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**Tennis Top Tips**

**Body Position**
- Shake hands with racquet for basic grip
- Balanced ready position, racquet up
- Keep eye on the ball

**Forehand/Backhand (Groundstroke)**
- Swing racquet low to high
- Use backswing to create power
- Follow through towards target for accuracy

**Volley (hit before a bounce)**
- Short sharp shot
- ‘Punch’ ball with racquet rather than swing

**Serve**
- Underarm – drop ball from chest height and swing racquet low to high
- Overhead – throw ball high above head with non-racquet hand, meet the ball with racquet at its highest point

In all games within this booklet, the ball may be served underarm or overhead

**Tactics**
- Try to hit the ball to parts of the court that make it difficult for the opponent to return
- Try to disguise the shot from the opponent

**Safety**
Consider having no-go zones or specific striking areas to ensure players don’t get hit with racquets or balls

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**The Gorilla**
1 Player, 1 Large Ball (e.g. Football)

Stand with feet wide apart and the ball on the floor between your feet.
- Bend your knees and put both hands on the ball with one hand in front of your legs and the other hand behind your legs. Pick the ball up then let it drop, change your hands around and catch it after the bounce.

**TIPS**
- Keep knees bent and your back straight.

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**The Square**
1 Player, 1 Square made using throw down lines or cones (2-3 strides length for each side)

- Start inside the square.
- Jump 2-feet around each line of the square in turn and back again, going twice round clockwise. Always keep your feet pointing towards the front.

**TIPS**
- Land and jump off the balls of your feet.
- Keep your balance and try not to look down.

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**Easier**
- Keep the ball on the ground and move hands to touch it.

**Harder**
- Catch it before the bounce.
- Use a tennis ball.
Start in a sit up position with the ball on your chest. Throw the ball up into the air ahead of you. Stand up and catch the ball before it touches the ground!
SLAM DUNK
2 PLAYERS, 1 LARGE BALL

- Player 1 throws the ball down onto the floor so that it bounces up high.
- Player 2 jumps high to catch it and immediately throws it down hard for player 1 to jump for.
- Keep alternating for 5 jumps each then rest.

TIPS
- Get your own head out of the way when you bounce the ball.
- Sink low to help you drive up high when jumping.
- Use your arms to help you jump up as high as you can.

EASIER
- Bounce the ball lower.

HARDER
- Team Version. Stand in a circle. Player 1 in the middle throws the ball down, and then goes back to the circle; the next player moves in, jumps and catches. Move round the circle.

PRESS UP TENNIS
2 PLAYERS, 1 BALL, 1 SQUARE MADE USING THROW DOWN LINES OR CONES (2-3 SHOES LENGTH FOR EACH SIDE)

Both players get onto hands and feet in a press up position, facing each other.

- Throw and catch the ball to each other letting it bounce in the square.

TIPS
- Nothing to mark out a square?
  - Play over a line on the court.
- Keep a good press up position
  - don’t let your back drop down.

EASIER
- Do the press up on knees.

HARDER
- Play points. The square is in.

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Play against a wall if on your own.

Add in throwing and catching a ball.

AIR & GROUNDIES
2 PLAYERS, 2 RACKETS, 2 BALLS
Players start facing each other, 4m apart.
• Player 1 kicks one ball along the floor to Player 2. At the same time Player 2 hits the other ball to Player 1 using a racket. The ‘hit’ ball must bounce once before being hit back. Keep both balls moving.
• Count: 1 each time the ball is hit. Stop counting when either of the balls is missed or when the air ball bounces twice.

COMPETITIVE
Count 1 each time the air ball is hit. Stop counting when either of the balls is missed or when the air ball bounces twice.

TIPS
Synchronise with your partner so that you each contact a ball at the same time.

EDGIE UPPIES
1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL
• Hit the ball upwards using only the edge of your racket.
• Count: 1 for every edgie. If you miss, start counting again from 1.

EASIER
• Hit alternatively with strings and edge.
• Hold racket further up the handle.

HARDER
• Hold racket further down the handle.
• Alternate between an edgie and hedging the ball.

