on 78-foot court.
- Create zigzag pattern in both alleys by placing cones on both singles and doubles lines. Space cones about eight feet apart from baseline to net.
- Up to eight players on each side of net, starting in a line on far right side of baseline.

Note: If you don't have enough cones, use balls or poly-spots.

Mission

- First player moves diagonally from cone to cone with specific movement.
- Once at net, player shuffles across court to next group of cones and performs specific movement, then goes to back of line.
- Next player goes after previous player reaches fourth cone.

Progressions

1. Run in zigzag pattern through cones, stopping at each cone, balancing for two seconds on outside leg, then pushing off and moving to next cone.
2. Run in zigzag pattern through cones and pause slightly on outside foot to help push off and change direction.
3. Shuffle to each cone, bend down, and touch with outside hand.



TEACHING TIP

Pay attention to players' posture, and emphasize keeping head level when eyes are on cone.

ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS TO A TARGET

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to four pairs on each side of net.
- Face each other in athletic stance.
- Each player places cone on right or left side. Can be any distance from players, but both targets should be same distance from players.

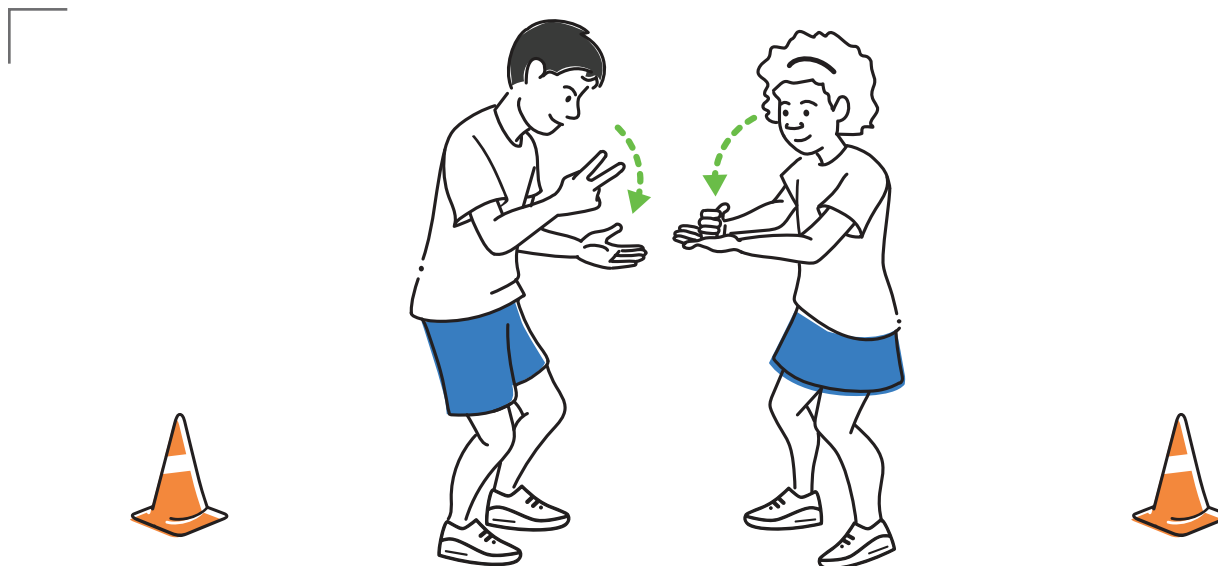
Mission

- Play rock-paper-scissors.
- After each round, race to spot belonging to winner to see who gets there first.
- Score by winning rock-paper-scissors and getting to spot first.
- Play same opponent no more than two minutes, then rotate.

Progressions

1. Change how players reach spot (running, skipping, shuffling, carioca, etc.).
2. Go to cone and return to same spot in athletic position.
3. Specific movement to cone and different movement back.

ILLUSTRATION: ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS TO A TARGET



QUARTERBACK

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to three pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs are on opposite sidelines, one football between them.

Note: If there aren't enough footballs, use a tennis ball or do station work where players are working on different activities.

Mission—Partners play throw and catch, working on throwing a spiral.

Progressions

1. By now, players should be able to throw a spiral with throwing arm behind head at 90 degrees.
2. Both hands on ball at shoulder level when you turn, point front tip of ball backward when behind head.
3. Add movement like a quarterback—face forward, turn and run back, set and throw.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

SHORT-BALL SCRAMBLE

Type: Hand-feed, players in pairs.

Focus: Slice off of short ball.

Setup

- Two pairs on each side of net with bucket of balls.
- Tosser is in middle of service box, hitter is on opposite side of net between service line and baseline.
- Use poly-spots and/or TDLs for service-box targets.

Mission—Play short-angle slice.

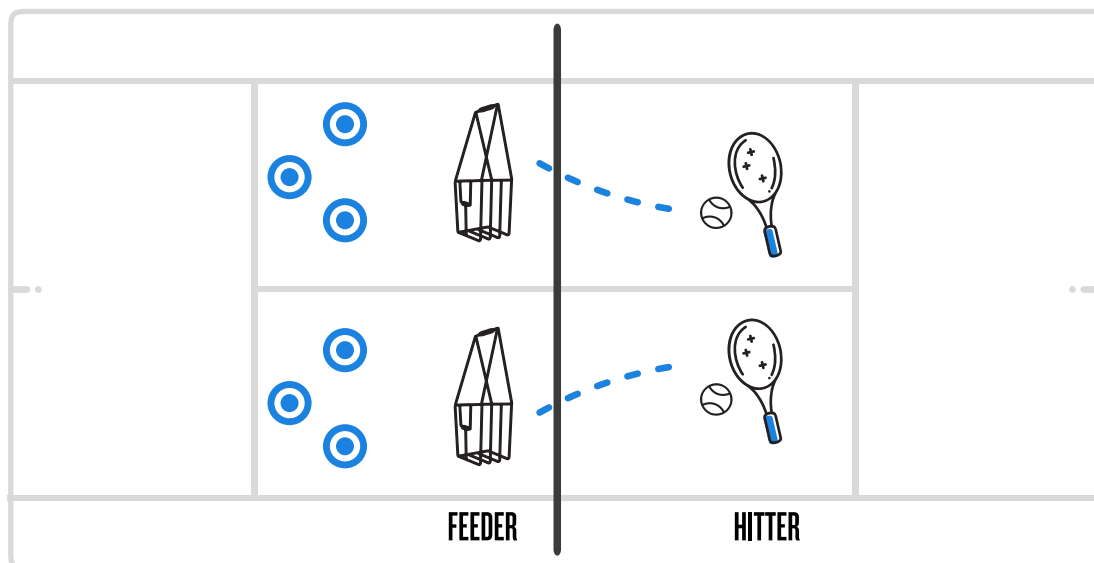
- Tosser feeds short, low ball to hitter's outside stroke. Hitter attempts to play short-angle slice in opposite service box, and recovers.
- Six attempts and switch roles. After both players have hit, switch sides of court.

Goal—Keep racquet in front for short slice.

Progressions

1. Alternate hitting straight-ahead drop-shot and crosscourt slice.
2. Keep score and play team versus team.

ILLUSTRATION: SHORT-BALL SCRAMBLE



THREE-LEVEL SERVE

Type: Individual.

Focus: Racquet-head speed on serve.

Setup

- Three to six players per court.
- All players on baseline on one side of net—half on deuce side, half on ad.

Mission—Serve ball various distances.

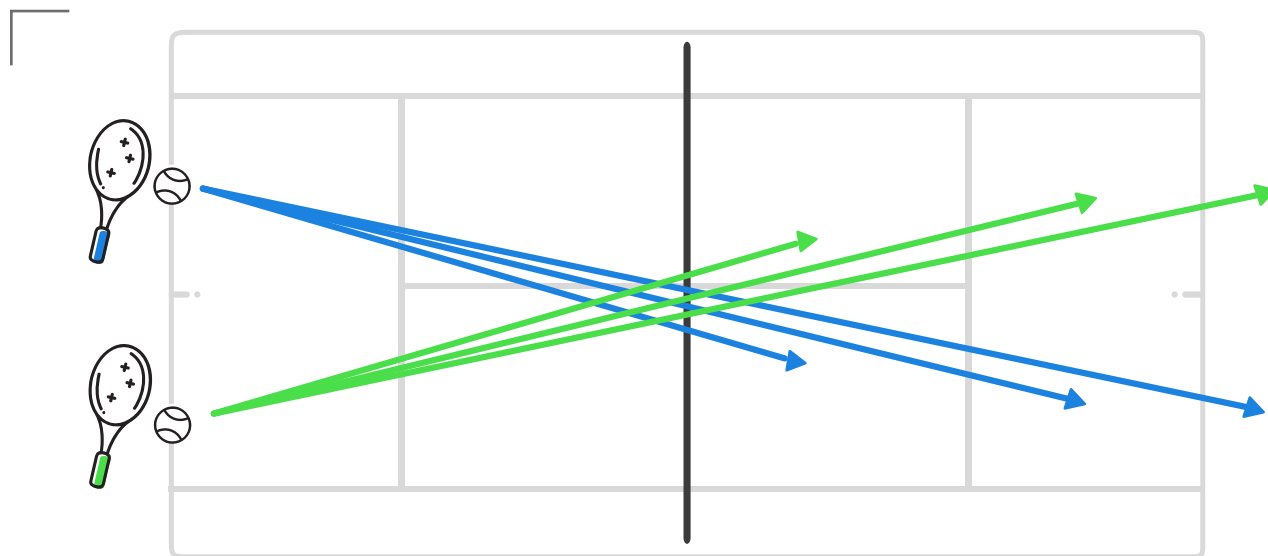
- Warmup serves into service box. Serve two and rotate (two players serve at same time from deuce and ad courts).
- Serve ball between service line and baseline twice, then rotate.
- Serve ball between baseline and fence.

Goal—Work on racquet-head speed and hitting up and out on ball.

Progressions

1. Serve three—service box, past service line, past baseline.
2. Divide service box and court into two sides, and serve to specific area.

ILLUSTRATION: THREE-LEVEL SERVE



DROP AND PLAY

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Hitting and handling short slice.

Setup

- Teams of two to three on opposite sides of net.
- One side feeds, other side “drops.”
- Feeder starts on service line “T”; dropper on opposite baseline.

Mission—Play slice off short ball.

- With racquet under arm, feeder tosses over net, short in service box, then backpedals to baseline.
- Dropper runs in, plays short slice and recovers.
- Feeder runs back up and plays out point.

Goal—Make good decisions based on where short slice is located.

Progressions

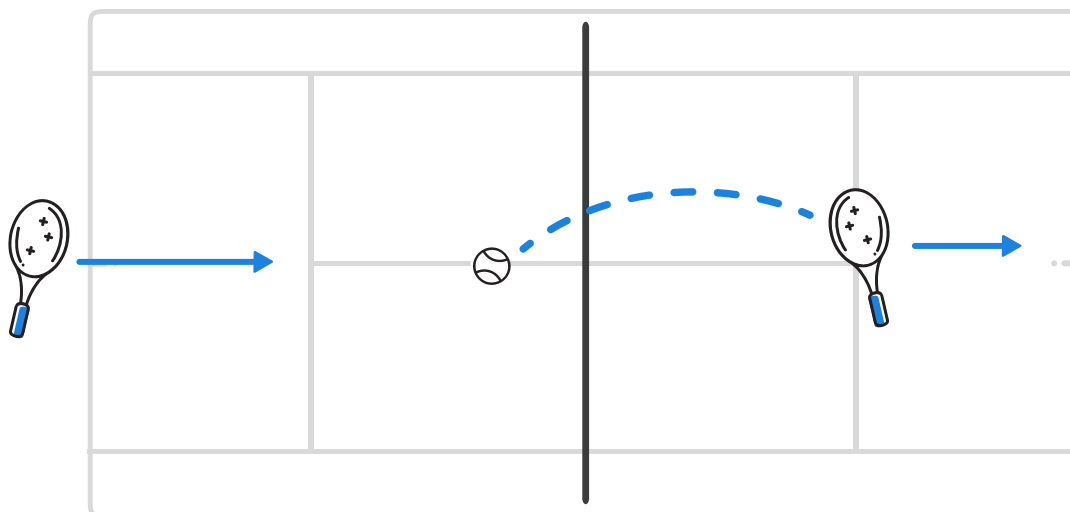
1. Feeder must play slice off drop shot.
2. Dropper must hit straight ahead or slice angle.
3. Dropper comes to net after drop shot.



COACHING TIP

Here’s an example of the advantage of having players feed to start the point. The feeder has to hustle back to the baseline after the feed, which simulates a real point. This allows the coach to provide personal feedback to players, or even a demonstration, without stopping play.

ILLUSTRATION: DROP AND PLAY



POINT PLAY

Note: Whenever there's time left or practice lasts 90 minutes, add point play.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- One team serves, other returns.

Mission—Play points with serve and return.

- Play out games as a team.
- Play one point and rotate if three on a team, two points and rotate if two on a team.
- Switch servers after game is over.

Goal—Apply day's theme to point play (two points for winning with drop shot).

VI. PLAY AT HOME

SLICE AND DICE

Setup

Play against wall on driveway or any flat surface.

Progressions

1. Play excessive slice on forehand and backhand.
2. Hit to wall with any stroke, one stroke, alternating strokes.
3. Mix in volleys and slice.
4. Play mini-tennis with a friend and use exaggerated slice.

ATTACK!

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls, playground balls (light medicine ball, junior basketball or playground ball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Direction and spin.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and hitting inside service box.
- All activities inside service box on half-court.

Mission—Use spin on groundstrokes and volleys.

- Both players on service line, rallying with extra slice.
- One player at net, other on service line. Groundstroke to volley, then switch.
- Volley to volley, focusing on underspin.
- After one minute, switch roles or activities.

Goal—Hit volleys and slice with extreme open racquet face.

Progressions

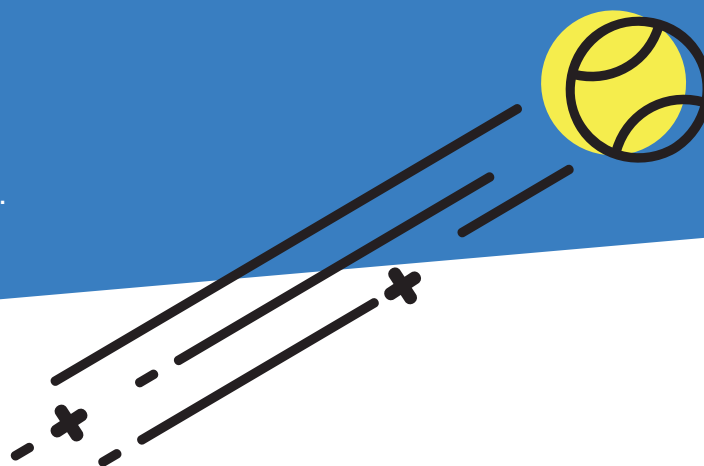
1. Straight ahead, then crosscourt.
2. One stroke only.

II. CHARACTER

RESPECT

- Keep track and announce score when serving.
- Retrieve and return balls to server quickly.

III. ATHLETIC SKILLS



SKIPS—HEIGHT AND DISTANCE

Setup

- Up to four players on each side of net.
- Start on baseline of 78-foot court, spread out across court.
- Place cones or TDLs in front of net so players know when to stop.

Mission

- Warm up with basic skip to net and back.
- Next, call out specific types of skips. Perform four rounds and move on to next progression.

Progressions

1. High-knee skips to net and back, trying to stay in the air as long as possible.
2. Skips for distance.



TEACHING TIP

At first, allow players to focus on just rhythm of skip. Once they've learned this, emphasize proper use of arms.

TWIST AND CATCH

Setup

- Players in pairs, no more than four on each side of net.
- Each pair with playground ball.

Mission

- Pairs stand back to back in athletic position.
- Twist to one side, pass ball around waist level to partner, who twists to other side and passes ball back.
- Continue for eight passes.

Progressions

1. Pass ball really low.
2. Pass ball above shoulders.

ILLUSTRATION: TWIST AND CATCH



FENCE THROWS

Setup

- Players in pairs—one outside fence, other inside.
- Both players about 10 feet from fence.
- Each pair has two balls.

Mission

- Throw over fence so partner can catch ball without having to move far.
- Throw two balls; partner catches and throws back.

Progression

Start with ball on ground behind back foot.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

UP-AND-BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court and starting on service line.

Mission—Approach, split-step and volley.

- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball; player 2 hits approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits easy groundstroke; player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Player 1 uses volley as approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to player 1, who volleys and retreats.
- Need help? Trap each groundstroke and drop-hit back to partner.

Goal—Work on correct approach footwork, proper grips and ready position.

Progressions

1. Start with topspin approach, then slice.
2. Use appropriate footwork—carioca move on slice backhand, hop move (on front foot) for topspin approach.

HI-LO VOLLEY

Type: Hand-feed, players in pairs.

Focus: Directing volley.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Pairs on opposite sides of net—hitter in middle of service box, feeder close to net with supply of balls.
- Targets set up in service boxes for angles.

Mission—Play low volley deep, high volley short angle.

- Feeder tosses low; hitter volleys ball back to feeder, who catches in the air.
- Feeder tosses second ball high; hitter moves forward and angles volley away from feeder.
- Switch sides of net after designated number of sequences.
- Need help? Feeder doesn't catch either volley.

Goal—Adjust racquet-face angle for different volleys.

Progressions

1. Hand-feed, then racquet-feed.
2. Hit first feed from service line, second a higher floater.
3. Coach can feed to increase tempo and difficulty.

