



Match Etiquette

Especially at more recreational skill levels, it's important to know not only the rules of tennis, but also those covering basic etiquette.

Following are some basic rules that cover common courtesy for tennis matches.

Warm up your opponent.

Warm up is not practice; it is warm up, for your opponent as well as yourself. This means hitting balls directly to the opponent and at a reasonable pace. Generally, you should not return serves during the warm up, unless you ask your opponent for permission.

Call the score before each point.

This not only ensures that players are on the same wavelength before each point and avoids later disputes, calling the score before serving lets the receiver know the point is about to begin. The server should call the score before each point, NOT the receiver.

Do not return serves that are obviously out.

If a serve is obviously long or wide, the Code of Conduct requires player to hit the ball into the net in front of them, or make sure it is secure in the fence behind them. It's considered a form of rudeness to hit serves that are obviously out back over the net. Continuing to do so can be considered unsportsmanlike and a delay of game.

Play to the reasonable pace of the server.

While the rules allow up to 25 seconds in between points for recovery, the receiver must play to the reasonable pace of the server, which is generally considered around 10-12 seconds after the last point ended. Receivers should not stall and servers should not rush, even if they prefer to start the next point immediately.

Additionally, if the receiver is not ready when the ball is served, he or she should make no attempt to return the ball. If the receiver makes a stab at a serve, and then tries to claim he or she wasn't ready, the receiver is out of luck. Just hold up your hand and say, "I wasn't ready."

When in doubt, call it "in."

If there is any doubt, give the call to your opponent. If you honestly can't see a call, you may ask your opponent if they saw the ball. If they saw the ball, they should make the call. If they didn't, then you must give them the call.

There are no "do overs," with one exception.

If doubles teammates disagree on a serve call, and the serve was put back in play, they may play a let. If the receiver put a sitting duck back in play, sportsmanship would require that the receiving team give the point to their opponents.



Don't interrupt points on the next court when returning balls.

In order not to interrupt a point on the next court, or delay your match, simply roll balls into the fence behind and between fences if the other court is involved in a point. This will allow you to begin your point, and allow the players on the next court to retrieve their ball without interfering with your point.

- Do not roll balls behind players involved in a point, even if it's well behind them and into their fence; their opponent can see the ball rolling behind them
- Also, if a ball rolls onto your court from another court and there is any chance that anyone on your court could step on that ball call a let and replay the point. You are here to have fun, not get hurt.

Have two balls ready before serving.

Before you begin serving you should have two balls ready to go. If by some chance you miss the first serve then you have the other ball ready to go without delaying the game in order to retrieve the second ball.

Cheering and praise.

It is wonderful to cheer on or praise your partner or another player. However, save the comments for after the point. Commenting after somebody has served or hit a great shot can sometimes be confusing because if the comment is not heard clearly then anyone of the others players (including your partner) may think that you are stopping the play for some reason. Do not applaud double faults or missed shots.

End of a Match.

Always go to the net and shake hands with your opponent(s) after a match. This is just common courtesy to acknowledge a well played match, whether it was you, your opponent, or both of you that played well.