

# TENNIS RULES

## NSA Modifications

- A. Matches consist of three sets of four games.
- B. Conventional advantage scoring will be used.
- C. A set is completed when a player has won four games and leads an opponent by two games.
- D. Sets reaching four games apiece will play a 5 out-of-10 point's tiebreaker.

## 1. Server & Receiver

The players shall stand on opposite sides of the net; the player who first delivers the ball shall be called the Server, and the other the Receiver.

## 2. Choice of Ends & Service

The choice of ends and the right to be Server or Receiver in the first game shall be decided by toss. The player winning the toss may choose or require his opponent to choose:

- a. The right to be Server or Receiver, in which case the other player shall choose the end; or
- b. The end, in which case the other player shall choose the right to be Server or Receiver.

### Comment:

The toss shall be made before the warm-up. Choices should be made promptly after the toss and are irrevocable, except when the match is postponed or suspended before the start of the match.

## 3. The Service:

The service shall be delivered in the following manner. Immediately before commencing to serve, the Server shall stand with both feet at rest behind (i.e. further from the net than) the baseline, and within the imaginary continuations of the centre-mark and side-line. The Server shall then project the ball by hand into the air in any direction and before it hits the ground strike it with his racket and the delivery shall be deemed to have been completed at the moment of the impact of the racket and the ball. A player with the use of only one arm may utilize his racket for the projection.

### Comment:

There is no restriction regarding the kind of service which may be used; that is, the player may use an underhand or overhand service at his discretion.

### Comment:

In singles, the server may stand anywhere in back of the baseline between the imaginary extensions of the inside edge of the center mark and the outside edge of the singles sideline.

## 4. Foot Fault

The Server shall throughout the delivery of the Service:

- a. Not change his position by walking or running. The Server shall not by slight movements of the feet which do not materially affect the location originally taken up by him, be deemed "to change his position by walking or running".

- b. Not touch with either foot any area other than that behind the base-line within the imaginary extensions of the centre-mark and side-lines.

### **5. Delivery of Service**

- a. In delivering the service, the Server shall stand alternately behind the right and left halves of the Court beginning from the right in every game. If service from a wrong half of the Court occurs and is undetected, all play resulting from such wrong service or services shall stand, but the inaccuracy of station shall be corrected immediately it is discovered.
- b. The ball served shall pass over the net and hit the ground within the Service Court which is diagonally opposite, or upon any line bounding such Court, before the Receiver returns it.

### **6. Service Fault**

The Service is a fault:

- a. If the Server commits any breach of Rules 3, 4 and 5;
- b. If he misses the ball in attempting to strike it;
- c. If the ball served touches a permanent fixture (other than the net, strap or band) before it hits the ground.

### **7. Second Service**

After a fault (if it is the first fault) the Server shall serve again from behind the same half of the Court from which he served that fault, unless the service was from the wrong half, when, in accordance with Rule 5, the Server shall be entitled to one service only from behind the other half.

### **8. When to Serve**

The Server shall not serve until the Receiver is ready. If the latter attempts to return the service, he shall be deemed ready. If, however, the Receiver signifies that he is not ready, he may not claim a fault because the ball does not hit the ground within the limits fixed for the service.

Comment:

This rule applies to the first and second serve. The Receiver, having indicated he is ready, may not become unready unless some outside interference takes place. If the Receiver claims to be not ready and does not make any effort to return a service, the Server's claim for the point may not be honored even though the service was good.

### **9. The "Let"**

In all cases where a let has to be called under the rules, or to provide for an interruption to play, it shall have the following interpretations:

- a. When called solely in respect of a service that one service only shall be replayed.
- b. When called under any other circumstance, the point shall be replayed.

### **10. The Let in Service**

The Service is a let:

a. If the ball served touches the net, strap or band, and is otherwise good, or, after touching the net, strap or band, touches the Receiver or anything which he wears or carries before hitting the ground.

b. If a service or a fault is delivered when the Receiver is not ready.

In case of a let, that particular service shall not count, and the Server shall serve again, but a service let does not annul a previous fault.

### **11. Order of Service**

At the end of the first game, the Receiver shall become Server, and the Server Receiver; and so on alternately in all the subsequent games of a match. If a player serves out of turn, the player who ought to have served shall serve as soon as the mistake is discovered, but all points scored before such discovery shall stand. A fault served before such discovery shall not stand. If a game shall have been completed before such discovery, the order of service shall remain as altered.

