



Tennis Australia Player Development Stroke & Tactical Fundamentals

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1. Introduction

Welcome Coaches, Parents, Teachers and Administrators,

Tennis Australia is very excited to introduce the *Tennis Australia Stroke and Tactical Fundamentals*. Our objective is to provide you with the content and direction for teaching the most critical aspects of our game.

The *Stroke and Tactical Fundamentals* are based on relevant research and coaching experiences over a number of years. The purpose of the comparison between the initial stages of development through to the professional ranks is to draw attention to the *similarities* in technical development versus the often talked about differences.

It is our role to educate and teach our players the *stroke fundamentals* to ensure each player has the correct foundation to build their game. Correct biomechanical strokes are vital building blocks that must be learnt in the early stages of childhood development.

The *tactical fundamentals* are designed to assist a player in reducing their unforced errors. The tennis court is a 'mistake centre,' and through applying a simple approach to decision making in *tactics*, players will minimise the number of mistakes.

Tennis Australia encourages all coaches, parents, teachers and administrators to understand and promote the use of both the technical and tactical fundamentals throughout the initial stages of a child's development.

For further information on the development of your players, and to understand how the *stroke and tactical fundamentals* are integrated with the other important aspects of development, we encourage you to utilise the *Tennis Australia Long-Term Athlete Development Matrix*.

While the *matrix* is extensive, it has been designed to help you understand the key skills that should be implemented at various stages of development.

These educational tools have been designed to assist you in providing an ideal environment for the tennis development of a child, especially during the crucial formative years.

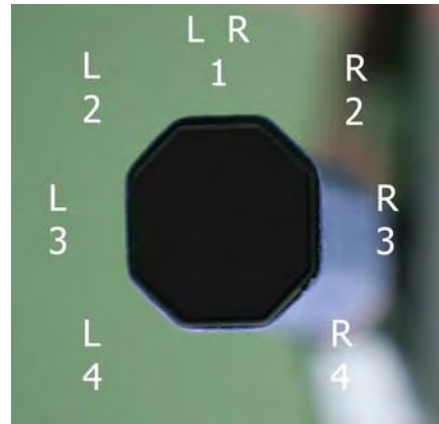
Yours Sincerely



Craig Tiley
Director of Player Development

2. Notes

Grip Systems



Left Handed

Semi Western Forehand Grip

- Bevel L #4
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach

Eastern Forehand Grip

- Bevel L #3
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach
- Forehand Slice Approach
- Forehand Volley

Continental Grip

- Bevel L #2
- Serve
- Overhead
- Forehand Volley
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Single)

- Bevel L #1
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Slice
- Backhand Topspin Approach
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Double)

- Dominant Hand Bevel L #1
- Non Dominant Hand Bevel R #3
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Topspin Approach

Right Handed

Semi Western Forehand Grip

- Bevel R #4
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach

Eastern Forehand Grip

- Bevel R #3
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach
- Forehand Slice Approach
- Forehand Volley

Continental Grip

- Bevel R #2
- Serve
- Overhead
- Forehand Volley
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Single)

- Bevel R #1
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Slice
- Backhand Topspin Approach
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Double)

- Dominant Hand Bevel R #1
- Non Dominant Hand Bevel L #3
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Topspin Approach

Scientific Tennis Terms

Acceleration

Increased change of velocity

Deceleration

Natural slowing down of body segments after impact

Dominant hand

Hand which aligns directly to the bevel of the grip in each stroke

Dynamic

Centre of gravity in motion

Extension

Refers to the increasing of the angle between two body parts (e.g. straightening the knee from a flexed position)

Flattened 'U' shape wrist

Refers to the shape created at the back of the wrist which provides each grip with the maximum amount of wrist stability

Flexion

Refers to the decreasing of the angle between two body parts (e.g. bending the knee or elbow)

Ground reaction force

The force emitted from the ground as a body pushes against it

Hitting zone

The zone where the racquet face is perpendicular to the ground during the impact phase

