SERVING

Before serving, be sure the receiver is ready to play.

When serving the first point, stand behind the baseline between the center mark and the right sideline. When serving, you’re not allowed to step on or over the baseline before hitting the ball.

The first serve must go over the net into the receiver’s right service court. If your first serve doesn’t go into the correct court, it’s called a fault.

Two tries are permitted for each service.

If you serve a ball which hits the top of the net before bouncing into the correct service court, it’s called a let. You may take that serve again. If it hits the net and then goes outside the service court, it’s a fault.

When serving the next point, stand behind the baseline between the center mark and the left sideline. The ball must go across the net into the receiver’s left service court.

After you have served one game in a set, you switch ends of the court and now receive your opponent’s serve for one game. You switch ends again after the third, fifth and every following odd-numbered game.

The alley and back court are never used on the serve.

PLAY

If a player hits the ball before it touches the ground and is standing outside the court, the ball is still in play.

A ball landing on the base line, sideline, or service line is good.

The ball is good if it hits the top of the net and goes into the proper playing area.

A player must let the service ball bounce before it is hit.

A player may not reach across the net to hit the ball, but may follow-through across the net.

SCORING

- Scoring is identical in singles and doubles games.
- Tennis matches are scored in points, games, and sets.
- The server’s score is always called first.
- The server continues the service during the entire game.
A player wins a point when his or her opponent makes a fault.

A fault occurs when: A player hits two serves out or into the net and is called a double fault. A player hits the ball into the net during a rally. A player hits the ball out of the court lines.

POINTS

- No point = LOVE
- First point = 15
- Second point = 30
- Third point = 40
- Fourth point = GAME
- Deuce = Each side has 3 points or 40 all. One side must have two consecutive points after deuce to win a game.
- Advantage = The first point after deuce.

- If the server wins the first point after deuce, the score is called advantage server or add-in.
- If the receiver wins the first point after deuce, it is called advantage receiver or add-out.
- A set in tennis is the player who wins 6 games and is ahead by 2 games. Exceptions are when the games are tied at 6-6 each, and players play a tie-breaker. The set score is scored 7-6 for the winner. A match in tennis is 2 out of 3 sets for women and 3 out of 5 for men.

HOW A PLAYER LOSES A POINT

- A player’s racquet or clothing touches the net during a rally or point.
- He or she hits the ball on the second bounce while trying to get it over the net.
- The ball touches the player or hits his or her clothing during a rally before it bounces.
- The player plays the ball before it passes over the net.
- The player fails to hit the ball after the first bounce.
- The player fails to hit the ball into the proper playing area.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- Absolutely no horseplay on the way to or coming from the courts.
- Make sure you stop and look before crossing the road.
- Be aware of where classmates are when you’re practicing your swing.
- When playing doubles, call for shots that may be taken by either player.
- Do not jump the nets.
- Be careful when retrieving loose balls that have gone into the parking lot or street.
Display good sportsmanship.

Pay attention to how you return loose balls to other players and to other courts.

Don’t walk through a game in progress.

DEFINITIONS

Ace - a serve that the opponent cannot even touch.

Break - to win a game served by your opponent.

Drop shot - A soft, delicate shot intended to cause the ball to barely clear the net.

Fault - a served ball that is either hit illegally or lands in the wrong service court.

Foot Fault - a serve that is illegal because the server steps over the line.

Let - a replay taken after a serve hits the top of the net and bounces in the correct service court.

Lob - a ball lifted high into the air.

Rally - a series of good hits made successfully by both players.

Volley - hitting a ball before it touches the ground.