### **12. When Players Change Ends**

The players shall change ends at the end of the first, third and every subsequent alternate game of each set, and at the end of each set unless the total number of games in such set is even, in which case the change is not made until the end of the first game of the next set. If a mistake is made and the correct sequence is not followed the players must take up their correct station as soon as the discovery is made and follow their original sequence.

### **13. The Ball in Play**

A ball is in play from the moment at which it is delivered in service. Unless a fault or a let is called it remains in play until the point is decided.

#### **Comment:**

A point is not decided simply when, or because, a good shot has clearly passed a player, or when an apparently bad shot passes over a baseline or sideline. An outgoing ball is still definitely in play until it actually strikes the ground, backstop, a permanent fixture (other than the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band), or a player. The same applies to a good ball, bounding after it has landed in the proper Court. A ball that becomes imbedded in the net is out of play.

#### **Comment:**

When a player hits a ball into the net and the opponent, thinking the ball is coming over, strikes at it and hits the net, the opponent loses the point if the opponent touched the net while the ball was still in play.

### **14. Server Wins Point**

The Server wins the point:

a. If the ball served, not being a let under Rule 10, touches the Receiver or anything which he wears or carries, before it hits the ground;

b. If the Receiver otherwise loses the point as provided by Rule 16.

### **15. Receiver Wins Point**

The Receiver wins the point:

- a. If the Server serves two consecutive faults;
- b. If the Server otherwise loses the point as provided by Rule 16.

### **16. Player Loses Point**

A player loses the point if:

- a. He fails, before the ball in play has hit the ground twice consecutively, to return it directly over the net (except as provided in Rule 20(a) or (c)); or
- b. He returns the ball in play so that it hits the ground, a permanent fixture, or other object, outside any of the lines which bound his opponent's Court (except as provided in Rule 20(a) or (c)); or

#### **Comment:**

A ball hitting a scoring device or other object attached to a net post results in loss of point to the striker.

- c. He volleys the ball and fails to make a good return even when standing outside the Court; or
- d. In playing the ball he deliberately carries or catches it on his racket or deliberately touches it with his racket more than once; or

#### **Comment:**

Only when there is a definite "second push" by the player does the shot become illegal, with consequent loss of point. The word "deliberately" is the key word in this rule. Two hits occurring in the course of a single continuous swing are not deemed a double hit.

- e. He or his racket (in his hand or otherwise) or anything which he wears or carries touches the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, or the ground within his opponent's Court at any time while the ball is in play; or

#### **Comment:**

Touching a pipe support that runs across the Court at the bottom of the net is interpreted as touching the net. See Comment under Rule 19 for a ball which hits a pipe support.

- f. He volleys the ball before it has passed the net; or
- g. The ball in play touches him or anything that he wears or carries, except his racket in his hand or hands; or

#### **Comment:**

This loss of point occurs regardless of whether the player is inside or outside the bounds of the Court when the ball touches the player.

- h. He throws his racket at and hits the ball; or
- i. He deliberately and materially changes the shape of his racket during the playing of the point.

### **17. Player Hinders Opponent**

If a player commits any act which hinders his opponent in making a stroke, then, if this is deliberate, he shall lose the point or if involuntary, the point shall be replayed.

**Comment:**

"Deliberate" means a player did what he intended to do, although the resulting effect on the opponent might or might not have been what he intended. Example: a player, after returning a ball advises the player's partner in such a loud voice that their opponents are hindered.

"Involuntary" means a non-intentional act such as a hat blowing off or a scream resulting from a sudden wasp sting.

**18. Ball Falls on Line**

A ball falling on a line is regarded as falling in the Court bounded by that line.

**Comment:**

In a non-officiated match, each player makes the call on any ball hit toward the player's side of the net. If a player cannot call a ball out with certainty, the player should regard it as good.

**19. Ball Touches Permanent Fixtures**

If the ball in play touches a permanent fixture (other than the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band) after it has hit the ground, the player who struck it wins the point; if before it hits the ground, and his opponent wins the point.

**Comment:**

A ball in play that strikes a pipe support running across the Court at the base of the net is treated the same as a ball landing on clear ground. See Comment under Rule 16(e) for a player who touches a pipe support.