TIPS
• Use a chopper grip.
• Aim not to move around too much.
YO-YO
1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL
• Start with the ball on the ground.
• Use the racket to bounce the ball up to waist height and then squash it back down again.
• Count: 1 for each complete sequence up and down.
Stop counting if you fail to bounce the ball up or lose control.

TIPS
• Make the first hit of the ball snappy; and quickly move the racket up.
• Bend the knees not the back.

EASIER
• Bounce down as normal; pick up by sandwiching ball between racket and foot.

HARDER
• Bounce the ball to waist height in only 2 hits.

DOUBLE DOWN
1 PLAYER, 2 BALLS
• Using both hands, continually bounce 2 tennis balls down to the floor. Aim to have both balls hitting the ground at the same time.
• Count: As the balls hit the floor count 1, 2, 3 etc.
Stop counting when you lose control of either ball.

TIPS
• Start by bouncing one ball, then add the 2nd ball once in a rhythm.

EASIER
• Bounce down 1 ball with alternate hands.

HARDER
• Use different size balls.
• Use one racket and one hand.
• Use 2 rackets.

TWISTED CRADLE
1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL
Hold the racket with a ball resting on the strings.
• Gently swing the racket upwards so the ball goes in the air. Quickly turn the racket over and catch the ball on the other side, without it bouncing on the strings.
• Count: 1 for each successful cradle completed in a row.
Keep counting until you lose control of the ball.

TIPS
• Start low before sending the ball up.
• Reach up with the racket to catch the ball and cushion it down, to stop it bouncing off the strings.

EASIER
• Remove the twist.
• Throw ball with hand and catch with racket.

HARDER
• Spin the racket twice.
• Catch behind your back.

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BACK ATTACK
2 PLAYERS, 2 RACKETS, 1 BALL

Players stand 5m apart.
• Rally a ball with partner hitting every other shot with the racket round the back of your body.
• The ball bounces once between hits.
• Count: 1 for each shot played. Stop counting when the ball bounces twice between shots.

TIPS
• When hitting ‘round the back’ - move your body to the side of the ball.
• Keep the racket head up when ‘round the back’.

EASIER
• Rally normally and only hit the easier balls ‘round the back’.

HARDER
• Hit every shot ‘round the back’.

WALK THE DOG
1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL

With the racket low and by your side.
• Walk or jog while bouncing the ball slightly forwards then slightly backwards.
• Keep the ball moving in time with your pace.
• Time: how long you can keep the ball moving under control.
• Or Count: 1 for every hit.

COMPETITIVE
• Time you and see how long you can keep the ball moving under control.

TIPS
• Relax the wrist slightly so you can move the ball back and forth easily.
• Keep the racket low by your side.

EASIER
• Move the ball backwards and forwards while standing still.
• Or tap the ball down trailing behind.

COLOSSAL CATCH
1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL

Start with 1 ball resting on the racket face.
• Flick the ball high into the air in one movement.
• Then toss the racket 360° and catch the ball back down on the strings.
• Count: 1 for each ball you catch.

TIPS
• Flick the balls high but straight to give time to toss the racket.

EASIER
• Just rotate the racket without using a ball to catch.

HARDER
• Do the same with 2 balls at once.
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**THE SCOOP**

1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL

Put your ball on the ground and stand 1m behind it.
- With the racket - roll the ball backwards slightly and scoop it up onto the racket strings.
- Don't let the ball bounce on the strings or fall off the racket.
- Count: 1 for each scoop. Stop counting when you fail to complete the scoop.

**COMPETITIVE**

- Count 1 for each scoop. Stop counting when you fail to complete the scoop.

**TIPS**

- Use one fluid motion from rolling the ball back to scooping.
- On the scoop - hold the racket as close to 90° to the ground as possible.

**EASIER**

- Flick a ball up from the floor against a wall or fence and catch before it bounces.

**HARDER**

- Scoop and catch 2 balls at once.