V. GAMES

TEAM DEFENDER

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

- Up to six players and two courts, using full court.
- Players in teams of three or four.
- Each team is assigned a court to “defend.”

Mission—Attack net on return of serve.

- Each team sends one player to compete against another team on a different court.
- Others remain on their court to defend it. Defenders play one point against challenger and rotate out.
- Challenger gets one serve; defender must return and come in.
- Play for time or set number of points. After each game, teams send different player to compete against another team.

Goal—Execute approach with hop move (right/right or left/left footwork).

Progressions

1. Serve and/or return must be to specific side.
2. No lobs.

POINT PLAY

Note: Whenever there's time left or practice lasts 90 minutes, add point play.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- One team starts as servers, other as returners.

Mission—Play points with serve and return.

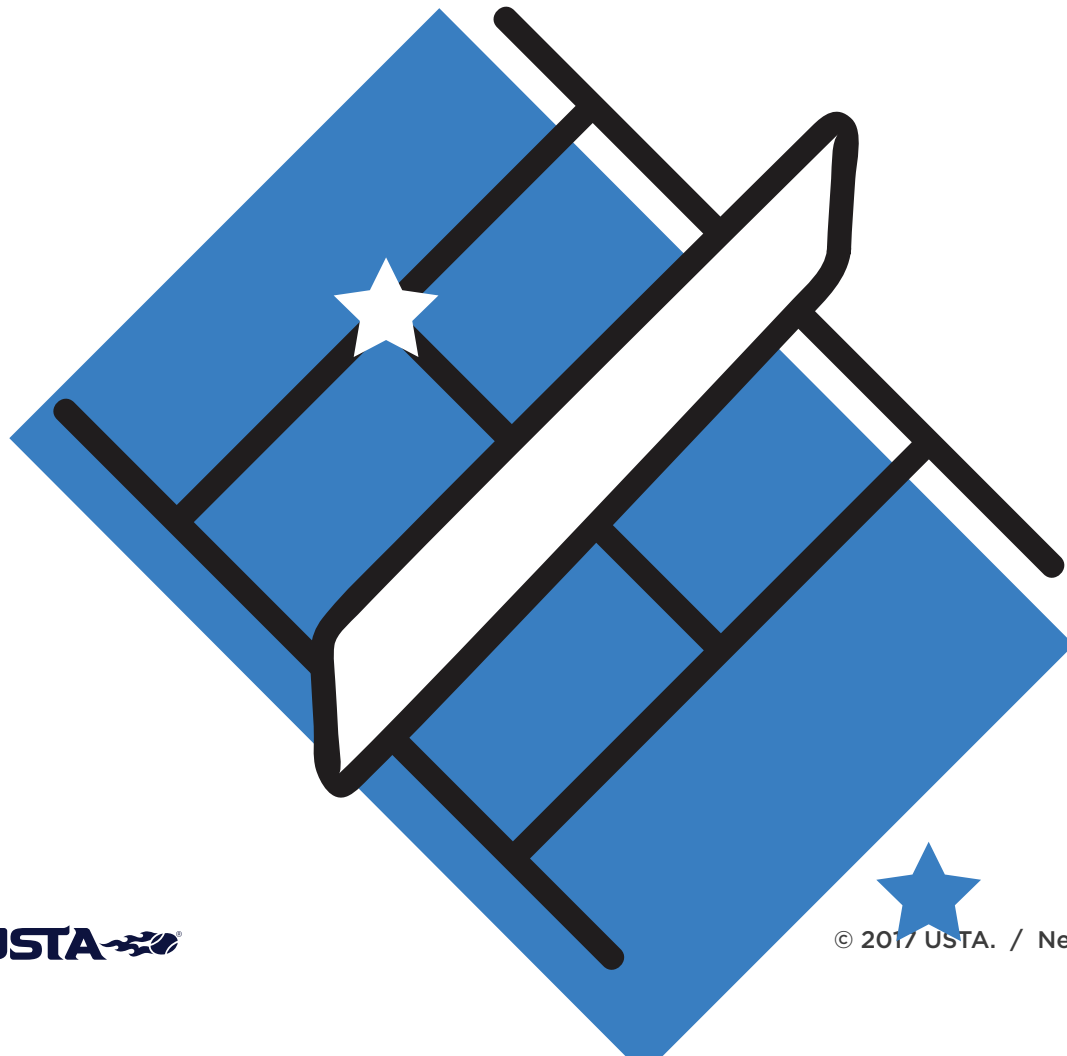
- Play out games as a team.
- Play one point and rotate if three on a team, two points and rotate if two on a team.
- After game is over, switch servers.

Goal—Apply day's theme to point play (two points for winning at net).

IV. PLAY AT HOME

ATTACK!

Play points or a match and come to net on second-serve returns.



STAY-DEFEND-GO

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

FIGURE 8 VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Change of direction on volleys.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and playing from front half of service box.

Mission—Change direction on every volley.

- Volley cooperatively. One side of net volleys down the line, other volleys crosscourt.
- Control each shot so partner takes no more than one step.
- One minute in each pattern, then switch. Total of two rounds.

Goal—Use an open face to keep ball in the air.

Progressions

1. Increase distance from net.
2. One side hits all forehand or all backhand volleys.



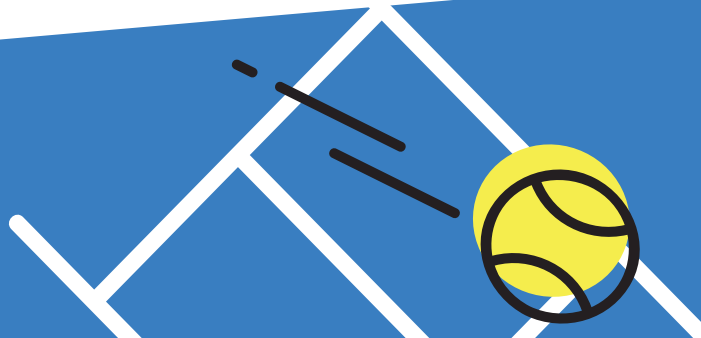
TEACHING TIP

By now, all players should be able to use a continental grip on both forehand and backhand volleys. Be sure to emphasize using backspin on the forehand volley for all balls waist level and below. This keeps the grip from slipping over to an Eastern forehand.

II. CHARACTER

PLAY FAIR

- Be honest when making line calls.
- If unsure, call the ball “good.”



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

SKATING

Setup

- Players spread out on baseline, no more than five on each side of net.

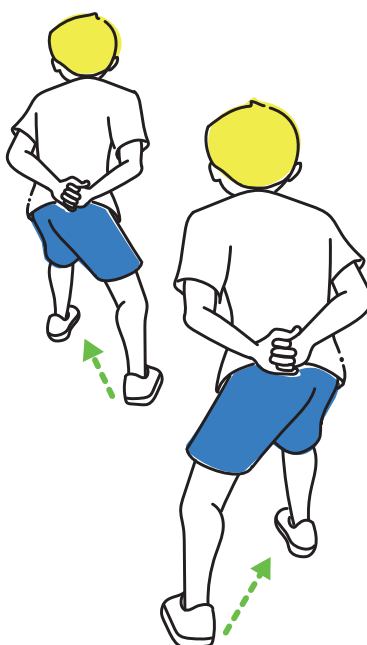
Mission

- Players “skate” to net by moving with outside foot only.
- Start off facing net in ready position. Step diagonally to right with right foot and bring left foot up next to right.
- Next, step diagonally to left with left foot, and bring right foot up next to left.
- Continue to net, then turn around and “skate” back to baseline.

Progressions

1. Put both hands behind back to imitate a speed skater.
2. Skate forward to net and backward to baseline.

ILLUSTRATION: SKATING



MULTI-JUMPS

Setup

- Players spread out on sideline, up to five on each side of net.

Mission

- Starting in ready position, jump two feet landing on left foot, then two feet landing on right. Continue to far sideline and back. This is same movement as in hopscotch.
- Jump as far as possible each time, using arms to gain elevation and distance.
- See how many jumps it takes to cover court.

Progressions

1. Create different patterns—two feet left, two feet left, two feet right, two feet right.
2. Go from baseline to net and back.

BALL DROPS**Setup**

- Players in pairs spread out around court.
- One player has two orange balls; partner is catcher.
- Pairs stand two to three feet apart.

Mission

- Hold both balls straight out at shoulder level in “V” position, palms down.
- Drop one ball. Partner catches on one bounce with one hand across body (right hand on left side, left hand on right).
- Catcher can lift heel off ground on opposite side to catch, but must maintain foot positioning.
- After four successful catches on one side, switch to other side, then switch roles.

Progressions

1. Alternate catching one on left side and one on right.
2. Random tosses.
3. Add a little movement and use an open stance to catch.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS**CHIP-LOB RALLY**

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Chip lob.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court. One player starts close to net, other (lobber) on opposite service line.

Mission—Rally lobs and high volleys.

- Start off with drop-hit lob using continental grip. Net player hits high dink volley back to lobber.
- Lobber continues rally using continental grip and chip lobs; net player continues hitting high dink volleys.
- Rotate positions every minute.
- Once successful, lobber moves back to baseline and drop-hits lob. Net player hits high dink volley back, which lobber traps. Repeat sequence.
- Need help? Drop-hit lob and trap volley from service line.

Goal—Use continental grip and one-handed backhand for chip lobs.

Progressions

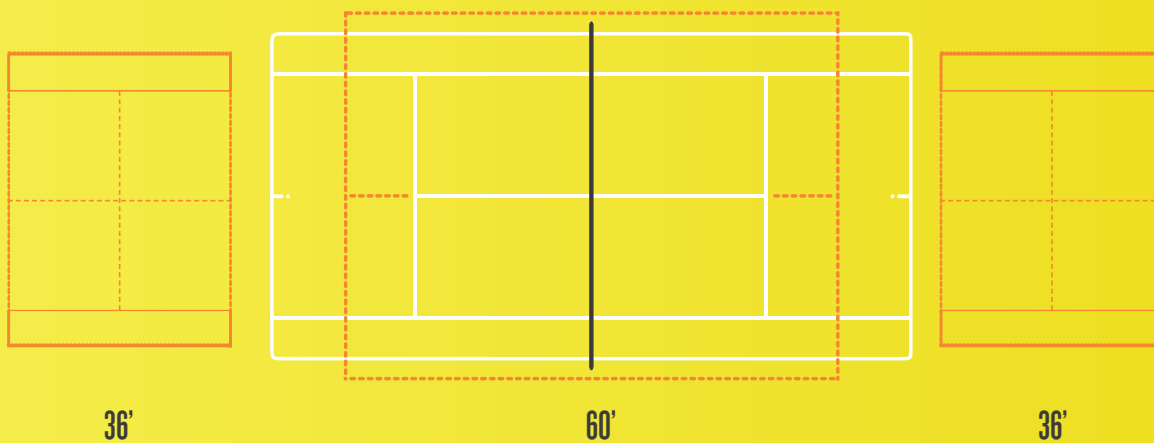
1. Continuous rally from baseline.
2. Net player hits an overhead.



COURT CENTS: 36 AND 60-FOOT COURT SETUP

- With discrepancy in levels, sometimes you need both 36- and 60-foot courts.
- You can create two 36-foot courts by placing a net from the 78-foot-court baseline fence toward the 78-foot-court baseline. Put one on each side of the court.
- Nets will run perpendicular to the 78-foot-court net.
- Remind the 60-foot court players not to go too far back to chase out balls.

ILLUSTRATION: COURT CENTS



TRAFFIC LIGHTS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Ball recognition.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Split court in half using TDLs. Alleys count.
- Use TDLs to set up three zones—defense (red), neutral (orange) and offense (green).

Mission—Call out ball location before it bounces.

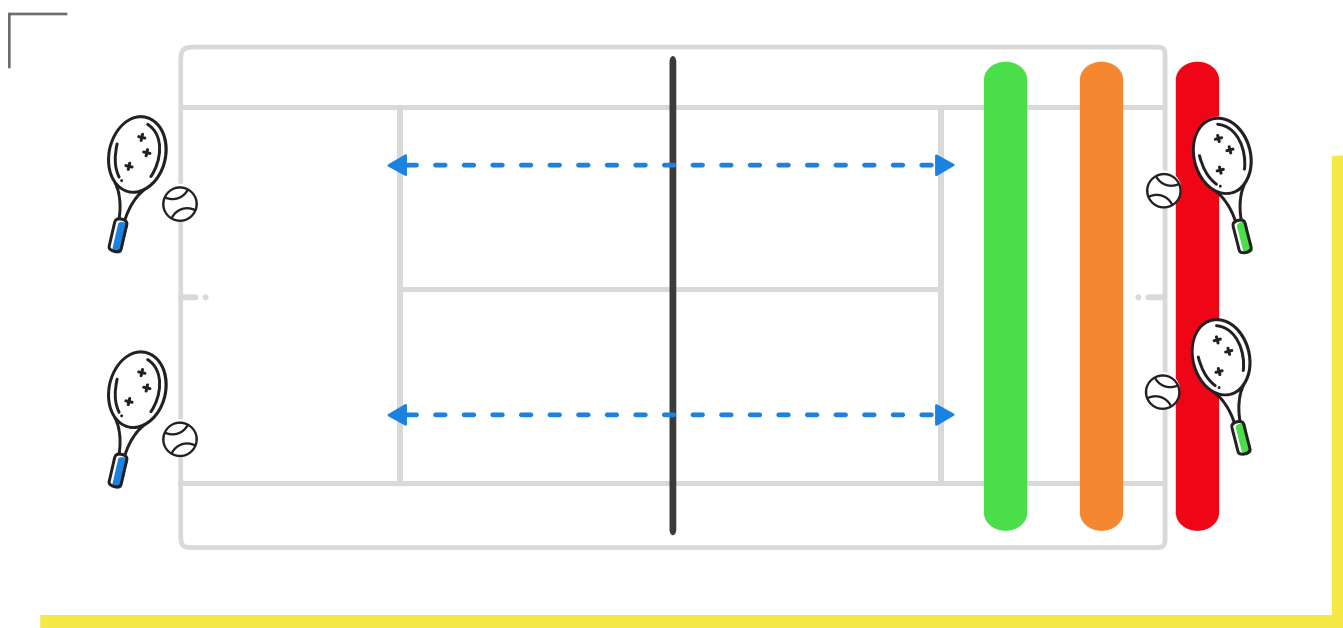
1. Rally in down-the-line direction starting on baseline.
2. Call out red, orange or green before ball bounces on your side.

Goal—Recognize depth of ball before it crosses net.

Progressions

1. Rally crosscourt with outside stroke.
2. Create point system and play cooperative games with partner.

ILLUSTRATION: TRAFFIC LIGHTS



V. GAMES

TRAFFIC LIGHTS LIVE

Setup

- Play out point full court.
- Receive two points for winning rally from inside green zone, three points for winning with volley or overhead.

Progressions

1. Add more points to encourage transition.
2. Players must approach with slice.

HUFF AND PUFF

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Groundstroke change of direction and playing defense.

Setup

- Two teams of two per court.
- Split court in half using TDLs.

Mission—Move opponent side to side.

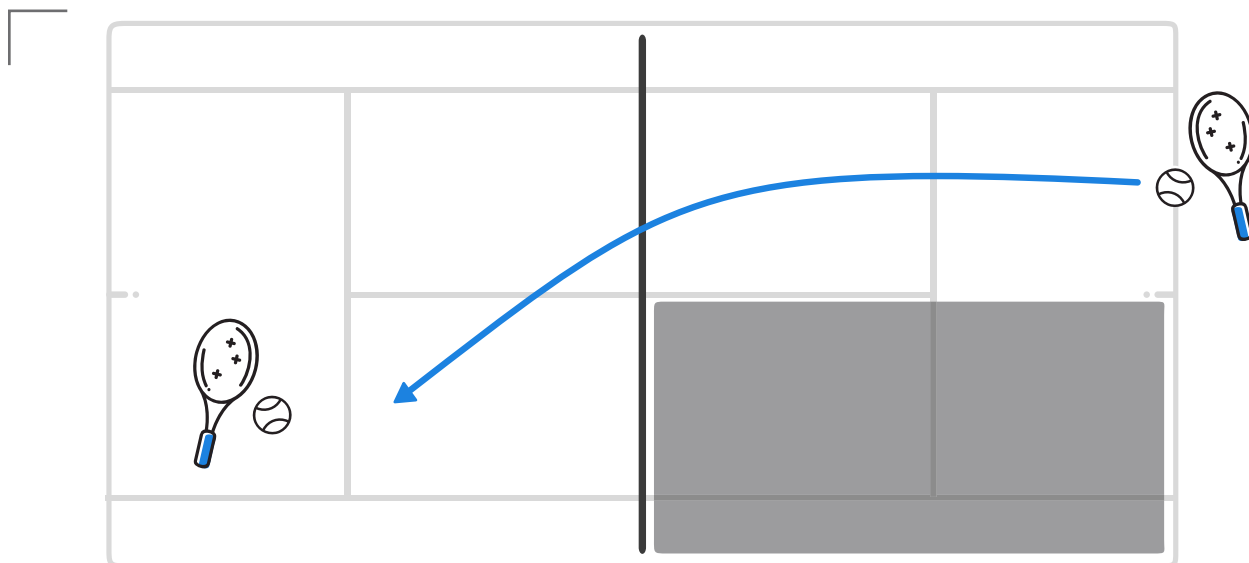
- Servers cover half-court, returners cover full-court. Servers choose which side they will cover.
- Server tries to move opponent around court by taking ball early when possible.
- Returners score point for getting four balls back to servers. Servers score for getting serve in and limiting returners to fewer than four shots. First team to four wins, then switch sides/change servers.

