

Using a Tennis Journal to Improve Your Game

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Your coach asked you to keep a tennis journal? Ugghh! What a pain! Why would she ask you to write in a journal? How could that actually help your tennis? Experienced players know that journaling is an effective way to improve and it is not painful!

Someone that has a Learning Mindset is continually focused on getting better every day. Players that improve faster than their opponents have 3 very important learning habits.

They:

1. **SET GOALS:** They set goals prior to practice. They have a plan for practice.
2. **EXECUTE:** They work on their goals and give themselves feedback as they practice. They are engaged and aware of what they are learning as they practice.
3. **REFLECT:** They think about goals they achieved in today's practice and what they want to achieve in the next practice. They set goals for the next day.

Benefits of Journaling:

1. Helps you remember goals. It keeps you focused on what is important for you.
2. All of your thoughts on paper so you can clearly see what is important and find solutions to problems.
3. Writing or typing in a journal helps you commit to your goals.

Getting Started

Buy a notebook or get the Player Development Journal which has sample questions for you to answer. Put the journal where you will see it every day (in your tennis bag). Put a pen or pencil with the journal.

What to Write About

Writing a journal is a personal choice, write about what helps you. At first, keep it simple. Write what you achieved today and what you want to achieve tomorrow. Then focus on how you played, what you learned, what you would do differently, did you follow your game plan, did you work on your goals, physical and mental strategies you used and how they worked.

How to Write

Be detailed and specific. The journal is to help you remember and apply what you are learning.

When to Write

Cool down and stretch after your practice, then write while you eat a snack and hydrate. If that is not possible then write while someone drives you from practice. Writing just before you go to bed is also good so you reflect on your day and prepare for tomorrow.

How to Use What You are Writing to Improve as a Player

Look at your journal entries at the end of the week. Look at what goals you achieved. Congratulate yourself on your accomplishments. Look at what goals remain to be achieved. Get excited to work towards those goals. Look at what you did each day to achieve your goals. Plan what you will do in the next week to achieve more goals.