**20. A Good Return**

It is a good return:

- a. If the ball touches the net, posts, singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, provided that it passes over any of them and hits the ground within the Court; or
- b. If the ball, served or returned, hits the ground within the proper Court and rebounds or is blown back over the net, and the player whose turn it is to strike reaches over the net and plays the ball, provided that he does not contravene Rule 16(e); or
- c. If the ball is returned outside the posts, or singles sticks, either above or below the level of the top to the net, even though it touches the posts or singles sticks, provided that it hits the ground within the proper Court; or
- d. If a player's racket passes over the net after he has returned the ball, provided the ball passes the net before being played and is properly returned; or
- e. If a player succeeds in returning the ball, served or in play, which strikes a ball lying in the Court.

**Comment:**

Paragraph (e) of the rule refers to a ball lying on the Court at the start of the point as a result of a service let or fault or as a result of a player dropping it. If a ball in play strikes a rolling or stationary "foreign" ball that has come from elsewhere after the point started, a let should be played.

## **21. Hindrance of a Player**

In case a player is hindered in making a stroke by anything not within his control, except a permanent fixture of the Court, or except as provided for in Rule 17, a let shall be called.

**Comment:**

See Rule 9 and Comments regarding lets.

## **22. Score in a Game**

- a. If a player wins his first point, the score is called 15 for that player; on winning his second point, the score is called 30 for that player; on winning his third point, the score is called 40 for that player, and the fourth point won by a player is scored game for that player except as below:

If both players have won three points, the score is called deuce; and the next point won by a player is scored advantage for that player. If the same player wins the next point, he wins the game; if the other player wins the next point the score is again called deuce; and so on, until a player wins the two points immediately following the score at deuce, when the game is scored for that player.

- b. Optional Alternative Scoring System

The No-Ad System of Scoring may be adopted as an alternative to the traditional scoring system in paragraph (a) of this Rule provided the decision is announced in advance of the event. In this case, the following Rules shall be effective:

If a player wins his first point, the score is called 15 for that player; on winning his second point, the score is called 30 for that player; on winning his third point, the score is called 40 for that player, and the fourth point won by a player is scored game for that player except as below: If both players have won three points, the score is called deuce; one deciding point shall then be played. The receiver shall choose whether he wishes to receive the service from the right-half of the court or the left-half of the court. The player who wins the deciding point is scored the game.

**Comment:**

In a non-officiated match the Server should announce, in a voice audible to the Receiver and spectators, the set score at the beginning of each game, and point scores as the game goes on. Misunderstandings will be avoided if this practice is followed.

## **23. Score in a Set**

- a. A player (or players) who first win four games wins a set; except that he must win by a margin of two games over his opponent and where necessary a set shall be extended until this margin is achieved.
- b. The tie-break system of scoring may be adopted as an alternative to the advantage set system in paragraph (a) of this Rule provided the decision is announced in advance of the match.

**Comment:**

Tie-Breakbe played in all sets. In this case, the following Rules shall be effective:

The tie-break shall operate when the score reaches four games all in any set except in the third or fifth set of a three-set or five-set match respectively when an ordinary advantage set shall be played, unless otherwise decided and announced in advance of the match.

**Comment:**

The Set Tie-Break or the Super Tie-Break in lieu of the third or final set in selected tournaments. The following system shall be used in a tie-break game.

- a. A player who first wins seven points shall win the game and the set provided he leads by a margin of two points. If the score reaches six points all the game shall be extended until this margin has been achieved. Numerical scoring shall be used throughout the tie-break game.
- b. The player whose turn it is to serve shall be the Server for the first point. His opponent shall be the Server for the second and third points and thereafter each player shall serve alternately for two consecutive points until the winner of the game and set has been decided.
- c. From the first point, each service shall be delivered alternately from the right and left Courts, beginning from the right Court. If service from a wrong half of the Court occurs and is undetected, all play resulting from such wrong service or services shall stand, but the inaccuracy of station shall be corrected immediately it is discovered.
- d. Players shall change ends after every four points and at the conclusion of the tie-break game.

**24. Rotation of Service**

The player whose turn it was to serve first in the tie-break game shall receive service in the first game of the following set.

**25. Maximum Number of Sets**

A match can be played to the best of 3 sets (the player/team needs to win 2 sets to win the match)

**26. Decision**

If the unexpected situation occurs and decision could not be made based on the rules and regulations, the final decision will be announced by the official referee.