

SCHOOL TENNIS



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SCHOOL/AFTER-SCHOOL
WORKSHOP **PARTICIPANT GUIDE**

THE USTA IS THE IDEAL PARTNER TO HELP YOU BRING TENNIS TO YOUR STUDENTS.

Here are just a few of our offerings:



TRAINING

How to teach tennis in a fun and easy manner with no previous tennis experience required.



CURRICULUM

Lesson plans and activities for teaching tennis without tennis courts.



KID-FRIENDLY EQUIPMENT

Opportunities to secure student-friendly equipment that ensures a positive first experience.



STAFF SUPPORT

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RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Resources and benefits for teachers and coaches that offer physical education or after school programs.

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WHY THE USTA SCHOOL TENNIS PROGRAM?

Modified equipment and boundaries make tennis possible in any school or after-school environment and are now aligned with the new rules for Kids Tennis in a kid-friendly format. Tennis activities supported by the USTA School Tennis Program are fun and easy to implement in gyms, playgrounds and multi-purpose rooms with no courts required. The USTA also offers extracurricular activities which include Kids' Tennis Clubs, Play Days and Jr. Team Tennis to give children opportunities to experience a healthy and safe activity that they can enjoy for life.

Purpose of the Program

The purpose of the School/After-School Tennis Workshop is to enable teachers, organizers and program leaders to feel comfortable introducing tennis in non-traditional spaces through a combination of student management activities, tennis skill activities and supervised play.

Workshop Objectives

- Discover how to adapt any space for tennis using kid-friendly equipment.
- Acquire large group management techniques that can be used in any physical activity setting (PE, Kids' Tennis Clubs, and events).
- Understand how to teach basic tennis and fitness skills using activity stations and the Tennis Skillastics game.
- Discover how to organize and supervise play in non-traditional spaces for large numbers of students.

What are your expectations of today's workshop?

What are your personal goals for your program?



CLASS MANAGEMENT **TECHNIQUES**

Introductory activities are used to physiologically prepare students for activity when entering the gymnasium or activity area. Such activities demand little instruction and allow time to practice class management skills.

Listed below are several hints that are easily implemented when starting and stopping activities.

Starting and Stopping Activities

- 1. Starting an Activity:** Be sure to always say “when” before “what” to start an activity, e.g. “When I say ‘Go,’ I need you to get a ball and dribble it down waist high. Ready, ‘Go.’ Other cue words can be used to start an activity (e.g. “When I say ‘carrots’...”).
- 2. Stopping an Activity:** Use a signal such as a whistle, hand raise, etc., to stop an activity. Have everyone square up to the teacher with hands on knees. Have students stand tall and only proceed once you have everyone’s attention! Using the same signal to start and stop an activity sends a conflicting message to the students.

Listed below are several introductory activities that are included in the curriculum guide. See **Appendix A** for more details regarding the formations and techniques.

FORMATIONS/TECHNIQUES

- Forming Partners using “Toe-to-Toe” **(Lesson 1)**
- Forming Two Sides using “One Hand Up, One Hand Down” **(Lesson 8)**
- Forming Small Groups using “Sound Mixer” **(Lesson 6)**

F/T WITH A TENNIS ACTIVITY

- Toe-To-Toe with “Ball Drop”
- Two Sides with “Toss Catch Tag”
- Sound Mixer with “Racquet Quickness Circle”

What were the key takeaways of the tennis and management games we just performed?



SAFETY TALK:

Teachers should discuss safety rules and consequences before allowing students to use equipment for the first time. Remind students to be aware of others and not to swing the racquet recklessly.

CLASS MANAGEMENT REMINDERS

MANAGING SPACE

- 1. Large Group Activities:** Be sure to establish boundaries with cones in each corner of the activity area to be sure students are safe and can be managed effectively. Throw down lines can be placed to create boundaries for areas that are not clearly defined with existing borders.
- 2. Small Group Activities:** Utilize the station format and determine a flow for station rotation allowing for ample space between stations. Emphasis should be placed on kids working collaboratively and supporting each other.
- 3. Self-space:** Encourage participants to be aware of their personal space and not swinging their racquets near other children. This is very important when participants are working independently.
- 4. Forming Groups:** Be sensitive to how partners and groups are formed so no student feels left out. Students should group with peers closest to them vs. seeking out their closest friends. If a player/group is not available within two steps, players must run to the “friendship circle” immediately to find a partner/group.

