

**Virginia Tech**  
**Department of Recreational Sports**  
**Men's, Women's and CoRec Tennis Doubles Rules**  
**2006 Summer / 2007 Spring Semesters**

A. Toss:

Before starting play, opponents shall toss a coin or spin the racket to determine serve and side. Winner(s) shall have the option of serving, receiving or choosing side of court.

B. Serving:

1. In tennis, 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.
2. The service for 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.
3. The order of serving is decided at the beginning of each set. The pair serving first decides which of the two is to serve first in the first game; the other partner will serve first in the third game. The opponents decide who is to serve first in the second game; the other partner will serve first in the fourth game. Both pairs alternate in the remaining games of the set.
4. The server's partner may stand anywhere during service.
5. 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.
6. The server has two service attempts to put the ball into play (the server may toss and catch the ball without penalty).
7. The service is a fault if any of the following situations occur during a serve:
  - The server does not take the proper position before serving.
  - The server commits a foot fault (the foot touches baseline prior to hitting ball).
  - The server fails to hit the ball into the proper service court.
  - The server misses the ball in attempting to strike it.
8. If any of the above situations occur on the first service, it is a fault. If any of the above situations occur on both services, it is a double fault and the point is lost.
9. The ball must clear the net and land in the proper service court before being hit by the receiver (a ball touching the line is considered good). After the service, the ball may be hit before it bounces.

C. Receiving:

1. The order of receiving is decided at the beginning of each set. The pair receiving the serve 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. The opponents will 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. Players alternate receiving services during a game.
2. If a player receives out of turn, he/she remains in that position until the game in which the mistake is discovered is completed. The partners then resume their original positions.

D. Scoring the Game:

1. The serving team is responsible for announcing the score before the service. The serving team's score is always called first.
2. 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".
3. When each team has a score of 40, the score is 'deuce', which means that one team must win by two consecutive points in order to win the game.

- If the serving team wins the next point, the score is called “ad in;” if the serving team then wins the next point, they win the game.
  - If the receiving team wins the first point after deuce, the score is called “ad out;” if the receiving team then wins the next point, they win the game.
  - If the score is either “ad in” or “ad out” and the trailing team wins the next point, the score becomes deuce again.
4. A set is concluded when one team wins six games, and with the winning team ahead by two or more games. In case of a tie, (6-6 in any set), a 9 point tie-breaker will decide the winner of the set.
  5. A match consists of the best two out of three sets.

#### E. Changing Sides:

1. The opposing pairs change sides of court at the following times:
  - At the end of the first, third, and every subsequent alternate game of each set.
  - At the end of each set, unless the total number of games in such a set is even, in which case the change is not made until the end of the first game of the next set.
2. The order of service does not change between subsequent sets.

#### F. A Let:

1. A let is a ball that strikes the net, strap, or hand, but still lands in the proper court on the surface.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. When a let occurs on a service, only that service is repeated.
5. The ball is in play if it hits the net during the subsequent rally after the service.

#### G. Loss of Points:

A player/team loses a point under the following circumstances:

- If the ball bounces twice on the opponent’s side of the net or if a pair does not return the ball in their opponent’s court.
- If a player’s body, clothing, or racket touch the net while the ball is in play.
- 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.
- If the ball is hit twice while on their side of the court.

#### H. Other Instructions:

1. Participants are responsible for reserving court times for scheduled matches within designated deadlines.
2. Participants must furnish their own equipment.
3. Courtesy Ball Policy: Each doubles team should report to each match with a new can of balls. The winner(s) take the unopened can of balls to the next match.
4. Only one tennis sport club member may participate on each Tennis Doubles team. Any team found to have more than one tennis sport club member will be removed from the challenge ladder and/or the playoff bracket.