Goal—Serve and take ball early to apply pressure.

Progressions

1. Servers must hit first ball to open court.
2. Servers score bonus point for a winning volley or overhead.

ILLUSTRATION: HUFF AND PUFF



IV. PLAY AT HOME

TRICK SHOTS

Setup

Play on driveway or any flat surface.

Mission—Create cool shots on bounce and in the air.

- Play with a friend and take video.
- Share video with coach and friends.



RIDICULOUS RETURN

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground balls (light medicine ball or junior basketball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke footwork.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court and hitting inside service box.

Mission—Take all groundstrokes on the rise.

- Both players with toes on service line rallying groundstrokes. Can't step backward.
- One player moves to net for groundstroke-to-volley rally.
- After two minutes, switch roles or activities.

Goal—Use compact backswing when taking ball on the rise.

Progressions

1. Hit crosscourt.
2. One stroke only.
3. Hit a specific number of shots in a row before changing positions.

II. CHARACTER

RESPECT

Recognize effort needed to put on a tennis tournament—thank officials and tournament staff.



SERPENTINE SHUFFLE

Setup

- Up to four players on each side of net.
- Players spread out across baselines of 78-foot court.
- Place cones or TDLs in front of net so players know when to stop.

Mission

- Shuffle toward net, two shuffles facing one direction, then two shuffles facing other.
- Face net when changing direction.
- On return to baseline, continue facing net when turning. This backward serpentine shuffle helps players develop proper movement for deep groundstrokes and overheads.

ONE-LEG TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs with one playground ball.
- No more than four pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other four to six feet apart.

Mission

- Each player catches on two feet, tosses on one.
- Catch in center of body facing forward.
- Toss with two hands from side of body, turning shoulder on each toss.
- After four successful tosses and catches each, switch to other foot.

Progressions

1. Toss in crosscourt pattern with limited movement.
2. Figure 8 tosses.
3. Toss and catch on one leg.

GRAB AND THROW

Setup

- Three players on each side of net, spread out along service line.
- Players on starting side are sideways to net with two orange balls close to back foot.

Mission

- Grab ball off ground and throw up and out over net all in one motion.
- Players on opposite side catch balls after bounce.
- After players catch both balls, switch roles.



TEACHING TIP

This is a great simulation for the serve. Players have to bend down to pick up the ball (with tilt), and then will naturally use leg drive to throw the ball up and over the net.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

CHIP-LOB RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Chip lob.

Setup

Two pairs per court, using half-court. One player starts close to net, other (lobber) on opposite service line.

Mission—Rally lobs and high volleys.

- Start off with drop-hit lob using continental grip. Net player hits high dink volley back to lobber.
- Lobber continues rally using continental grip and chip lobs; net player continues hitting high dink volleys.
- Rotate positions every minute.
- Once successful, lobber moves back to baseline and drop-hits a lob. Net player hits high dink volley back, which lobber traps. Repeat sequence.
- Need help? Drop-hit lob and trap volley from service line.

Goal—Use continental grip and one-handed backhand for chip lobs.

Progressions

1. Continuous rally from baseline.
2. Net player hits an overhead.

FIRST FOUR

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, diagonally across net from each other.
- Players start on baseline.

Mission—Execute serve, return, third and fourth balls.

- Hit serve, return and one ground stroke each.
- Server catches fourth ball and starts again.
- Complete four sequences and switch servers, then switch sides of court after complete rotation.

Goal—Work on serve and split-step; return and split-step with proper recovery.

Progressions

1. Serve to specific half of service box.
2. All four balls to specific sides.

V. GAMES

SERVE INDEX

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Serve direction.

Setup

- Players in teams, up to four players per court.
- All players on one side of net—one serving from deuce, other from ad.
- Split each service box into two zones using TDLs.

Note: Use extra players as returners.

Mission—Serve to each zone.

- Count how many balls it takes to serve successfully to all four zones. This is your “serve index.” Add up players’ serve-index number to get a team serve index.
- Once all players have served to all four zones, start over and strive for lowest team serve index.
- Need help? Move inside baseline.

Goal—Use spin to add control.

Progressions

1. Only counts if same rituals are used before serve.
2. Must use slice for out wide on deuce side and down the “T” on ad side (opposite for lefties).
3. Add returner targets and do a “return index.”

ATTACK!

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Attack serve.

Setup

- Players in teams on opposite sides of net.
- One side serves, other returns.

Mission—Return serve, approach, and volley.

- Server gets one serve, returner must approach and come to net.
- Stay on court if you win point; change with partner after winning two straight points.
- Play regular-game scoring. Switch serving teams after each game.
- Need help? Play half-court points.

Goal—Play deep/short volley combinations when coming to net.

Progressions

1. Designate specific side for return and volley.
2. Server can’t lob.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

TAKE IT EARLY

When playing practice matches, move into court for all second-serve returns.

I LOVE DOUBLES

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, two on two.

Focus: Continental grip and touch shots.

Setup

- Two teams of two per court.
- Play points as doubles team. Boundaries are service boxes.

Mission—Play all slices.

- Any player starts point with drop-hit.
- Slice all shots using continental grip; hit backhands one-handed.
- Must let ball bounce and use all touch and finesse.
- Play for one minute; if tied, play one final point.
- Use up-and-down-the-river format.

Goal—Move opponents and stay consistent.

Progressions

1. One stroke only; alternate strokes.
2. Volleys allowed.

II. CHARACTER

POSITIVITY

Encourage partner during tough times.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

COPY CAT

Setup

Players spread out, up to four on each side of net.

Mission

Have a player demonstrate specific movement players will copy.

Suggested Movements

1. Side-to-side groundstrokes with open stance and crossover recovery.
2. Hop-move approach (left-left or right-right).
3. Drop-step, crossover, and run for overhead.
4. Hop-move to net, then drop-step/crossover/run back for overhead.

COMPASS JUMPS

Setup

- Place four cones in a square to represent north, south, east and west. Cones should be about two feet from center.
- Players in groups of two or three per “compass.”

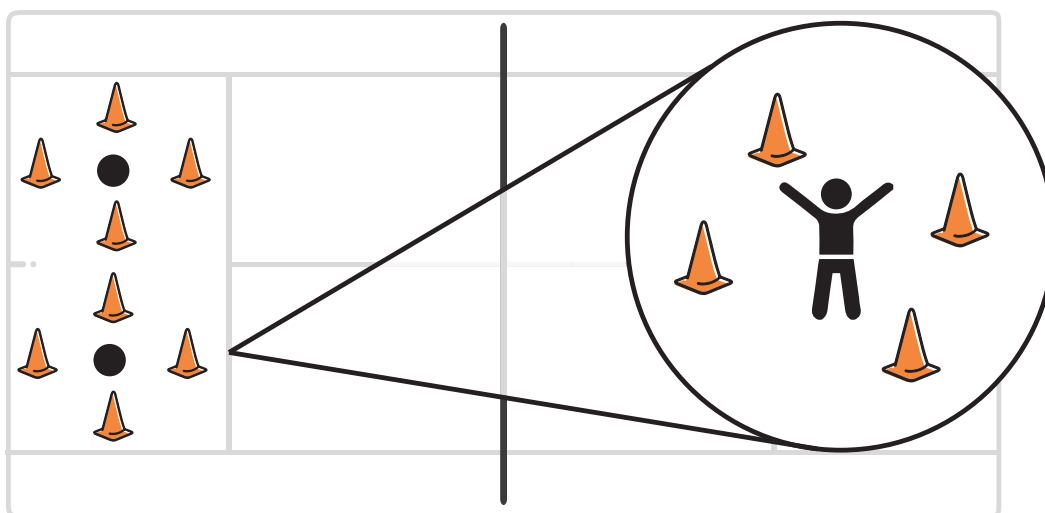
Mission

- Stand in center of cones and jump to each cone, returning to center each time.
- Jump around compass three times, then next player goes.
- After all players have gone once, change direction.

Progressions

1. One-leg jumps, pausing after each jump. Do twice, then switch legs.
2. Jump continuously on one leg.

ILLUSTRATION: COMPASS JUMPS



HI-LO TOSS

Setup

- Players in pairs with orange ball.
- Up to four pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Players face each other four to five feet apart.

Mission

- One player feeds, other catches.
- Toss to catcher, who catches after bounce and tosses back.
- Toss second ball high. Catch in the air above waist level and toss back.
- Catch with right hand on right side, left hand on left.
- After four successful hi-lo catches on each side, switch roles.

Progressions

1. Toss first ball high over catcher's shoulder, second in front of catcher.
2. Toss first ball short, second higher and deeper.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

FIVE-MINUTE WARMUP

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Managing a timed warmup.

Setup

- Two to three pairs per court.
- Start on baseline.

Mission—Hit groundstrokes, volleys, overheads, serves and returns.

- Hit all strokes for five minutes.
- Coach keeps track of time. First round, coach doesn't call out time until end. Second round, coach gives two-minute, then one-minute warning.

Goal—Hit all strokes within five-minute period.



COACHING TIP

Once players start competing in tournaments, they'll experience a timed warmup with an Official. You need to coach players on how to handle this because younger players can have difficulty gauging time.

HI-LO

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Consistency on volleys and overheads.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court. One player at net, other at baseline.

Mission—Control volleys and overheads with partner.

- Baseline player alternates groundstroke and lobs; net player alternates volleys and overheads.
- Begin with drop-hit groundstroke. Net player volleys back deep, baseliner lobs; net player hits overhead, and baseliner traps. Repeat.
- Complete four sequences and switch positions.
- Need help? Baseline player moves up to service line and can hit and trap.

Goal—Step out and across for volley.

Progressions

1. Play cooperative rally and keep it going.
2. Hit lob with continental grip (first as drop-hit, then rally).

V. GAMES

ONE-UP/ONE-BACK DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Doubles positioning.

Setup

- Four to six players per court.
- Begin in one-up/one-back doubles position.

Mission—Play a standard doubles formation.

- Play doubles points. Only net players volley.
- Baseline players focus on keeping ball crosscourt and deep.
- Play no-ad scoring. Rotate players in every two to four points; switch opponents every two games.
- Each team must lob at least once per game.
- For large groups, play an up-and-down-the-river format. For smaller groups, change partners every two games.

Goal—Review court positioning for standard one-up/one-back and how to switch on lobs.

Progressions

1. On second serve, returners can come in.
2. Net players must hit everything in the air.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

PLAY SOME DUBS!

Setup

Pick a partner and find two others for doubles.

Progressions

1. Play one-up/one-back.
2. Serve and volley or return and come in.

LET'S PLAY!

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

MINI-TENNIS

Type: Competitive, one on one.

Focus: Touch shots.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All points straight ahead in service box.

Mission—Slice all shots.

- Either player starts point with drop-hit.
- Slice all shots with continental grip; hit backhands one-handed.
- Move opponent around service box with touch shots.
- Play first to four points and up-and-down-the-river format.
- If you've reached four points, volley back and forth cooperatively until last court has finished.

Goal—Move opponent and stay consistent.

Progressions

1. Play crosscourt.
2. One stroke only; alternate strokes.
3. Players can volley.

II. CHARACTER

RESPECT

Accept feedback from coaches.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs with orange ball and TDL.
- Up to three pairs spread out on each side of net.
- Players face each other four to six feet apart.
- One player feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as “home base.”

Mission

- In open stance, catch after bounce using left hand on right side, right hand on left.
- Start off with easy tosses so players can get their rhythm. Toss a little to catcher's side so only one step with outside foot is necessary.
- Switch roles every minute.

Progressions

1. Feeder tosses ball higher, then wider.
2. Increase distance between feeder and catcher.

PLAYER'S CHOICE

- Let two players pick a different athletic skill that has already been done in practice, or even create one.
- Be sure to select players who have demonstrated good character during session.



TEACHING TIP

As players mature, try to create more situations where they have to make decisions. Encourage the others to support their choices to create an environment of inclusiveness.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

FIVE-MINUTE WARMUP

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Managing a timed warmup.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- Start on baseline.

Mission—Hit groundstrokes, volleys, overheads, serves and returns.

- Hit all strokes for five minutes.
- Coach keeps track of time. First round, coach doesn't call out time until end. Second round, coach gives two-minute, then one-minute warning.

Goal—Hit all strokes within five-minute period.

FOUR-SQUARE

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Deep/short and side to side.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- Divide court into four equal squares using TDLs or poly-spots.

Mission—Move opponent side to side and deep/short.

- Play points starting with serve. After serve, players can't hit into same square two times in a row.
- Play no-ad scoring. Rotate players after each point, servers after each game.

Goal—Use different spins and speeds to move ball.

Progressions

1. Must use slice for short boxes.
2. Bonus point for winning with short volley.

HUFF AND PUFF

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Groundstroke change of direction and playing defense.

Setup

- Two teams of two per court.
- Split court in half using TDLs.

Mission—Move opponent side to side.

- Servers cover half-court, returners cover full-court. Servers choose which side they will cover.
- Server tries to move opponent around court by taking ball early when possible.
- Returners score point for getting four balls back to servers. Servers score for getting serve in and limiting returners to fewer than four shots. First team to four wins, then switch sides/change servers.

Goal—Serve and take ball early to apply pressure.

Progressions

1. Servers must hit first ball to open court.
2. Servers score bonus point for a winning volley or overhead.

ATTACK! DUBS

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Attack serve.

Setup

- Players in teams on opposite sides of net.
- One side serves, other returns.

Mission—Return serve, approach and volley.

- Servers get one serve; returner must approach and come to net.
- Players stay on court if they win point. Must change partners after winning two straight points.
- Play regular scoring. Switch serving teams after each game.

Goal—Play deep/short volley combinations when coming to net.

Progressions

1. Designate specific side for return and volley.
2. Servers can't lob.

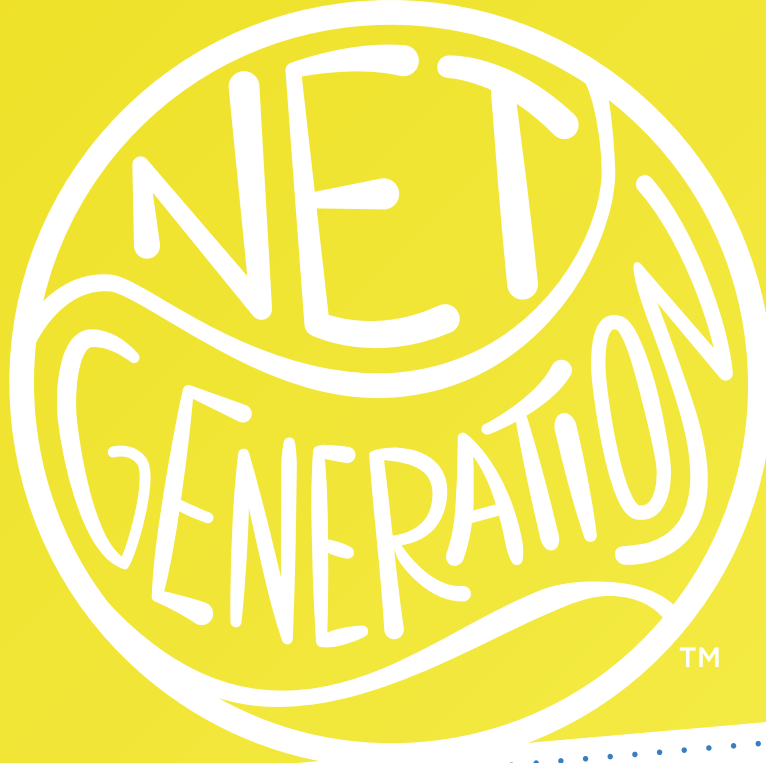
VI. PLAY AT HOME

WATCH PRO TENNIS

Watch pro matches on television or on computer.