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

- 1. Clear Guidelines:** Be sure to establish clear guidelines so that expectations are understood from the beginning.
- 2. Rewards/Incentives:** Provide rewards and incentives as a means to achieve adherence from all participants.
- 3. Consistency:** Be consistent with procedures and expectations. Always make sure participants are “with you” before proceeding to the next activity. Students can get caught up in the activity so use positive reinforcement by waiting for everyone to be “with you” before you move on.

MANAGING EQUIPMENT

- 1. Obtaining Equipment:** Space equipment around the perimeter of the activity area to avoid congestion around equipment bins. Utilize buckets near nets and at stations so that racquets are safely stored between activities. When using equipment, ask students to get a racquet and/or ball from the perimeter and find their own space by placing the equipment on the ground. Students should then stand in an athletic position with hands on their knees while awaiting instructions.
- 2. Hugging the Racquet:** Demonstrate and practice how to “hug your racquet” or “lock it in” for older students. This is a good safety technique when you are only addressing students for a few seconds. Have students place equipment on the floor or ground if you will be addressing students for a longer period of time.
- 3. Grounding the Racquet:** Demonstrate how to “ground your racquet” by placing the racquet flat on the floor in front of you. Explain that grounding the equipment is necessary if you are addressing students for a longer period of time.
- 4. Storing a Ball:** Students should not chase balls out of their playing area. Loose balls should be picked up and stored immediately by students when it enters their space. Loose balls can be stored in pockets, tucked into clothing or under a hat. If a ball is lost, students should be able to obtain a ball from their peers or from supply bins located safely on the perimeter of the activity area.

*The curriculum CD ROM includes a three step process for dealing with behavior problems.

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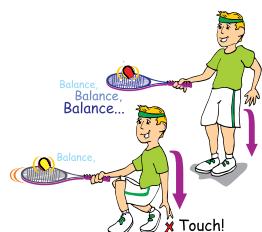


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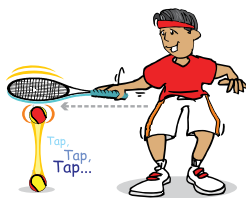
BASIC TENNIS SKILLS AND GAMES

PURPOSE: Promote racquet and ball handling skills and basic rallying skills.

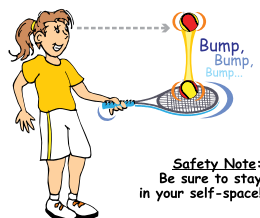
Individual Activities “Racquet and Ball Sense”



Ball-Balance

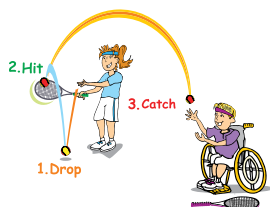


Tap-Downs

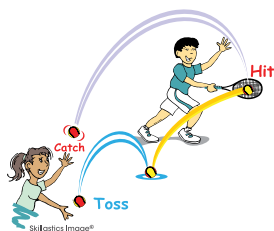


Bump-Ups

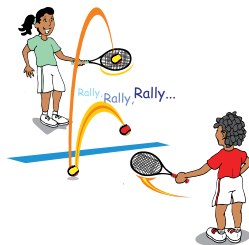
Partner Activities



Drop-Hit Catch (forehand)



Toss-Hit Catch (backhand)



Partner Rallies Over Line

Teaching Hints:

- Students should practice tossing and catching the ball under “control” before attempting striking skills.
- Allow students ample time to practice skills first before offering corrective feedback.
- When students are having trouble mastering an activity, they can go back to the previously learned activities.
- Encourage “waist high” for tap downs and “eye high” for bump ups.
- Use the slowest moving ball possible for these activities.
- Where appropriate, bean bags, balloons or yarn balls can be substituted to increase success.

IMPORTANT PERFORMANCE CUES

1. Forehand Grip: “Shake hands” with the racquet grip.

2. Backhand Grip: The dominant hand is placed on the bottom of the grip and the non-dominant hand uses the “shake hands” grip.

3. Side to target

4. Contact out in front

What were some of the adaptations used to make the activities easier for students?

- Toss and catch
- Roll the ball on the ground with racquets on edge
- Juggle ball with bounces before sending to partner

What were some of the adaptations used to challenge students?

