RTC CAMPS: FUNDAMENTALS FOR THE FUTURE

Level I
Regional Training Center Manual
Dear Parents, Coaches and Players:

Congratulations on being selected by USTA Player Development and your USTA section to participate in a USTA Regional Training Center (RTC) camp. These camps serve as a critical step for the USTA to build relationships with parents, coaches and players across the country, provide information and resources to all who attend, and offer feedback on the players’ technical and tactical development. We want to work together to build the next generation of American tennis players. We believe these camps and relationships are the key to our country’s future success and therefore have been a top priority for USTA Player Development during the last four years.

In 2012, there were more than 1,000 players who participated in at least one of the 63 RTC Camps that took place. Each camp was held at one of our USTA Regional Training Centers or host sites throughout the 17 USTA sections in the U.S. Along with the players, there were more than 200 coaches who worked and attended the camps, and over 1,000 parents who received resources and information through the camp programming.

We think these camps have been a big success, and we’re looking forward to an even better 2013. We will continue to strive to “Grow the Family” by working with a broader base of young players beginning their journey through the Player Development pathway. Our goal is to have a large wave of technically sound players moving up through the system, and these camps are helping us accomplish this goal.

I am fortunate to have many opportunities to travel around the world and see the greatest players compete at the highest-level tournaments. I have seen up close how unbelievably competitive this sport is and how global the sport of tennis has become across the world stage. If our country is going to produce a larger group of Top 100 players and Grand Slam champions, the only way to get there is to build a bigger base of technically sound players at a young age, have a passionate support group around them and then provide them with the best training and resources possible to help them “Outwork the World.” This isn’t an easy endeavor, but as our USTA Director of Coaching Jose Higueras often says, “If it was easy, everybody would be doing it.”

Thank you again for being a part of this effort, and have a great weekend! Let’s Do This!

Patrick McEnroe
General Manager
USTA Player Development Incorporated
Acknowledgments

There are so many people to thank for assuring that *Regional Training Center Camps: Fundamentals for the Future* became a finished product. This manual is a culmination of the first four years of Regional Training Center Camps. This project was a true team effort, and sprung from the creativity and hard work of so many creative coaches, parents and players from around the country. First, we would like to thank Patrick McEnroe for his vision, leadership, and constant support of the RTC structure. Jose Higueras, Jay Berger, Ola Malmqvist, Martin Blackman and David Ramos had the vision for the first ever Regional Training Center manual. It provided great structure for helping to execute on- and off-court training for our up-and-coming American junior players at the RTC camps. Dr. Paul Lubbers was able to help integrate many of the great resources that have been produced by the USTA Coaching Education Department. We want to thank our National Coaches for providing constant feedback on the content that is being delivered to the players at each camp. Anne Pankhurst’s vision for Player Identification has been instrumental in refining how we go about evaluating and providing feedback to the players, coaches and parents. Our department is grateful to Carlos Cano, Francisco Montoya, Vesa Ponkka, Bryan Smith, Laurie Warder and Dan Willman for helping lead over 75 Regional Training Center Camps and being part of an advisory team that has helped read the first draft of this manual as well as develop some of this countries’ top players. Just this last year, our department took on a new member of our team, Tom Gullikson, who has brought a wealth of coaching knowledge and experience to our department. Jon Evans and Rhonda Hoffmann are the backbone of the Player ID & Development Department. And lastly, we would like to thank Jon Evans and Rhonda Hoffmann, who are the backbone of the Player ID and Development Department. They have become an integral part of helping shape the Player Development Pathway in the United States, and we are very grateful for their constant dedication and hard work.

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Mission Statement

To develop world-class American players through a clearly defined training structure and competitive pathway as well as through the implementation of a comprehensive coaching philosophy and structure.
The USTA Player Development Teaching and Coaching Philosophy is based on teaching and developing the fundamental skills that enable the player to have the most complete game possible.

Part of the mission of the USTA Player Development is the implementation of a comprehensive coaching philosophy, which was developed by Jose Higueras in conjunction with our USTA Player Development staff and is based on the many years of collective coaching experience and interaction with the international tennis community.

Tennis coaches and teachers who work with high performance players of any age have the responsibility to help develop the full potential of their players and to enable them to become the best players possible. The long-term development of a world-class player does not take place in a vacuum but rather in a dynamic environment that is influenced by many things, including teaching and coaching philosophies, growth and development of the player and the nature of competition itself.

Teaching and Coaching Philosophy

USTA Player Development (USTAPD) adheres to a teaching and coaching philosophy that encompasses the entire continuum of Player Development and is applicable to athletes at all stages of development. The foundation of the philosophy is the belief that coaches should teach and develop the fundamental skills that enable the player to have the most complete game possible. At a young age, the focus should be to develop the correct fundamental skills for future success.

Open-Closed-Open Model of Teaching and Learning

As the player develops within acceptable parameters, the progressive nature of teaching and training challenges the player to apply the fundamental skills in a more dynamic environment, where movement, decision making and shot selection can be assimilated. This parameter-based, progressive teaching and coaching methodology spans the player’s years of development and is based on the underpinnings of motor learning and athletic movement. Gross motor skills, agility, balance and coordination are learned in an “open” play environment, and then tennis-specific skills are refined in a “closed” environment, where precise repetition and deliberate practice is necessary. Finally, these skills are, and once again, tested and developed in an “open” play-based environment.

USTAPD ascribes to this open–closed–open model of learning, and recent studies on how myelinization (The Talent Code by Daniel Coyle) occurs around nerve cells and reinforces the importance of deliberate practice. Based on this model and utilizing the premise of deliberate practice throughout the training continuum, new skill teaching (skill acquisition) occurs in a controlled environment (drills), while training of existing skills (skill refinement) is done in a more open environment.
Five Principles of the USTA Player Development Teaching and Coaching Philosophy

1. **Patience.** Teaching tennis takes tremendous self-control, passion and discipline from the coach and player.

2. **Progressions.** Everything that is taught must follow ordered progressions based on the fact that the game of tennis is played first with the mind and eyes, secondly with the feet and finally with the hands. In teaching the game, the progression should be taught in the opposite order:
   - 1. Hands (e.g., grips, swing shape and path, unit turn)
   - 2. Feet (e.g., split step, movement patterns, stances, recovery)
   - 3. Eyes and mind (e.g., decision making)

3. Parameters. From the onset of training, teaching must be executed carefully, using proper technique within a range of acceptability.

4. Planning and Goals. Player development plans should be devised and designed jointly by the player and coach (the more advanced the player is, the more input the player should provide) based on clearly defined performance goals.
   - The coach should plan practice with a clear goal in mind and execute using the appropriate progressions.
   - The coach should always communicate the goal of the practice and the focus to the player.

5. Problem Solving. Players need to learn how to think independently and develop self-reliance. The coach’s role should be to show the player the correct path to follow.
Player Identification & Development
The Player Identification and Development Department works at the base of our Player Development Pathway structure to ensure the identification and development of our country's best young players and coaches. Coaching Education and Parent Education is embedded into all of our programming at RTC camps and Coaching Workshops.

The Player Identification and Development Department identifies and evaluates young players and HP coaches and gives development support to them. The science and art of Player ID in athletics is very inaccurate in pre-pubescent athletes. Therefore, our PD pathway for players under the age of 14 is very fluid and open. Our goal is to provide an intersection of opportunity and commitment for as many gifted athletes as possible.

As we develop more and more fundamentally sound 13- and 14-year-old players, we will have a base of elite juniors who train together, who compete against each other and who make each other better—the way that Jim Courier, Andre Agassi, Pete Sampras, Michael Chang and David Wheaton did in the late 1980's.

“To create a network of Regional Training Centers (RTCs) that facilitate a network of coaches as well as programs to identify, train and develop a continuous wave of 8- to 13-year-olds in alignment with the USTA Teaching and Coaching Philosophy.”
USTA Certified Regional Training Centers: “An American Partnership”

The establishment of Regional Training Centers (RTCs) enables us to partner with the best programs in the country, building relationships between our best coaches and raising the level of training for our best 8- to 13-year-old juniors.

The partnerships also make the transition of the very best juniors in the country into our National Program more seamless. Currently, USTA Player Development has partnered with 17 RTC programs across the country. These programs help train hundreds of our junior players (ages 8 to 13) close to home and help facilitate relationships between personal coaches and our National Staff. USTAPD tracks the development and performance of these juniors and builds strong relationships with their coaches and parents.

Regional Training Centers are important because:

- A player’s technical foundation is built between the ages of 8 and 13.
- The most critical teaching phase is ages 8 to 12 for girls and ages 10 to 13 for boys.
- Maturity is a function of socialization.
- It’s a TEAM effort. RTCs help us create hubs of collaboration and cooperation, which will greatly increase the number of juniors we develop.

The in-house programs of Regional Training Centers allow USTA Player Development to create extensions of the National Training Centers, where players have organized year-round training that is in line with the USTA Player Development Teaching and Coaching Philosophy. The players stay connected to USTAPD through regular communication with USTAPD staff, personal coaches and parents.
Player Identification

Player Identification is the prediction of future performance of young players, and it entails a process of identifying young players who may one day achieve success at the national or international level. However, because tennis is a late-specialization sport, there are not good predicative models for children who are pre-pubertal. As such, the USTA Player Identification process is fluid, with the recognition that players may mature differently because of where they are in their maturation process.

There are two fundamental components of Player Identification:

1. Identifying athletes who are not currently playing tennis and attracting them to the sport.
2. Identifying talented athletes who are playing tennis and investing more time, attention and resources to their development.

There is clear evidence that children who one day may take a Player Development pathway in tennis should begin playing tennis at an early age (sport initiation) while focusing on developing athleticism and the fundamental skills necessary to play the sport of tennis. Because tennis is a late-specialization sport, which means that players do not peak until they are in their twenties, it is only after puberty that the combination of athleticism and tennis proficiency becomes most apparent. With that being said, it is also true that most top players are fully committed to tennis right around before they reached puberty.

There is a wide consensus that Player Identification is a process that entails re-evaluation of an individual over time, and that it cannot simply be focused on results at an age before puberty. Top 100 players in the world have had some measure of success by the age of 14. Very few were No. 1 in their respective age groups, but they were all competing by the time they were 12- to 14-years-old at the highest national events.

The USTA Player Development Approach to Player Identification

The USTA Player Identification & Development Department works at the base of the USTA Player development Pathway structure to help ensure the identification and development of the U.S.’s best young players. The goal is to provide an intersection of effort, ability and opportunity, as well as growth and development for as many gifted athletes as possible.

As more and more fundamentally sound 13- and 14-year-old players develop, USTA Player Development will be able to provide an opportunity for a base of elite juniors to train together, to compete against each other and to make each other better.
The focus of the USTA Regional Training Center camps is to help develop a large base of players who are technically sound (strokes are within the competencies or parameters). The technical base will be a direct result of solid teaching, attention to detail, developmental planning and using the correct formats for training and competition.

The foundational characteristics that are important in children ages 8 to 13 are:

1. Beginning of a strong technical foundation
2. Parents/families who are supportive and committed
3. Athletic parents
4. Agility, balance, coordination, speed
5. Coachability and willingness to try new things
6. Love of the game and desire to play
7. Problem-solver
8. Resilient
9. Self-confident
10. Ability to manipulate the racquet head and produce different spins
11. Multisport athlete (plays other sports to increase athletic foundation)
12. Throwing mechanics
13. Outlier (doesn’t necessarily do things the same way as others)

Once players are tracked, the USTA Player Development coaches nurture talent by supporting the player, family and coach through various training. Players become part of the USTA Player Development training pathway.
Progressive Development of a World Class Player
Progressive Development

Progressive development is the long-term development of expert athletic performance. Over the years, different researchers have noted that, at different ages and stages in their lives, athletes make faster progress in certain skills and abilities.

As a result of these findings, a number of different models of athletic development were developed. USTAPD adopted a well-researched model developed by Benjamin Bloom in 1985. Here are the three stages of development in this model.

1. The Introduction and Foundation Phase  
   (ages 6 to 10 in girls, ages 6 to 12 in boys)

In this phase, young players are introduced to the sport, and a solid foundation is laid for their future development through the teaching of parameter-based fundamentals in a progressive teaching methodology. The learning themes for this phase is FUN and fundamentals—making the initial experience one that will encourage the player to make progress, have fun and stay in the sport. It is important to note that, for children, perceived competence is directly related to fun; therefore, fundamental skill development must be a goal from the onset.

The key issues for this phase move beyond these skills. The phase spans childhood, which means the young player is small in stature and physically undeveloped. For this Introduction and Foundation Phase, the 10 and Under Tennis formats will provide the appropriate environments:

- Begin on a 36-ft. court and, as the child grows and improves his or her fundamental skills, the court size will increase to a 60-ft. court and finally to a full-size 78-ft. court.
- The ball type used changes as the child grows and develops, and moves from red, orange, green and to a yellow ball.
- The length of the racquet must enable the child to control the length of the lever. Shorter, lighter racquets are vital to rapid learning.
- The ages and abilities of the players in this phase will also be reflected in the scoring system and types of matches played. Emphasis should be placed on reducing the duration of the individual matches and increasing the number of matches/opponents.
- Players need to learn certain competitive skills, as well as the foundations of winning and losing, sportsmanship and respect for others. Therefore, an increased number of matches with a reduced duration allow for more competitive experiences.
- High-performance-oriented players need to learn tennis in an environment in which they are taught by professionals who understand their need for fun and enjoyment as well as for learning in relevant ways. Coaches and teachers who are experienced with young children are more likely to teach players before they try to coach them—keeping the focus on performance goals (skill improvement) and not on competitive outcomes.
2. Refinement and Transition Phase (ages 10 to 15)

This phase has three characteristics:

- To build on the fundamental skills and abilities learned and developed in the Introduction and Foundation Phase.
- To develop the key needs of players at this stage in their tennis development.
- To serve as the launch pad for the World-class Performance Phase of performance that follows.

The learning theme for this phase is “Training and Competition” since this is the prime time in the player’s development to learn the skills for both. In terms of tennis training, fundamental technical skills should be solid and well established by this time. The player is able to develop more pace and improve movement and footwork because of the physical skills learned in the Introduction and Foundation Phase, and because they are growing stronger and faster.

Physical and technical training is especially important in this phase. However, an increased emphasis should be placed on tactical development. The player is maturing rapidly both mentally and emotionally, and this is reflected in improved concentration and the ability to conceptualize things like goal-setting and anxiety control. Tennis is an open skill sport in which success depends on rapid decision making and a sound tactical understanding. In this phase, players are able to make quality decisions when presented with a range of options. A personal game style makes sense as the player’s personality becomes more evident.

In the Introduction and Foundation Phase, competition is team-based and is used to coach simple skills such as winning, losing and scoring. In the Refinement and Transition Phase, the opportunity and feasibility exists to teach skills such as defense, offense, counter attack, etc., because the player has the mental maturity to understand such skills. Therefore, competition is a vital development tool. The ratio of competition to training increases as players move through this phase as well as the type of competition.

Rankings become increasingly important to provide benchmarks of measurable improvement. The players will have a periodized schedule for their training, competition and recovery. As they move through this phase, the players are also moving through puberty—a stage that represents the greatest change in their lives in terms of physical growth and emotional and mental development.

Good practice in terms of coaching, training and competition in this phase is crucial because it can have a great impact on the player’s future as a tennis player.

There are significant changes in players in this phase. In physical terms, there are real biological/physical differences between young players of the same chronological age. Chronological age is the age on the birth certificate—the player’s actual age in months and years. Players in this phase can be up to two years above or below their chronological age in physical terms. This poses a challenge for coaches who need to coach and teach players appropriately in groups. A further dilemma for coaches is that a player may appear talented but simply be bigger and stronger than his or her peers. The differences in chronological and biological age also mean that coaching technical and physical skills becomes increasingly individualized. One way to address the differences in growth and identify player’s unique needs is to implement physical testing. Both fitness testing and injury prevention tests such as the USTA’s High Performance Profile are great tools when beginning to develop long-term plans for a young player.
In this phase, there also will be marked physical differences between girls and boys. These differences will be reflected in the way each gender plays the game. As the player matures throughout this phase, their tennis improves, so the range of knowledge of the coach will need to be higher to ensure that the coaching skills match the player’s needs.