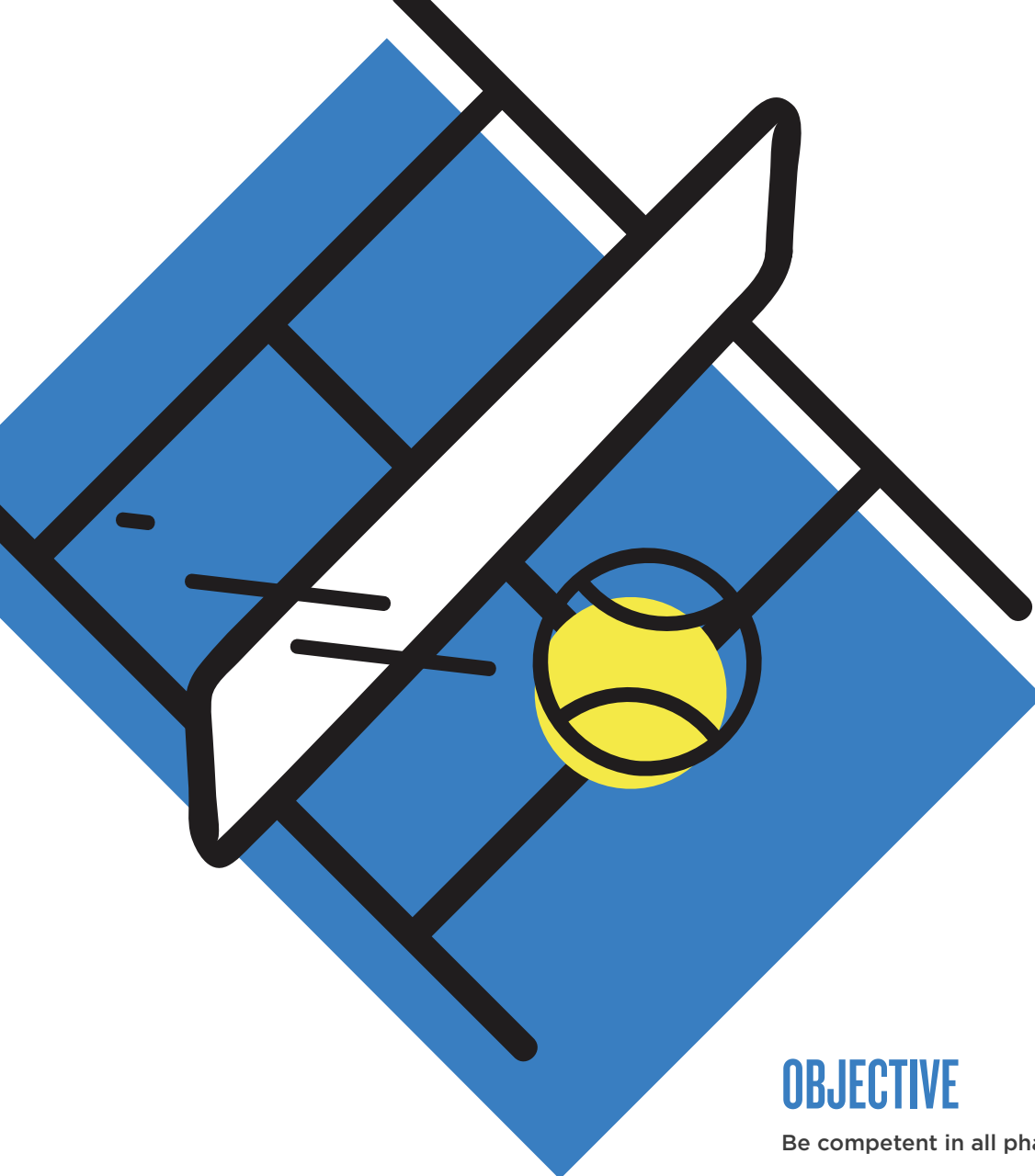
Mission

- How often do they come to the net?
- Are they using a slice backhand?
- Do they use positive or negative self-talk?



ORANGE BALL 01





OBJECTIVE

Be competent in all phases of play on 60-foot court.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

Total: 90 minutes

- Warmup: 6 - 8 minutes
- Character: 3 minutes or less
- Skills (athletic and tennis): 30 - 35 minutes
- Games: 25 - 30 minutes
- Play at Home: 3 minutes or less



NOTES:

For this level, a dynamic stretch at the beginning and static stretch at the end are important. If properly trained, players can do these outside of the practice session.

PLANS AT A GLANCE



	Warmup	Character	Athletic Skills	Tennis Skills	Games	Play at Home
01 Put the Ball Where I Want	Pinch	Effort	Skips—Height and Distance Twist and Catch Snag Catch	Roll and Rally Roll and Rally Live	Serve Index Island Tennis	On the Rise
02 Shape It!	Over and Under	Effort	Positional Starts Compass Jumps Four-Corner Toss	Roll and Rally Swing Volley	Sideline I'm the Boss	Roll to Wall
03 Who's the Boss?	Two on One	Responsibility	4x4 Tag Jump Rope to Skip Loops Quarterback	Weapons Drill Tug-of-War Serve	Capture the Cone Finish in Three	Forehand Only
04 Serve Plus One	Strings and Body	Respect	Copy Cat Multi-Jumps Three-Level Throw	One-Leg Serve Serve Plus One	Serve Plus One Live	Trick Shots
05 Watch Me Volley	Juggle Volley	Independence	Skate and Volley Around the World Make 'Em Move	Up-and-Back Volley Overhead Warmup	Four and Go Two-on-One Attack	Attack Second
06 Speed Check	Opposites	Responsibility	Obstacle Course Prone Extensions Clap Catch Extreme	Roll and Rip Mix It Up	Serve Index I'm the Boss	Mini-Tennis
07 Air Attack	Juggle Volley	Responsibility	Skate and Hit Rock-Paper-Scissors	Overhead Warmup Deep/Short Volley	Two-on-One Attack Offense/Defense	Overheads to the Wall
08 What's Your Game?	Pinch	Respect	Player's Choice	Five-Minute Warmup	Capture the Cone Kamikaze Doubles	Go See a College Match

PUT THE BALL WHERE I WANT

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls and playground balls (light medicine ball or junior basketball); cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

PINCH

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstrokes on the rise.

Setup

Two or three pairs per court.

Mission—Keep rally going without backing up.

- With toes on service line, rally groundstrokes (any stroke) without stepping back.
- Back up and rally groundstrokes with toes on baseline.
- Take all deep shots on short hop; if it's in the air, volley it!
- Two-minute maximum on each line.

Goal—Prepare earlier for deep balls on the rise.

Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

EFFORT

- Bring your best self to each practice.
- Be rested and hydrated so you can practice hard.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

SKIPS—HEIGHT AND DISTANCE

Setup

- Up to four players on each side of court.
- Players spread out on baseline of 78-foot court.
- Place some cones or TDLs in front of net so players know when to stop.

Mission

- Warm up with basic skip to net and back.
- Next, call out specific types of skips to net and back. Perform two rounds and move on to next progression.

Progressions

1. High-knee skips to net and back, trying to stay in the air as long as possible.
2. Skips for distance.
3. Loud skips, soft skips, medium skips.



TEACHING TIP

After loud skips, ask players how it felt. Then do the same for soft skips.

TWIST AND CATCH

Setup

- Players in pairs, maximum of four on each side of net.
- Each pair with playground ball.

Mission

- Pairs stand back to back in athletic position.
- Twist to one side, pass ball around waist level to partner, who twists to other side and passes ball back.
- Continue for eight passes.

Progressions

1. Pass ball really low.
2. Pass ball above shoulders.

SNAG CATCH

Setup

Players spread out around court, with one orange ball each.

Mission

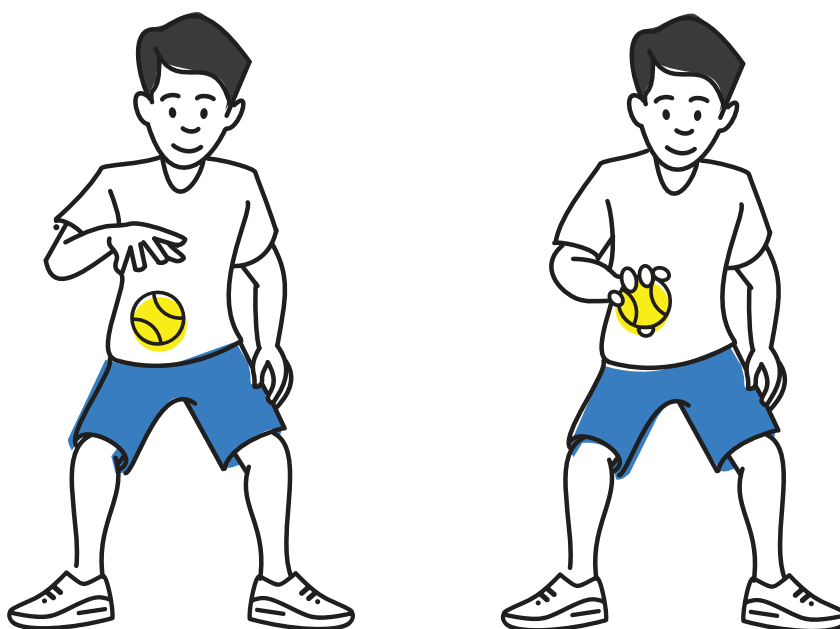
- Start with ball in right hand at waist level, palm down.
- Let ball drop, quickly move hand up a few inches, catch (“snag”) ball again.
- Once successful, move to progressions.

Progressions

1. Catch with left hand.
2. Alternate catching with right and left hands.

Note: Keep ball relatively still while moving hands up and down to catch.

ILLUSTRATION: SNAG CATCH



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

ROLL AND RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstrokes on the rise.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission—Rally and roll off different balls.

- One side rolls ball with high topspin, other takes ball on the rise, any stroke.
- On-the-rise side takes deep balls early and midcourt balls on the rise when possible.

Goal—Stay consistent while changing height and spin.

Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

ROLL AND RALLY LIVE

Setup

Same as Roll and Rally.

Mission—Play out points with one side hitting all loops, other side attacking balls on the rise.

V. GAMES

SERVE INDEX

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Serve direction.

Setup

- Players in teams, up to four players per court.
- All players on one side of net—one serving from deuce, other from ad.
- Divide each service box into three zones using TDLs.

Note: With extra players, two can be returners.

Mission—Serve to each zone.

- Count how many balls it takes to serve successfully to all six zones. This is your “serve index.” Add up players’ serve-index numbers for a team serve index.
- Once all players have served to all six zones, start over and strive for lowest team serve index.
- Need help? Move inside baseline or use two zones per box.

Goal—Use spin to add control.

Progressions

1. Only counts if same rituals are used before serve.
2. Must use slice for out wide on deuce side and down the “T” on ad side (opposite for lefties).

ISLAND TENNIS

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Take deep balls on the rise.

Setup

- Two teams of two to three on opposite baselines.
- The island is boundaries of court. Outside of these boundaries is water.

Mission—Hit every ball standing inside court.

- Play points with serve and return. Server starts off in water and moves inside baseline after serve lands (one serve only).
- Win points when opponent steps in water or misses a shot.
- Play one point and rotate players on each side.
- Play to seven, then switch serving team and opponents, if necessary.

Goal—Take deep balls as they come off the ground, and cut off angles on sideline.

Progressions

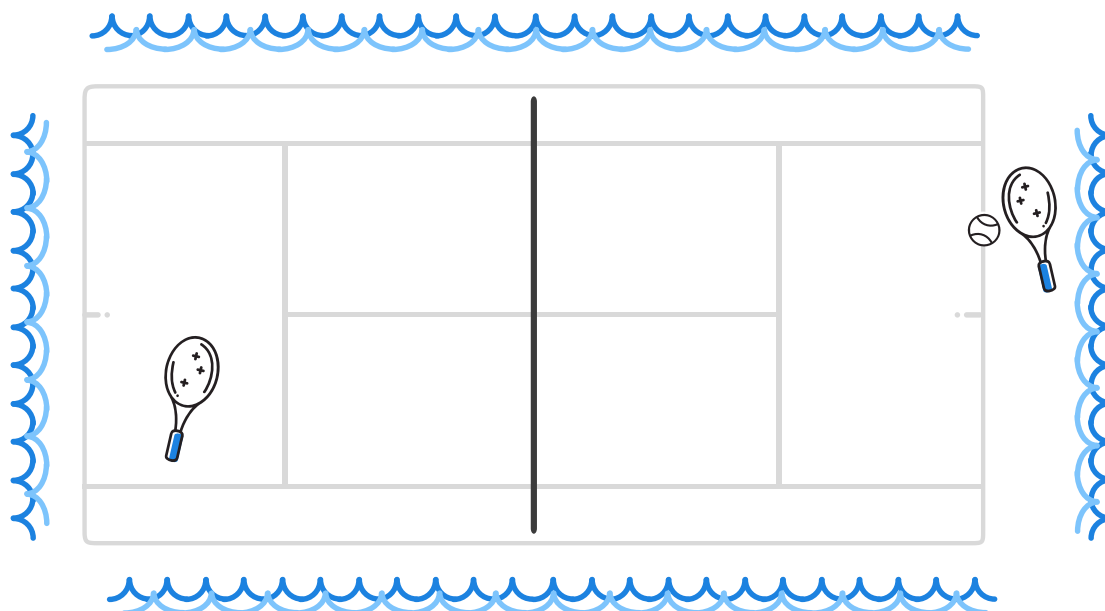
1. Only one side plays Island Tennis.
2. Bonus point for winning at net (volley or overhead).
3. Bonus point for making opponent step outside sideline (using angles/width).



COACHING TIP

Learning to play the ball on the rise takes time and won't always be pretty. Continue to praise effort and good decision-making.

ILLUSTRATION: ISLAND TENNIS



VI. PLAY AT HOME

ON THE RISE

Setup

Play with red or orange ball against garage door or solid wall.

Mission—Take every ball on the rise.

Progressions

1. Use red ball, then orange ball.
2. Play with a friend on driveway or any flat surface. Alternate one taking ball on the rise, other hitting heavy topspin loop.



SHAPE IT!

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court, 25-inch racquets, orange balls, playground balls (light medicine ball or junior basketball), cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

OVER AND UNDER

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Alternating topspin and slice.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- Start on service line.

Mission—Keep rally going while changing spins.

- One side hits easy topspin groundstrokes, other alternates topspin and slice.
- Switch roles after two minutes.

Goal—Switch grips and/or hands when moving from slice to topspin.

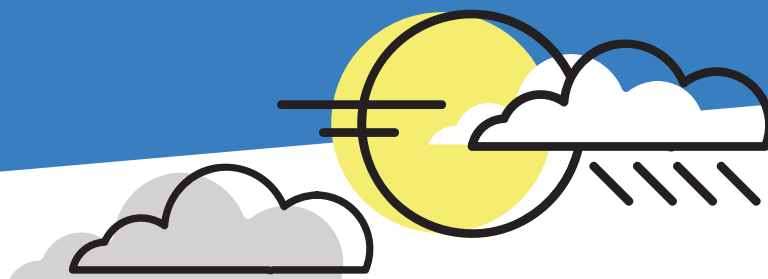
Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

EFFORT

- Be determined.
- Give best effort even when tasks are difficult.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

POSITIONAL STARTS

Setup

Players spread out on sideline on both sides of net, up to four per side.

Mission

- Start in various positions, and on coach's command, sprint and stop on opposite sideline in athletic position.
- Emphasis is on big, strong strides and driving arms.
- Do each movement twice, then switch.

Progressions

1. Start sideways in athletic position. Face different direction each time.
2. Start backward in athletic position.
3. One knee on ground, both knees on ground.
4. From a lunge position.



TEACHING TIP

To challenge players further, ask questions before "go" command: "What is six minus three?" "Say alphabet backward from D."

COMPASS JUMPS

Setup

- Place four cones in a square to represent north, south, east and west. Cones should be about two feet from center.
- Players in groups of two to three per "compass."

Mission

- Stand in center of cones and jump to each cone, jumping back to center each time.
- Jump around compass twice, then next player goes.
- After all players have gone twice, change direction.

Progressions

1. Jump on one leg, pausing after each jump. Do twice, then switch legs.
2. Jump on one leg continuously.

FOUR-CORNER TOSS

Setup

- Up to four pairs on each side of net.
- Pairs face each other about four feet apart with four orange balls.

Mission

- Toss ball with right hand to partner, who catches in the air with left hand.
- Partner passes ball from left hand to right, and tosses it back to player's left hand.
- Toss and catch ball to side of body.
- Once successful, add movement, going from sideline to sideline and back.

Progressions

1. Add a second ball, continuing to toss to partner with right hand, and transfer ball from left hand to right. Perform in a stationary position, then add movement.
2. Add a third ball—stationary, then with movement.
3. Add a fourth ball—stationary, then with movement.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS



ROLL AND RALLY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstrokes on the rise.

Setup

- Two or three pairs per court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission—Rally and roll off different balls.

- One side rolls ball with high topspin, other takes ball on the rise, any stroke.
- On-the-rise side takes deep balls early and midcourt balls on the rise when possible.
- Rally 10 each, then switch roles.

Goal—Stay consistent while changing height and spin.

Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

TEACHING TIP

At this level of play, skill acquisition is accelerated when players can take private lessons. Many players don't have the resources for this and may lag behind in certain technical areas. Whenever players struggle, look to pull them out of the drill and hand/racquet feed with another player or coach.

SWING VOLLEY

Type: Hand feed, players in pairs.

Focus: Swing volley on floaters.

Setup

- Two pairs per court.
- Hitters on service line; feeders on same side, close to net in alley.
- Each feeder has a supply of balls.
- Place a target in each corner of baseline.

Note: Make sure feeders toss and move quickly to side in a safe position.

Mission—Play a swing volley off midcourt ball to designated target.

- Play high toss from feeder as swing volley using outside stroke, and recover.
- Feed six balls and switch positions.
- After a complete rotation, switch sides.

Goal—Take swing volley at shoulder level and play like approach shot.

Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. Alternate straight ahead and crosscourt.
3. Add second ball as standard volley.
4. Coach feeds to increase tempo and difficulty.

SIDELINER

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Angle groundstrokes.

Setup

- Teams of three or four on opposite sides of net.
- Use TDLs to split court in half.

Mission—Move opponent outside sideline.

- Play all points crosscourt; can play two points at same time.
- Start with serve and return. After that, must hit outside stroke.
- Score points for your team by winning point and forcing opponent outside sideline.
- First team to seven wins.

Goal—Use spin to move ball off court.

Progressions

1. Every ball must bounce.
2. Play full court.

I'M THE BOSS

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Change of direction.

Setup

- Two to three players per team, full-court points.
- Players on serving team are “bosses.”

Mission—Change direction of groundstroke.

- Start point with serve or drop-hit from baseline.
- Play points crosscourt using outside stroke only.
- Boss can hit down the line on right ball; opponent must hit everything crosscourt.
- After initial change of direction, play is open.
- Boss gets bonus point for winning point on change of direction and negative point for losing point on change of direction.
- Play games to seven, then switch servers.

Goal—Make good decisions on when to change direction.

