

Player and Spectator Conduct

Jr. Team Tennis is sanctioned and supported by the United States Tennis Association, USTA Southern and NC Tennis. In recognition of the support provided by the USTA, certain behavior is expected from both players and spectators.

Player Conduct

We expect the highest level of sportsmanship and exemplary behavior both on and off the court. Each player shall abide by the following rules of conduct during all USTA Jr. Team Tennis match play:

1. If you have **any doubt** as to whether a ball is out or good, you must give your opponent the benefit of the doubt and play the ball as good.
2. It is your obligation to call all balls on your side, to help your opponent make calls when the opponent requests it, and to call against yourself (with the exception of a first service) any ball that you clearly see out on your opponent's side of the net.
3. Any "out" or "let" call must be made instantaneously; otherwise the ball continues in play.
4. **Do not enlist the aid of spectators in making line calls.**
5. If you call a ball out and then realize it was good, the point is over and your opponent wins the point.
6. To avoid controversy over the score, the Server should announce the set score before starting a game and the game score prior to serving each point.
7. If players cannot agree on the score, they may go back to the last score on which there was agreement and resume play from that point, or they may spin a racket.
8. Do not stall, sulk, complain, or practice gamesmanship.
9. Wait until the players on another court have completed a point before retrieving or returning a ball.
10. From the beginning of the match, play must be continuous. Attempts to stall the ball are against the rules.
11. Players are expected to put forth a full and honest effort regardless of the score or expected outcome.
12. Players are expected to maintain full control over their emotions and the resulting behavior throughout the match. If you begin to lose your composure during play, try the following:
 - Take several deep breaths, exhale as slowly as possible and feel your muscles relax.
 - Concentrate on your own game and behavior while ignoring distractions from your opponent or surroundings.
 - Be your own best friend – enjoy your good shots and forget the poor ones.

Spectator Conduct

If you have ever been to a football game, you know that there aren't any set expectations or rules of etiquette around spectator behavior. As a result, these events can get loud and sometimes even rowdy. Tennis is a different sport though, where just one or two opponents go head-to-head on a fairly small court. In an effort to promote fairness and to assure a physically and mentally healthy experience for all players, tennis has expectations around spectator behavior. All Jr. Team Tennis spectators are asked to follow these rules of conduct:

- Cheering.** Clapping for good shots is encouraged and will be allowed provided spectators clap for both teams' good shots.
 - Please wait until a point has finished before clapping. Clapping during play is a distraction for all players.
 - Please do not cheer when a player makes a mistake. This is considered poor etiquette.
 - Please keep cheering respectful in tone and volume. Cheering that gets out of control can intimidate children on the court, disrupt other matches in progress and cause conflict between opposing teams.
 - If cheering gets out of hand, spectators will be informed that any cheering or clapping will not be allowed the remainder of the match
 - If abuse continues the person(s) will be asked to leave the site. Any violation of rules may be enforced by the point penalty system.
 - Team Captain/Coaches are responsible for their spectators and should make sure their parents and players understand.
- Coaching.** Spectators are **prohibited** from coaching players. Only one designated Team Manager/Coach can provide on-court coaching, and only during changeovers from **outside the fence**.
 - Spectator coaching can intimidate and disrupt play on the court. Spectators who attempt to coach players will be asked to stop.
 - If spectator coaching continues, the person(s) will be asked to leave the site. Any violation of rules may be enforced by the point penalty system.
- Spectator Help.** Spectators are **prohibited** from making line calls, calling double bounces or providing scores to players. **Only the players on the court, or designated court monitors** (for 10 and under divisions), can make line calls, double bounce calls or assist with scoring.
 - This can be particularly tough for spectators, especially when watching their own children. It is possible to feel that your own child has been mistreated on the court and "robbed" of a point. Naturally, parents want to stand-up for their own kids. Please control any urge to address a perceived injustice. Remember that these are children and they are still learning the mechanics and rules of the game. In addition, they are also learning how to manage their own behavior and make good decisions on the court.
 - Please discuss line calls, double bounces and score discrepancies with your child before they play. And, follow-up with him or her after the match to debrief any on-court calls that could have gone a different way. Encourage your player to be fair with his or her own calls. Conversely, let your player know it is acceptable to politely ask an opponent of his or her certainty with a call. However, make sure your own child knows that constant questioning of an opponent's calls is not acceptable. Players should speak to the Team Manager/Coach on a changeover to discuss concerns about calls.
 - Address any concerns you have with your Team Manager/Coaches. The Team Manager/Coach should be the one to discuss player behavior with the opponent's Team Manager.

One of the goals of Jr. Team Tennis is to put junior players in a competitive setting without the pressures of tournament play. Ultimately, spectators are asked to use common sense. Think how your child would feel in a situation before subjecting another child to unfairness.