3. World-class Performance Phase (ages 15 to 30+)

The learning theme for the World-class Performance Phase is “Personal Excellence.” In any sport, the talented athlete aims to achieve expert performance on the world stage. In tennis, the timing of this phase for females is approximately two years earlier than it is for males. Essentially, this is the phase when all the work in the previous phases comes to fruition, coupled with the fact that the “playing field” is level—almost every player has completed physical, physiological and emotional growth.

The “Window of Opportunity” is now to capitalize on and train every capacity so that the player can utilize his or her abilities to the maximum with the objective of winning. A real difference in this phase is that each and every player is now working from an individualized training, competition and recovery schedule.

Top players often have a team of people to help them reach and maintain their full potential—coach, physical trainer and sports science support. In technical terms, the players have sound parameter-based fundamentals that enable them to have a well-defined game style. Physically, all components of strength, speed, endurance, power and flexibility are trained to maintain peak performance and reduce injury. Mentally and emotionally, the players have the tools to play at peak level, to win and lose and have the ability to move on to the next match.

What is interesting about these stages is that players do not begin their careers with championships in mind. Instead, they become exposed to tennis—and fall in love with the game. Then they progress to more serious and focused involvement. Thus, in the early years of involvement, the best way to produce a top player is to do the same things needed to grow the game with all children—encourage fun, fundamentals and involvement. Once this foundation is built, a more focused and intense approach evolves.
Growth and Development of a Tennis Player
Growth and Development

Understanding the characteristics of growth and development and its implications is important for a coach, who needs to recognize how changes in a player may impact his or her abilities, both positively and negatively. It is useful to consider the changes in specific stages of development, which normally are:

**Age**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Approximate Ages</th>
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<tr>
<td>Childhood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-puberty</td>
<td>8-11 (girls); 9-12 (boys)</td>
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<td>Puberty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post-puberty</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adulthood</td>
<td>16 (girls); 17+ (boys)</td>
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**Chronological Age, Biological Age and Readiness Age**

Young people of the same age can be very different in size and maturity. Two 10-year-olds can be very different in height, and two 14-year-olds can be of totally different physique, shape and height.

The stages of growth and maturation in an elite tennis player are pre-puberty, puberty and post-puberty. Puberty is the period during which secondary sex characteristics develop, and both skeletal and somatic changes occur. The timing of these events can vary greatly from child to child. As these changes are related with increases in physical performance, it is likely the high-performance tennis coach will identify players reaching puberty early as the better performers. This, however, may not be the case over the long term, as players reaching maturity later may have the same long-term potential.

There are several markers during puberty which can be followed to indicate the developmental stage of the player. For the high-performance tennis coach, one of the most important (and easily measurable) markers is peak height velocity (PHV), which is a measure of the maximum rate of growth in stature during a growth spurt. The PHV occurs at a mean of approximately ages 13 to 14 in boys and 11 to 12 in girls, but there can be wide variations.

http://www.synchro.ca/e/development/documents/HowtoMeasurePeakheightvelocity11_000.pdf

Young tennis players will enter puberty at different chronological ages and progress through the stages of puberty at different rates. This is an important time for basic athletic skills training. (See “Windows of Opportunity” below). Between the ages of 8 and 13 in girls and 11 and 15 in boys, players are at an important stage of growth and maturation as they transition from pre-puberty to post-puberty.

Special consideration should be given to the differences in growth and development of boys and girls related to both physical training and athletic basic skill development. The high-performance coach may observe both positive and negative effects of the growth spurt.

On the negative side, the coach may observe clumsiness due to the rapid increase in limb length and weight. This reinforces the importance of the basic athletic skills in this phase. Additionally, inflexibilities may occur with rapid increases in height. Bones increase in length, and it takes longer for the muscles and tendons to “catch up.” Flexibility exercises are also important during the growth spurt.
On the positive side, hormonal changes occur in both boys and girls which include significant changes in height, weight and positive changes in body composition. These changes will improve the athleticism of both boys and girls. It is important to note the players who reach puberty earlier may appear to be superior athletes. Late developers require an individualized program for athletic skill development but may still have the same long-term potential.

Chronological age is the age on the birth certificate—the player’s actual age in months and years. Biological age is the skeletal (or physical) age and is related to individual patterns of growth. It can be up to two years behind or in advance of the chronological age, particularly during the pre-pubertal growth spurt in girls and boys. It links to the readiness age (see below). In tennis terms, it is the biological age that should be of most interest to coaches for two reasons. The first is because the late-maturing player often does not achieve early success, and so may drop out of the sport or not even get the same level of coaching attention. The second is that critical periods of trainability for players of different biological age will also be different.

During post-puberty, when growth and development is nearing completion and the playing field is level between athletes of the same gender, such differences do not matter; but the sport may have lost its best talent. Conversely, the early-maturing player may not maintain his or her early progress and could leave the sport as the early success decreases.

Coaching Practices and Development

The high-performance coach is cautioned to avoid certain practices.

- If possible, try not to group pre-pubertal athletes with post-pubertal athletes, regardless of the chronological age.
- Avoid using tennis drills or conditioning drills as punishment. Both skill-related tennis drills and basic athletic skill conditioning drills are prescribed according to the developmental phase of the athlete and the individual level of skill.
- Avoid overlooking the “late developers,” as they have the same long-term potential as the “earlier developers.” The tendency will be to view the “early developers” as the best athletes with the most potential. This may or may not be the case.
- Avoid practicing basic tennis skills and/or basic athletic skills when fatigued, particularly with younger players. Because skill development is primarily neurological, skill development activities are most effective when the nervous system is not fatigued.

The Physical and Mental/Emotional Characteristics of Each Stage

Childhood: Ages 5/6 – 9/10

Physical characteristics:

- The child is short in terms of height, with short arm and leg length.
- Muscle mass is small.
- Stature only increases 2–3 inches per year. This means that equipment (racquets and balls) and court sizes must “fit” the child.
Growth and Development of a Tennis Player

- The nervous system is immature, and the child is ready to learn.
- Physical skills need development, but in a non-sport specific manner to create a general movement base in the following areas:
  - Agility, balance and coordination (ABC)
  - Running, jumping, throwing, sliding, catching
  - Speed – 1:5 work:rest ratio
  - Reaction and movement
  - Movement skills can be learned through play activities, during tennis instruction/play and other physical activities and sports.

There is considerable evidence that children who do not learn physical skills when they are young may dislike sports and physical activity when they are adults. This is probably because the absence of basic skills makes them feel less competent.

**Mental and emotional characteristics:**

- Interest levels are maintained if the child has FUN.
- Effort and ability are perceived as the same thing—a young child thinks that by trying harder he or she will succeed.
- Decision making is slower, and making choices between more than two things is difficult.
- Perception of time is largely absent.
- The concentration span is limited.
- Visual processing of information (what to do and what the outcome will be) is very important to a child, such as how to score through visual means first before being able to verbalize the concept.
- Concepts are hard to understand; he or she needs to experience concepts such as winning and losing or “the best of three.”
- Winning and losing needs to be experienced in the right type and length of competition and in a supportive, perhaps team-based, environment.
- Chronological and biological age differences may increase toward the end of an age group, particularly in early-developing athletes.

**Pre-puberty: Ages 8-11 (girls); 9-12 (boys)**

**Physical characteristics:**

- The number of children with chronological and biological age differences is increasing.
- During this period, open skeletal growth plates often exist, which means the potential for overuse injuries are a real issue. Coaches need to monitor the demands of physical training.
- Boys and girls are beginning to differ physically.
• The factor of being smaller in stature and body mass is still an issue. It means that equipment and court sizes must “fit” the child and not the other way around.

• The nervous system’s rate of adaptation to movement is increasing rapidly.

• Aerobic trainability is limited.

• Anaerobic ability is limited to at least a 1:5 work:rest ratio. At this stage, children can only work at maximum effort for up to 5-8 seconds.

• Strength training may have different results for boys and girls. Prior to the age of approximately 12 in girls and 14 in boys, strength gains are primarily related to improvements in coordination due to the adaptations of the nervous system rather than an increase in muscle size.

Physical Skills to Develop During Prepuberty:

– Speed 1:5 work:rest ratio
– Strength
– Endurance
– Flexibility, especially during a growth spurt, or for players (particularly boys) who participate intensely in sports
– Core stability
– Complex coordination
– Chronological and biological age differences
– Coordination needs to be worked on with girls because of their rapid growth spurt in this age range
– The physical skills can be redeveloped through:
  • Structured practice
  • Play activities
  • Other sports and physical abilities

Mental and emotional characteristics:

• Having FUN is important.
• Concentration is developing.
• Enjoyment of the sport based on intrinsic motivation is increasing.
• Independence is developing.
• Ability to train cooperatively with others is developing.
• Understanding the difference between ability and effort is developing.
• Coping with winning and losing is easier.

Puberty: Age 12 (girls); 14 (boys)
Physical characteristics:

- Chronological and biological ages are often different.
- Skeletal maturation means that stature increases rapidly (the growth spurt), but not necessarily in a linear manner.
- Strength for boys increases later and to a greater extent than it does for girls, as muscle development and mass “catches” up with growth.
- Neurological growth increases the complexity of the nervous pathways.
- Physiologically, all the energy systems are progressively developing so near maximum effort can be sustained over 25/30 seconds.
- All physical capacities improve.
- Sexual maturation means there are wide differences between boys and girls.
- Menarche (onset of menstrual cycle) for girls begins on average around the age of 12, but the actual age varies.
- Physical development and the existence of “experienced” motor skill means the adolescent is able to use power and control.
- The volume of physical work can increase in line with the growth spurt (peak height velocity, or PHV), but the possibilities for developing the following components will change with the growth spurt:
  - Speed
  - Strength and core and shoulder stability
  - Flexibility
  - Endurance
  - Power (because of the development of speed and strength)
  - Coordination needs to be worked on with boys because of rapid growth spurt in this age range

Mental and emotional characteristics:

- Emotional and mental changes and mood swings may be observed.
- Self-responsibility is developing.
- Independence increases.
- The decision making process improves, and the adolescent can select from more options.
- Goal setting is more meaningful to the player (performance goals).

Adulthood: Age 16 (girls); 17+ (boys)

Physical characteristics:

- Growth is close to completion, and most of the skeletal growth plates may have closed.
- Physical stature and body shape is determined.
All aerobic and anaerobic capacities are in place and can be trained.

Chronological and biological differences are less evident and have a decreasing impact on abilities.

Differences exist between the sexes in terms of strength, speed and power and are related to changes occurring during puberty.

Physical work should be undertaken in the following areas:

- Speed (1:4) and (1:5) work:rest ratios
- Strength
- Endurance
- Flexibility
- Power
- Core and shoulder stability

Mental and emotional characteristics:

- Independence
- Self-responsibility
- Self-discipline
- Self-motivation
Regional Training Center Camps
Regional Training Center Camps

Why Regional Training Center Camps?

Regional Training Center Camps will enable us to train and track our top juniors (ages 8 to 13) in High Performance Camps in all 17 USTA sections. We will collect comprehensive information on all of those juniors and evaluate their progress throughout the year.

As we all know, Player Development is a costly process for the families of our top juniors and often limits the development of some of our most promising players. The RTC camps will provide each USTA section with the ability to provide high-quality training for juniors within their section. The research is very clear: a player’s technical foundation is built between the ages of 8 to 14, so it is important that these players are able to work on developing strong fundamentals at an early age. These players are also very young, and maturity is a function of socialization, so it is important to keep them in a local training environment as long as possible.

The hosting of these camps are not just a partnership between USTA Player Development Incorporated and the RTC, but between the USTA and the section—and the Coaches’ Commission. Through coaches’ workshops and training sessions, we will bring the section coaches together with our national coaches, under the tutelage of Jose Higueras, our Director of Coaching.

The RTC camps are a TEAM effort; these camps help create hubs of collaboration and cooperation which will greatly increase the number of junior players developed. USTA Player Development works closely with the player’s personal coaches throughout the RTC camp process. Regardless of who the primary coach is, the goal of USTA Player Development is to develop world-class American players and to work in collaboration with the primary coach toward that end. It is extremely important that players let us know who their primary coach is so we can have regular communication. It is the parent’s responsibility to let all coaches involved in a child’s development know that they are receiving input from the RTC camps so we can all work together to help the player reach his or her maximum potential. In addition, personal coaches are always welcome to come to any of our training centers or to call any of our coaches regarding a player’s development.

Coaches from throughout the section will staff the Player Development camps, and all associated programs will receive USTA support and have direct access to our Player Development staff.
The Regional Training Camp Pathway

Player Development

**Level 1:** FUNdamentals
**Level 2:** Good to Great: What Does It Take?
**Level 3:** “Outwork the World”

10 & Under Team Exchanges. The primary goal of these camps is for the players to have the opportunity to TRAIN with players from their region. The camps are cross-sectional team events designed to give players, 10 & under, the opportunity to compete against a wide variety of players from other sections. Players will train and compete using the 78-ft., green 10 & under format.

Match Play Camps. Match play camps will be held primarily for players ages 11 to 13. These camps are a new addition to the 2013 camp pathway. They are designed to give players additional training and competitive opportunities where players are able to compete against their peers from around the country. Our national coaches will be able to have the opportunity to provide coached match play to the players. Players will be selected to participate in the match play camps from the Level 1 and 2 camps based on the evaluation criteria outlined in the following chapters.

National Training Center Camps. There are training opportunities at one of the three National Training Centers (Boca Raton, FL; Carson, CA; and Flushing, NY). Players come together from across the country to train for various amounts of time, participate in wild-card events and prepare for international travel.

National Training Centers. Training takes place for players who have applied and been selected to train full time at one of our three National Training Centers.
60-ft. Orange Manual
CAMP OBJECTIVES

Mission of USTA Player Development: To develop world class American players through a clearly defined training structure & competitive pathway; as well as through the implementation of a comprehensive teaching & coaching philosophy.

Patience: Critical periods of trainability – How to maximize development: Research (Smidish 1991, Balyi and Way 1995) has shown that there are a number of critical periods of development when the ‘trainability’ of specific abilities is at its highest. This research provides guidelines and suggests that there are times in the development of the individual when the combination of previous experience and training allows the optimal (fastest) progression of a specific skill. It has been shown that the same training carried out at either earlier or later stage has no effect or even retards later skill acquisition.

Progressions – Advanced Tactical Development on the 60’ Orange Court: It is important to understand that players playing 78’ court, yellow ball, are not always afforded the opportunity to arrive and hit from a static or perfect position (balanced). On the 60’ Orange court players will have more time to position themselves and may have to hit fewer balls from a dynamic position. It is still very important to teach these players how to hit from a dynamic position, while still controlling their body (maintaining balance). The size of the court will also allow the players to refine and develop advanced tactics.

Parameters (Competencies) – Orange Competencies: Competencies are technical and tactical benchmarks related to the Forehand, Backhand, Volley and Serve that the players should accomplish before they transition to the next format. These competencies stem from the USTA Player Development Parameters which are the benchmarks of what is needed for long-term tennis success as well as based on tenants of Long-Term Growth and Development. It is important that we give the parents and coaches feedback on areas of the player’s game that directly relate to their long term athletic development. The evaluations are going to have two (2) areas of focus that should guide the next three months of training.

Planning: The developmental emphasis when planning a player’s tennis training and competitions should revolve around FUNdamentals. USTA Player Development encourages players to play other sports to develop a solid foundation of ABC’s.

Problem Solving: The mental and emotional skills for 8 -10 are: coping with winning and losing, understanding ability and effort, concentration and focus, respect for game, other players, coaches, as well as the sport of tennis.
How the Five Principles of the USTA Player Development Teaching and Coaching Philosophy Relate to 60-ft. Orange Training and Competition

1. Patience

Critical Periods of Trainability

If the “Critical Periods of Trainability” principle is not followed, it is highly likely that players will not be able to learn complex skills because the basics were not put in place at the right age and stage.