Progressions

1. Inside stroke only.
2. Both sides can be “the boss.”

VI. PLAY AT HOME

ROLL TO WALL

Setup

Play with red or orange ball against garage door or solid wall.

Mission—Change arc of ball.

- Use spin and height to change arc of ball.

Progressions

1. Use red ball, then orange ball.
2. Play with a friend.



WHO'S THE BOSS?

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court, 25-inch racquets, orange balls, cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

TWO ON ONE

Type: Cooperative, groups of three.

Focus: Change of direction.

Setup

- One or two groups of three per court.
- Two players on one side of net, one on other. All players on service line.

Mission—Change direction on groundstrokes.

- Players rally. Group of two hits to single player's forehand (isolation).
- Single player hits side to side.
- Switch positions every minute, move to baseline after complete rotation.

Goal—Recover according to location and type of shot hit.

Progressions

1. Hit forehands isolated to opponent's backhand.
2. Any stroke, then side with two players hits outside stroke only.

II. CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY

- Learn the rules of tennis.
- Be prepared to act as your own referee on court.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

4X4 TAG

Setup

- Create a square on each side of net using baseline and sidelines, and adding TDLs or cones in front of net.
- Up to eight players on each side of net. Half of group on one corner of square, other half on opposite corner.

Mission

- One player from each team in box—tagger and avoider.
- Avoider attempts to dodge tag for seven seconds. Game is over when someone is tagged or steps out of playing area.
- When finished, players go to back of opposite line and next two begin.

Progressions

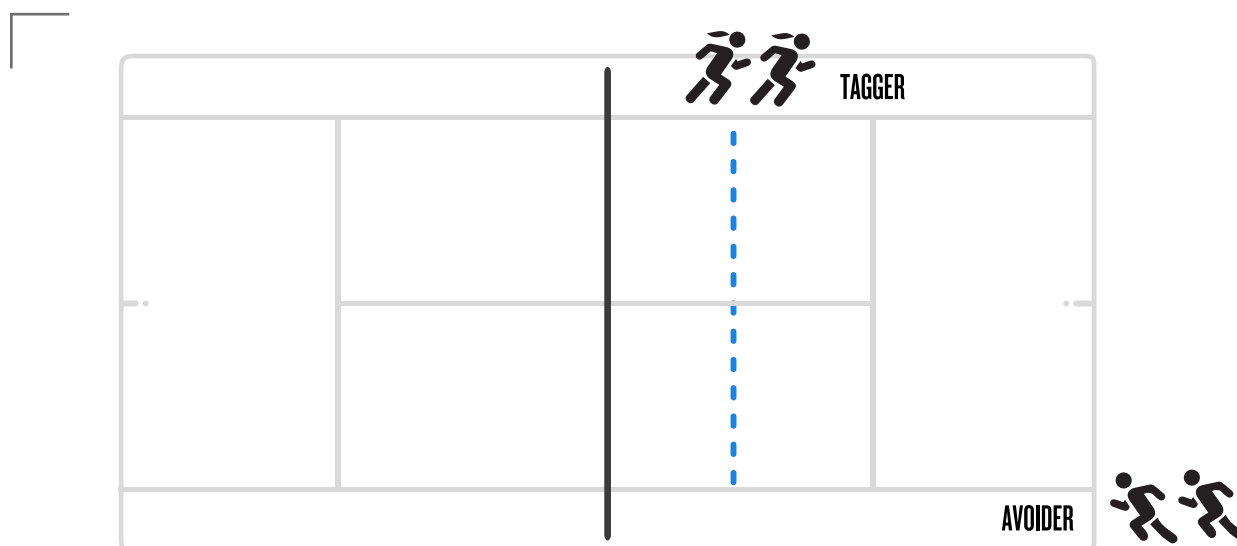
1. Shrink square.
2. Create a different shape.



TEACHING TIP

Focus is on staying low with multiple changes of direction, reaction, and prediction.

ILLUSTRATION: 4X4 TAG



JUMP ROPE TO SKIP LOOPS

Note: Have each player bring a jump rope to practice, or provide one.

Setup

- Each player with jump rope.
- Set up a simple path for players to follow, such as court lines or cones and markers.

Mission

- Once players have established a baseline of jumping rope in place (single jumps), they can begin to move along designated path.
- Make sure path involves moving forward, to sides, and even backward.

Progressions

1. Move by zigzagging with feet.
2. Use in and out patterns (jumping jacks).
3. Hop.

QUARTERBACK

Setup

- Up to three pairs on each side of net.
- Players are on opposite sidelines with one football.

Note: If you don't have enough footballs, use tennis balls or have extra players do station work.

Mission

- Partners play catch, working on throwing spirals.

Progressions

1. By now, players should be able to throw a spiral with throwing arm behind head at 90 degrees.
2. Emphasize both hands on ball at shoulder level when they turn, tip of ball pointed backward when behind head.
3. Add movement like a quarterback—face forward, turn and run back, set, and throw.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

WEAPONS DRILL

Type: Hand-feed, players in threes.

Focus: Aggressive groundstrokes.

Setup

- One group of three per half-court.
- One tosses; one hits; one catches.
- Hitter is on baseline, close to center.
- Tosser is in doubles alley on same side of net.
- Catcher is on opposite side of net with small container.

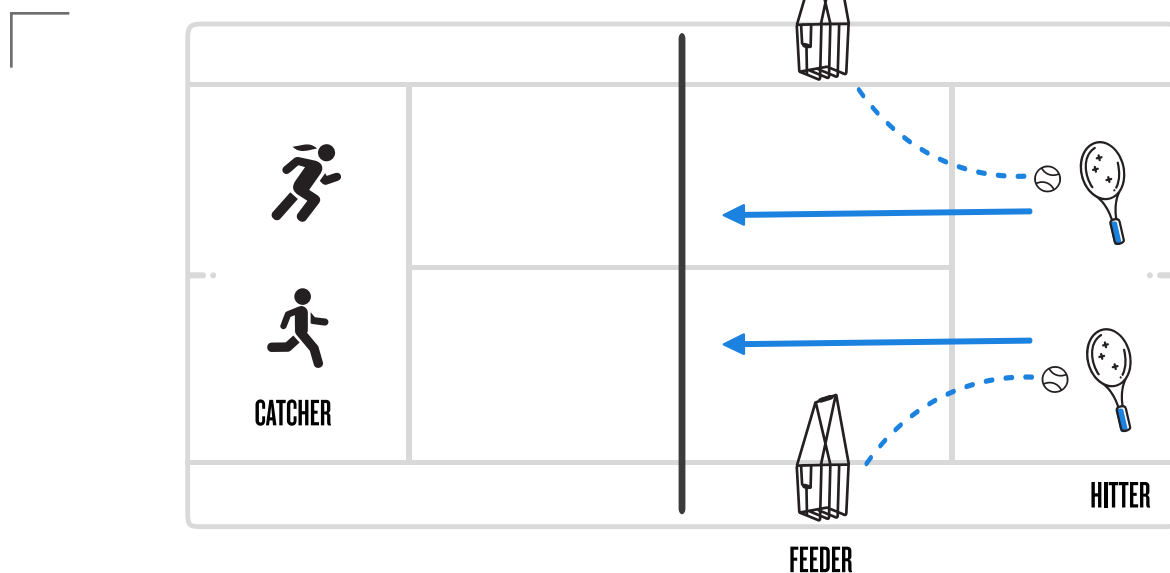
Mission

- Tosser feeds high, midcourt ball to hitter's outside stroke; hitter moves forward, plays aggressive shot crosscourt and recovers back in a diagonal.
- Hit six balls and rotate.
- Once all three players have hit, switch sides.

Progressions

1. Hit down the line.
2. Play swing volley in the air.

ILLUSTRATION: WEAPONS DRILL



TUG-OF-WAR SERVE

Type: Competitive, players in pairs.

Focus: Racquet head speed on serve.

Setup

- Team of two servers on one side of net and two returners on other.
- On servers' side, place TDLs at net, in middle of service box, and on service line for each server.

Mission—Hit aggressive serves.

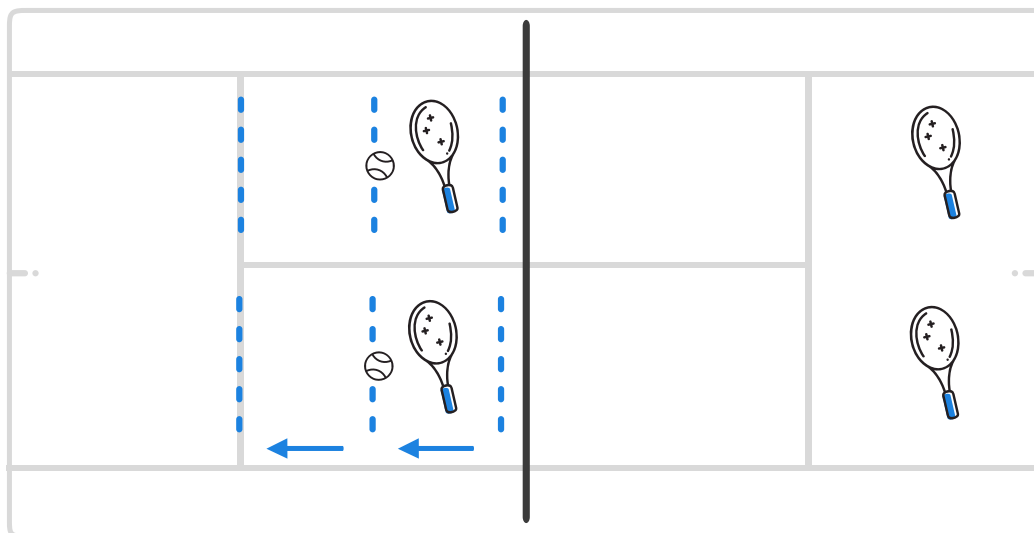
- Servers warm up—one on deuce side, other on ad.
- For first serve, servers stand just behind TDLs at net, with returners at baseline.
- Servers move to next set of TDLs if both serves aren't returned. Once a return is made, returners serve, starting from first TDLs.
- Goal is to get to third TDLs without a return being made.
- In intervals, switch partners and sides of court.
- Need help? Start by throwing serve.

Goal—Increase racquet-head speed and spin while maintaining control.

Progressions

1. Add a fourth serving spot on baseline.
2. Make it more competitive by splitting into teams. Score points progressively—one point for successful serve at net; two from middle of service box; three from service line.

ILLUSTRATION: TUG-OF-WAR SERVE



CAPTURE THE CONE

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Hit groundstrokes using all five controls.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- Each team has five to seven cones lined up on their side, outside of court.

Mission—Break down one-handed backhand.

- Play out points with two serves.
- Returner must use a one-handed backhand.
- Point winner runs to opponent's side and "captures a cone."
- Play games by time; team with most cones wins, or team with all cones wins.
- Switch serving teams after each game.

Goal—Find multiple ways to break down opponent's weakness.

Progressions

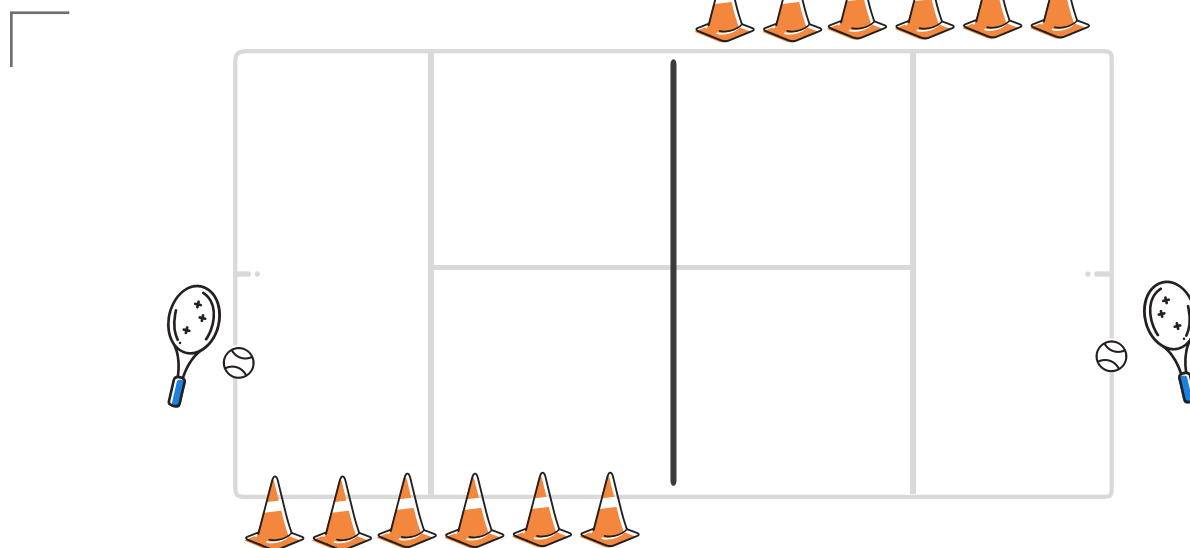
1. Must win two straight points to capture a cone.
2. Returner must use continental grip on both sides (can only slice and volley).
3. Bonus point if server wins point hitting to opponent's backhand.



COACHING TIP

This is a great time to observe whether players understand tactics such as running around a one-hander to hit a forehand, or playing a high topspin ball deep to opponent's backhand to produce an error or a short ball.

ILLUSTRATION: CAPTURE THE CONE



FINISH IN THREE

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Use serve and groundstrokes as weapons.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- One side serves, other returns.

Mission—Serve to spots and put pressure on opponent with groundstrokes.

- Play competitive points, ending point after serve plus two shots.
- Look to take ball early and hit to either open court or opponent's weakness.
- If point goes past serve-plus-two, or if server misses any shots before that, returner wins point.
- Play games to seven, then switch servers.

Goal—Use serve offensively to begin point, and look to move inside baseline.

Progressions

1. Use only forehand to finish point.
2. Must finish point at net.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

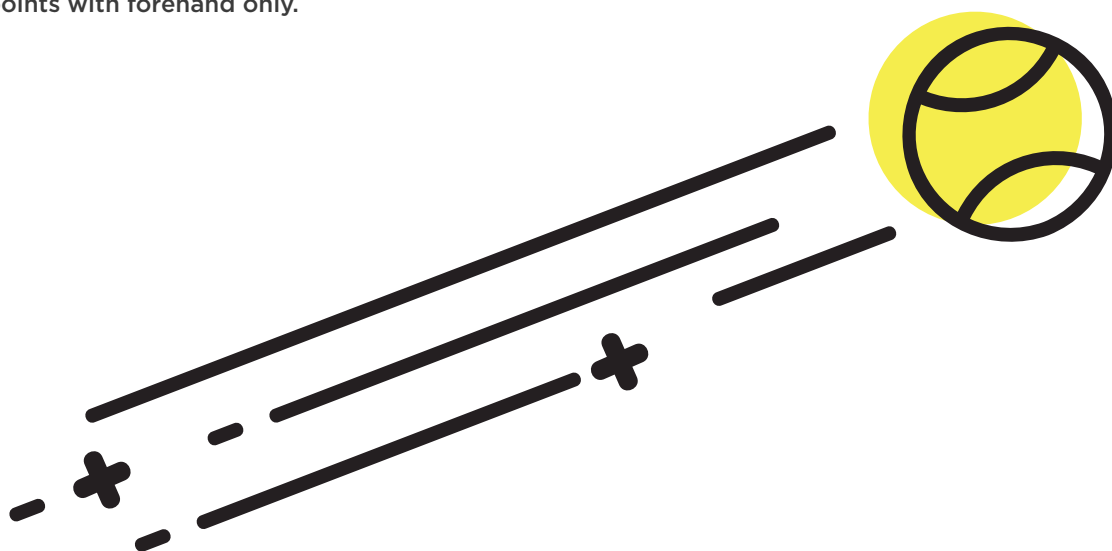
FOREHAND ONLY

Setup

- Play with red or orange ball against garage door or solid wall.
- Play with friend on driveway, any flat surface or court.

Mission—Forehands only.

- Rally to wall with forehand only.
- Play points with forehand only.



SERVE PLUS ONE

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

STRINGS AND BODY

Type: Individual.

Focus: Racquet skills and body awareness.

Setup

- Players spread out around court, up to six on each side of net.
- Each player has one orange ball.

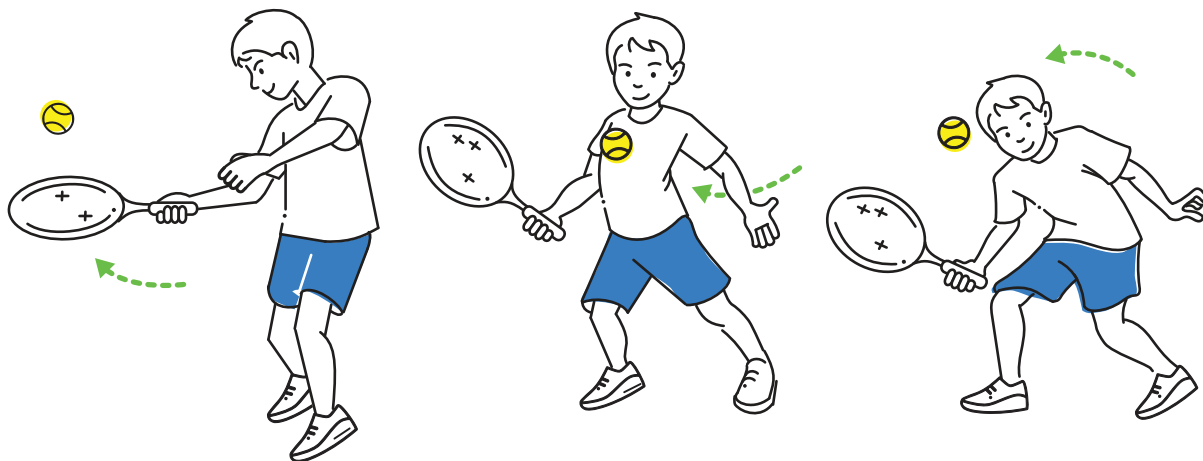
Mission—Alternate hitting with racquet and body.