FITNESS & TENNIS STATIONS/ TENNIS SKILLASTICS

Fitness & Tennis Stations

Fitness and tennis stations provide students with a fast-paced, dynamic and fun learning environment that enables them to work on multiple skills. See **Appendix B** for a sample fitness & tennis station routine.

Tennis Skillastics

Tennis Skillastics was designed as a teaching tool to help children achieve a higher level of fitness and skill by making practicing tennis fun in a unique, non-competitive environment. The program involves 26 activities including a mixture of all the basic tennis skills and activities for individual, partner and team participation. Tennis Skillastics develops hand/eye coordination, improves concentration and creates interest in a lifetime sport.

The 26 tennis and fitness games that comprise Tennis Skillastics can be practiced as separate station activities prior to playing the full game. This is usually more effective to ensure student success.

What are some different ways to utilize the Tennis Skillastics game?

Teaching Hints:

- Similar to a station rotation, utilize music and offer turbo tips to keep participants on track.
- Form groups with the “Sound Mixer” technique and distribute those groups to the smaller “game boards.”
- Encourage and reward effort, sportsmanship and cooperation.



SUPERVISED PLAY GAMES

Extracurricular programs, including Kids' Tennis Clubs, Play Days and Junior Team Tennis, give children opportunities to experience a healthy and safe activity that they can enjoy for life. Historically, the availability of courts has been a limiting factor. Fortunately, these activities were specifically designed to be adaptive to multiple areas.

No Courts Required

Listed below are activities and games that enable School Tennis to be implemented in various areas including school playgrounds and gyms.

1. Tennis Four Square: A four square court is created using jump ropes, floor tape, rubber lines, etc. The ball is put in play amongst four players on the four square court. The goal is to work up towards the top square following a clockwise rotation. If a player loses a point, they go to the lowest square and the other players in the game advance one position closer to the top square. Extra players can wait on deck and rotate into the lowest square. This game can be played with or without a net.

3. Team Tennis Doubles (Rallyball): Up to six players are put on each team. Only two players per team play at one time. Players on both teams play out four points and all players rotate out after the points are over. Be sure to rotate substitutes evenly from the side. First team to 7 points wins. This game can also be played as Team Singles with players playing singles points and alternating out with their teammates.

2. Champ(s) of the Court Doubles: A designated champion team competes against a line of challenging teams. Points are started with an underhand or overhand serve from the challenger's side. Play 2 out of 3 points. If the Challengers win, they replace the Champs. This game can also be played as Champ of the Court Singles.

4. Star Catcher: Quick games of singles or doubles are played on each mini-court (e.g. first to win 3 points). Extra players wait on deck outside of the playing area. As soon as players finish a game, they come off the court and get back in line. People that are first in line quickly fill the open courts as they become available. Players can earn a star or a stamp for each mini match they win. Players rotating out should match up with new partners for their next game.

Reminders from the games:

APPENDIX A: MANAGEMENT FORMATIONS/TECHNIQUES

FORMATIONS/TECHNIQUES

1. Forming Partners using “Toe-to-Toe” (Lesson 1):

- Ask participants to move throughout the activity area (jog, skip, gallop, etc.). Use a variety of locomotor movements to mix participants each time.
- Freeze them by blowing a whistle. Once frozen, ask them to get toe-to-toe with a partner.
- Those without a partner run to the “friendship circle” and wait for a player to join them. Once paired up, they move out of the circle and find their own space.
- If there are an odd number of participants, the teacher should assign the participant to work with an existing pair/group.
- Practice a couple of times until everyone does it correctly.

2. Forming Two Sides using “One hand up, one hand down” (Lesson 8):

- Have students get toe-to-toe with a partner.
- Ask one player from each pair to raise their hand.
- The participants with hands raised line up across the center of the activity space with their foot on the center line.
- Instruct the other players that had their hands down to line up across from their partner and get toe-to-toe.

3. Forming Small Groups “Sound Mixer” (Lesson 6):

- To begin, have participants jog around in all directions.
- Blow a whistle to freeze the group. Explain that you are going to clap your hands a certain number of times to signal the size of the groups to be formed.
- Participants then form groups with the number in each group equal to the number of hand claps. (If there are four claps, students form groups of four).
- When participants have the correct number of participants in the group, they get toe-to-toe with each other to signal that they have the correct number of participants in the group. Participants can also be asked to sit down once they have formed their group.
- Participants who cannot find a partner within two giant steps run quickly to the “friendship circle” and form a team with other students. Participants should immediately move out of the circle once they are teamed up.