A number of examples illustrate the concept:

1. The fundamental skills of coordination, balance and agility (ABC) have a critical learning time from the ages of 6-10. After this, the absence or under-development of these skills will hinder future development. There is another ‘window’ for development of coordination post puberty, around the age of 16/17.
2. Reaction speed has a critical learning time up to the age of 12.
3. Running, jumping and throwing skills (so important to the serve) have a critical learning time (especially for girls) of ages 6-9.
4. Motor skill learning has a critical learning time period between the ages of 8-12 and another at 16-17+.
5. The development of speed has two windows, ages 6-8 (especially for girls) and from 6 months to a year after puberty for both boys and girls.

These critical periods of trainability are specifically linked to growth and development:

1. The development of the neurological pathways
2. The physiological development of energy systems
3. The development of muscle strength post-puberty

For coaches, these critical periods of trainability can serve as a guide and reference so that coaching opportunities and player training can be maximized.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>16</th>
<th>17</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordination, balance, agility</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Running, jumping, throwing</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<td>E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sliding, gliding</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motor learning</td>
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<td>G</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motor control</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Speed of reaction</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rhythm/cadence capacity</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spatial awareness</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
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<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Endurance</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strength</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>E</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E = Excellent  G = Good

(Pankhurst, based on work by Nadori)
2. Progressions

USTA Player Development believes the 10 & Under tennis formats allow us to accelerate skill development and enhance the competitive experience for young children. In USTA Player Development, we view the game of tennis as being played in a sequence comprised of three distinct yet interrelated components: the eyes and mind, followed by the feet, followed by the hands. “The eyes and mind” refers to ball recognition and shot selection; “the feet” refers to footwork, movement and balance, and “the hands” represents the player’s grips and stroke production. These formats enhance the development of all three competencies in the following ways.

For most children under the age of 10, the traditional yellow ball bounces higher than their height, which means that the stroke biomechanics for children playing with a yellow ball must differ from adults, thus their swing path differs from an adult’s. USTA Player Development believes that stroke mechanics and technique are important at a young age, so the bounce of the ball is extremely important for the overall development of the player.

Movement on the court is also a key aspect of development. When children play with the yellow ball, quality movement may be less than when playing with a modified ball. A primary reason is that children have more difficulty controlling the yellow ball, and because of a smaller stride length, they cannot cover the entire distance of the traditional 78-ft. court as well as an adult. If a child is able to play on a court better suited to his or her size, the number of strides is very similar to that of an adult playing with a yellow ball on a 78-ft. court. Assuming an average adult stride of 6 feet and an average child stride of 4.5 feet, the court side to side is about 3.5 strides for adults on a 78-ft. court and the same for children on a 60-ft. court. The less efficient movement also allows for less tactical options.

![Covering the Court Diagram]

Distance = 21 feet
Adult: 6 ft/stride = 3.5 strides
Child: 4.5 ft/stride = 4.7 strides

Distance = 16 feet
Child: 4.5 ft/stride = 3.6 strides

Source: ITF
Appropriate footwork patterns can now be developed on the 60-ft. court. Good diagonal movement and forward movement into the court are now rewarded due to the size of the court as well as the bounce of the ball. This will allow players to feel more comfortable making contact in the appropriate strike zone (which allows for players to transition) as well as reward players for moving forward and working on developing their front-court skills.

The ITF performed an analysis of the serve as it relates to the orange court. An average adult can attack the serve with some degree of power, but this would be near impossible for a 10-and-under child on a 78-ft. court. However, as the illustration above demonstrates, a child playing on a 60-ft. (orange) court can similarly attack the serve.
60-ft. Orange Competencies/Parameters

One primary goal of using the appropriate formats to train players and have them compete is that they will emerge with better fundamentals. More players who progress through the modified formats will have more neutral grips, better preparation and smaller swing paths. It is important that teachers teach to the competencies so they do not have to be relearned later on down the road. Over the past four years, USTA Player Development has reviewed the player’s technical competency levels, and approximately 75 percent of the players had technical flaws which would ultimately limit their development if they were not addressed. This means that considerable time will have to be spent in a closed environment to correct these technical flaws. (Refer to the chart on the next page.)

The foundation of USTA Player Development’s philosophy is that fundamental athletic skills are a necessity for success in tennis. These fundamental skills are often referred to as the ABCs of sport:

A: Agility
B: Balance
C: Coordination
S: Speed

It is important first and foremost to focus on athletic development and not simply tennis development, never forgetting that athletic development should be fun and should focus on the foundation of the ABCs. In addition to these fundamentals, there is a critical window for developing a foundation for many aspects of athletic development. If the focus is on tennis development and not athletic development, there may be important components of athletic skills that will be more difficult to obtain later in life.
## 10 and Under Competencies in Transition from Orange Ball/60-Foot Court to Green Ball/78-Foot Court

### Hands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forehand</th>
<th>Backhand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduce racquet-head acceleration</td>
<td>Consistent contact point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent contact point</td>
<td>Moving toward full extension at point of contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving toward full extension at point of contact</td>
<td>Set wrist in proper position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit turn, working on keeping non-dominant hand on racquet until the hitting shoulder rotates</td>
<td>Load: Coordinated movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrist load/pre-stretch</td>
<td>Load: Coordinated movements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Load: coordinated movements</td>
<td>Grip: Bottom hand: Continental; Top hand: Continental to eastern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grip: Eastern to semi-western</td>
<td>Unit turn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit turn</td>
<td>Preparation: Racquet above the wrist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Feet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forehand</th>
<th>Backhand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diagonal up</td>
<td>Diagonal movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stances: Establish semi-open and introduce the open stance</td>
<td>Forward movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready position</td>
<td>Stances: Closed, semi-open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lateral movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Split step</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery: cross-over</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Eyes and Mind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forehand</th>
<th>Backhand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 balls cross-court past the service line in a row with shape and rotation (top spin) to both sides</td>
<td>7 of 10—return cross-court on wide serves, return down middle on middle serves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand offense and defense (slice)</td>
<td>7 out of 10 to the correct box- each side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving forward → down the line</td>
<td>Split step and backswing sync with speed of serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving back → high cross-court</td>
<td>7 of 10—return cross-court on wide serves, return down middle on middle serves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control/direct ball to zones of the court (7 out of 10) to each zone</td>
<td>7 out of 10—return to each side</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topspin &amp; slice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open court zone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Combo

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Smooth efficient grip change</th>
<th>Timing of split step</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition grip between the forehand and backhand</td>
<td>Increase scope of movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lateral movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Split step</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recovery step</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Serve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synchronized upper-body mechanics with consistent toss from inside of the front leg</th>
<th>Introduce leg drive (use of ground)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Continental grip</td>
<td>Either platform or slide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated service motion</td>
<td>Balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent contact point</td>
<td>Stable platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Return

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside leg behind the ball</th>
<th>Assimilate the 3 footwork movement patterns: back, lateral, forward</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fully execute grip change</td>
<td>Split step</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside leg behind the ball with a deeper load</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grips</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ready position</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quick unit turn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Volley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outside leg behind the ball</th>
<th>Transitional footwork patterns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Able to maintain firm wrist at contact</td>
<td>Explosive split step</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control racquet head</td>
<td>Moving to volley and timing the step</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continental grip</td>
<td>Split before contact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Source: USTA
3. Player Evaluation

Each player will be evaluated at the weekend camp based on the following criteria:

- Athletic Ability (refer to athletic testing protocol)
  - Agility
  - Balance
  - Coordination (complex)
- Technical/Tactical (refer to 60-ft. orange competencies)
- Competitiveness
  - Run for every ball
  - Likes to play when keeping score
- Mental and Emotional
  - FUN when learning
  - Likes to do things well
  - Intrinsic motivation

Each player will also receive an evaluation with two areas of technical development linked to the 60-ft. orange competencies. It is important that the player works on these two areas before the next camp he or she is invited to attend. Each player’s progress will be tracked from camp to camp.

Please take the athletic tests home and practice with your child. All of the drills that were completed at the camp are in the back, with take-home exercises, to improve those various skills. It is important that we work toward developing the most well-rounded athletes as well as tennis players.

4. Planning and Goals

**Developmental emphasis is FUNdamentals:**

- 40 weeks of training and 8 weeks of competition (ration of training: competition is 5:1)
- 4 weeks of rest
- Maximum of 40 singles matches per year
- 12 hours of physical activity per week
- 2 hours maximum length of tennis training sessions

**Suggested percentage of activities:**

- 40% tennis, including unlimited training matches
- 25% other sports
- 20% coordination
10% speed
1.5 hours maximum length of tennis training sessions

Number of sessions per week: 4-6, with a maximum of 1.5 hours per session

Number of hours per week: 12 hours

Hours per week of physical activity

- 2 hours of coordination
  - ABCs
  - Athletic skills
- 1.5 hours of speed, strength and endurance
  - Speed: work is reaction speed, speed of coordination
  - Linear speed, footwork speed, multidirectional speed
- 1 hour
  - Strength: development of core stability for shoulder, elbow and ankle
  - Endurance: developed through other sports
- .5 hours of flexibility
  - Flexibility: developed dynamically in warm-up and statically in cool-down
- 3 hours of other sports
  - Other ball sports, such as basketball and soccer, as well as dancing, gymnastics, swimming
- 5 hours of technical and tactical
  - Tactical/technical: open-closed-open training, working on developing the 60-foot orange competencies as a guideline
5. Problem Solving

The ability for young players to begin problem solving at ages 8 to 9 is extremely important for their long-term development as tennis players. The development of basic mental and emotional skills will give these young players the tools necessary to become good problem solvers and independent thinkers on the court as they get older. The following skills are extremely important to develop at this age.

**Coping Skills.** Players must be able to control their emotions not only when they win but when they lose. As players mature, they go from equating strong effort to ability. At this age, players look at winning and losing as a measure of their overall ability. Being able to focus their attention on performance (getting better at a skill) and developing the FUNdamentals at this age is important. So it is extremely essential that we do not look at winning and losing as a product of a player's ability. Work with the players to help them cope with winning and losing.

**Concentration.** Tennis is a game that involves being able to concentrate for extended periods of time. It is important to get players at this age to start being able to concentrate for longer periods. The average attention span for a child is based on his or her age. (For example, a player who is 9 years old has an average attention span of approximately 9 minutes.) Develop exercises to work on developing longer attention spans:

- Umpire matches.
- Rally counting back from 100 in increments of five.
- Win three consecutive points to score a goal point. If a player loses a point before he or she achieves three consecutive points, the player starts back at zero.

**Respect for the Game.** Players must be taught the importance of rules and fairness. Work with the players on proper tennis etiquette. Players must learn to respect other players, coaches and the officials. Good behavior on the practice court is a must, as the behavior from practice typically transfers over to the competition court. Players need to learn to say thank you and offer their congratulations to others after a match. Be a gracious loser, but also learn to be a gracious winner.
### Age 7
- **Number of Peaks**: 0
- **Number of Matches Per Year**: 25-35
- **Type of Competition**: 60’ orange sectional events
- **Physical Training**: 3-5 hours
- **Tennis Training**: 4-8 hours (1-2 hours of private lessons)
- **Total No. of Hours Per Week**: 8-12 hours
- **Rest and Regeneration Per Weeks Per Year**: 4 weeks

**Training Details**
- **Tennis Training**: 3-5 hours (3-4 hours of other sports)
- **Total Training**: 4-8 hours (1-2 hours of private lessons)
- **Total Training Hours Per Week**: 8-12 hours
- **Rest Days**: 4 weeks

### Age 9
- **Number of Peaks**: 0
- **Number of Matches Per Year**: 35-45
- **Type of Competition**: Mix of 60’ & 78’ court sectional championships
- **Physical Training**: 5-6 hours
- **Tennis Training**: 5-6 hours (3 hours of other sports)
- **Total No. of Hours Per Week**: 12-14 hours
- **Rest and Regeneration Per Weeks Per Year**: 4 weeks

**Training Details**
- **Tennis Training**: 3 hours (3 hours of other sports)
- **Total Training**: 6 hours (3 hours of other sports)
- **Total Training Hours Per Week**: 12-14 hours
- **Rest Days**: 4 weeks

### Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
<th>Day 6</th>
<th>Day 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tennis</strong>: 90 min.</td>
<td><strong>Tennis</strong>: 90 min.</td>
<td><strong>Tennis</strong>: 90 min.</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td><strong>Tennis</strong>: 90 min.</td>
<td><strong>Tennis</strong>: 90 min.</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min.</td>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min.</td>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min.</td>
<td>Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min.</td>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min.</td>
<td>Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined</td>
<td>Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined</td>
<td>Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined</td>
<td></td>
<td>Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined</td>
<td>Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cool-down</td>
<td>Cool-down</td>
<td>Cool-down</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cool-down</td>
<td>Cool-down</td>
<td></td>
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<td><strong>Other Sports</strong></td>
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<td>45 min. (include endurance and speed)</td>
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</table>
CAMP OBJECTIVES

Mission of USTA Player Development: To develop world class American players through a clearly defined training structure & competitive pathway; as well as through the implementation of a comprehensive teaching & coaching philosophy.

Patience – Why 78-Foot Green Tennis:

- Rallies using green and yellow balls lasted the same amount of shots, but were played at a higher tempo using green.
- Players contact the ball twice as often above shoulder level using yellow balls
- Players contact the ball at ‘comfortable’ height more often using the green ball.
- Players made more bad errors using yellow balls.
- Players are able to hit from a position in front of the baseline more often using green balls.
- Players direct the ball down the middle of the court more often using yellow balls.
- The total number of volleys are the same at green and yellow.

Progressions- 78’ Court Training: Understanding the proper transition from 78’ green tennis to 78’ yellow. What are the proper guidelines about when a child should transition? The same progressions that are used on the 78’ court can be applied to the 78’ green court. The intensity of the training does not change when using the modified formats. The only thing that changes is the player’s ability to accomplish a better technical foundation and tactical awareness on the court in a shorter amount of time.

Parameters- 78-Foot Green Competencies: In this manual you will find a document that outlines the technical and tactical development for 10 and under players as they move from the 78’ Green to the 78’ Yellow court. What is represented in this document are benchmarks for competencies related to the Forehand, Backhand, Volley and Serve. At each stage (you will see three stages of play (Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced). These competencies stem from the USTA Player Development Parameters which are the benchmarks of what is needed for long-term tennis success as well as based on tenants of Long-Term Growth and Development:

1. Technique- Hands
2. Footwork- Feet
3. Play- Eyes & Mind

Planning- Training Schedule: How many hours of physical activities should players 10-11 participate in each week? It is important to make sure that the player is developing as an athlete as well as a tennis player. Overtraining and overuse can lead to burn out and injury.

Problem Solving: As players develop their game it is important that they continue to develop their ability to problem solve. At this age it is important that players are engaged in their development, able to make tactical decisions on court, and for the player to take ownership of their game.
How the Five Principles of the USTA Player Development Teaching and Coaching Philosophy Relates to 78-ft. Green Training and Competition

1. Patience

Why 78-ft. Green?

At the 2012 Grand Slam Coaches Conference at Melbourne Park in Melbourne, Australia, on January 12, Kim Kachel, the Talent Search and Development Manager for Tennis Australia, gave an outstanding presentation of a study that she, Rob Leeds and others at Tennis Australia conducted on green ball competition compared to yellow ball competition. The study, which provided factual data to ITF and national governing bodies, reported:

Around the world Red – Orange and Green is gaining momentum. Most coaches agree that using balls, courts, racquets and coaching principles appropriate for younger children is the best way to increase participation in tennis and research has shown increased enjoyment amongst young players using modified equipment. There is, however, still resistance among some coaches as to the benefit of using R – O – G as a player development tool. While many coaches intuitively recognize the benefit of using R – O – G as a performance tool for 10 & under players, there has been little fact-based evidence to support the use of low compression balls over the traditional yellow ball.