- Self-rally hitting one ball up with racquet, let bounce, and use a body part to hit ball.
- Be as creative as possible using arms, legs, feet, head, etc.

Progressions

1. Focus on creativity.
2. How many can you hit in a row?

ILLUSTRATION: STRINGS AND BODY



II. CHARACTER

RESPECT

- If dispute arises during play, be respectful to opponent.
- Stay calm and listen.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

COPY CAT

Setup

- Players spread out on court. Up to four on each side of net.

Mission

- Coach demonstrates a specific movement, then players copy, using shadow strokes.

Progressions

1. Players in line from net to baseline. Warm up side-to-side groundstrokes with open stance and crossover recovery.
2. Players in line across baseline. Perform three approaches to net and back using hop move.
3. Players in line across baseline. Perform three backhand slice approaches with carioca move.

MULTI-JUMPS

Setup

- Players spread out on sideline, up to five on each side of net.

Mission

- Starting in ready position, jump two feet landing on left foot, then two feet landing on right. Continue to far sideline and back. This is same movement as in hopscotch.
- Once players have their rhythm, have them jump as far as possible each time, using arms to gain elevation and distance.
- See how many jumps it takes to cover court.

Progressions

1. Create different patterns—two feet left, two feet left, two feet right, two feet right.
2. Go from baseline to net and back.

THREE-LEVEL THROW

Type: Individual.

Focus: Racquet-head speed on serve.

Setup

- Three to six players per court.
- Players are on one side of net in two lines behind baseline.

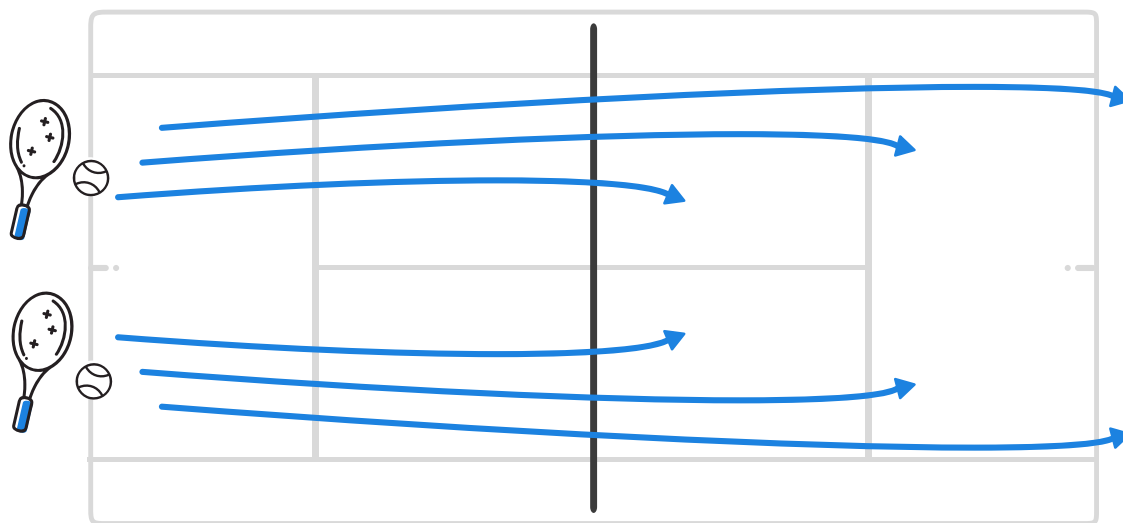
Mission—Throw ball various distances.

- All throws from baseline. Two players throw at same time.
- First throw into appropriate service box. Throw twice and rotate.
- Next throw between service line and baseline. Throw twice and rotate.
- Final throw between baseline and fence.

Progressions

1. Throw three in a row—service box, past service line, past baseline.
2. Split service box and court into two sides and throw to specific area.
3. See who can hit opposite fence.

ILLUSTRATION: THREE-LEVEL THROW



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

ONE-LEG SERVE

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Leg drive on serve.

Setup

- Two pairs per court diagonally across net from each other.
- One serves, other returns.

Mission—Serve standing on back leg.

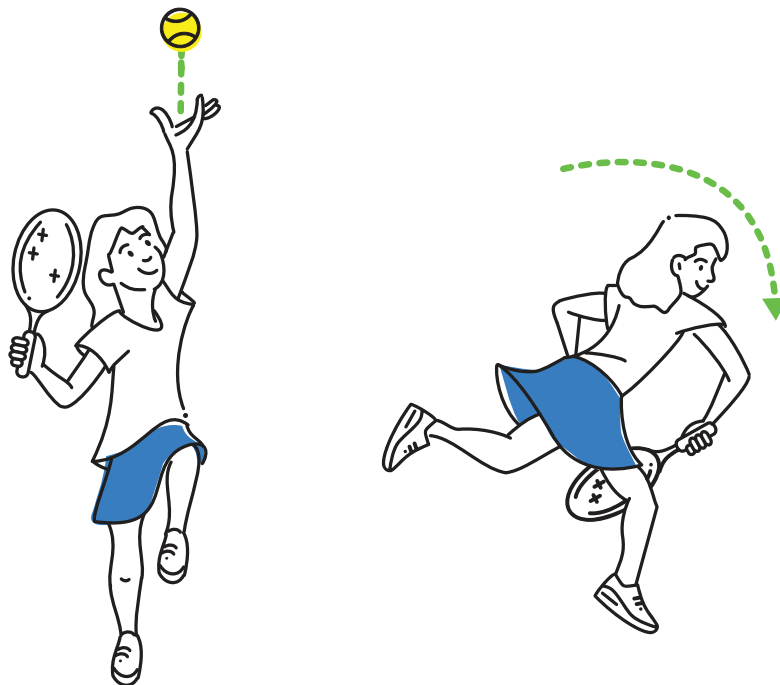
- Serve standing on back leg only; front leg is bent and off ground.
- Land on front foot only.
- Returner hits drop-shots with continental grip.
- Serve four balls and switch roles.

Goal—Serve driving upward with back leg as you swing.

Progressions

1. Serve with toes of front foot lightly touching ground.
2. Serve using both legs to drive up, and land on front foot.

ILLUSTRATION: ONE-LEG SERVE



SERVE PLUS ONE

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Serve and return direction and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court—one pair serves, other returns.

Mission—Execute serve, return and first ball.

- After serve and return, server hits groundstroke and returner traps.
- Next pair does same from opposite side.
- After both pairs serve/return, switch roles.
- Coach calls target for serve and return.
- Complete four sequences each, then switch sides of court.

Goal—Land on front foot after serve and come back to ready position.

V. GAMES

SERVE PLUS ONE LIVE

Setup

- Same as Serve Plus One, but play out point.
- Call targets in advance for Serve Plus One.
- Server must play forehand on first ball.
- For larger groups, use up-and-down-the-river format.

Progressions

1. Forehand only for first ball.
2. Declare strength in advance. Win point with strength to receive bonus point.
3. Bonus point for winning point off opponent's weak side.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

TRICK SHOTS

Setup

Racquet and orange ball.

Mission

- Use any part of body (foot, hand, head, etc.) or racquet (both sides, edge, etc.).
- Alternate hitting with racquet, then body parts.
- Record your tricks and post on YouTube!

WATCH ME VOLLEY

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

JUGGLE VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Touch on volleys.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Players in front half of service box.

Mission—Play a self-volley, then volley to partner.

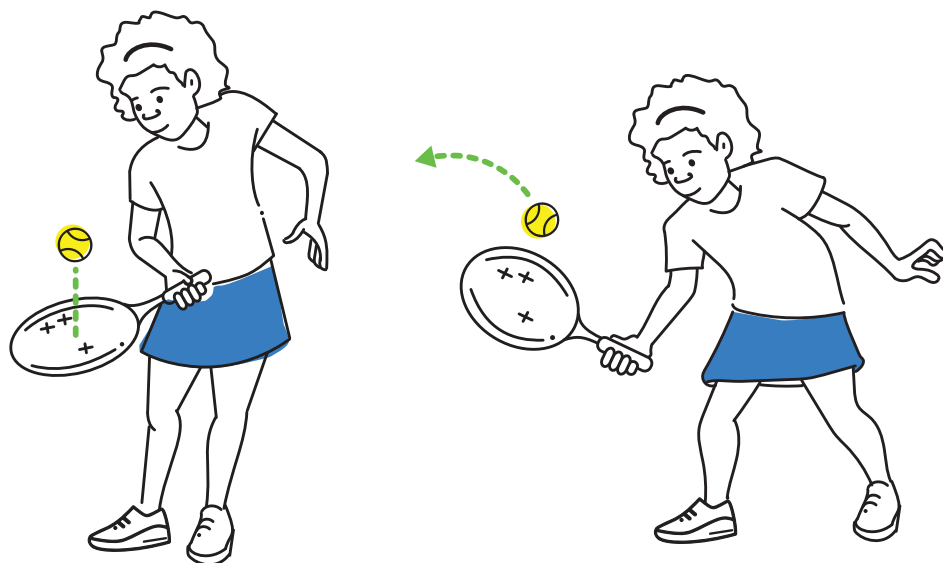
- Volley cooperatively. First, self-volley straight up in the air, then volley to partner.
- Partner then self-volleys and volleys back to partner.

Goal—Adjust racquet face for different volleys.

Progressions

1. Increase distance from net.
2. Self-volley with one stroke, volley with other.

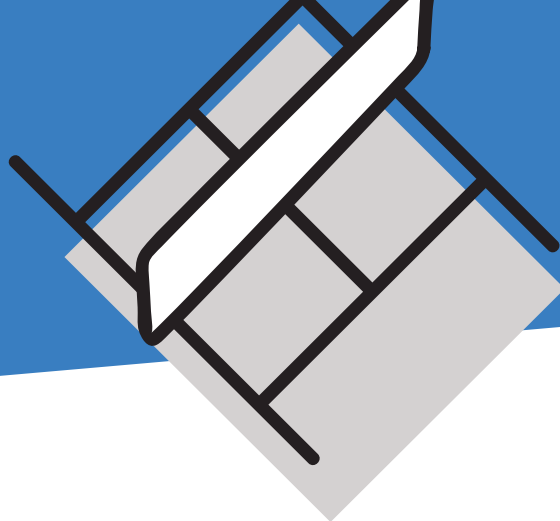
ILLUSTRATION: JUGGLE VOLLEY



II. CHARACTER

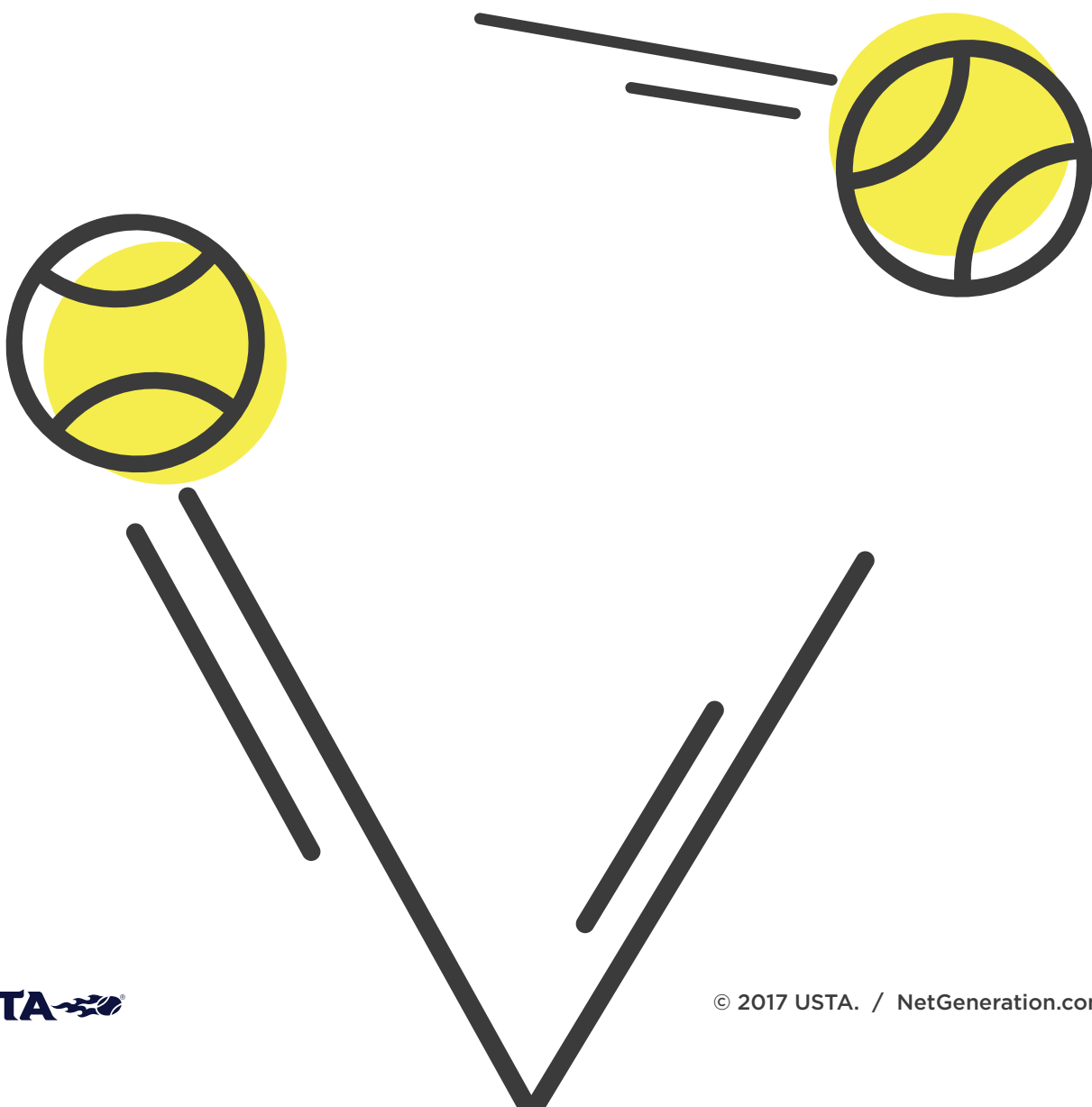
INDEPENDENCE

Schedule your own practice time outside of lessons.



ORANGE BALL 1

III. ATHLETIC SKILLS



SKATE AND VOLLEY

Setup

Players spread out on baseline, maximum of five on each side of net.

Mission

SKATE

- Warm up by “skating” to net, moving with outside foot only.
- Start off facing net in ready position. Step diagonally to right with right foot and bring left foot up next to right.
- Next, step diagonally to left with left foot, and bring right foot up next to left.
- Continue to net, then turn around and “skate” back to baseline.

SKATE AND VOLLEY

- Start at baseline with racquet in hand in volley-ready position.
- Step out diagonally to forehand side. As outside foot hits ground, pause, then turn upper body and set hands in ready position for forehand volley.
- Shadow-volley, stepping forward diagonally with back foot.
- Come back to ready position and make same movement on other side for one-handed backhand volley.
- Continue to net in this manner.
- Need help? Just do one forehand volley, back up and do it again. Then switch to backhand.

Progression

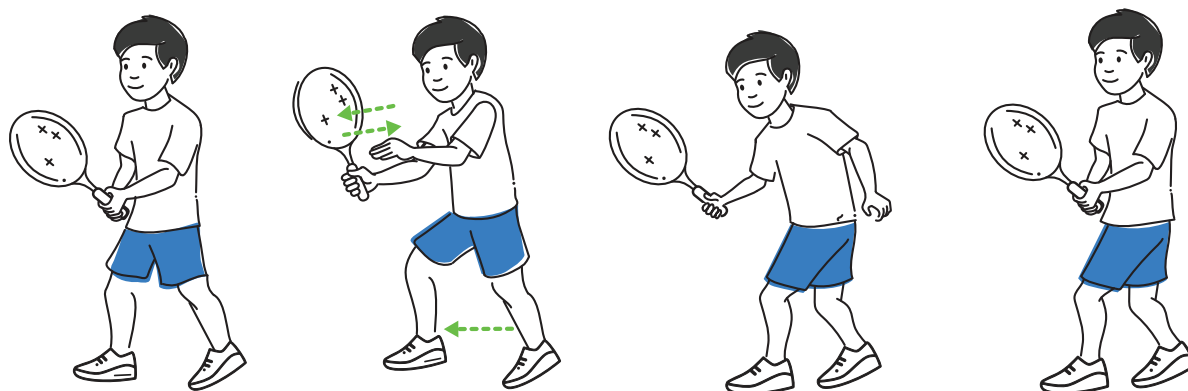
Skate-volley to net, shadow three overheads, then skate back to baseline.



TEACHING TIP

An advanced volley involves moving with outside foot first, which requires separation of upper and lower body to execute shot. On forehand volley, upper-body turn is especially important to maintain continental grip.