FORMATIONS/TECHNIQUES WITH A TENNIS ACTIVITY

1. Toe-to-Toe with Ball Drop:

- Get students into pairs with the toe-to-toe technique and demonstrate how participants would play “ball drop.”
- Choose one participant to demonstrate the game with you.
- The participant holds a ball in each hand and extends their arms out to the left and right at shoulder height.
- The participant drops one of the balls and the partner then moves toward the ball and attempts to catch the ball after one bounce.
- Have all partner groups practice the game 5 times each.

2. Two Sides with Toss Catch Tag:

- Instruct the partner groups to have one partner raise their hand and the other partner to keep their hands down.
- The participants with hands raised line up across the center of the activity space with their foot on the center line (or imaginary center line).
- Instruct the other players who had their hands down to line up across from their partner and get toe-to-toe.
- Demonstrate how to play toss-catch-tag with a participant.
- One partner tosses using an underhand technique and the other partner attempts to catch the ball after one bounce.
- Instruct the participants that they are to continue to toss to one another until the music stops.
- Once the music stops, the person with the ball attempts to tag their partner while they are fast walking away from them.
- Have the participants practice several times with the music.





3. Sound Mixer with Racquet Quickness Circle:

- With racquets in hand, have all participants jog in the activity area.
- Use a clap, whistle, etc. to form small groups based on the number of sounds made (four claps = groups of four).
- Use one small group to demonstrate to the larger group on how to perform “Racquet Quickness.”
- Form a circle and have the participants stand the racquet on the tip of the frame with handle up.
- Call out “right” or “left” and participants let go of their racquet and move in the directions called and attempt to catch the racquet next to them before it falls.
- If everyone has a successful catch, move and back up a step, if not, move in a step.
- Have the participants practice the game in their groups for a few minutes alternating who gets to call out “left” or “right”.

APPENDIX B: **SAMPLE FITNESS & TENNIS STATION ROUTINE**

Fitness and tennis stations provide students with a fast paced, dynamic and fun learning environment that enables them work on multiple skills.

Facilitating Stations:

- Have stations already assembled on the perimeter prior to starting the station activities.
- Form groups with the Sound Mixer technique and rotate groups of 4-6 students at the stations every 60 seconds.
- Play music and have the students rotate to the next station in the circuit when the music stops.

SAMPLE FITNESS & TENNIS STATION ROUTINE:

1. Racquet and Ball Handling:

- a. Tap Downs: Bounce the ball down at waist level.
- b. Bump Ups: Bounce the ball up eye level without letting the ball touch the ground.
- c. Edgies: Dribble the ball down at waist level using the edge of the tennis racquet.
- d. Self-Rallies: Alternate bumping the ball off the racquet and off the ground.
- e. Invent a Bounce Players attempt different ways to dribble or bump the ball — this can even be choreographed to music as a rhythm and skills challenge.

2. Partner Ball Tossing, Rolling, and Catching: Balls can be tossed, rolled, or bounced between partners. Players should keep their fingers up when attempting to catch. For an additional challenge, players can toss balls one at a time or two at a time, while stationary or moving.

3. Toss, Hit, and Catch: One player tosses a ball to the forehand or backhand side of their partner. The ball can either be bumped or volleyed out of the air back to the tosser. Begin with partners three steps apart and have players attempt to make five successful hits and catches before switching.

4. Ready Position and Catch: One player is the tosser and the other player is in ready position with a racquet. The beanbag (or foam ball) is tossed to either the forehand or backhand side of the player in ready position. Their goal is to catch it on the racquet strings and learn to move into position rather than reaching for the ball. Switch positions after five tosses.