The Study

After watching the 2011 12 & under nationals, Kachel, Leeds and the team from Tennis Australia set out to gain some information as to the relative benefits of using a green or yellow ball for 9- and 10-year-olds during their development. At the nationals, the coaching teams from Tennis Australia were a little dismayed at the weakness demonstrated by the young players, particularly in ball control and consistency.

They gathered the best 9- and 10-year-olds in Australia for a camp in Brisbane; these players were used to playing with the yellow ball. Each player alternated playing a match with the green ball (75% compression) and the yellow ball (100% compression). Nineteen matches were recorded from seven different camera angles, and pain-staking statistics were recorded. Each shot was recorded, and how the point ended was coded; heat maps were developed to show where players hit from and to. Finally, players were asked questions post-match to gain critical qualitative information.

The coaching team was looking to compare several different indicators, including the height players contacted the ball, the distance from net the players met the ball, and approach shots opportunities with the green and yellow balls.

Rally Length and Tempo

While it was anticipated that rallies with the green ball would be longer, they were actually almost the same, 5.25 shots per rally vs. 5.35 with the yellow ball. The reason for the slightly longer rallies at yellow was the number of long “moon” ball rallies which increased the average.
The lower compression of the ball would indicate that green ball should have a slower rally tempo as it travels slower through the air and off the bounce. However, rally tempo with the yellow ball was one shot per 0.62 seconds versus 0.58 with the green ball. Green ball rallies were higher tempo than yellow ball rallies, as players were able to hold a court position closer to the baseline and take the ball on the rise comfortably.

**Contact points**

As expected, the green ball allowed players to contact the ball more often at a comfortable height, 79% of the time against 69% with the yellow ball. Most significantly, yellow balls forced the players to hit high balls twice as much as green (24% vs. 12%). This was an area of concern for the yellow ball, as this high contact point above the shoulders often leads to forming extreme technique, especially on grips. Low balls results were 6% with yellow balls and 9% with green.

**Errors**

An important factor in the study was how the points ended. With the yellow balls, 27% of the errors were classified as “bad” errors (1.5 meters or more out), and 20% were “bad” errors with the green balls. The yellow ball was causing the players to spray the ball far more often; more ball control was being demonstrated with the green ball.

At the same time, play with the yellow ball involved far more play down the center corridor of the court, as players struggled to return the ball as best they could under difficult situations.

**Court Position**

Players were able to hit 39% of balls in front of the baseline with the green ball and 27% with yellow. This resulted in a more attacking style of play, with players able to open up the court with angle and hit with pace to pressure the opponent using green balls. In fact, this was a major comment made by the players in post-match questions; they felt they could attack more and control the point using the green ball.

Interestingly, the improved court position did not result in more volley opportunities. Volleys made were similar for the green and yellow balls. This shows that although young players could hit from a closer position to the net, the full-sized court is still a challenge for the U10s in approaching and volleying.

The young players were overwhelmingly positive in their reaction to using the green ball when asked after their matches. As mentioned earlier, they enjoyed being able to control the ball and, therefore, the rally. These young athletes just wanted to play, and although they were used to playing with the yellow ball, they were skillful enough to adapt to any condition. Their growth mind-set was instructive and demonstrated it is often parents and coaches who have closed mind-sets and are the barrier to trying something new.
In summary, some of the major findings of the study were:

- Rallies using green and yellow balls lasted the same amount of shots but were played at a higher tempo using green balls.
- Players contacted the ball twice as often above shoulder level using yellow balls.
- Players contacted the ball at a “comfortable” height more often using the green ball.
- Players made more bad errors (1.5+ meters) using yellow balls.
- Players were able to hit from a position in front of the baseline more often using green balls.
- Players directed the ball down the middle of the court more often using yellow balls.
- The total number of volleys was the same with green and yellow balls.

Also, players were very positive in their comments when asked about using the green ball.

This study is just a small sample in the overall scheme of things, and some coaches will remain skeptical. These coaches will argue procedural learning dictates that using a yellow ball is best for player development and that the way things have been done has produced great players in the past. But if you have been looking for fact-based evidence to support your belief that using a low-compression ball aids in the development of your players, here it is.

After all, if you could use a tool that helps your players rally at a higher tempo, hit more balls at a comfortable height, hit the ball in a more aggressive court position and hit more often to the corners, would you use it?
2. Progressions

A proper transition from the green to yellow ball should be based on sound technique and tactical competencies rather than impatience to skip from one level to the next. There is a normal decrease in performance with each transition phase, and this decrease can be much greater if premature transition is made. When children transition too quickly from one ball to another, there is a much greater likelihood that they will develop technical flaws as a means of compensating for developmentally inappropriate play.

There are no concrete guidelines about when a child should transition. It is possible that making a transition from one ball to another could become associated with a race to make the transition as quickly as possible. The transition is based on a natural progression in technique, skill, athleticism and age. Because each child matures differently, and because there is no known correlation between a fast transition in childhood to teenage and adult performance, there is no reason to hurry the transition. When working with children, winning should never override proper development.

Utilizing deliberate practice, a coach can work specifically with the orange ball for the transition game while the player uses the green ball to work on his/her groundstrokes. If a player makes a transition too quickly, the player will likely feel frustrated at playing worse and may even lose interest in his or her development. As shown in the chart below, players will see a drop in performance when making a transition from the green ball to the yellow ball, which means there might be less emphasis on competition during this phase.

If the player is not technically ready to make the transition, then the performance drop off could be a lot greater. This would likely translate to less fun and less of a focus on development. It is essential for coaches to be well versed in the Long-term Athlete Model and the technical competencies needed to transition from the green to yellow ball. The transition must be done cautiously and patiently.
3. 78-foot Green Competencies/Parameters

The transition from the green ball to the yellow ball and 12-and-under tennis must be grounded in maturational and technical proficiency.

In the USTA Player Development model, technique and tactical competencies are combined when providing green to yellow ball transition guidelines. One primary purpose of the green ball is to better allow players to emerge with solid fundamentals. The formats allow children to become well versed in the parameters of grips, preparation, swing path and ball placement.

Players must develop green ball proficiency for the same aspects of the game before transitioning from the yellow ball, as noted in the following table.
### Forehand

- **Weapon development:** Racquet-head acceleration
- **Develop forehand as a weapon**
- **Introduce racquet-head acceleration**
- **Consistent contact point**
- **Moving toward full extension at point of contact**
- **Unit turn—working on keeping non-dominant hand on racquet until the hitting shoulder rotates**
- **Wrist load/pre-stretch**
- **Load: Coordinated movements**
- **Grip: Eastern to semi-western**
- **Unit turn**
- **Preparation: Racquet above the wrist**

- **Well-developed load in sync with unit turn**
- **Backward diagonal movement**
- **Integrate all three movements**
- **Stances: Able to execute all three**
  - **Diagonal up**
  - **Stances: Establish semi-open and introduce the open stance**
  - **Ready position**
  - **Lateral movement**
  - **Split step**
  - **Recovery: Cross-over**
  - **Diagonal movement**
  - **Forward movement**
  - **Stances: Closed, semi-open**

### Backhand

- **Weapon development:** Racquet-head acceleration
- **Change direction and shape**
- **Consistent contact point**
- **Moving toward full extension at point of contact**
- **Set wrist in proper position**
- **Load: Coordinated movements**
- **Grip: Bottom hand: Continental; Top hand: Continental to Eastern**
- **Unit turn**
- **Preparation: Racquet above the wrist**

- **Drop step**
- **Move backward on diagonal, get behind the ball and establish the base to get hips moving back into the court**
- **Timing of split step**
- **Increase scope of movement**
- **Speed of drills increase**
- **Lateral movement**
- **Split step**
- **Recovery step**

### Combo

- **Able to position body in relation to ball and establish a contact point**
- **Create space between body and the ball**
- **Absorb power**
- **Smooth, efficient grip change**
- **Transition grip between forehand and backhand**

- **Game style**
- **Patterns to game style**
- **Attack and defend on both sides**
- **Random: Side to side with appropriate response to coach in corner—20 in a row**
- **Cross-court down the line, side to side (7 out of 10)**
- **Change direction of ball both down the line and cross-court during cooperative rally with partner**
- **Side to side (7 out of 10)**

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**Chart continues on next page.**

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**10 and Under Competencies in Transition from Green Ball/78-Foot Court to Yellow Ball/78-Foot Court**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes and Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weapon development: Racquet-head acceleration</td>
<td>Well-developed load in sync with unit turn</td>
<td>Speed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop forehand as a weapon</td>
<td>Backward diagonal movement</td>
<td>Spin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduce racquet-head acceleration</td>
<td>Integrate all three movements</td>
<td>Height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent contact point</td>
<td>Stances: Able to execute all three</td>
<td>Depth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving toward full extension at point of contact</td>
<td>Diagonal up</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit turn—working on keeping non-dominant hand on racquet until the hitting shoulder rotates</td>
<td>Stances: Establish semi-open and introduce the open stance</td>
<td>Ball recognition: 7 of 10—random and 3-way forehand/backhand into appropriate zones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wrist load/pre-stretch</td>
<td>Ready position</td>
<td>20 balls cross-court past the service line in a row with shape and rotation (topspin) to both sidest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Load: Coordinated movements</td>
<td>Lateral movement</td>
<td>Understand offense and defense (slice)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grip: Eastern to semi-western</td>
<td>Split step</td>
<td>Moving forward → down the line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit turn</td>
<td>Recovery: Cross-over</td>
<td>Moving back → high cross-court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation: Racquet above the wrist</td>
<td>Diagonal movement</td>
<td>Control/direct ball to zones of the court (7 out of 10) to each zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Forward movement</td>
<td>Topspin &amp; slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stances: Closed, semi-open</td>
<td>Open court zone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Chart continues on next page.**
Player Evaluation

Each player will be evaluated at the weekend camp based on the following criteria:

- Technical/Tactical (refer to 78-foot green competencies)
- Athletic Ability (refer to athletic testing protocol)
  - Agility
  - Balance
  - Coordination (complex)
• Competitiveness
  o Run for every ball
  o Use rituals during competition
  o Play to win
• Mental and Emotional
  o Enjoy learning, training and playing
  o Solving problems
  o Fostering independence
  o Goal-setting performance vs. outcome

4. Planning and Goals

Developmental emphasis is TRAINING:

• 36 weeks of training and 12 weeks of competition (ratio of training: competition is 3:1)
• 4 weeks of rest
• Maximum of 40 singles matches per year
• 15 hours maximum of physical activity per week
• 2 hours maximum length of tennis training sessions

Training week content (in order of importance):

• 35% tennis, including unlimited training matches
• 20% other sports
• 15% speed
• 15% coordination
• 10% strength
• 5% flexibility

Number of sessions per week: 4-6, with a maximum of 2 hours per session
Number of hours per week: 15 hours
Hours per week of physical activity

• 2 hours
  o Coordination
• 2.5 hours
  o Speed: work rest ratio is 1:5
• 1 hour
  o Strength
• Core stability
• Shoulder, elbow, and ankle
• Own body weight using good posture
• 1.5 hours
  o Flexibility
- Dynamic warm-up
- Cool-down
- 3 hours
  - Other ball sports
- 5 hours
  - Technical
  - Tactical
  - Mental built in to all work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Playing</th>
<th>Practicing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Peaks</td>
<td>Number of Matches Per Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Singles</td>
<td>Doubles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-11</td>
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<td>35-45</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40-55</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
<th>Day 6</th>
<th>Day 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 120 min.</td>
<td>Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis: 90 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 90 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 90 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 90 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 90 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 120 min.</td>
<td>Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min. Include coordination Speed: 20 min. Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
<td>Warm-up: 10 min. Include coordination Speed: 20 min. Technical/Tactical: 60 min. combined Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
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<td>Flexibility: 15 min.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
5. Problem Solving

Engagement. For learning to take place, players must see learning as being fun. There must be personal motivation to play the game of tennis. It is important that they are engaged in the developmental process and they are able to set their own goals. Simple goal setting is based around two performance goals each quarter. They should be able to write a match plan with tactical objectives and patterns of play based on their strengths and opponents' weaknesses. They need to be receptive to challenge. Everything is not going to come easy, but they need to be able to challenge themselves with regards to their two areas of focus.

Decision making. At this level, the player must be able to understand opponents' strengths and weaknesses. Players need to be able to open up the court using the width of the cross-court shot. They need to understand their own strengths and how that matches up against their opponents' weaknesses. Basic patterns of play should be used off of the serve and return (serve plus one, return plus one).

Foster independence. It is a coach's job to lead a player, but the ultimate goal is for the player to become more and more independent. Players should be responsible for their own warm-up and cool-down after practice and match play. It is our responsibility as parents and coaches to give players ownership over managing their pre- and post-match routines. They must definitely be responsible for their own bag, equipment and drink. Part of developing independence is learning how to provide feedback between peers. Players should be able to phone a friend when setting up match play outside of practice. It is important for them to keep a simple practice and match log (refer to player handbook).
78-ft. Yellow Manual
CAMP OBJECTIVES

Mission of USTA Player Development: To develop world class American players through a clearly defined training structure & competitive pathway; as well as through the implementation of a comprehensive teaching & coaching philosophy.

Changing the paradigm – “Work hard work smart”: It is important for the players to understand how competitive the sport of tennis has become around the world. The United States is in a global battle with the rest of the world. In order to reach the highest level, the training must be deliberate and properly planned. There is no substitute for hard work and smart work. Smart work means, each day the players must practice with a clearly defined purpose and end result in mind.

Patience – Early Initiation vs. Late Specialization: Initiation refers to the age at which someone beings playing a sport; specialization is the age when someone trains and competes at an advanced level in one sport. Tennis is a late specialization sport, which means that players do not peak until they are in their 20s. In late-specialization sports, general athleticism should be the foundation of the athlete.

Progressions – Teaching vs. Training & Deliberate Practice: As the players are getting older and more advanced, the focus goes from teaching (hand & racquet feeding) to more training (live ball). Training is where the players will learn how to develop more advanced ball recognition and tactical decision making skills. Deliberate Practice, refers to a specific type of training in sport, or in any other domain, that involves focused cognitive activity. Players must practice with a clearly defined purpose in mind. Deliberate practice involves maximal concentration on a very specific task- which can be tennis-specific or athletic-competency specific- with the manner of practice being taught by a teacher or coach.

Parameters – Developing the “All around player”: At this age, players must feel comfortable, confident, and competent in all areas of the court. It is important that the players have the ability to execute all the various shots, from all parts of the court. As teachers, we do not want the players to have any limiting factors in their game that inhibit them from playing a certain style of tennis. As the player transitions from the teaching phase to the coaching phase, their game styles will become more clearly defined.

Planning & Periodization: As the player is transitioning from the foundation phase to the refinement phase, it is important that the long term development links to the training and competition. The player’s personal coach should work on preparing a yearly developmental plan with clearly defined roles between the player, parent, and coach. Performance and objective goals need to be established that work towards helping the player obtain his/her long term vision.

Problem Solving: Great players are problem solvers. We want to cultivate independence in our young players so that by the time they are playing in college or the pro ranks they are able to solve problems on the court and adapt to all types of pressure situations. Young players should be encouraged to set up their own practice matches, enter their own tournaments and pack their own bags.
How the Five Principles of the USTA Player Development Teaching and Coaching Philosophy Relates to 78-ft. Yellow Training and Competition

1. Patience

Teaching tennis takes tremendous self-control, passion and discipline from the coach and player. It is important to put this into context when we are talking about athletes who are 8 and 9 years old. It is so important at these ages to focus on developing the athlete, not just the skills that are associated with tennis.

Initiation vs. Specialization

Initiation vs. Specialization in tennis must be defined and differentiated because it allows us to understand the length of time it will take for players to master the skills necessary to become a world-class player. Initiation refers to the age at which someone begins playing the sport. Even if there is only occasional play, the age at which such play begins is the age of initiation. From a Player Development perspective, the top-ranked players on the ATP and WTA tours began playing tennis at a relatively young age. There is a two-year difference in age initiation between the 2011 Top-ranked men and the Top 10-ranked women.