ILLUSTRATION: SKATE AND VOLLEY



AROUND THE WORLD

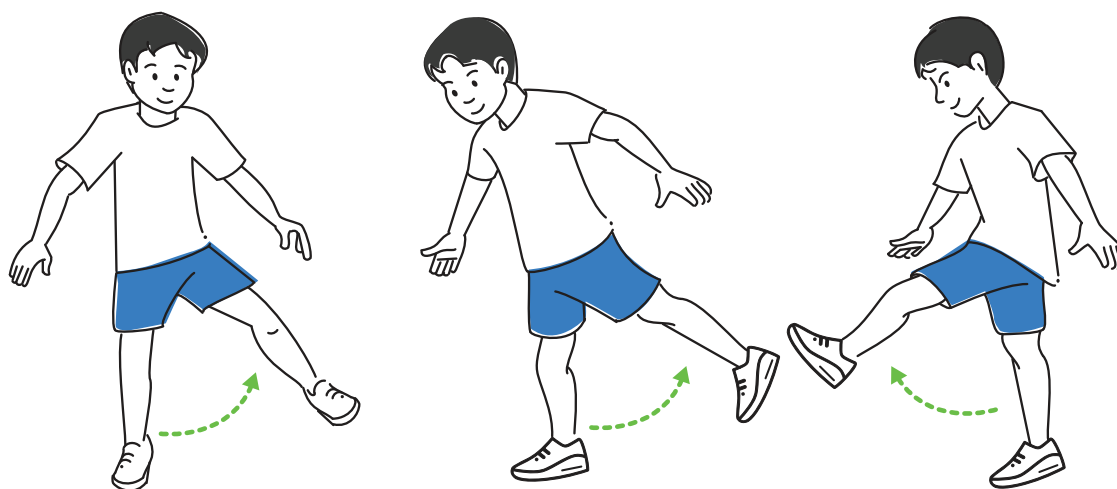
Setup

Players spread out around court.

Mission

- Standing on one foot with soft knee (slightly bent), lift opposite leg forward and up as high as possible while maintaining balance.
- Move raised leg out to side without leaning excessively in opposite direction as a counterbalance.
- Move same leg up and back while maintaining balance, trying not to lean forward excessively.
- Repeat for three trips “around the world” on each leg.

ILLUSTRATION: AROUND THE WORLD



MAKE 'EM MOVE

Setup

- Players in pairs with orange ball and TDL.
- Up to three pairs spread out on each side of court.
- Players face each other, four to six feet apart.
- One player feeds, other catches.
- Catcher uses TDL as “home base.”

Mission

- Start off catching all balls in the air, like a volley.
- Toss to forehand side about five feet away, with enough height so catcher has to take two steps. Catch at chest level.
- Catcher steps with outside foot first, then diagonally with front foot.
- Make all catches with opposite foot and hand.
- Switch roles every minute, then switch to backhand side.

Progressions

1. Add groundstroke/volley combination—catch first ball after bounce, second in the air.
2. Stand farther apart.



TEACHING TIP

When catching on backhand side, players don't need to use their dominant hands. Focus should be on proper movement and shoulder turn.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

UP-AND-BACK VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Approach and volley.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Start on service line on half-court.

Mission—Approach, split and volley.

- Player 1 drop-feeds short ball to player 2, who hits approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 1 hits easy groundstroke back; player 2 volleys and retreats back behind service line.
- Now Player 1 uses volley as approach shot, comes to net and split-steps.
- Player 2 hits it back to player 1, who volleys and retreats.
- Need help? Trap each groundstroke and drop-hit back to partner.

Goal—Use hop move (right/right or left/left) on approach shot and play short volley with underspin.

Progressions

1. Start with topspin approach, then slice.
2. Use appropriate footwork—carioca move on slice backhand, hop move for topspin approach.

OVERHEAD WARMUP

Type: Coach feed.

Focus: Overhead direction.

Setup

- Up to four players per court.
- Two players in service box, two “on deck” behind baseline.
- Place targets in deep corners and service-box corners.

Mission—Alternate overheads to corners.

- Coach feeds two players simultaneously.
- Hit four overheads each to opposite sides, then switch lines.

Goal—Perform drop-step and crossover for deep overhead.

Progressions

1. Start with service-box feed, then deep, then alternate deep/short overheads.
2. Angle short overheads to service-box corners, and deep overheads to deep corners.

V. GAMES

FOUR AND GO

Type: Cooperative to competitive, players in pairs.

Focus: Volley movement and consistency.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- Start in middle of service box.

Mission—Go from neutral to offensive at net.

- Start off volleying cooperatively. Point begins after two volleys each.
- Work on closing on high ball, defending on low.
- Need help? Just volley cooperatively.

Goal—Finish points close to net.

Progressions

1. Start with two volleys each, then three.
2. Start at service line.

TWO-ON-ONE ATTACK

Type: Competitive.

Focus: Approach in multiple ways.

Setup

- Four or five players on each court.
- Net player and baseliner on one side, covering full-court doubles. Extra players lined up behind baseliner.
- Single player (champ) on opposite baseline covering half-court, middle to doubles line.

Mission—Attack net and play out point.

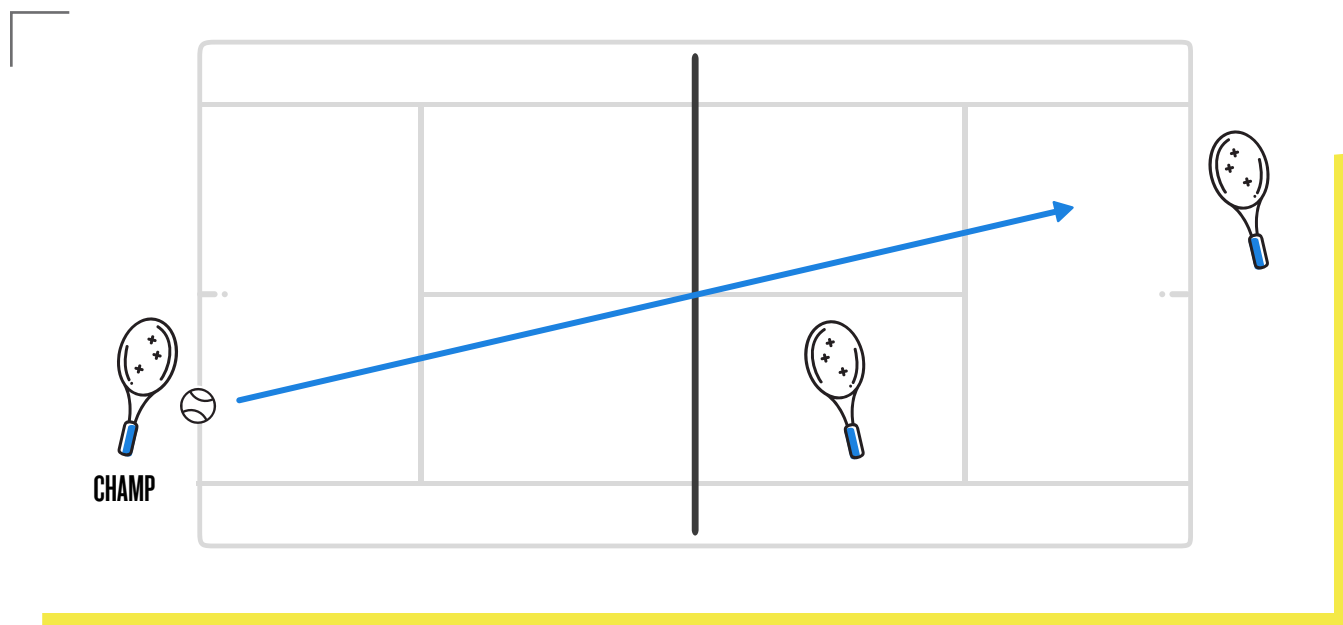
- Champ gets one serve; returner comes to net. Play out point two on one.
- Champ can't lob first two balls.
- After point, rotate—baseliner to net; net player to back of line.
- After seven points, bring over a new champ.

Goal—Use deep and short volleys to end points.

Progressions

1. Use slice approach off serve.
2. Champ must lob within first two shots.

ILLUSTRATION: TWO-ON-ONE ATTACK



VI. PLAY ON YOUR OWN

ATTACK SECOND

Play singles or doubles points. Return and come in on all second serves.

CHAPTER 06

SPEED CHECK

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

OPPOSITES

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Changing spins.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half court.
- All activities inside service box.

Mission—Hit opposite shot from your partner.

- One side leads, other follows.
- Players rally, hitting opposite spins. If leader slices, partner must hit topspin.
- Switch roles after one minute.

Goal—Change grips and/or hand positions for different spins.

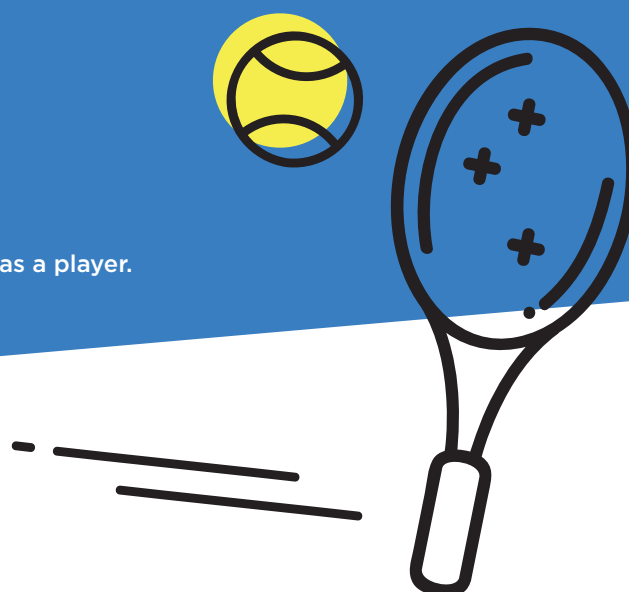
Progressions

1. One stroke only, then alternate.
2. Play two similar shots in a row then change spins.

II. CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY

- Analyze your own strengths and weaknesses as a player.
- Ask yourself, “What can I do better?”



OBSTACLE COURSE

Setup

- Use four cones to create an 18x18-foot square in center of court on each side of net. Remember to keep square a safe distance from net and shared lines.
- Four to six players per square.

Mission

- Proceed from cone to cone using different movements. Next player goes when previous player reaches second cone.
- After each player has gone twice, change movement.

Progressions

1. Skip/shuffle. Skip, shuffle facing outward, backward skip, shuffle facing inward.
2. Sprint. Starting on right side of square, sprint to cones and stop on right foot. Push off and sprint to next cone. After two rounds, start on left side and stop on left foot.
3. Circles. Run to each cone and make complete circle around it. Face same direction entire time.
4. Ask questions. Have players answer specific questions as they perform various movements. What are your favorite foods? Name 10 states.

PRONE EXTENSIONS

Setup

Players spread out around court, up to six on each side of net.

Mission

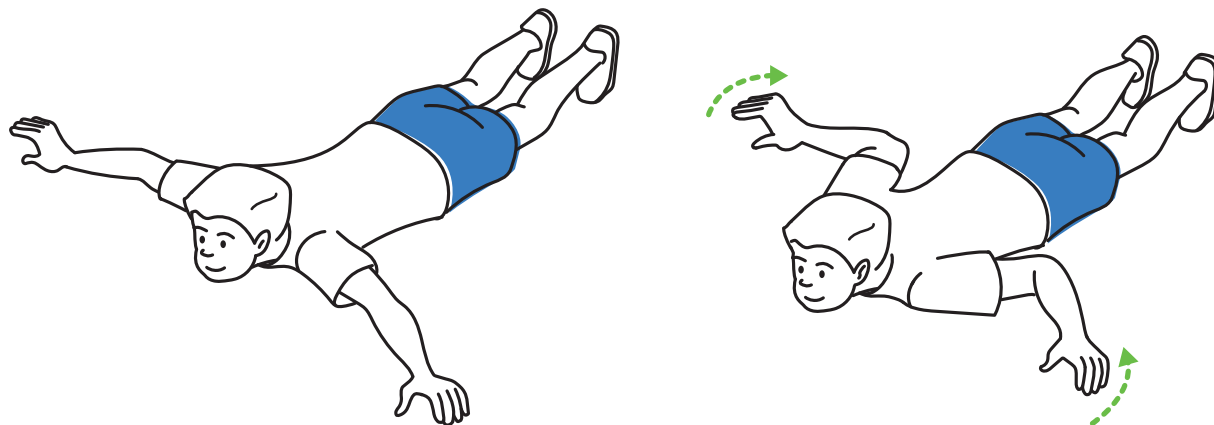
- Lie on ground in prone position (on stomach) with arms extended, forming letter “Y” with your body.
- Toes touch and heels rotate outward. If foot positioning is an issue, point toes straight to ground.
- Raise arms and upper body upward as far as possible without straining or lifting legs off ground.
- Perform a rowing movement, bending arms so elbows move toward ribs.
- Extend arms back to “Y” position and return to starting position with chest on ground.



TEACHING TIP

If the court is excessively hot, make sure to find a shady area where players can perform the activity properly. If there's no access to shade, find another location or time.

ILLUSTRATION: PRONE EXTENSIONS



CLAP CATCH EXTREME

Setup

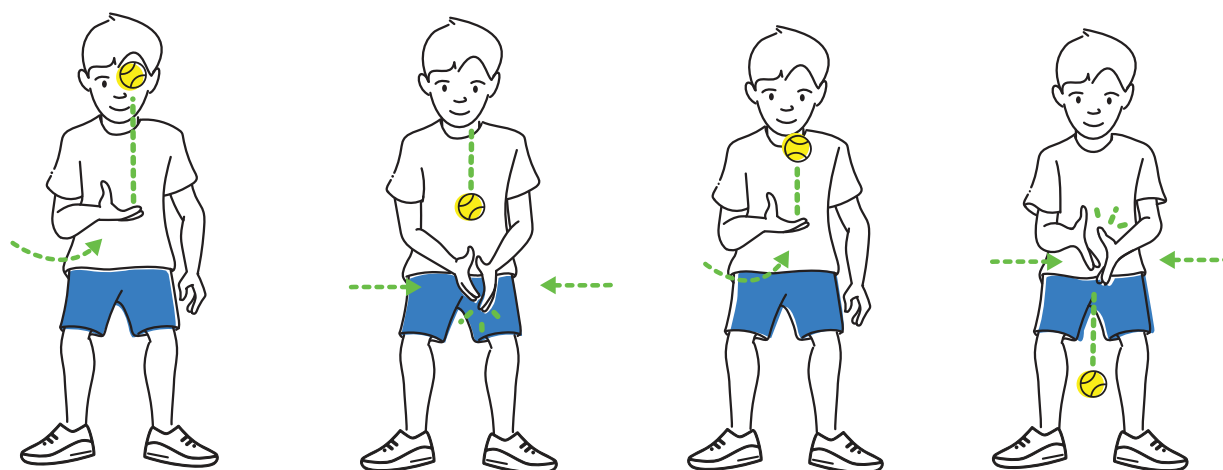
Players spread out around court, with one orange ball each.

Mission—Work on bouncing, clapping and catching ball after bounce.

Progressions

1. Toss ball up with one hand, let it bounce, clap below ball, then catch it.
2. Toss ball up, let it bounce, clap above ball, then catch it.
3. Toss ball up, let it bounce, clap below and above ball, then catch it.

ILLUSTRATION: CLAP CATCH EXTREME



IV. TENNIS SKILLS

ROLL AND RIP

Type: Hand-feed, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke movement and tempo change.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, court split in half using TDLs.
- Two hitters on same baseline starting in middle; two feeders on same side of net close to service line “T” with bucket of balls.
- One side hits forehands, other hits backhands (for righties).

Mission—Roll one, rip one.

- Partner feeds two ball sequences. First is wide with enough height for hitter to get set and roll ball. Second is wide and slightly inside of court so hitter can step into ball.
- For first ball, hitter uses open stance and rolls ball, taking off pace. For second, hitter either steps in with square stance or uses semi-open stance, depending on feed.
- After three two-ball sequences, switch feeder/hitter. After both players hit, switch sides of court.

Goal—Use appropriate footwork, stance and change of tempo for each shot.

Progressions

1. Racquet-feed from opposite side of net.
2. Coach feeds, then play out point.

MIX IT UP

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstroke height.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All players on baseline.

Mission—Alternate rally ball and topspin high loop.

- One side hits continuous rally ball; other alternates between rally ball and topspin loop.
- Switch roles after one minute.

Goal—Change height, spin and speed of rally.

Progressions

1. Hit straight ahead, then switch to crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, then outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

SERVE INDEX

Type: Individual best.

Focus: Serve direction.

Setup

- Up to four players per court.
- All players on one side of net—one serving from deuce, other from ad.
- Use TDLs to divide each service box into three zones.

Note: Use extra players as returners.

Mission—Serve to each zone.