Impact

The area on a racquet face where the most effective impact will occur

Knuckle guidance

Keeping the knuckles facing the direction of the swing during the impact phase of the backhand groundstroke (single and double), return of serve, approach, slice and volley

Non dominant hand

Hand used to initiate the grip change and support the racquet head (opposite to dominant hand)

Palm guidance

Keeping the palm perpendicular to the ground and parallel to the racquet strings during the impact phase of the forehand groundstroke, return of serve, approach and volley

Pronation

Rotation of the forearm to align the strings of the racquet to the ball at impact during the serve and overhead

Range of acceptability

Most efficient range for optimal execution

Separation angle

The angle created by the misalignment of where the shoulders rotate beyond the angle of the hips in the backswing phase

Stance

The stance of the player has not been referred to as a fundamental as it is a consequence of time and space and court position in the set up

Static

Centre of gravity stationary

Swing Systems

Circular Swing (topspin)

- Forehand Groundstroke
- Forehand Topspin Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach
- Backhand Groundstroke (single and double)
- Backhand Topspin Return of Serve
- Backhand Topspin Approach

Shallow 'U' shape (slice)

- Forehand Slice Approach
- Backhand Slice
- Backhand Slice Approach

Horizontal

- Forehand Volley
- Backhand Volley

Figure 8

- Serve
- Overhead

Swing Phases

Preparation

Balance - Balance needed to prepare for the shot

Grip - Grip needed to efficiently execute the shot

Initial turn - Shoulders begin to horizontally align to the ball path

Swing Phase

Backswing - Loading phase of the swing where the shape of the swing is created

Forward swing - Acceleration phase of the swing leading to impact

Impact Phase

Impact - Phase of the swing where the racquet face is perpendicular to the ground and the palm or knuckles of the hand are facing the intended target

Balance & Recovery Phase

Deceleration of body segments to promote recovery and preparation for the next stroke

References

All references to Biomechanical principles have been taken from:

Elliott, B., Reid, M., & Crespo, M. (Eds.) (2003). ITF Biomechanics of Advanced Tennis. ITF: London

3. Strokes

Forehand Topspin Groundstroke



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened 'U' shape)

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Beginning of circular motion
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Non-dominant hand balances the backward trunk rotation
- Ideal separation angle 20° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of accelerating and decelerating the body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory and an inside to outward swing pattern

Impact Phase

- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders have rotated to face the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Full extension of palm guidance through contact
- Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery
- Hitting shoulder finishes high

Single Hand Backhand Topspin Groundstroke



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head support
- Beginning of circular swing motion
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Ideal separation angle 30° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand are still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Hands begin to separate
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of the body segments
- Weight transfer from back foot to front foot
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory, creating an inside to outward swing pattern

Impact Phase

- Knuckle guidance system through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Dominant arm continues to lift through the impact zone
- Non dominant arm straightens – hand to hand forms a line
- Hitting shoulder finishes high
- Hips slightly open to begin recovery

Double Hand Backhand Topspin Groundstroke



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in neutral position with elbows away from the body
- Non-hitting hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Dominant hand on grip L/R #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Non dominant hand on grip L/R #3

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm is slightly bent and raised
- Beginning of circular motion
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Ideal separation angle 20° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand are still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Both knees are flexed to provide a base which trunk rotation and forward body movement can be created
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Both arms working in unison to generate maximum amount of power
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory forming an inside to outward swing pattern
- Transfer of body weight from back foot to front foot

Impact Phase

- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders are facing the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Full extension with both arms through impact
- Both arms finish high
- Racquet deceleration promotes recovery

Forehand Topspin Approach



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened 'U' shape)

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment
- Beginning of dynamic movement

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Beginning of circular motion
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Non-dominant hand balances the backward trunk rotation
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force
- Dynamic movement up to the ball

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of accelerating and decelerating the body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory and an inside to outward swing pattern
- Dynamic movement through to impact

Impact Phase

- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders have rotated to face the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Added acceleration of racquet through impact by ground reaction force and body segments

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Full extension of palm guidance through impact
- Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery
- Hitting shoulder finishes high
- Dynamic movement towards the target