The American Academy of Pediatrics defines specialization in sport as the age when individuals train and compete at an advanced level in one sport throughout the year. In essence, the athlete is concentrating all practice and competitive time on a single sport year-round.

Before discussing the age at which one should specialize in tennis, it is important to differentiate early-specialization sports from late-specialization sports. Early-specialization sports are those sports in which peak performance is expected in the middle teenage years. Late-specialization sports are sports in which peak performance is expected after the age of 20. Between 1996 and 2013, the average age of a Top 100 ATP player increased from 20.8 years to 26.9 years, and in the same time frame the average age of a Top 100 WTA player increased from 17.9 to 24.3 years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>20.8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>26.9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>17.9 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>24.3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Early- or late-specialization categories link the technical, mental, emotional and physical requirements of the sport to the fact of growth, development and maturation. As tennis has become increasingly physical and has assumed a world presence, the age for full maturation and development has increased. Attempts to
specialize too early could lead to a peak performance at a younger age. Tennis athletes who specialize too early are more likely to achieve their best results at junior age level.

Peaking at an early age and not peaking as an adult, early specialization in a late-specialization sport, can have many negative consequences, including:

• Players don’t develop into complete athletes because fundamental motor and coordinative skills have not been learned through activity in other sports.

• Players who focus solely on tennis develop a social network that revolves around tennis and could lead to social isolation.

• Players can burn out due to their responding to outside motivation from adults. Innate motivation begins to develop around the time of puberty.

The goal is for the players to become the most well-rounded athlete possible. This takes tremendous attention to developing athletic skills which sometimes cannot be learned through just playing tennis. Each player should look to develop a complete athletic and fundamental base, while continuing to enjoy the opportunities to compete in many different athletic activities until around ages 12 to 13.

2. Progressions

Teaching vs. Training

The drill portions and paired activities of the practice should be determined by the coach in a fluid process of progression and regression. As the player’s aptitude increases in a specific skill, the coach should open the environment and increase the level of difficulty (intensity, pace, volume, speed, distance, etc.).

When weaknesses are identified during the practice, the player should be “isolated” in a closed/controlled environment, using appropriate drills to provide feedback to strengthen the skill. This process should be fluid and fun, with the knowledge that the goal is incremental improvement, not instant mastery.

As the ability of a player increases (in one particular skill set), the practice should focus more on training and less on teaching The more teaching needed, more hand and racquet feeding should be used. The more training needed, the more live ball drills and purposeful games should be used.

If the practice is scheduled to include internal competition (recommended) and to lead up to external competition (recommended), the practices should emphasize training and playing more as the competition approaches.

Progression/Regression

One of the core concepts in our philosophy is “isolation”—choosing one or two skills to be taught or refined. One of the best ways to isolate a skill is to control or close the environment. Coaches can control or close the environment in different ways. One of the best ways to control the environment and isolate a skill is to hand or racquet feed the ball to the student. Hand and racquet feeding is a tool that can be used very effectively to facilitate teaching, as this can put the incoming ball in the exact position to help develop a certain component (e.g., skill, swing path, grip change).
As players progress and improve their fundamental skills, correct grips, stroke production and movement, we begin to open the environment and introduce more challenging drills which assimilate full-court sending/receiving skills, footwork and shot selection. We call the process of opening the environment to assimilate more challenging drills a progression.

When a coach needs to isolate an area in need of improvement, the coach goes backward to close the environment and simplify the drills to allow the player to reinforce the skill correctly. We call this regression.

The tools or methods used will differ according to the level of the player and/or the objective of the drill. The drills and methods presented are tools that can be used for teaching and training or a combination of both.

- We want to avoid the misconception that our philosophy promotes feeding over live ball training or live ball training over feeding.
- The more teaching needed, the more hand and racquet feeding should be used. The more training needed, the more live ball drills should be used.
- Live ball drills are used to develop the skills of shot selection, pattern play and tactics. When working with elite juniors and professionals, teaching still takes place, but the majority of the work is training focused and is done through live ball, point play and practice matches.
3. Parameters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes and Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Forehand</strong></td>
<td>• Grip between Eastern and Semi-western</td>
<td>• Grip between Eastern and Semi-western</td>
<td>• Ball recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proper unit turn &amp; use of non-dominant hand</td>
<td>• Proper unit turn &amp; use of non-dominant hand</td>
<td>• High-percentage shot selection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Racquet taken back above the hand</td>
<td>• Racquet taken back above the hand</td>
<td>• Patterns of play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proper point of contact for grip</td>
<td>• Proper point of contact for grip</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Balanced upper body and head stability</td>
<td>• Balanced upper body and head stability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appropriate finish between over the shoulder and waist</td>
<td>• Appropriate finish between over the shoulder and waist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Backhand</strong></td>
<td>• Two-Handed: Grip on bottom hand close to Continental, top hand close</td>
<td>• Ball recognition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>to Eastern</td>
<td>• High-percentage shot selection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• One-handed: Grip close to Eastern</td>
<td>• Patterns of play</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Racquet back above the hand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proper unit turn with the use of the non-dominant hand</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Proper point of contact for grip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Balanced upper body and head stability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appropriate finish between over the shoulder and above the waist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volley</strong></td>
<td>• Close to Continental grip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ready position slightly to backhand side</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shoulder turn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outside foot load</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Step (depending on time)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Racquet face slightly open</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contact usually between steps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serve</strong></td>
<td>• Start: Grip close to Continental</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Serve wide → first ball open court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Release:</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Serve “T” → first ball behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Consistent toss from inside of front leg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Release just above the head</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Loading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Stance platform or pinpoint</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Shoulder and pelvis lateral rear tilt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Knee flexion and rear leg drive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cocking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Racquet head pointing down</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Acceleration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Proper shoulder and hip rotation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Full extension of upper body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Deceleration and Finish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Long axis rotation, pronation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Balanced landing and recovery</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Return</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Served wide → return back cross-court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Served “T” → return in front of you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Big returns to big parts of the court</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In formulating our teaching and coaching philosophy, we knew that it was very important to clearly define parameters for all of the strokes. We looked at the very best players in the game and identified the common fundamentals or range of acceptability of all of their strokes. We believe that if junior players develop strokes within these parameters, they will have an opportunity to be able to improve throughout their careers.

Forehand

On the forehand, we recommend a grip between Eastern and Semi-western. Although many top players on the professional tour play with a full Western grip, we believe that between the ages of 8 and 13 the player should be closer to Semi-western as it is likely that their grips will become more extreme as they get older. The racquet should be taken back above the hand in a unit turn, with the non-dominant hand on the throat of the racquet. Players should use the appropriate stance based on the ball they are receiving and demonstrate proper loading for efficient stroke production. The contact point will depend on the grip and the stance. We recommend a finish between the waist and over the shoulder.

Grip: The first parameter for the forehand is the grip. The parameters for grip are between Eastern and Semi-Western (although Roger Federer uses a more traditional Eastern grip). This is particularly important for younger players between the ages of 8-13 because using extreme Western grips can limit their development. Notice the role of the non-dominant hand on the throat of the racquet. It supports the weight of the frame as the player switches from the Continental to Eastern forehand grip.

Unit Turn: The second parameter for the forehand is the proper use of the unit turn. The unit turn describes the process of taking the racquet back using the shoulders and core as one unit. Many of the other top male players tend to keep the non-dominant hand on the throat of the racquet to aid in this process and separate the non-dominant hand from the throat of the racquet somewhere between the center of the chest and the rear shoulder.

Loading: The third parameter for the forehand is taking the racquet back above the hand. As the player takes the racquet back from the unit turn into the loading phase, the racquet is above his or her hand at all times. Although it is possible to hit a forehand with straight back or other shaped backswing, having the racquet above the hand is a common fundamental among all players with outstanding forehands.

Contact: The fourth parameter for the forehand is the proper point of contact, which is dependent on the extremity of the grip. Top players make contact out in front of their body, with their arm comfortably extended and their upper body well balanced. Federer is known to keep his head perfectly stable and his gaze at the point of contact until well after contact. The top players generate pace by using the kinetic chain properly, with balanced upper bodies and little head movement at contact.

Extension: The fifth parameter for the forehand is extension of the hitting arm out toward the target. In order to produce strokes with depth that penetrate the court, it is important to have proper extension. Younger players
sometimes have the tendency to shorten the stroke swinging across the body in an effort to create greater racquet speed. This often creates strokes that have increased spin but less depth.

Finish: The last parameter for the forehand is the appropriate follow-through or finish of the stroke. Because the finish is a function that is affected by many factors, including the grip, amount of spin, desired placement, speed of the incoming shot and point of contact, there is a wide range of finishes that are acceptable. Generally, finishes range from over the shoulder to waist level but also include vertical finishes where the racquet finishes on the same side of the body. The finish should be appropriate for the type of shot being executed.

**Backhand**

On the two handed backhand, we recommend the bottom hand that is close to Continental and the top hand that is close to Eastern. On the one handed backhand, we recommend a grip that is close to Eastern. The racquet should be taken back above the hand, on both the one- and the two-hander, with a proper unit turn that engages the non-dominant arm. Players should use the appropriate stance based on the ball they are receiving and demonstrate proper loading for efficient stroke production. The contact point will vary slightly based on the grip and stance. We recommend a finish that is between over the shoulder and above the waist. As mentioned on the forehand, when players are using a racquet that is too long or heavy, they sometimes take too big of a backswing to generate more racquet speed and power. We call this “breaking the plane.” It is usually problematic and creates an inefficient swing path which will be exposed as the pace of play increases.

Grip: The first parameter for the two-handed backhand is the grip. The bottom hand should be close to Continental and the top hand close to Eastern. Some players prefer to have the non-dominant hand up on the throat, in the ready position, and slide the top hand down to find the grip as they begin the unit turn. Notice in the photograph that the player is in the process of finding the grip with the top hand.

Unit Turn: The second parameter for the two-handed backhand is the proper use of the unit turn, which describes the process of taking the racquet back using the shoulders and core as one unit. The unit turn on the two-handed backhand is easily accomplished because both hands are on the grip.

Loading: The third and fourth parameters for the two-handed backhand take place during the loading stage. The third parameter is taking the racquet back above the hand. Players who have the best backhands take the racquet back above their hands from the ready position to the loading position so they can use the momentum of dropping the racquet to generate greater racquet head speed. While taking the racquet straight back is faster and more acceptable with a two-handed backhand, players with the best two-handed backhands take the racquet back above the hands and use a small loop.

Contact: The forth parameter for the two-handed backhand is the proper point of contact, which is dependent on the extremity of the grips and the timing of the swing. Contact is generally made slightly in
front of the body, with both arms slightly bent and the upper body well balanced. The player’s head is stable at contact, and the player generates pace by using the kinetic chain properly.

Extension: The fifth parameter for the two-handed backhand is extension of the left (or top hand, in this example) out toward the target. To produce strokes with depth that penetrate the court, it is important to have proper extension. Younger players sometimes have the tendency to shorten the stroke swinging across the body in an effort to create greater racquet speed. This often creates strokes that have increased spin but less depth.

Finish: The last parameter for the two-handed backhand is the appropriate follow-through or finish of the stroke. Because the finish is a function that is affected by many factors, including the grip, amount of spin, desired placement, speed of incoming shot and point of contact, there is a wide range of finishes that are acceptable. Generally, two-handed-backhand finishes range from over the shoulder to waist level, depending on the type of shot being executed.

The world’s best players work hard to take the correct path and angle to the ball to maximize their load off both the forehand and backhand side. By being efficient with their footwork, they are able to execute most shots with pretty neutral stances (square and semi-open) The top players use the semi-open and square stances on balls that are neutral and in the middle two-thirds of the court. The stance is dictated by the incoming shot the player is receiving and the area of the court they are hitting from. Players within the parameters make appropriate choices of stances which maximize their ability to use leg drive and weight transfer for stroke production.

By eyes and mind, we mean ball recognition, shot selection, pattern play and tactics. Basic shot selection depends on an understanding of high-percentage tennis and a player’s game style. Generally, players should try to hit the ball high cross-court or high up the middle when defending. When moving into the court, the player should typically look for a short cross-court target or down-the-line target. High-percentage shot selection parameters may change slightly based on surface and game style.

Serve
Grip: The first parameter for the serve is a grip close to continental. On the first serve, a grip close to Continental allows the player to hit serves with a variety of spin and power. On the second serve the grip may be adjusted closer to an Eastern Backhand grip to allow for more spin.

Toss: The second parameter for the serve is the release of the toss. A consistent toss is important for a reliable service motion. The toss should be released out of the finger tips in line with the front foot and just above the height of the head.

Loading: The third parameter for the serve is proper loading. The player may choose to use the platform or pinpoint stance as both allow for effective loading mechanics. In this example, Tsonga is using a pinpoint stance which is highlighted by the red box. Notice the full extension of the non-dominant arm (Tsonga is
seeing the ball over his left shoulder) and that the front hip is pushing into the court. The blue and green lines illustrate proper shoulder and pelvis lateral rear tilt.

Cocking: The fourth parameter for the serve is a proper cocking position where the racket head is pointing towards the ground. Notice the hip over hip and shoulder over shoulder position as the body remains parallel to the baseline.

Acceleration: The fifth parameter for the serve is proper acceleration. The acceleration phase is where all the previously stored energy generated through the kinetic chain is released. The most effective servers have faster acceleration than ineffective servers and the production of power is dependent on strength and coordination of the previous links.

Contact: The sixth parameter for the serve is proper contact. The picture in picture effect illustrates Tsonga’s full extension of the upper body at contact. Notice that his non-dominant hand is tucked into his waist and that the point of contact is clearly forward into the court.

Deceleration: The seventh parameter for the serve is proper deceleration. Deceleration or the follow through is where the loads generated in the upper and lower body are dissipated. Tsonga has completed the long-axis rotation (a combination of internal shoulder rotation and forearm pronation) resulting in his racket face pointing towards the back fence.

Finish: The eighth parameter for the serve is a proper finish. Notice that Tsonga has landed about one foot into the court on his left foot. He is well-balanced with his right leg and left arm acting as counterbalances and his eyes are focused on the opponent’s return.

Movement Patterns

The world’s best players work hard to take the correct path and angle to the ball to maximize their load off both the forehand and backhand side. By being efficient with their footwork, they are able to execute most shots with pretty neutral stances (square and semi-open) The top players use the semi-open and square stances on balls that are neutral and in the middle two-thirds of the court. The stance is dictated by the incoming shot the player is receiving and the area of the court they are hitting from. Players within the parameters make appropriate choices of stances which maximize their ability to use leg drive and weight transfer for stroke production.

By eyes and mind, we mean ball recognition, shot selection, pattern play and tactics. Basic shot selection depends on an understanding of high-percentage tennis and a player’s game style. Generally, players should try to hit the ball high cross-court or high up the middle when defending. When moving into the court, the player should typically look for a short cross-court target or down-the-line target. High-percentage shot selection parameters may change slightly based on surface and game style.
4. Planning and Goals

**Developmental emphasis is COMPETITION:**

- 34 weeks of training and 14 weeks of competition (ratio of training:competition is 2.5:1)
- 4 weeks of rest
- Maximum of 60 singles matches per year
- 21 hours maximum of physical activity per week
- 2.5 hours maximum length of tennis training sessions

**Training week content (in order of importance):**

- 45% tennis, including unlimited training matches
- 10% other sports
- 10% speed
- 10% coordination
- 10% strength
- 10% flexibility

**Hours per week of physical activity:**

- 3.5 hours
  - Coordination
- 1.5 hours
  - Speed: work rest ration 1:5
- 1.5 hours
  - Strength
- Swiss and medicine ball
- Own body weight
- Learning good technique
- Shoulder, elbow and ankle
- 1.5 hours
  - Flexibility
- Developed dynamically in warm-up
- Statically in cool-down
- 1.5 hours
  - Flexibility
- Dynamic warm-up
- Cool-down
- 3 hours
  - Other ball sports
- 8.5 hours
  - Technical
  - Tactical
  - Mental built in to all work
### Possible Weekly Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
<th>Day 6</th>
<th>Day 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Rest Day</td>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 90 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 60 min.</td>
<td>Tennis: 120 min.</td>
<td>Practice matches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>Other Sports</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td>45 min. for endurance</td>
<td></td>
<td>60 min. for endurance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The coach should plan every practice and communicate the objective of the practice to the player. There should be a Player Development plan which defines the player’s short-term, mid-term and long-term goals. These goals should be divided into two types of goals: outcome goals, which the player does not have complete control of, such as a ranking; and performance goals, which are specific tasks within the player’s control, such as “I am going to practice my serve for 15 min. three times per week for the next month.”