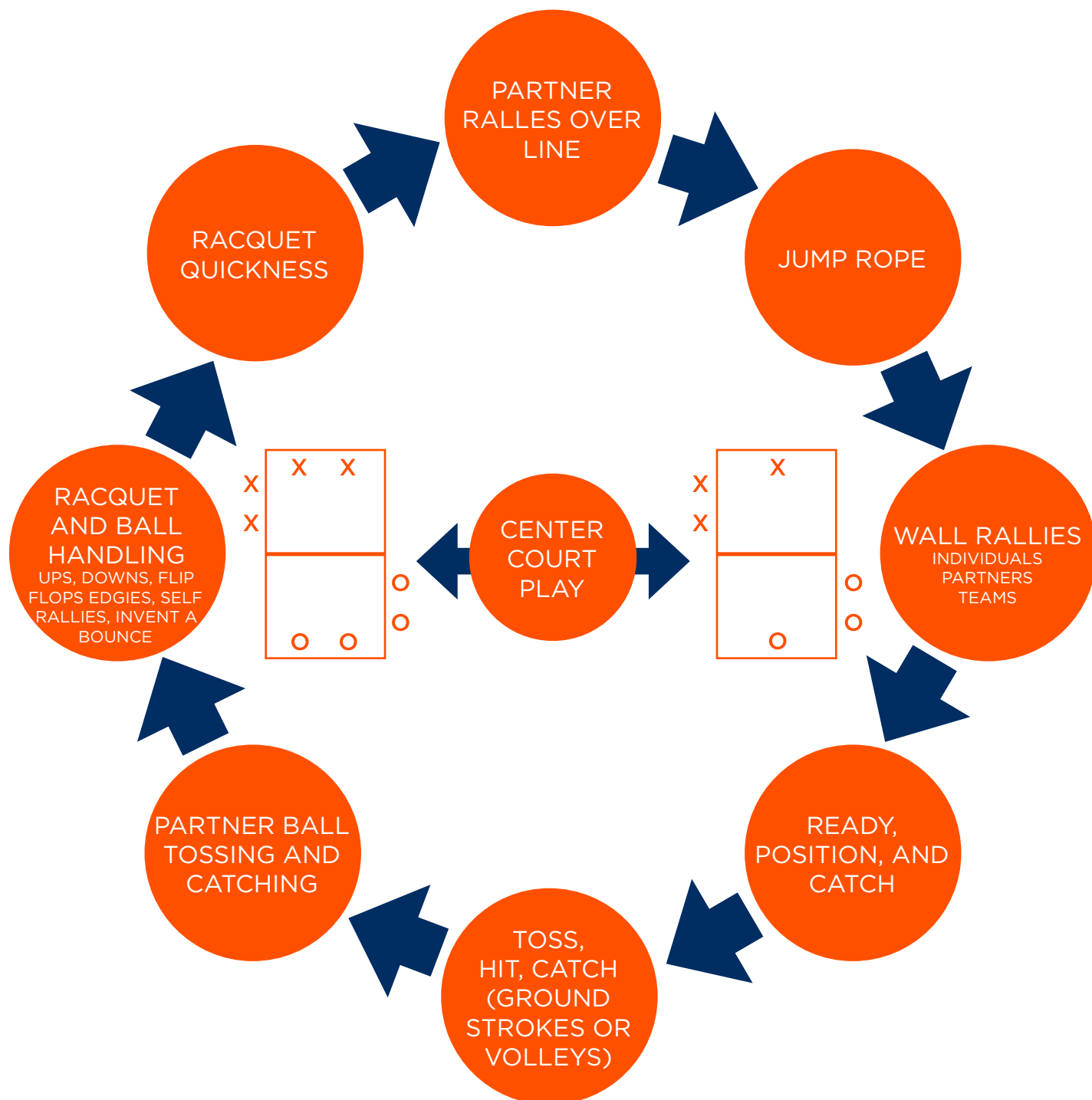
5. Wall Rallies: Standing 10-15 feet away, players attempt to rally the ball consecutively against a wall. Rallies can be done individually or in pairs or teams with players alternating hits.

6. Jump Rope: Players can practice jumping rope individually or with partners. For an extra challenge, players can attempt jumping with two ropes at once (“double dutch”), do 360 degree turns, or juggle a ball in the air while their partners turn the ropes.

7. Partner Rallies over Line (or Net): Partners work together with a line or jump rope between them to serve as an imaginary net. They bump the ball back and forth using forehands and backhands. To start the rally, players should start close, match up the racquet faces, and take two steps back. Have players try and set the “world record” for longest rally.

8. Racquet Quickness: Partners are about 3 feet apart while balancing their racquets. On signal, they release their racquet and try to catch their partner's racquet before it falls to the ground. If both partners catch their racquet, they each step back one step and repeat the challenge. An additional challenge is to make a full turn after the release and before catching the racquet.

9. Center Court Play: Additional space can be reserved for players to play games of Team Singles, Team Doubles or other self directed tennis games (e.g. Champ of the Court, Challenge Court, etc.).



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Courts	Hard	Clay	Grass	Total
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