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**FOOT FLICKS**

1 PLAYER, 1 RACKET, 1 BALL

Put the ball on the ground and stand with a foot alongside it.
- Use the foot and racket together and flick the ball up into the air in one movement.
- Hit the ball down to the floor then catch it when it bounces up again.
- Count: 1 for each successful foot flick in a row. Stop counting when you fail to catch the ball.

**EASIER**

- Position each foot at opposite sides of the ball, flick the ball up and catch it.

**COMPETITIVE**

- Count 1 for each successful foot flick in a row. Stop counting when you fail to catch the ball.

**TIPS**

- Bring the foot and the racket up snappily together.

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**HOME BASE**

- Place a cone/spot at centre back of court
- Play on a small area, with a feeder on one side of the court
- Feeder shouts "forehand/backhand/volley" as they feed ball onto court
- After each shot players must move back to touch cone/spot with foot
- Points for returning ball in court

**ADAPTATIONS:**

- Feeder doesn't call shot, striker has to react to ball
- Feeder becomes striker too and must also touch cone on their side
- Points only won for outright winners, not for missed shots/out of bounds/Hit net
THROW, BOUNCE, CATCH, REPEAT...

Player 1 throws the ball against the wall
Player 2 lets the ball bounce, then catches it

Adaptations:
- Move further away from the wall
- See how many you can do in a certain time
- Try different throws or without a bounce
- Add in a tennis racket

SQUARE SQUASH

Play in pairs within a square area
Player 1 taps the ball up into the air above waist height
Player 2 returns ball by also hitting the ball into the air (one bounce allowed)
Play first to 11 points

Adaptations:
- Play co-operatively and see how many hits you can get
- If a player misses a shot you must start again at zero

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Number each player 1-4
Players take it in turns to hit a set number of shots against the wall (e.g. player 1 = 4, player 2 = 3, player 3 = 2, player 4 = 1)

Adaptations:
- Allow two bounces
- Change the number of hits
- Mix up the numbers (e.g. player 1 then player 3 etc.
- See if you can complete it within a certain time

Mark out a dividing line to mark the middle of the court
Players place spots (or any household objects e.g. empty toilet roll/empty milk bottle) randomly around their area
Players take it in turns to bounce and hit the ball aiming to hit one of their opponents’ spots
If successful, the spot is removed
The player that removes all their opponents spots first wins

Adaptations:
- Allow players to defend their spots by catching the ball before it bounces
- Play a normal game of tennis – hitting the spot = extra point
Tennis Adaptation – perform the action:

- A smash beats a forehand
- A forehand beats a volley
- A volley beats a smash

Giants, Wizards and Elves

There are 3 commands in this game; Giants, Wizards and Elves with the same principle as Rock, Paper, Scissors. The game can be played in two large teams or in pairs against each other individually.

The Giant stands on tip toes, raising their arms in the air looking as fierce as possible making a ‘grrr’ noise.

The Wizard stands slightly crouched and waves their wand casting a marvellous spell by shouting ‘shaaazam’.

The Elf crouches down really low, cups their ears in their hands and makes a high pitch ‘ehee’ noise.

The leader needs to give an enthusiastic demonstration so the young people follow suit.

Giants beat elves, because giants are able to “squash” elves. Elves beat wizards because they outsmart them. Elves chew at their legs. Wizards beat giants because they are able to zap them with a magic spell. If both teams / young people show the same character, no one wins. Rounds keep repeating until one team wins (the other team is completely captured).

ADAPTATIONS:
- Can be played in teams or individually
- Can be played by Rock, Paper, Scissors so young people remember the principles
- Young people can make up their own 3 characters and their skills in relation to their interests

Heads, Shoulders, Knee’s...

In partners, team members stand 1 metre apart from one another with an object in the middle on the floor (for example cone, ball, pen). All participants start on their toes ready to go. The leader shouts a range of different body parts which then the young people have to touch (on their own body)!. Once the leader shouts ‘Grab’ both players have to try and pick up the middle object before their partner gets there.

Make sure to give a safety tip of keeping your head out and hands in to avoid bumped heads!