The Periodization Plan is the comprehensive plan which breaks the year into specific periods.

The Player Development team should consist of the player, one or two parents and the coach.
Problem Solving

Great players are problem solvers. We want to cultivate independence in our young players so that by the time they are playing in college or the pro ranks they are able to solve problems on the court and adapt to all types of pressure situations. Young players should be encouraged to set up their own practice matches, enter their own tournaments and pack their own bags.

- Self-preparation for matches: the players should develop a pre-competition routine, which includes eating, drinking, practice, and proper warm-up. They need to be able to be responsible for their own match times. It is important that they are able to scout their own opponents and put together a match plan.

- Rituals and Routines (16 Second Cure): Players need to be able to control their emotions on court and be able to go through routines. Included in the routines should be: preparing for the next point, showing positive body language, and use cue words. Use words to link visualization to the action they are looking to accomplish.

- Accountability for each shot: Players must understand that each shot has a purpose. It is important for the players to understand that missing wide or in the net from a neutral rally is not acceptable. Players need to take ownership for their shot selection and make sure they develop good tactical habits.
60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets
**Drill Name:** Forehand Cross Court Controls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grip within the parameters (note on eval, not court)</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Good preparation based on oncoming ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good racket preparation above the hand</td>
<td>• Good balance on contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racket stays on hitting side of the body</td>
<td>• Ability to use all three stances with a load that is synchronized with unit turn</td>
<td>• Good basic ball recognition leading to correct stance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unit turn with non-dominant hand on throat of racket</td>
<td>• Good lateral movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable extension at contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racket head acceleration</td>
<td>• Good diagonal movement (up and back) – to facilitate use of correct stances</td>
<td>• More developed ball recognition, leading to correct court positioning, shot production and high shot tolerance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Backhand Cross Court Controls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Level 1** | • Grip within the parameters (note on eval, not court)  
  • Good racket preparation above the hand | • Well-timed split step  
  • Good balance on contact | • Good preparation based on oncoming ball |
| **Level 2** | • Racket stays on hitting side of the body  
  • Good Unit turn  
  • Minimal head movement  
  • Comfortable extension at contact | • Ability to use all three stances with a load that is synchronized with unit turn  
  • Good lateral movement | • Good basic ball recognition leading to correct stance |
| **Level 3** | • Racket head acceleration | • Good diagonal movement (up and back) – to facilitate use of correct stances | • More developed ball recognition, leading to correct court positioning, shot production and high shot tolerance |
## 60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Forehand Side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Level 1** | • Grip within the parameters (note in eval, not on court)  
• Good racket preparation above the hand | • Well-timed split step  
• Good lateral movement | • Good shot selection based on court positioning – (neutral: crosscourt), (offensive: down the line or short angle) |
| **Level 2** | • Good unit turn with non-dominant hand on the throat of the racket  
• Racket stays on hitting side of the body  
• Comfortable extension at contact  
• Minimal head movement | • Good balanced movement  
• Correct use of stances – square, semi and open | • Good ball recognition leading to appropriate stance |
| **Level 3** | • Racket head acceleration  
• Good receiving skills – able to absorb and take the ball the on the rise | • Good load in all three stances, synchronized with the unit turn  
• Use of slight diagonal (up or back) move to the ball when possible | • Advanced ball recognition, leading to correct absorption or taking the ball on the rise  
• Accuracy in hitting target, intentional use of correct shapes and high shot tolerance |
**Hands** | **Feet** | **Eyes & Mind**
---|---|---
**Level 1** | | |
- Grips within parameters (note in eval, not on court) | Well-timed split step | Good shot selection based on court positioning – (neutral: crosscourt), (offensive: down the line or short angle)
- Good preparation with racket above the hand | Good lateral movement | |
**Level 2** | | |
- Good unit turn with non dominant hand on the throat of the racket | Good balanced movement | Good ball recognition leading to appropriate stance
- Racket stays on hitting side of the body | Correct use of stances – square, semi and open | |
- Comfortable extension at contact | | |
- Minimal head movement | | |
**Level 3** | | |
- Racket head acceleration | Good load in all three stances, synchronized with the unit turn | Advanced ball recognition, leading to correct absorption or taking the ball on the rise
- Good receiving skills – able to absorb and take the ball the on the rise | Use of slight diagonal (up or back) move to the ball when possible | Accuracy in hitting target, intentional use of correct shapes and high shot tolerance
60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

Drill Name: Side to Side

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• grips within parameters (note in eval, not on court)</td>
<td>• well-timed split step</td>
<td>• good shot selection (cross-court unless moving forward)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• good preparation with racket above the hand</td>
<td>• good, balanced lateral movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• good unit turn</td>
<td>• good loading, synchronized with unit turn on both sides in all three stances</td>
<td>• ball recognition leading to correct use of stances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• racket stays on the hitting side of the body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• comfortable extension at contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• racket acceleration</td>
<td>• use of slight diagonal movement, to optimize correct use of all three stances</td>
<td>• advanced ball recognition leading to ability change direct and execute with balance and high shot tolerance to correct targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• quick, efficient grip change</td>
<td>• correct use of cross-over recovery step and good first step coming out of split step (even when drill is randomized)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets**

**Drill Name:** Deep/Short Forehand V-Drill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good grips within the parameters (note on the eval, not on court)</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Good shot selection – (offensive: down the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good racket preparation above the hand</td>
<td>• Good lateral movement</td>
<td>line or short angle) or (moving back: high,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>heavy crosscourt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good unit turn with non dominant hand on the throat of the racket</td>
<td>• Good load, synchronized with unit turn</td>
<td>• Good ball recognition, leading to correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racket stays on the hitting side of the body</td>
<td>• Well balanced movement and execution</td>
<td>court positioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable extension at contact</td>
<td>from square and semi-open stances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good receiving, leading to good absorption and ability to take</td>
<td>• Good diagonal movement leading to</td>
<td>• Elimination of half volleys and ability to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the ball on the rise</td>
<td>correct use of square and semi-open</td>
<td>take short balls on the rise, in the square</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stances</td>
<td>stance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• High shot tolerance, and good accuracy to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>the correct targets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level 3**

- Good receiving, leading to good absorption and ability to take the ball on the rise
- Good diagonal movement leading to correct use of square and semi-open stances
- Elimination of half volleys and ability to take short balls on the rise, in the square stance
- High shot tolerance, and good accuracy to the correct targets
### Drill Name: Deep/Short Backhand V-Drill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good grips within the parameters (note on the eval, not on court)</td>
<td>• Good unit turn with non dominant hand on the throat of the racket</td>
<td>• Good receiving, leading to good absorption and ability to take the ball on the rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good racket preparation above the hand</td>
<td>• Racket stays on the hitting side of the body</td>
<td>• Good diagonal movement leading to correct use of square and semi-open stances</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Comfortable extension at contact</td>
<td>• Elimination of half volleys and ability to take short balls on the rise, in the square stance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td>• High shot tolerance, and good accuracy to the correct targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Good lateral movement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Good load, synchronized with unit turn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Well balanced movement and execution from square and semi-open stances</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Good shot selection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>– (offensive: down the line or short angle) or (moving back: high, heavy crosscourt)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Good ball recognition, leading to correct court positioning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Backhand Slice Progression

**Drill Name:** Backhand Slice Progression

## 60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

### Hands
- Continental grip
- Racket back above the hand

### Feet
- Wide base

### Eyes & Mind
- Ability to hit slice crosscourt from the service line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Level 1** | • Good unit turn with non dominant hand on throat of racket  
• Ability to hit firm slice crosscourt | • Execution without dropping front shoulder | • Ability to hit slice crosscourt from the 60 foot baseline |
| **Level 2** |                                          |                                           |                                                      |
| **Level 3** | • Ability to hit low and high slice crosscourt or down the line  
• Comfortable extension at contact | • Well-timed split step and balance while executing | • Ability to hit slice consistently crosscourt or down the line from the 60 foot baseline |
# Drill Name: Backhand Slice Progression

## Hands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Continental grip</td>
<td>• Racket back above the hand</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Feet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good unit turn with non dominant hand on throat of racket</td>
<td>• Ability to hit firm slice crosscourt</td>
<td>• Execution without dropping front shoulder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Eyes & Mind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to hit low and high slice crosscourt or down the line</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step and balance while executing</td>
<td>• Ability to hit slice consistently crosscourt or down the line from the 60 foot baseline</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Drill Name: Backhand Slice Progression

#### 60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Level 1** | • Continental grip  
• Racket back above the hand  
• Wide base |  
• Ability to hit slice crosscourt from the service line |  
| **Level 2** | • Good unit turn with non dominant hand on throat of racket  
• Ability to hit firm slice crosscourt | • Execution without dropping front shoulder | • Ability to hit slice crosscourt from the 60 foot baseline |
| **Level 3** | • Ability to hit low and high slice crosscourt or down the line  
• Comfortable extension at contact | • Well-timed split step and balance while executing | • Ability to hit slice consistently crosscourt or down the line from the 60 foot baseline |
### Drill Name: Volley Progression #1&2

#### Hands
- Continental grip
- Ready position slightly to the BH side
- Racket above the hand

#### Feet
- Well-timed split step

#### Eyes & Mind
- Good timing of contact with movement – btw steps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Good timing of contact with movement – btw steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>One-handed BH volley</td>
<td>Good outside foot, to inside foot step rhythm</td>
<td>Ability to receive and send with open face – FH volley down the line, BH volley crosscourt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Firm wrist on contact</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Ability to stick volley, without the wrist collapsing</td>
<td>Good balance while moving, executing and split stepping</td>
<td>Ability to hit both volleys crosscourt and down the line</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Drill Name: Volley Progression #3 – Deep Volley / Short Volley

### 60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td>• Firm wrist on contact</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Good ball recognition on volleys leading to hands being ready to receive ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td>• Able to absorb hard, low 1st volley, and ‘send’ floating higher second volley</td>
<td>• Outside leg use on 1st volley</td>
<td>• Ability to hit firm 1st volley deep, and angle second volley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Good move to second volley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 3</strong></td>
<td>• Able to handle differing heights, paces and placements on both volleys</td>
<td>• Able to execute low or wide second volley without collapsing upper body</td>
<td>• Able to handle pace and spin and consistently execute with balance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Diagram of tennis court with players demonstrating volley progression]
### Drill Name: Volley Progression #4 – Overhead Progression (Volley/Overhead Combo)

#### Hands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Firm wrist on contact</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Good ball recognition on volleys leading to hands being ready to receive ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Able to absorb hard, low 1st volley, and ‘send’ floating higher second volley</td>
<td>• Outside leg use on 1st volley</td>
<td>• Ability to hit firm 1st volley deep, and angle second volley</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Good move to second volley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Able to handle differing heights, paces and placements on both volleys</td>
<td>• Able to execute low or wide second volley without collapsing upper body</td>
<td>• Able to handle pace and spin and consistently execute with balance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Diagram:

- **Level 1:**
  - 1: Player 1
  - 2: Player 2
  - 3: Player 3
  - 4: Player 4

- **Level 2:**
  - 1: Player 1
  - 2: Player 2
  - 3: Player 3
  - 4: Player 4

- **Level 3:**
  - 1: Player 1
  - 2: Player 2
  - 3: Player 3
  - 4: Player 4
# 60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Backhand Slice Transition Progression #1&2

## Hands
- Continental grip
- One-handed slice with non-dominant hand on throat in unit turn

## Feet
- Square stance

## Eyes & Mind
- Down the line first

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>• Open shoulders on contact</td>
<td>• Outside foot load before stepping in</td>
<td>• Down the line deep slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Drive slice &amp; come under for drop shot with same motion</td>
<td>• Carioca step on approach slice</td>
<td>• Short slice cross court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Approach slice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>• Add defensive slice from the corner</td>
<td>• Add open stance slice in corner</td>
<td>• Consistent execution to targets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Add slice on high heavy ball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Drill Name:** Backhand Slice Transition Progression #2

**Hands** | **Feet** | **Eyes & Mind**
---|---|---
**Level 1** | • Continental grip on slice approach and volley | • Good wide stance on slice | • Good shot selection – either down the line or short crosscourt
| | | | 
**Level 2** | • Racket above hand and firm wrist on contact for approach and volley | • Well-timed split step when opponent / coach is hitting the ball | • Good ball recognition leading to good body positioning for slice
| | | | 
**Level 3** | • Ability to hit firm, low slice | • Good approach footwork using carioca step when appropriate | • Good balance during approach, split step and volley
| • Ability to stick volley to short crosscourt target | • Good outside to inside foot transition on volley | • Consistent execution of approach, volley combination
# 60-ft. Orange Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Progression #1 (Run Around Forehands)

## Hands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good grips within the parameters (note in eval, not on court)</td>
<td>• Good unit turn with non dominant hand on the throat of the racket</td>
<td>• Racket acceleration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good preparation above the hand</td>
<td>• Racket stays on hitting side of the body</td>
<td>• Ability to hit high heavy or flatten out – based on the incoming ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Comfortable extension at contact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td>• Ability to use drop-steps to move into BH corner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Feet

- Level 1 • Well timed split step
- Level 2 • Good shuffling movement into BH corner
- Level 3 • Ability to use bounce step on inside-in when appropriate

## Eyes & Mind

- Level 1 • Good shot selection – inside out on deeper ball, inside-in on shorter ball
- Level 2 • Ability to take a good position based on ball recognition – (player is not falling to the left because of poor balance)
- Level 3 • High shot tolerance of inside-out and inside-in to correct target, with correct shape
**Drill Name:** Progression #2 (4 Forehands)

### Hands
- Good grips within the parameters (note in eval, not on court)
- Good preparation above the hand

### Feet
- Well timed split step

### Eyes & Mind
- Good shot selection – inside out on deeper ball, inside-in on shorter ball

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Level 1** | - Good unit turn with non dominant hand on the throat of the racket  
- Racket stays on hitting side of the body  
- Comfortable extension at contact  
- Minimal head movement | - Well timed split step | - Ability to take a good position based on ball recognition – (player is not falling to the left because of poor balance) |
| **Level 2** | - Racket acceleration  
- Ability to hit high heavy or flatten out – based on the incoming ball | - Good shuffling movement into BH corner  
- Appropriate use of square and semi-open stances with load synchronized with unit turn | |
| **Level 3** | | - Ability to use drop-steps to move into BH corner  
- Ability to use bounce step on inside-in when appropriate | - High shot tolerance of inside-out and inside-in to correct target, with correct shape |
78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets
The purpose of this drill is to teach the player proper ball recognition skills, advanced level movement, and the correct shot selection for side to side Forehand/Backhand groundstrokes.

Progression 1 has the coach feeding side to side. Progression 2 allows for feeds to be random so players are forced to recognize the ball and make correct shot selection. The coach is also adding more stress to the side to side movement. This becomes more challenging for the player. It is important to understand that the coach can isolate the open stance by feeding the ball wider.

As the difficulty of the drill increases, a lot more attention is put on the open stance and strong cross over step out of the corner of the court. It is important that the player establishes a strong base on the outside leg and looks to maintain good balance.