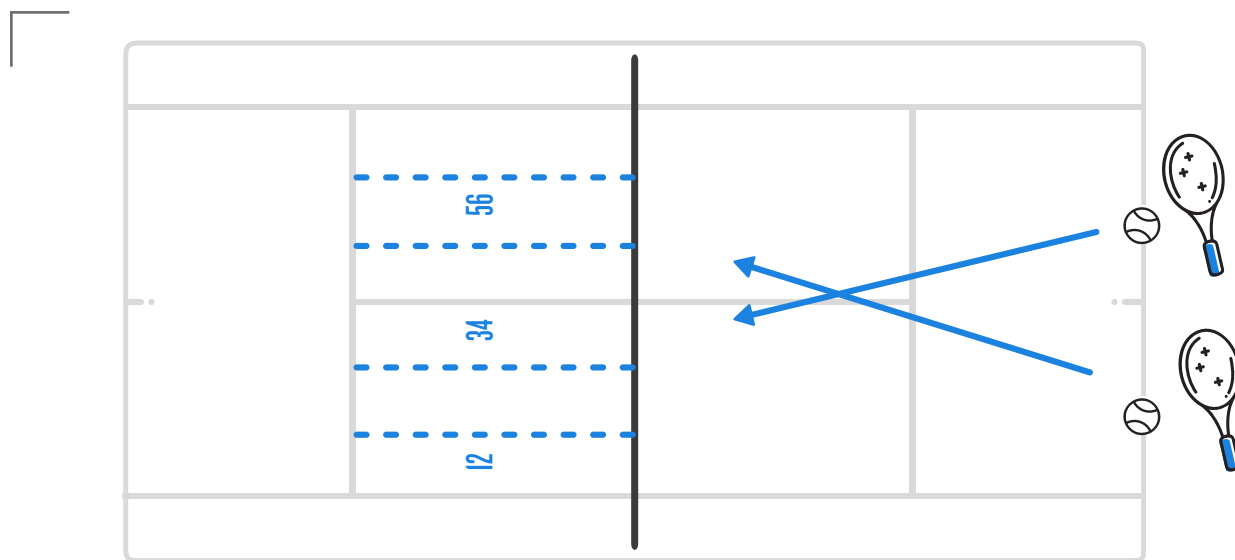
- Count how many balls it takes to serve successfully to all six zones. This is your “serve index.”
- Once all players have served to all six zones, start over and go for personal best.

Goal—Use spin to add control.

Progressions

1. Only counts if same rituals are used before serve.
2. Must use slice for out wide on deuce side and down the “T” on ad side (opposite for lefties).

ILLUSTRATION: SERVE INDEX



I'M THE BOSS

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Change of direction.

Setup

- Two to three players per team, full-court points.
- Servers are “bosses.”

Mission—Roll and rip.

- Start points with a serve.
- Returner plays balls down center with heavy topspin and height.
- Boss waits for right ball to rip.
- Servers score two points for outright winners.
- Play to seven, then switch serving team.

Goal—Decide when to let it rip.

Progressions

1. Returner mixes slices and loops.
2. Both sides can be “the boss.”



COACHING TIP

Learning to accelerate for more racquet-head speed and spin is important at this level. At the same time, encourage players to take the ball early inside the baseline to be more offensive.

VI. PLAY AT HOME

MINI-TENNIS

Setup

Make your own court on driveway or any flat surface.

Mission—Play mini-tennis with a friend or family member.

AIR ATTACK

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

JUGGLE VOLLEY

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Touch on volleys.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- All players in front half of service box.

Mission—Play a self-volley then volley to partner.

- Volley cooperatively. First, self-volley straight up in the air, then volley to partner.
- Partner then self-volleys and volleys back to partner.

Goal—Adjust racquet face for different volleys.

Progressions

1. Increase distance from net.
2. Self-volley with one stroke, volley with other.
3. Add more juggles.

II. CHARACTER

RESPONSIBILITY

Recognize opponents' strengths and weaknesses.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

SKATE AND HIT

Setup

Players spread out on baseline, up to five on each side of net.

Mission

SKATE

- Warm up by “skating” to net, moving with outside foot only.
- Start off facing net in ready position. Step diagonally to right with right foot and bring left foot up next to right.
- Next, step diagonally to left with left foot, and bring right foot up next to left.
- Continue to net in this manner, then turn around and “skate” back to baseline.

SKATE AND HIT

- Start at baseline in ready position with racquet in hand.
- Step out diagonally to forehand side with a unit turn, pausing on outside foot to load (bend).
- As outside foot hits ground, separate hands, bring racquet back and up, and front hand to a balance position at side of body.

- Shadow-swing a forehand. As you swing, push off back foot, land on front. Momentum should force back foot to come through.
- After finishing forehand groundstroke, come back to ready position, then make same movement on other foot for a backhand.
- With backhand, keep non-dominant hand on racquet during preparation.
- Continue to net, making forehand and backhand groundstrokes, leading with outside foot.
- Need help? Just do one forehand groundstroke, back up, and do it again. Once successful, switch to backhand.

Progressions

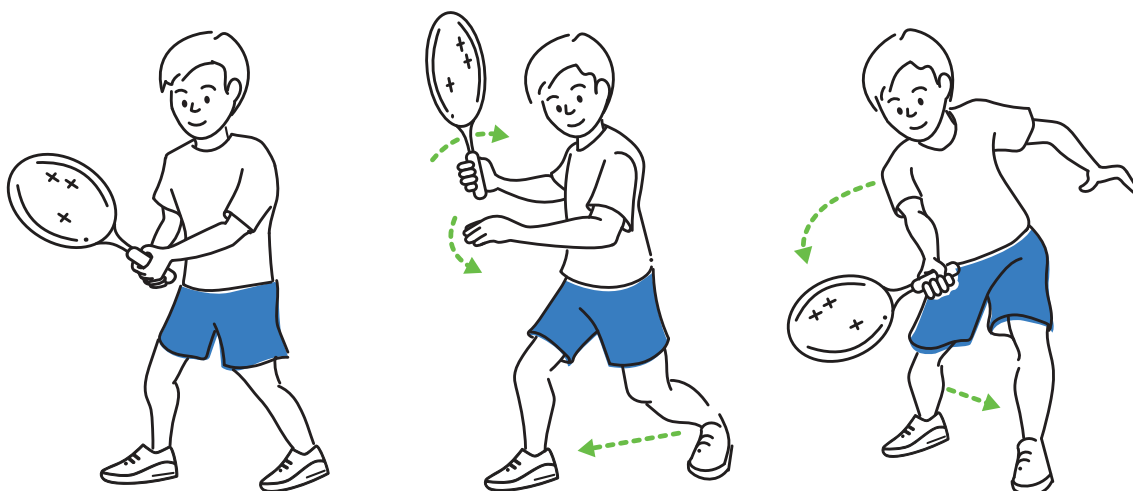
1. Do forehands and backhands to net and back.
2. Combine an approach, volley and overhead.



TEACHING TIP

This movement can be for a return of serve, approach shot or any ball that's inside the court and away from the player.

ILLUSTRATION: SKATE AND HIT



ROCK-PAPER-SCISSORS

Setup

- Players in pairs, up to four pairs on each side of net.
- Face each other in an athletic stance.
- Each player places a cone on right or left side. Can be any distance from players, but both should be same distance from both players.

Mission

- Play rock-paper-scissors.
- After each round, race to spot belonging to winner to see who gets there first.
- Score by winning rock-paper-scissors and getting to spot first.
- Play same opponent up to two minutes then rotate.

Progressions

1. Change how players reach spot (running, skipping, shuffling, carioca, etc.).
2. Must go to cone and return to same spot in athletic position.
3. Specific movement to cone and different movement back.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

OVERHEAD WARMUP

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Chip lob and overhead.

Setup

- Two pairs per court, using half-court.
- One player (overhead hitter) at net, other (lobber) on service line.

Mission—Rally lobs and overheads.

- Drop-hit lob using continental grip; overhead hitter plays a high dink volley back to lobber.
- Lobber continues rally using continental grip and chip lob; net player hits high dink volleys.
- Once successful, lobber backs up to baseline and repeats. This time net player hits easy overhead.
- Need help? Lobber traps overhead from baseline and drop-hits lob using continental grip.

Goal—Use continental grip for lobs, drop-step and crossover for deep overhead.

Progressions

1. Lobber must use one-handed backhand.
2. Net player hits full-speed overhead.

DEEP/SHORT VOLLEY

Type: Hand feed, players in pairs.

Focus: Deep and short volleys.

Setup

- Two pairs per court.
- Two hitters on service line. Partners close to net on opposite side (close to alley) with supply of balls.
- Targets set up for deep corners and service-box corners.

Mission—Play first volley deep, second one short.

- Toss high ball to outside of hitter, who plays swing volley deep, then moves up and split-steps.
- Toss second ball more level. Hitter moves forward and angle-volleys away from feeder.
- Play three two-ball sequences and switch roles.
- Switch sides of net after two full rotations.

Goal—Use different spins for different types of volleys.

Progressions

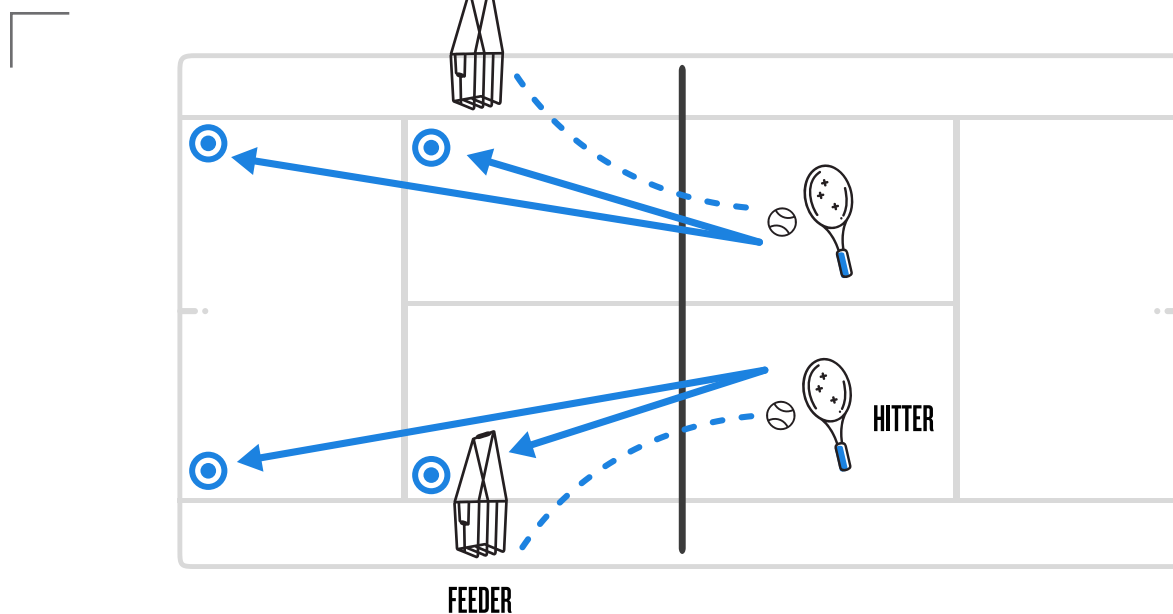
1. First volley deep straight ahead, second to same spot (go behind opponent).
2. Use point system for making volley into correct area. Bonus points for hitting targets.
3. Coach feeds to increase tempo and difficulty.



TEACHING TIP

Make sure players know how to hit both a standard volley with a continental grip, and a swing volley that looks more like a groundstroke. To help players decide which type to hit during a point, encourage them to hit a swing volley when the ball is high and they have to wait for the ball to come down.

ILLUSTRATION: DEEP/SHORT VOLLEY



TWO-ON-ONE ATTACK

Type: Competitive.

Focus: Swing volley approach.

Setup

- Four or five players on each court.
- Net player and baseliner on one side covering doubles court. Extra players line up behind baseliner.
- Single player (champ) on opposite baseline covering half-court, middle to doubles line.

Mission—Attack net and play out point.

- Champ feeds high midcourt floater; baseliner plays swing volley and comes to net.
Play out point two on one.
- Champ can't lob first two balls.
- After point, rotate: baseliner to net; net player to back of line.
- After seven points, bring over a new champ.

Goal—Use deep/short combinations on volleys.

Progressions

1. Play midcourt floater as regular volley and play out point.
2. Champ must lob within first two shots.

OFFENSE/DEFENSE

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Transitioning to net and making passing shots.

Setup

- Four to six players per court.
- Four players start on baseline.
- Extra balls at bottom of net on each side.

Mission—Take over net.

- Either team feeds to start baseline point, winning team then runs to net.
- Net team grabs a ball and feeds deep to start next point.
- Only net team can win points.
- When players on net team lose, they backpedal and baseline team runs up and feeds deep ball.
- Play to a set number of points and rotate opponents and/or partners.

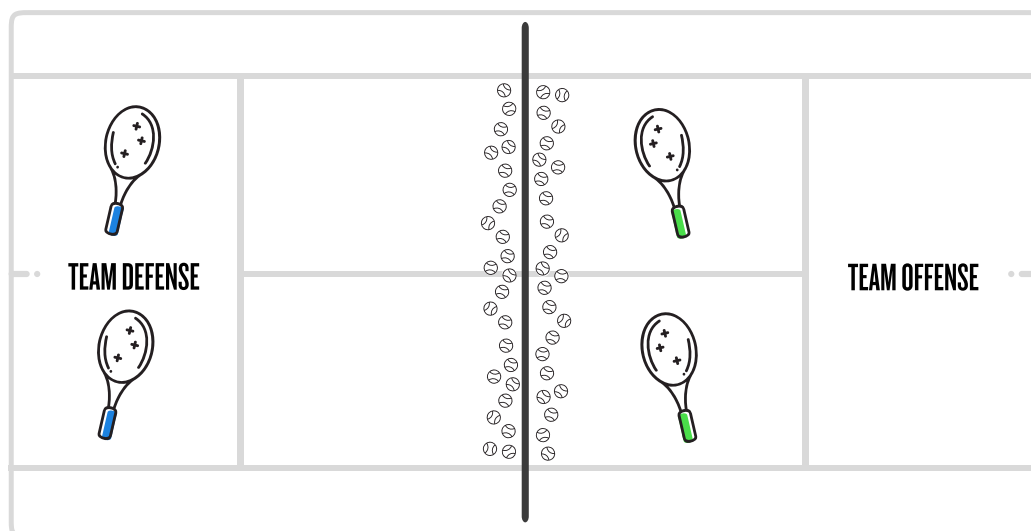
Goal—Use deep and short volleys to end points.

Progressions

1. Player feeds or coach feeds (coach feeds with smaller numbers).
2. Feed must land past service line.
3. Play with or without lobs allowed.

Note: For coach feed, coach stands next to net and feeds deep ball to baseline team. If team wins, coach feeds approach shot.

ILLUSTRATION: OFFENSE/DEFENSE



VI. PLAY AT HOME

OVERHEADS TO THE WALL

Setup

Play with orange ball against garage door or solid wall.

Mission—Rally overheads to wall.

- Hit a serve that bounces in front of wall.
- Ball will rebound off wall and create lob.
- Take lob in the air as overhead and repeat.

Note: Need help? Catch ball and start again as a serve.



WHAT'S YOUR GAME?

Equipment: Blended lines or TDLs for 60-foot court; 25-inch racquets; orange balls; cones, poly-spots and TDLs.

I. WARMUP

PINCH

Type: Cooperative, players in pairs.

Focus: Groundstrokes on the rise.

Setup

Two or three pairs per court.

Mission—Keep rally going without backing up.

- With toes on service line, rally groundstrokes (any stroke). Don't step backward.
- Back up and rally groundstrokes with toes on baseline.
- Take all deep shots on short hop; if it's in the air, volley it!
- Two-minute maximum on each line.

Goal—Prepare earlier for deep balls on the rise.

Progressions

1. Crosscourt.
2. One stroke straight ahead, outside stroke crosscourt.
3. Alternate strokes.

II. CHARACTER

RESPECT

- Enjoy the fun of competition.
- Acknowledge when opponent gives best effort; it will make you a better player.



III. ATHLETIC SKILLS

PLAYER'S CHOICE

- Let two players pick an athletic skill that's already been done in practice, or even create one.
- Be sure to select players who have demonstrated good character during session.

IV. TENNIS SKILLS

FIVE-MINUTE WARMUP

Type: Cooperative with partner.

Focus: Managing a timed warmup.

Setup

Two or three pairs per court, all on baseline.

Mission—Hit groundstrokes, volleys, overheads, serves and returns.

- Hit all strokes in five minutes.
- Coach keeps track of time. First round, coach won't call out time until end. Second round, coach gives two-minute, then one-minute warning.

Goal—Hit all strokes within five-minute period.

V. GAMES

CAPTURE THE CONE

Type: Competitive, team.

Focus: Using your strength.

Setup

- Two teams of two or three per court.
- Teams have five to seven cones lined up on their sides, outside of court.

Mission—Look to hit your favorite shot.

- Play out points with two serves.
- Each player on serving team announces favorite stroke before game starts.
- If server wins point with favorite shot, team gets bonus point.
- Winning player runs to other side and captures a cone (or cones) for team's line.
- Play games by time, team with most cones wins, or team with all cones wins.
- Switch serving teams after each game.

Goal—Use your strengths.

Progressions

1. Server can win bonus point only with forehand.
2. Any player receives bonus point for winning with volley or overhead.

KAMIKAZE DOUBLES

Type: Competitive, doubles.

Focus: Transition to net.

Setup

- Four to six players per court.
- Start in one up/one back doubles formation.

Mission—Get to net in different ways.

- Play doubles points. Must serve and volley, and return and come in.
- Returner can't lob.

Goal—Keep closing on net to end points.

Progressions

1. Topspin approach, then slice approach.
2. Return must go crosscourt.

**COACHING TIP**

It takes many years to develop a great doubles game. As players become more skilled, encourage them to serve and volley, and return and come in, even if they're unsuccessful at first.

VI. PLAY AT HOME**GO SEE A COLLEGE MATCH**

Find a college match close to home and go watch.

- What types of doubles formations do they play?
- Do they use the same patterns and combinations as you do in singles?
- What about their rituals before they serve?

TOGETHER WE WILL

**GROW
THE GAME**