Single Hand Backhand Topspin Approach

No suitable pro footage currently available



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Beginning of dynamic movement

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head support
- Beginning of circular swing pattern
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Racquet and hand are visible on the same side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force
- Dynamic movement up to the ball

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hands begin to drop below the ball
- Hands begin to separate
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of the body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory, creating an inside to outward swing pattern
- Dynamic movement through to impact

Impact Phase

- Knuckle guidance system through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate
- Added acceleration of racquet through impact by ground reaction force and body segments

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Dominant arm continues to lift through the contact zone
- Non dominant arm straightens – hand to hand forms a line
- Full extension at completion of swing
- Hips slightly open
- Dynamic movement towards the target

Slice Backhand

No suitable pro footage currently available



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head stability with the elbow raised
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Hands begin to separate
- Racquet acceleration with a shallow 'U' shape trajectory
- Uncoiling of the body with effective use accelerating and decelerating body segments
- Non dominant arm remains raised
- Racquet head remains above the wrist
- Transfer of body weight from back to front foot

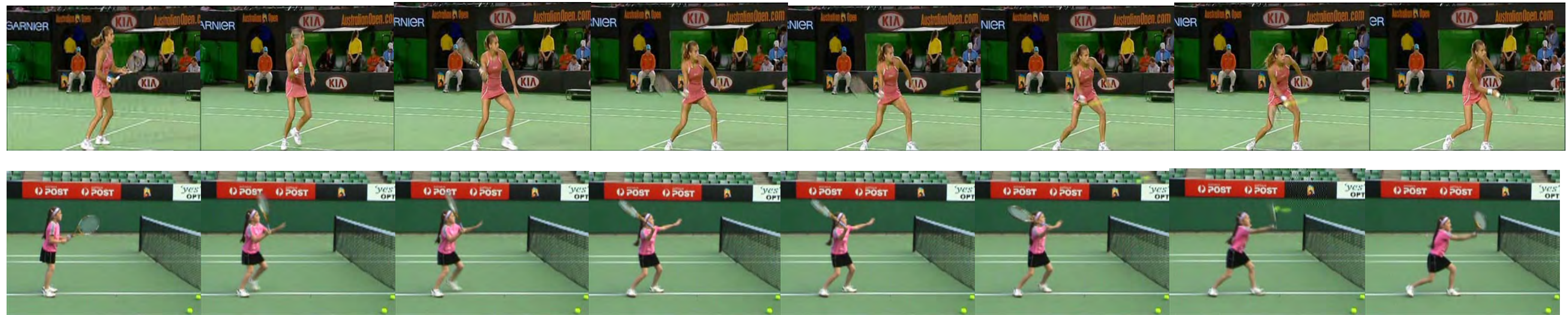
Impact Phase

- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on contact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Racquet follows path towards target
- Non dominant arm straightens and remains back - hand to hand forms a line
- Full extension of knuckle guidance at the completion of swing
- Hips slightly open to begin recovery

Forehand Volley



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non hitting hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #2 Continental grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened 'U' shape)

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Forms part of the initial turn with the hand and arm in front of the hitting shoulder
- Strings in line with the path of the ball
- Effective loading of ground reaction force
- Knee flexion range of acceptability $135^{\circ} \pm 10^{\circ}$ (shoulder high volley)

Forward Swing

- Body is dynamic moving through the volley with a transfer of body weight
- Racquet head above the wrist
- Strings move along a horizontal line towards the target
- Knees extend with dynamic forward movement

Impact Phase

- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Impact occurs in front of the body while the body moves through the volley
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Racquet follows path towards the target
- Deceleration of body weight to recover

Backhand Volley



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip to a #2 Continental grip
- Wrist stable

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head stability with the elbow raised
- Racquet head is kept above the wrist
- Strings in line with the path of the ball
- Knee flexion

Forward Swing

- Forward swing initiated by the separation of the arms
- Body is dynamic, moving through the volley with a transfer of body weight
- Racquet head is kept above the wrist
- Strings move along a horizontal line towards the target

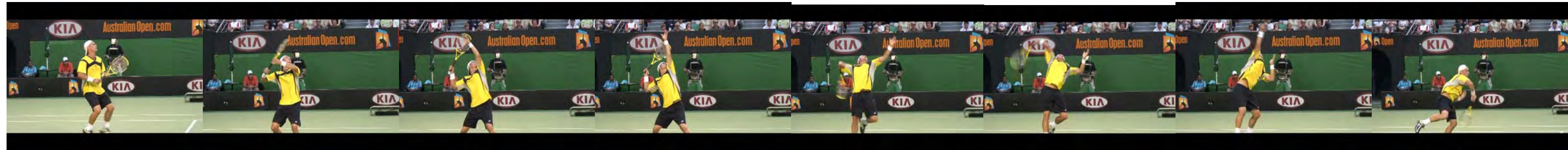
Impact Phase

- Knuckle guidance through hitting zone
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on contact point
- Impact occurs in front of the body while the body moves through the volley
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Racquet follows path towards target
- Non-hitting arm straightens and remains back - hand to hand forms a line
- Deceleration of body weight to recover

Overhead



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume sound support stance
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non-hitting hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- #2 Continental grip

Initial Turn

- Three actions happen simultaneously
 - Use of non dominant hand to initiate grip change
 - Right leg moves back for a right handed player, left leg moves back for a left handed player
 - Both arms raised together, racquet is closed with racquet angle at 45°

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Transfer of body weight onto the back leg to initiate ground reaction force
- Both knees are flexed in preparation for full leg drive
- Arms begin to separate while palm stays down

Forward Swing

- Elbow bends to initiate throwing motion
- Full leg drive which creates racquet displacement away from the body
- Uncoiling of hips followed by trunk rotation
- Extension of elbow and forearm to initiate pronation
- Racquet follows an upward and outward swing path
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

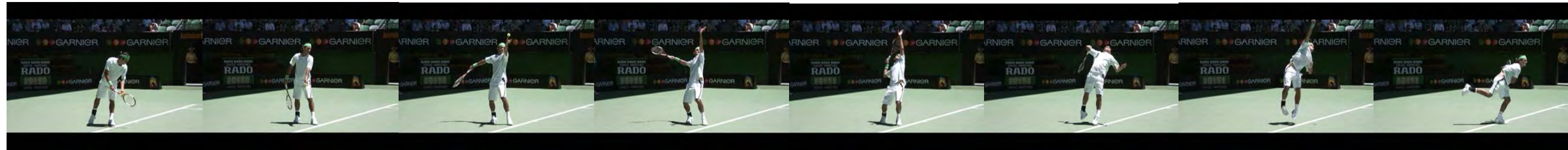
Impact Phase

- Impact out to the right and in front for a right hander, contact out to the left and in front for a left hander
- Non dominant arm tucks in close to the body to allow for continued acceleration of dominant arm
- Head and shoulders aligned with eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders rotate parallel to the net
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Completion of natural forearm pronation
- Deceleration of racquet speed
- Use of dynamic balance to ensure efficient recovery

Serve



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Serving stance – feet perpendicular to the net and assume a sound support base
- Front foot angled towards the net post
- Back foot behind the front, parallel to the baseline
- Non dominant hand supports ball and throat or racquet

Grip

- #2 Continental grip

Initial Turn

- Shoulders rotate away from the net
- Arms begin to separate
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Transfer of body weight onto the back leg to promote effective use of ground reaction force
- Back knee flexion at $110^\circ \pm 10^\circ$ range of acceptability
- Tossing arm leads hitting arm (non dominant arm leads dominant arm)
- Tossing arm raises up towards the net post
- Palm of hitting arm remains down facing the ground

Forward Swing

- Elbow bends to initiate throwing motion
- Full leg drive initiated which creates racquet displacement away from the body
- Uncoiling of hips followed by trunk rotation
- Weight transfer from back to front foot
- Extension of elbow to turn palm in for beginning rotation
- Racquet follows an upward and outward swing path
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

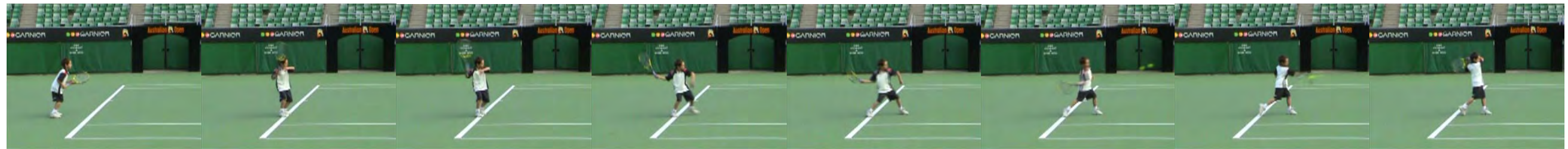
Impact Phase

- Impact points varies due to the type of serve executed
- Tossing arm tucks in close to the body to allow for continued acceleration of dominant arm
- Head and shoulder aligned with eyes focused on impact point
- Shoulder over shoulder rotation
- Hips and shoulders rotate to parallel position to the net
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Completion of natural forearm pronation
- Deceleration of racquet speed
- Use of dynamic balance to ensure efficient recovery

Forehand Return of Serve



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened 'U' shape)

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Non dominant hand balances the backward trunk rotation
- Backswing is short and compact
- Ideal separation angle 20° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Racquet face closes and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Forward swing is short and compact
- Transfer of body weight from back to front foot
- Racquet acceleration on a low to high trajectory with a shortened circular swing

Impact Phase

- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders rotate to face the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Full extension of palm guidance through impact
- Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery
- Relaxation at the elbow

Single Hand Backhand Return of Serve

No suitable pro footage currently available



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position with elbows away from the body
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Hitting arm remains slightly flexed
- Non hitting arm provides racquet head stability with the elbow raised
- Backswing is short and compact
- Dominant hand positioned between shoulders and hips
- Ideal separation angle 30° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Hands begin to separate
- Forward swing is short and compact
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of the body segments
- Weight transfer from back foot to front foot
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory with a shortened circular swing

Impact Phase

- Knuckle guidance system through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Dominant arm continues to lift through the impact zone
- Non dominant arm straightens – hand to hand forms a line
- Hitting shoulder finishes high
- Hips slightly open to begin recovery

Double Hand Backhand Return of Serve

No suitable pro footage currently available



Preparation Phase

Balance

- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in neutral position with elbows away from the body
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

Grip

- Dominant hand on grip L/R #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Non dominant hand on grip L/R #3

Initial Turn

- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing

- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm is slightly bent and raised
- Beginning of circular motion
- Backswing is short and compact
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Ideal separation angle 30° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand are still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Both knees are flexed to provide a base which trunk rotation and forward body movement can be created
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

Forward Swing

- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Both arms working in unison to generate maximum amount of power
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory forming an inside to outward swing pattern
- Forward swing is short and impact
- Transfer of body weight from back foot to front foot

Impact Phase

- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders are facing the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

Balance and Recovery Phase

- Full extension with both arms through impact
- Both arms finish high
- Racquet deceleration promotes recovery

4. Fundamental Tactical Concepts

The following tactical concepts should be used as a base when building a tactical understanding within your players.

1. Play Consistent Percentages

Each player should understand the difference between creating unforced errors compared to forced errors.

Unforced errors: mistakes made with no applied pressure from your opponent

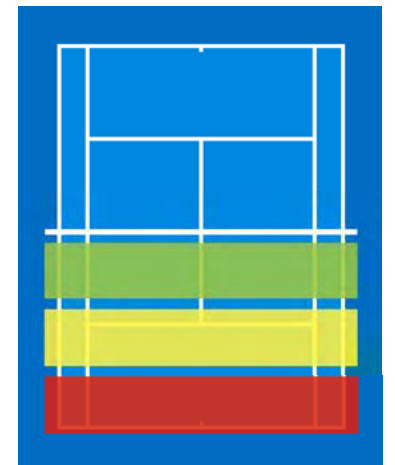
Forced errors: loss of a point when pressure has been applied from your opponent. Pressure can be created by taking away time and space from your opponent.

A player should look to reduce the numbers of unforced errors made and increase the number of forced errors of the opponent.

2. Know the Zones of the Court (traffic lights)

The court is broken up into three equal sections. Using the analogy of traffic lights the following rules can exist to create an understanding of correct shot selection depending on your court position.

Red Zone	Baseline – safe, consistent play
Yellow Zone	Mid-court – proceed through, transition ball to net
Green Zone	Net – finish off the point with volley or overhead



3. Understand the Court and the Target Areas

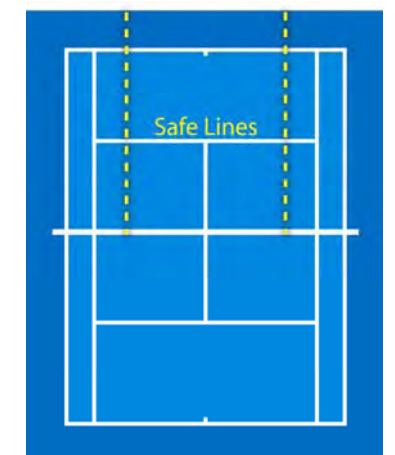
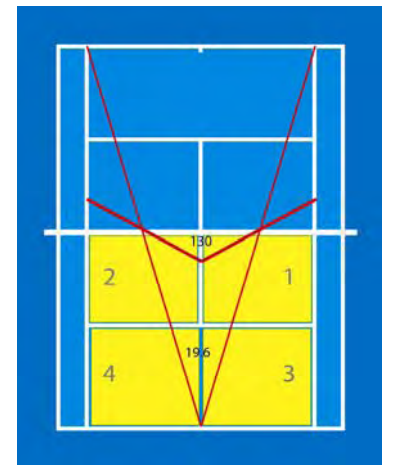
The following four rules help to explain the court and its dimensions to the player. Following these will allow for a higher percentage of tennis to be played.

Four quadrants – as you move into the two sections of the court closer to the net, a greater angle is created in which you can execute the stroke, allowing / putting your opponent under more pressure.

Height equals depth – having your strokes clear the net by over a metre will help create depth on your strokes. Depth is the backbone of any attacking game, as it creates pressure on your opponent and can often lead into a short ball.

Safelines – each player should know the safe lines to hit through which will give them some margin for error. By creating safelines a metre inside the lines, it will help to reduce errors and build pressure on the opponent; this is specifically useful when approaching the net.

Safe spots – each player should understand the areas of the court to hit to when under pressure and out of position. When taken out of court a player should aim for a high and deep down the middle to buy time to get back in position.

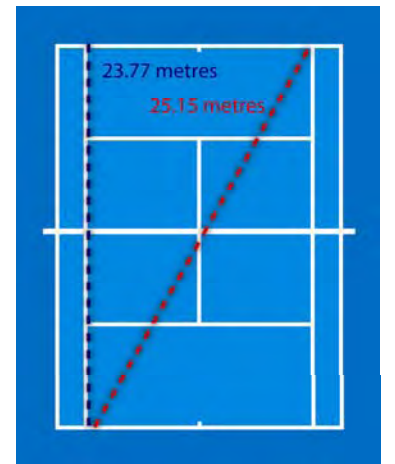


4. Limit Directional Changes

A player should only look to change direction when in excellent court position and has time to correctly execute to help guarantee success. This court position is when the player has both feet inside the court which will help increase the angles for successful change.

When the player is positioned behind the baseline, they should be encouraged to go back crosscourt, over the lowest part of the net and where there is the greatest distance from point to point.

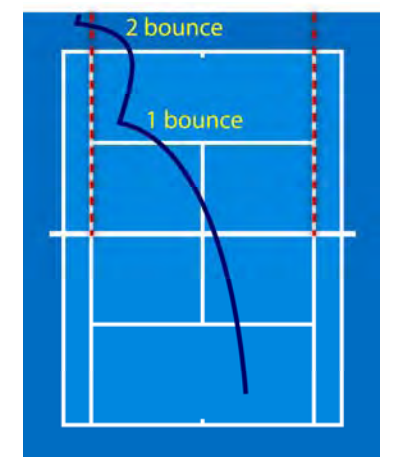
The difference between down the line and cross court is 19.1 degrees. Chances of errors increase when changing direction off a deep crosscourt ball (angle of incidence – where the ball is coming from vs where the ball is going to – angles of reflection).



5. Centre the Ball

The best error a player can make is long. A player should understand by hitting the ball through the baseline they are reducing their margins for error while reducing the area and angles their opponent can hit in to.

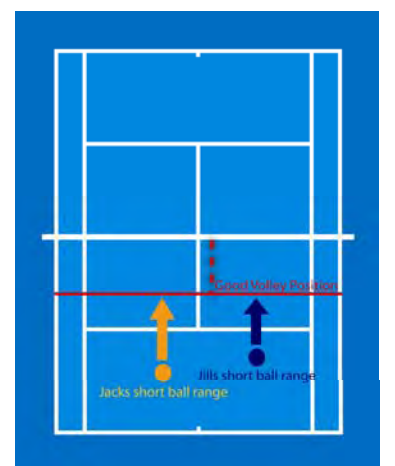
To help a player understand this, they can imagine their strokes having to bounce twice before dissecting the sideline.



6. Attack the Short Ball

A player needs to understand when coming towards the net, it is essential to get into a great net position. If a player comes forward off a short ball and cannot get into a good volleying position then they have come in off the wrong ball. Their short ball range is the position of where the ball lands when moving forward to gain this effective net position. Effectiveness at the net should result in winning 2 out of 3 points.

When approaching, the player should understand to come in towards their opponent's weaker side, which is the side they will hit longer and higher. Always look to approach up the line and move through the approach to help gain effective net position.



7. Winning Plays (1-2 sequence)

Each player must understand tennis is combinations of strokes which will lead to successful outcomes. Many junior players only see the winner; however it is often the stroke prior which has created an opening in the court to execute the point. It should be stressed to players to win the point off the second stroke in the sequence, for example, a wide serve into the forehand court and an off forehand to the backhand corner.

Winning plays or 1-2 sequences can come in many different combinations such as a serve and volley, first and second passing shot, approach and volley and backhand cross court and aggressive down the line.

8. D-N-O (Defensive, Neutral and Offensive)

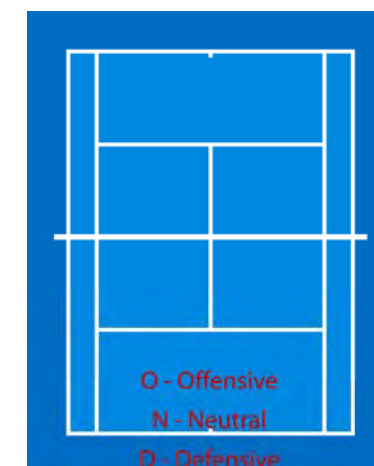
This is similar to the traffic lights concept. It is directly associated with the court position of the player.

Defensive – when behind the baseline

Neutral – when on the baseline

Offensive – when inside the baseline

By following this simple rule, it will reduce the number of unforced errors and create opportunities to increase their opponents forced errors.



9. Hold the Line on Low Volleys

This concept outlines the importance of playing the percentages and holding good court positioning at the net by volleying down the line and at the safe target line off low volleys.

10. Changing Gears (changing tactics & rhythm during a match)

The final concept outlines the ability of the player to change their tactics through the match depending on their current success rate. Junior players need to understand there are different ways they can change the play by altering their shot selection. This is an important skill for all players to understand.

The following are some different ways players can create tactical change during a match:

- More or less topspin
- Use of the slice backhand
- More height over the net
- Stay on the baseline longer
- Vary speed of the ball
- Attack only on very short ball
- Hit your 1st serve as if it was your 2nd serve
- Take more time between points (control the tempo)

These tactical concepts are to be utilised in your everyday coaching of both beginner and competitive players. They can be incorporated during different sessions according to the objectives of the session.

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