As the drill becomes more difficult the player needs to make good decision. Most of the balls executed in this drill will go cross-court. To help the players improve their ball recognition the coach can feed random balls (progression 2).
## 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

### Drill Name: Side to Side

#### Hands
- Good racket preparation above the hand
- Unit turn with non-dominant hand on the throat of the racket for FH
- Keep racquet on the hitting side of the body
- Develop racquet head acceleration
- Comfortable extension at contact

#### Feet
- Well-timed split step
- Good lateral movement
- Use of the cross-over recovery step when coming out of the corners
- Appropriate use of all three stances

#### Eyes & Mind
- Good basic shot selection – crosscourt unless moving forward
- Good ball recognition leading to appropriate stance

### Green
- Good absorbing skills, with ability to hit consistently deep, with different shapes
- Efficient grip change, especially when drill becomes random

### Yellow
- Good load synchronized with a strong unit turn
- Ability to find a diagonal to the ball whenever possible
- ‘Floating’ split step when moving through the middle, and ability to change direction when ball is fed ‘behind’
- Good ball recognition leading to being able to take the ball on the rise, and correct shot production
The Forehand “V” Drill: the purpose of the drill is to teach proper stroke production and footwork associated with advanced movement backwards (defend/neutralize) and forwards (attack) on the Forehand.

Progression 1- Crossover moving back
As the level advances so does the footwork. The coach introduces the crossover step to the player when moving backwards. Make sure the player is being economical with his/her footwork. There is no reason to take to many steps.

Progression 2- Random Feeds
Feeds can be random so that the player is forced to recognize the ball and make the proper shot selection.

Shot Selection
On the deep ball the coach can give the more advanced player latitude to go more up the middle and down the line to change direction. This ball still has plenty of shape and is not played close to the sideline. For less advanced players we would ask they would play the deep ball back cross court.
# 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Deep/Short Forehand V-Drill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Green** | • Grips: Eastern to Semi-Western  
• Racquet back above the hand  
• Racquet stays on hitting side  
• Good unit turn with the non-dominant hand on the throat | • Well timed split step  
• Good load in semi-open and square stance synchronized with unit turn | • Good shot selection – short ball deep or short angle / deep ball high and heavy  
• Good ball recognition leading to appropriate use of stances |
| **Yellow** | • Minimal head movement  
• Racquet acceleration  
• Advanced racket head speed  
• Ability to absorb and send with correct shape | • Appropriate use of square and semi-open stances with good loading and well-timed split step even when drill is made random or shot ‘dependent’ | • Advanced ball recognition leading to good shot production and high shot tolerance |
Backhand “V” Drill, Hand Fed

Backhand “V” Drill where the purpose of the drill is to teach proper stroke production and footwork associated with advanced movement backwards (defend/neutralize) and forwards (attack) on the Forehand.

Feeding- Random

Feeds can be random so that the player is forced to recognize the ball and make the proper shot selection. At times, teachers will need to move with the player. By moving with the player, this allows for the player to feel the energy of the coach.

Movement

The player is trying to get in the best position possible by taking the most efficient path to the ball. The teacher should always be aware of the purpose of the drill. The feeding can help isolate a specific skill. In this case the coach is trying to isolate the diagonal forward and backward movement.

Shot Selection

When the player gets pushed back they are aiming for the big part of the court (middle to cross-court).
### 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Deep/Short Backhand V-Drill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feet</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eyes &amp; Mind</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grips: Eastern to Semi-western</td>
<td>• Well timed split step</td>
<td>• Good shot selection – short ball deep or short angle / deep ball high and heavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racquet head back above the hand</td>
<td>• Good load in semi-open and square stance synchronized with unit turn</td>
<td>• Good ball recognition leading to appropriate use of stances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racquet stays on hitting side</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feet</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eyes &amp; Mind</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced racquet head speed</td>
<td>• Appropriate use of square and semi-open stances with good loading and well-timed split step even when drill is made random or shot ‘dependent’</td>
<td>• Advanced ball recognition leading to good shot production and high shot tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to absorb and send with correct shape</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racquet head acceleration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“3-way” Forehand, Hand Fed
This is a “3-way” Forehand Drill using hand feeding when the player is at the baseline and the coach is just in front of the service line. The purpose of this drill is to teach the proper stroke production and footwork associated with moving backwards (defend/neutralize), laterally (neutral), and forwards (attack) on the Forehand.

Coach Feeding
The feeds should be in a predictable sequence until the player gets comfortable with all three movements to the Forehand.

Movement Patterns
The coach is working with the player on two diagonal movements: forward and backwards. The drill is also working on the player’s lateral movement. The coach is not having the player cross-over moving backwards to the ball as this is a little too advanced. The coach encourages the player to execute a controlled shuffle.

Shot Selection
The purpose of this drill is to teach stroke production and proper movement patterns. Basic shot selection can be addressed. You want the players to take the backward diagonal and lateral balls cross court and the short ball down the line.
**Drill Name:** Side/Deep/Short: 3 Way Forehand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Green** | • Good unit turn with nondominant hand on the throat of racket  
• Introduce racket head speed  
• Minimal head movement | • Well-timed split step  
• Good loading and use of all three stances  
• Develop diagonal movement (up and back leading to advanced and balanced loading in all three stances) | • Basic ball recognition leading to well-timed split step  
• Good lateral movement |
| **Yellow** | • Advanced racket head speed  
• Racket stays on hitting side of the body  
• Advanced ability to vary shot production (sending) by receiving and absorbing correctly | • Refine loading that is synchronized with a good unit turn  
• Refine use of all three stances based on good diagonal movement (up and back) | • More refined ball recognition leading to giving and taking ground appropriately  
• Good basic shot selection based on oncoming ball  
• Advanced ball recognition and shot production based on oncoming ball |
“3-way” Backhand, Hand Fed

The purpose of this drill is to teach the proper stroke production and footwork associated with more advanced levels of diagonal backwards (defend/neutralize) and forwards (attack) on the Backhand as well as moving laterally (neutral). Feeds can be random so that the player is forced to recognize the ball and make the proper shot selection.

Coach Feeding- Tempo of Feed

As the players become more advanced, it is important that you increase the tempo of your feeding. To the contrary the coach can increase the tempo and push the player to hard where they are unable to benefit from the drill. It is important to push them to where they are able to execute the drill correctly.

Movement Patterns – Random

The level of movement becomes more advanced at this level. The coach can begins to push the player by making the feeds random. The coach now feeds four balls and can change the depth and height of the feed so the player has to develop their ball recognition skills.

Shot Selection

It is important that the coach focuses on the players ability to execute the shot and make the correct decision. When the player is pushed back they should be able to hit the ball high and heavy back cross court. The lateral ball should also be directed back cross court. The coach can give the player the option of hitting the short ball down the line or angle cross court depending on their position.
## Drill Name: Side/Deep/Short: 3 Way Backhand

### Hands
- Good unit
- Introduce racket head speed
- Minimal head movement

### Feet
- Well-timed split step
- Good loading and use of all three stances
- Develop diagonal movement (up and back) leading to advanced and balanced loading in all three stances

### Eyes & Mind
- Basic ball recognition leading to well-timed split step
- Good lateral movement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Yellow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced racket head speed</td>
<td>• Refine loading that is synchronized with a good unit turn</td>
<td>• More refined ball recognition leading to giving and taking ground appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced ability to vary shot production (sending) by receiving and absorbing correctly</td>
<td>• Refine use of all three stances based on good diagonal movement (up and back)</td>
<td>• Good basic shot selection based on oncoming ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Advanced ball recognition and shot production based on oncoming ball</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Drill Name: Half X Forehand

"Half X" Forehand, Hand Fed

This is a "Half X" Forehand Drill where the purpose of the drill is to teach ball recognition, correct footwork and shot selection, with an advanced level of movement backwards and forwards on the Forehand/Backhand side.

Coach Feeding

Feeds can be random so that the player is forced to recognize the ball and make the proper shot selection.

Movement

Diagonal backward and forward movement should be refined. These are the two core movements that each player needs to master if they are going to compete at a high level. The coach also continues to emphasize the cross-over step on the movement backwards.

Shot Selection

The coach really needs to emphasize targets and zones of the court. The player should hit high and heavy into the red zone when pushed back. When moving forward, the player should drive the ball into the green zone. This holds true for all of the drills in USTA Player Development.
Drill Name: Half X Forehand

Hands
- Good unit turn with racket preparation above the hand
- Introduce racket head speed
- Minimal head movement

Feet
- Well-timed split step
- Ability to hit deep ball from semi-open stance
- Ability to hit short ball from square stance

Eyes & Mind
- Basic ball recognition of short ball and deep ball
- Basic shot selection – short ball down the line or short angle / deep ball heavy crosscourt

Green
- Ability to hit angle or down the line on the short ball
- Ability to hit high heavy on the deep ball
- Ability to absorb deep ball and send appropriately
- Ability to take short ball on the rise and send appropriately

Yellow
- Good diagonal movement (up and back)
- Advanced ability to take and give ground, using the square and semi-open stances
- Basic understanding of when to give or take ground
- Basic understanding of appropriate shot selection
- Basic understanding of the difference between taking the ball on the rise and a half volley
- Advanced ball recognition, shot selection and shot production
- High shot tolerance
“Half X” Backhand, Hand Fed
This is a “Half X” Backhand Drill is very similar to what was done on the Forehand side. The purpose of the drill is still to teach ball recognition, correct footwork and shot selection, with an advanced level of movement backwards and forwards on the Forehand/Backhand side.

Coach Feeding
Feeds can be random so that the player is forced to recognize the ball and make the proper shot selection. It is important to push the player back with a lower ball on the backward diagonal to the Backhand side. Make sure the short feed is wider than shorter. If it is too short, the player should follow the ball into the net, and the coach should then start the drill over.

Movement
Diagonal backward and forward movement should be refined. These are the two core movements that each player needs to master if they are going to compete at a high level. The coach also continues to emphasize the cross-over step on the movement backwards.

Shot Selection
The coach really needs to emphasize targets and zones of the court. The player should hit high and heavy into the red zone when pushed back. When moving forward, the player should drive the ball into the green zone. This holds true for all of the drills in USTA Player Development.
### 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Half X Backhand

![Diagram of tennis court with drills]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Green** | - Good unit turn with racket preparation above the hand  
- Introduce racket head speed  
- Minimal head movement | - Well-timed split step  
- Ability to hit deep ball from semi-open stance  
- Ability to hit short ball from square stance | - Basic ball recognition of short ball and deep ball  
- Basic shot selection – short ball down the line or short angle / deep ball heavy crosscourt |
| **Yellow** | - Ability to hit angle or down the line on the short ball  
- Racket stays on hitting side of the body  
- Ability to hit high heavy on the deep ball  
- Ability to absorb deep ball and send appropriately  
- Ability to take short ball on the rise and send appropriately | - Good diagonal movement (up and back)  
- Advanced ability to take and give ground, using the square and semi-open stances | - Basic understanding of when to give or take ground  
- Basic understanding of appropriate shot selection  
- Basic understanding of the difference between taking the ball on the rise and a half volley  
- Advanced ball recognition, shot selection and shot production.  
- High shot tolerance |
Drill Name: Full X

“Full X” Drill, Hand Fed
This is a “X” Drill that is essentially the same drill as the Level 2. The purpose of the drill is to teach advanced footwork and shot selection.

Coach Feeding
Once the player demonstrates competency in all four directions the coach may choose to make the feeds random or dependent on the shot execution of the player. For example if the player is pushed deep and hits a short reply the coach will continue to push them back deep until they produce the correct response and then they would receive a short ball.

Movement
The drill is executed with advanced levels of diagonal movement in all direction. This will allow the player to work on defending, neutralizing and attacking.

Isolation
When the coach sees the player having trouble using a crossover step to initiate the movement to his/her deep forehand or backhand, the coach isolates that skill by feeding that single shot to the player until he/she gets it right.
### 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Full X

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good unit turns on both sides, with racket preparation above hand</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Basic ball recognition of short and deep ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racket speed</td>
<td>• Ability to use square stance for short balls and semi-open stance for deep balls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to hit short balls down the line or short angle/deep balls heavy crosscourt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable extension</td>
<td>• Balanced movement and good loading synchronized with unit turn</td>
<td>• More developed ball recognition leading to good shot selection and shot production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Racket staying on hitting side of the body</td>
<td>• Good diagonal movement (up and back) to take and give ground appropriately</td>
<td>• Advanced ball recognition leading to advanced shot selection and shot production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate receiving, absorbing and sending – ability to hit short ball on the rise</td>
<td>• Advanced, efficient movement with balance</td>
<td>• High shot tolerance at a high tempo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More developed racket speed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced receiving, absorbing and sending skills based on oncoming ball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Run Around Forehand, Hand Fed

The purpose of this drill is to teach ball recognition, footwork and shot selection, while running around the Backhand to execute the inside out/in forehands. The player should alternate inside out/in forehands. **Feeds can be random** so that the player is forced to recognize the ball and make the proper shot selection.

Coach Feeding

The coach will feed in sequences of two balls. One inside-out, and one inside in. Inside in shots should be fed inside the baseline where inside out balls should be fed behind the baseline. The Feeds can be random (height, speed, tempo or spin) so the player is forced to recognize the ball make adjustments and use the proper shot selection based on the feed.

Movement Patterns

The coach is increasing the range of movement in the drill so the player can on the proper footwork patterns associated with the inside-out and inside-in Forehands. At this level, the coach is asking the player to use the drop step or rear crossover as the initial movement to the stroke.

Shot Selection

The coach can feed the player a ball to hit inside-in only when they establish an advantage in the drill (by hitting a quality inside out ball). The higher percentage shot for the player is the inside out Forehand.
# Drill Name: Run Around Forehands with Cone

## 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

### Green
- Good unit turn with left hand on throat of the racket
- Comfortable extension
- Develop racket head speed
- Minimal head movement

### Feet
- Well-timed split step
- Appropriate use of semiopen and square stances
- Introduce use of drop step

### Eyes & Mind
- Good ball recognition

### Yellow
- Racket stays on hitting side of the body
- More refined racket speed
- Ability to ‘shape’ ball appropriately
- Ability to flatten out high forehands

### Hands
- Loading in square and semi-open stances coordinated with unit turn
- Advanced use of appropriate stances
- Refine use of drop-step (to the ball) and cross-over step (recovery)

### Feet
- More developed ball recognition leading to correct choice of either inside-out or inside-in FH
- Advanced shot selection and shot production based on advanced ball recognition
# 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Back Hand Slice with Running Forehand

## Green
- Good early preparation for slice (with non-dominant hand on the throat of the racket) and good unit turn on the way to the ball
- Wrist firm on slice and racket speed on FH
- More developed unit turns on the way to the ball

## Feet
- Well-timed split step as player moves through the middle of the court
- More developed cross-over recovery step coming out of corner
- Ability to hit open stance running FH – and drive slice off of dominant leg

## Eyes & Mind
- Good shot selection based on court positioning

## Yellow
- Upper body stability after the run
- Stiff slice
- Refined racket speed and balance after the run
- Appropriate shape of shot based on time and court position

## Feet
- Some diagonal movement if possible to improve court positioning
- Advanced movement and court positioning with explosive 1st step coming out of ‘floating’ split step
- Powerful cross-over recovery step coming out of corner

## Eyes & Mind
- More refined shot selection and depth and shape based on court positioning
- Advanced shot selection and shot production based on court positioning – higher FH if out of court / more air under slice if out of court

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good early preparation for slice (with non-dominant hand on the throat of the racket) and good unit turn on the way to the ball</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step as player moves through the middle of the court</td>
<td>• Good shot selection based on court positioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wrist firm on slice and racket speed on FH</td>
<td>• More developed cross-over recovery step coming out of corner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More developed unit turns on the way to the ball</td>
<td>• Ability to hit open stance running FH – and drive slice off of dominant leg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• More refined shot selection and depth and shape based on court positioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Advanced shot selection and shot production based on court positioning – higher FH if out of court / more air under slice if out of court</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Image of a tennis court with diagrams showing the drill.*
Drill Name: Forehand Cross Court Controls

**Forehand Controls, Live Ball**

This is a Forehand Controls, Live Ball Drill. The purpose of this drill is to help the player develop the ball recognition, shot selection, footwork, and consistency to a repeated target in a live ball situation.

**Goals of the Drill**

The live ball drill should be simulating a cross court rally in the point. The players should maintain the same focus and intensity as they would in a match. Both players should be looking to take the ball early when they can, and giving ground when they are pushed back. It is important that the players recognize the ball they are receiving and adjust their feet to give themselves proper spacing to the ball.