ADAPTATIONS:
- Use muscles and bones to test participant’s anatomical knowledge!
- Speed up and / or Use more active commands to get participants warmed up; ‘high knees’, ‘jump’, ‘touch the wall’ ‘sit down’
- Give participants responsibility to make up commands
- Rotate around so participants get to play against different people

PEOPLE: Any number
EQUIPMENT: None
TIME: 2 - 5 minutes
Mark out an area for the batter and bowler to stand, and a scoring zone
Bowler throws the ball underarm to bounce in front of the batter (with or without a wall)
Batter hits the ball and runs to the scoring zone and back. If successful 1 run is scored
Ball is returned back to the bowler and then can bowl as soon as they are back on their starting point
Batter is out if the ball is bowled to the batters’ point before the batter, or if the bowler/fielder catches the ball before it bounces on the floor

Adaptations:
- Mark out an area where the ball has to land so that the fielder has a chance of catching the ball
- Widen the distance of the scoring zone

Place a hoop (or something to make a circle) on the floor and designate an outer boundary
Players hit the ball to bounce inside the hoop
Only one bounce allowed before returning the ball
Ball must land within the outer boundary
Players can move around the playing area as dictated by play

Adaptations:
- Change the number of bounces allowed
- Move the outer boundary
- Make the inner circle smaller or bigger
Adapt into using a tennis ball rather than a frisbee – 1 v 1

EQUIPMENT
Frisbee/flying disc, buckets/empty bins

HOW TO PLAY:
- 2 buckets, 20m apart
- 2 teams of 2, team mates standing at opposite ends
- Thrower sends frisbee towards bucket
- If frisbee lands straight in bucket - score 3 pts
- Team mate can deflect frisbee into bucket for 1 point
- Highest score after 10 throws each wins

ADAPTATIONS:
- Change distance between buckets
- Throw with non-dominant hand

TOP TIPS
- Follow through towards target
- Consider force and angle of throw

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DEFEND THE GOAL

Mark a goal on a wall or create one using 2 objects/fence posts
Player attempts to hit the ball into the goal area
Goalkeeper uses racket to defend the goal
Players win points for hitting the goal and the goalkeeper wins’ points for deflecting the ball away

Adaptations:
- Change the size of the goal
- Use non-dominant hand

ROUND THE WORLD

Similar to the 4-3-2-1 game shown earlier
Each player starts with 3 lives
Player 1 plays the ball against the wall for player 2 and then moves to the back of the line
Player 2 quickly moves onto the court to play the ball for player 3, then moves to the back of the line
Play is continuous, with each player playing one shot until a mistake is made
A player who makes a mistake loses a life

Adaptations:
- Change the number of bounces allowed or increase the number of shots each person takes before moving to the back of the line
- Players work together as a team to try and hit a set number of shots

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Waves
- Play singles or doubles over a net/line
- Everyone starts on baseline
- Win a point = move to service line/halfway
- Win again = move to net
- Lose a point = move back one line (can't move further back than baseline)
- If a player wins the point at the net they win a point for them or their team

Adaptations:
- Forehand/backhand shots must be played at baseline, volleys at the net
- Players/teams can only move forward for points won on their serve

Game On
- Play singles or doubles over a net/line
- Play 3 shots co-operatively
- After 3rd shot it becomes competitive and players can play for a point

Adaptations:
- Play co-operatively for as many shots as players want, they can decide to go for a winner at any time
- Points earned are then based on how many co-operative shots were played eg: 8 co-operative shots played before winner = 8 points, 2 co-operative shots played before winner = 2 points
- Points only won for outright winners, not missed shots

READY, SET, STRIKE
find a space, perform ready position then mime a shot

ROBIN HOOD
run into area to retrieve ball and then strike back to team

STUCK IN THE MUD
roll ball through legs to release stuck player

CIRCLE PASS/
NUMBER PASS
pass in sequence

RELAYS
bounce up, down, roll along floor, balance on racquet, sandwich ball in pairs, be creative!

DVD PLAYER
play-go, rewind=move backwards etc. with ball balanced on racquet
Be creative – make a court out using things at home e.g. chairs, or a washing line!

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