Summer Tennis Doubles Rules

1. Toss: Before starting play, opponents shall toss a coin or spin the racket. The winners shall have the option of serving, receiving, or choosing side of court.

2. Serving: Play is started with the service, which is made by tossing the ball into the air and hitting it with the racket **before** it touches the ground. The server stands **behind** the baseline and to the right or left of the center mark, but not outside the doubles sideline.
   a. The service of the first point of a game **always** begins to the right of the center mark, and is made to the opponent’s right service court. After each point is played, alternate service court. The same individual continues serving until the game is completed.
   b. The order of serving is decided at the beginning of each set. The pair serving first decides who is to serve in the first game, and the other partner will serve in the third game. The opponents also decide who is to serve first in the second game, and the other partner will serve in the fourth game. Both pairs alternate in the remaining games of the set.
   c. The server’s partner may stand anywhere during service.
   d. If a player serves out of turn, the proper server must serve as soon as the mistake is discovered. All points earned are counted. If a complete game is played with the wrong server, the order of service remains as altered.
   e. The server has two service attempts to put the ball into play.
   f. The service is a fault if the server:
      i. Does not take the proper position before serving.
      ii. Commits a foot fault (i.e., foot touches baseline prior to hitting ball).
      iii. Fails to hit the ball into the proper service court.
      iv. Attempts to strike and misses the ball (may toss and catch the ball without penalty).
      v. **If any of these occur on the first service, it is a fault.**
      vi. **If any of these occur on both services, it is a double fault, and the point is lost.**
      vii. **The ball is “out” if it fails to land in proper service court.**
   g. The ball must clear the net and land in the proper service court before being hit by the receiver. After the service however, the ball may be hit before it bounces. A ball that touches the line is considered in play.

3. Receiving: The order of receiving is decided at the beginning of each set.
   a. The pair receiving in the first game decides who will receive first, and that player will continue to receive first in all odd-numbered games of the set.
   b. The opponents also decide who will receive first in the second game, and that player will receive the first service in all even-numbered games of the set.
   c. Players alternate receiving services during a game.
   d. If a player receives out of turn, he/she remains in that position until the game in which it is discovered is completed. The partners then resume their original positions.

4. Scoring the Game: The serving team is responsible for announcing the score before the service. The serving team’s score is always called first.
a. A game equals four points. The scoring in tennis is 15 for the first point won, 30 for the second, 40 for the third, and “game” for the fourth point. A score of zero is referred to as “love”.
   i. When each team has a score of 40, the score is “deuce”, which means that one team must score two consecutive points, in order to win the game.
   ii. If the serving team wins the next point, the score is called “ad in” and they win the following point, it is game.
   iii. If the receiving team wins the first point deuce, the score is called “ad out”, and they win the next point, it is their game. However, if the score is either “ad in” or “ad out” and the other team wins the next point, the score then becomes deuce again.
b. A set is concluded when one team wins six games, but the team must win by two or more games. In cases of ties (6-6 in any set), a 9-point tie breaker decides the winner of the set.
c. A match consists of the best two out of three sets.

5. Changing Sides: The opposing pairs change sides of court at the end of the first, third, and every subsequent alternate game of each set as well as at the end of each set. If the total number of games in such a set is even, the change is not made until the end of the first game of the next set. The order of service does not change between subsequent sets.

6. Lets: A let is a ball which, striking the net, strap, or hand, lands in the proper court on the surface.
   a. A let is called when a player is unable to play a shot due to circumstances beyond his/her control, such as interference by a ball or player from another court.
   b. A let occurs if a service is delivered before the receiver is ready. If however, the receiver attempts to return the service, he/she is considered to be ready.
   c. When a let occurs on a service, only that service is repeated.
   d. The ball is in play if it hits the net during the subsequent rally after the service.

7. A team Loses A Point:
   a. If the ball bounces twice on the opponent’s side of the net.
   b. If a pair does not return the ball in their opponent’s court.
   c. If a player’s body, clothing, or racket touch the net while the ball is in play.
   d. If a player reaches over the net to play a ball, unless the ball has bounced back over the net due to a spin, or the wind.
   e. If the ball is hit twice while on a team’s side of the court.

8. Other Instructions
   a. Participants are responsible for reserving court times for scheduled matches within designated deadlines.
   b. Participants must furnish their own equipment.
   c. Courtesy Ball Policy: Each team should each report to match with a full can of balls.