**Progression #1**

The second progression of this drill incorporates an option of either player to change direction and hit the ball down the line with ending the rally at the appropriate time.

**Eyes & Mind**

Players should be able to execute sets of 50 balls in a row or more. It is important the coach stress to the players, when engaged in a cross court rally, it is important to hit to big targets with margin. When the player’s feet are set in the court that is when the players should execute down the line.
## 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Forehand Cross Court Controls

### Hands
- Good unit turn with racket above hand
- Introduce racket speed

### Feet
- Well-timed split step
- Good lateral movement
- Use of diagonal movement (up and back)

### Eyes & Mind
- Basic ball recognition leading to correct preparation
- Good shot selection based on oncoming ball

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Yellow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• More developed racket speed with good extension</td>
<td>• More refined ball recognition leading to taking or giving ground appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td>• Advanced ball recognition leading to advanced shot selection and production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced ability to receive, absorb and send based on incoming ball</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Backhand Cross Court Controls, Live Ball**

This is a Backhand Controls, Live Ball Drill. The purpose of this drill is to help the player develop the ball recognition, shot selection, footwork, and consistency to a repeated target in a live ball situation.

**Goals of the Drill**

The goal of this drill is to have the players engaged and simulate match like conditions. The coach needs to make sure the players are recovering back towards the middle of the court.

**Eyes & Mind**

Players should be able to execute sets of 50 balls in a row or more. It is important the coach stress to the players, when engaged in a cross court rally, it is important to hit to big targets with margin. When the player’s feet are set in the court that is when the players should execute down the line.

**Variation**

The players can hit forehands. The player is only allowed to hit one forehand before having to hit a backhand. The coach can also add in the slice BH to this variation.
## Drill Name: Backhand Cross Court Controls

### 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good unit turn with racket</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Basic ball recognition leading to correct</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>above hand</td>
<td>• Good lateral movement</td>
<td>preparation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduce racket speed</td>
<td>• Use of diagonal movement (up and back)</td>
<td>• Good shot selection based on oncoming ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More developed racket</td>
<td>• Advanced use of all three stances</td>
<td>• More refined ball recognition leading to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speed with good extension</td>
<td>with balance, based on advanced</td>
<td>taking or giving ground appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to hit slice</td>
<td>diagonal movement</td>
<td>• Advanced ball recognition leading to advanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td>shot selection and production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced ability to receive,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absorb and send based on</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>incoming ball</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
78-ft. Green & Yellow Video

**Drill Name:** Two on One – 2 Crosscourt 1 Down the Line

**Forehand Controls, Live Ball**
This is a 2 on 1 Drill with all three players at the baseline. We will demonstrate three different variations of the same drill in the same format but with a different purpose. This is a cooperative, live ball drill that is a physical drill as the single player is covering the entire court while the group of two are covering only half the court.

**Variation #1: 2 Crosscourt, 1 Down the Line**
In the first variation of the 2 on 1 Drill, the player that is alone will maintain a pattern of 2 shots crosscourt followed by one shot down the line. The players on the two side will hit everything moderately crosscourt while maintaining a balance between cooperating with the single player and challenging him to cover the whole court as he executes the pattern.

**Crosscourt Target**
This is a solid target for the single player hitting to the crosscourt target. He has plenty of margin from the sideline and baseline. Players should avoid making any mistakes wide or in the net during live ball drills.

**Down the Line Target**
It is important for the single player to change direction by aiming for a deep target and avoid trying to hit the ball too close the line. When Raymond hits the ball down the line from this position he must recover the to add side of the court quickly to maintain the pattern. In a point situation, when players choose to change direction, they need to maintain a lead in the point by changing with depth or spin to avoid being out of position on the next shot.
## 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Two on One – 2 Crosscourt 1 Down the Line

### Diagram
![Tennis court diagram with players and numbered points indicating drill sequence]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feet</strong></td>
<td><strong>Eyes &amp; Mind</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Early preparation</td>
<td>• Correct choice of stance</td>
<td>• Learn ball recognition, leading to appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Introduce racquet</td>
<td>based on the ball being received</td>
<td>stance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acceleration</td>
<td>• Appropriate recovery almost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Able to control speed and</td>
<td>back to the center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spin of ball being sent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minimal head movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow</strong></td>
<td>• Refine V movement to ensure</td>
<td>• Understanding how to shape the ball appropriately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>semi-open stance</td>
<td>based on the incoming ball – flat, rally and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Refinement of first move</td>
<td>highheavy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and recovery footwork</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Bounce step when appropriate to</td>
<td>• Refine ball recognition leading to correct stances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>take ball on the rise</td>
<td>and appropriate shot production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Understanding how to shape the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ball appropriately based on the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>incoming ball – flat, rally and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>highheavy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

**Drill Name:** Forehand/Backhand Volleys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Athletic ready position with racket slightly to the BH side</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td>• Ball recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good continental grip for volleys</td>
<td>• Outside foot load to initiate volley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yellow</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Firm wrist on contact</td>
<td>• Good balance and developed load to achieve split/load(hit rhythm)</td>
<td>• More developed ball recognition to facilitate quick racket prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good receiving and sending to keep the ball between waist and shoulder from service line to service line</td>
<td>• Advanced split-step timing, load and balance</td>
<td>• Advanced ball recognition, leading to quick racket prep and high quick volley tolerance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good racket control to maintain pace and placement of volley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**78-ft. Green & Yellow Video**

**Drill Name:** Forehand/Backhand Volley and Overhead Combo

**FH & BH Volley, Racket Fed**
Forehand and Backhand Volley Drill that is very advanced as the player is hitting a variety of closing volleys with an advanced level of movement while covering the entire court. The coach is positioned on the opposite baseline and feeds alternating volleys to challenge the player. The player has been instructed to volley the first shot crosscourt so they can practice following the shot into the net with the correct positioning.

**Purpose**
To assist the player in ball recognition, correct footwork, and shot selection with advanced movement to Forehand/Backhand volleys and overheads.

**Coach Feeding**
Player is positioned at ¾ court and is fed alternating Forehand/Backhand closing volleys and overheads. The coach can make the drill even more realistic by passing the player with the 2nd feed or feeding a very difficult 2nd volley when the player does not execute a solid 1st volley to the target or the player does not locate the 1st volley well. **Feeds can be random** so the player is forced to recognize the ball and make decisions regarding footwork & shot selection.

**Movement**
The coach will take the players out wide. Having the players hit the ball crosscourt is used so they get the feeling of following their balls. The coach should not take the players too wide as this would make hitting the volley crosscourt unrealistic.
Drill Name: Forehand/Backhand Volley and Overhead Combo

Overhead Progression, Racket Fed
Overhead Progression Drill that is very advanced as the player is hitting a variety of overheads with an advanced level of movement while covering the entire court. The coach is positioned on the opposite baseline and feeding randomly. The player is choosing the placement based on their court position and frequently will have to hit scissor-kick overheads (where the player has to jump up and back to handle shots that would normally go over their head).

Coach Feeding
The coach will feed this drill randomly. He or she is mixing in different kinds of balls (depth, speed, height) along with volleys to make sure the player is continuing to move forward after hitting overheads.

Movement
It is important that the player uses his/her movement to get underneath the overhead. The coach will push the player to where they will have to execute the shot using a scissor kick.
### Drill Name: Forehand/Backhand Volley and Overhead Combo

#### Hands
- Athletic ready position at net with non-dominant hand on throat of racket – slightly to the backhand side
- Good continental grip for volleys and overhead
- Good internal shoulder rotation/external forearm
- Pronation
- Volleys: Firm wrist on contact

#### Feet
- Well-timed split step
- First move initiated with outside foot move
- Maintenance of sideways stance on overhead
- Back foot comes around after wide volleys in order for player to push back into the appropriate position to recover or go back for lob
- Scissor kick overhead when appropriate for deep overheads
- Advanced low movement at net – with split steps at appropriate time based on time court positioning
- Leg strength that facilitates upper body stability – especially on low and wide volleys

#### Eyes & Mind
- Good ball recognition
- Understanding of good volley placement and net coverage – that covers most likely passing angles
- Advanced volley and overhead recovery that allows player to cover the net appropriately
- Advanced shot selection (volley and overhead) based on the opponent’s court positioning

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Green</th>
<th>Yellow</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Athletic ready position at net with non-dominant hand on throat of racket – slightly to the backhand side</td>
<td>• Good, firm contact with elbows and arms on the hitting side of the body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good continental grip for volleys and overhead</td>
<td>• Volley initiated by hip turn and minimal head movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good internal shoulder rotation/external forearm</td>
<td>• Overhead: non-dominant arm and hand up to measure contact/hitting arm bent with elbow up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pronation</td>
<td>• Advanced receiving, absorbing and sending of volley depending on height and pace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Volleys: Firm wrist on contact</td>
<td>• Good overhead snap for a finishing shot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

*Fig. 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets*
### 78-ft. Green & Yellow Drill Sheets

#### Drill Name: Return Progression

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hands</th>
<th>Feet</th>
<th>Eyes &amp; Mind</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Green</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Basic shot selection – return based on angle of serve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good efficient unit turn on both sides</td>
<td>• Well-timed split step</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Comfortable extension</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yellow</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>More advanced return production based on oncoming serve</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• More developed racket speed</td>
<td>• Outside foot load and explosive step when necessary</td>
<td><strong>Ability to ‘read’ serve—based on toss</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to absorb abs send</td>
<td>• Ability to cut angles off with first step and run around to hit FH when appropriate</td>
<td><strong>Advanced return production based on oncoming serve</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Efficient execution of grip change (FH / BH)</td>
<td>• Ability to move forward on weak 2nd serves</td>
<td><strong>Advanced ability to ‘read’ serve based on toss and opponent’s tendencies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advanced finish dependent on oncoming serve</td>
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<td><strong>Ability to position self appropriately based on quality of return</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to execute grip change (not block) on high speed serves</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to block returns on high speed serves</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Advanced ability to absorb and send</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Player Development Planning
**GOAL SETTING TABLE**

**Player: 8-10 Years Old**  
**Level: Aspirations of Playing High Level Tennis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Long Term Goals</strong> (6-12 months)</th>
<th><strong>Medium Term Goals</strong> (1-6 months)</th>
<th><strong>Short Term Goals</strong> (1-4 weeks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HANDS</strong></td>
<td>*f/h: increase length follow through (hitting through the ball) on down-the-line f/h</td>
<td>*f/h: continue solidifying grip change and focus on nondominant arm use during the unit turn</td>
<td>*f/h: grip change from full western to semiwestern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Technical)</td>
<td>*b/h: solidify top hand involvement on b/h cross-court</td>
<td>*b/h: learn the slice backhand keeping the wrist firm</td>
<td>*b/h: racket above the wrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*serve: develop slice wide serve to the deuce side</td>
<td>*serve: greater leg involvement (i.e. pushing into the ground) during loading stage of serve</td>
<td>*serve: focus on straight non-dominant arm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>*volleys: wrist firm on both f/h and b/h volleys</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FEET</strong></td>
<td>*on deep balls focus on loading the back leg to a greater extent (i.e. store energy and then release from that position)</td>
<td>*f/h: maintain core and head balance during stroke</td>
<td>*f/h: develop semiopen stance forehand (back/outside leg load)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Footwork &amp; Balance)</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Movement: develop effective recovery cross-over from wide f/h position</td>
<td>*b/h: back hip involvement during follow through</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EYES &amp; MIND</strong></td>
<td>*Recognize short balls and move forward sooner.</td>
<td>*Improve understanding of when to drive the ball down the line and when to use the rally cross-court ball</td>
<td>*f/h: Develop inside out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Tactical)</td>
<td>*when hitting short crosscourt on f/h understand the movement and positioning need to hit the next ball inside out</td>
<td></td>
<td>*Recognize when opponent is behind the baseline and when to use the drop shot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>*Start to implement a structured age appropriate physical training program that is integrated with daily tennis</td>
<td>*Start using some light medicine balls to play min-tennis working on rotation, sending and receiving and movement</td>
<td>*Flexibility; implement a 10 minute per day stretching program *ABC: focus on improving ABCs and playing one or two other sports (basketball, soccer, volleyball etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>*Start using age appropriate rituals and routines during match play.</td>
<td>*Start introducing basic rituals and routines (i.e. taking a deep breath after a tough point and changing the racket form the dominant to the non-dominant hand.)</td>
<td>*Discuss the difference between performance and outcome goals in language the athlete can understand</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## GOAL SETTING TABLE

**Player:** _____________________________________  
**Level:** ______________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Long Term Goals (6-12 months)</th>
<th>Medium Term Goals (1-6 months)</th>
<th>Short Term Goals (1-4 weeks)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HANDS (Technical)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>FEET (Footwork &amp; Balance)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EYES &amp; MIND (Tactical)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Principles of Effective Goal Setting

**Performance and Outcome Goals**

1. Goals should be player driven with coach guidance.
2. Put goals in writing.
3. Goals must be challenging but attainable, specific, measurable, realistic and manageable.
4. When two or more goals are established they must be compatible.
5. Goals should be flexible enough to allow for revision and change.
6. Goals should have structured time frames or specific target dates.
7. Priorities should be structured for Goals.
8. Goals should be stated to allow for evaluation of effort as well as performance.
9. Goals should always be linked to the overall aim of performance.
10. Goals should be continually evaluated against progress.
High Performance Developmental Plan

Player Name: _______________________________

Birth Date: _______________________________

Personal Coach: ___________________________

Preparing A Developmental Plan

Establish Developmental Team Leader:

Establish Player’s role:

Establish Parents’ role:

Establish frequency and mode of communication:

Player writes essay outlining their long-term vision for their game. Player states their short, mid and long-term performance goals for their game.
LONG TERM VISION (Include Game Style/Strategy and Tactics):

GENERAL PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

HANDS – Technical Assessment:

Serve:

Return of Serve:

Forehand:

Backhand:

Backhand Slice:

Transition Shots (approach shot/drive/swing volley/slice)

Forehand Volley:
Backhand Volley:

Overhead:

**FEET – (Footwork & Balance)**

Footwork Patterns (lateral/diagonal/forward):

Balance (load/head movement):

**EYES & MIND (Tactical Development):**

Recognition:

Shot Selection:

Patterns of Play:
Player Development Planning

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

EMOTIONAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

THREE MAIN AREAS OF NEEDED IMPROVEMENT

Priority One:
Plan: (Include daily drills)

Priority Two:
Plan: (Include daily drills)

Priority Three:
Plan: (Include daily drills)
GOAL SETTING

Performance Goals (HANDS/FEET/EYES & MIND):

6 Months:

1 Year:

2 Years:

Outcome Goals (RANKINGS/RESULTS):

6 Months:

1 Year:

2 Years:

Tracking/ Evaluation – Establish method for tracking performance (developmental) progress and outcome (ranking and results) progress.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week No #</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
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<td>Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serve: Palm down during the backswing</td>
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<td>Unit Turn: Focus on the turn and non-dominant hand</td>
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<td>F/h: Emphasis on more circular path on backswing</td>
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<td>B/h: Grip change to stronger continental bottom hand</td>
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<td>Volleys: solidify continental grip</td>
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<td>Return of Serve: focus on consistent contact zone</td>
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| Tactical (Eyes & Mind) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Taking mid-court balls on the rise |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| When pushed deep behind the baseline develop more height |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| When pushed wide on b/h, utilize slice effectively |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Recognition: based on last shot |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |

| Physical |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Medicine ball work on wide f/h address unit turn as well as load |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Develop flexibility in hip flexors/rotators to help on wide balls |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |

| Psychological (engagement) |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Focus on performance goals for each practice rather than outcome |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |
| Clear concise goals for each practice session |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |    |

<p>| Coaches notes: | Age: 13 | Weight: 120lbs | Height: 5ft 3in | Gender: Female | Regional Level Player | | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week No. #</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Training &amp; Competition</th>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Plan</th>
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Coaches notes: