

ACES TENNIS SKILLS/DRILLS

Getting Started:

Ball Balance:

- Players must try and keep the tennis ball balanced on the racquet strings while touching the ground with their opposite hand.

Tap Downs:

- Try to bounce the ball down at waist level

Bump Ups:

- Try to bounce the ball up eye level without letting the ball touch the ground.

Ball Pass:

- Players work with a partner or small group and pass a tennis ball back and forth and catch it with the racquet. Begin a few feet apart. For each successful catch, students can back up a step.

Drop, Hit, Catch:

- One player drop hits a ball very gently to their partner standing 6-10 feet away. The partner tries to catch the ball to earn a point. Change rolls after 6 hits. (1. Drop 2. Hit 3. Catch)

Toss, Hit, Catch:

- Using a tennis ball, one partner tosses to the forehand of backhand side of their partner. The partner rallies it back to the tosser, who catches it. Begin with partners three steps apart. Change roles after 6 tosses. (1. Toss 2. Hit 3. Catch)

Partner Rally:

- Standing a few feet apart, players attempt to rally the ball over a line or net. Players should act as teammates to rally the ball as many times as possible.

Wall Rally:

- Standing 10-15 feet away, players attempt to rally the ball consecutively against the wall. Rallies can also be done in pairs.

1. RULES OF THE GAMES

SKILL – Discuss these rules, demonstrate when possible

- a. Game starts with a serve. A good serve must go over the net and land in the diagonally opposite service box.
- b. Fault: an invalid serve (If you walk or run while serving, if you cross the baseline before hitting the ball, if you go over the center mark, if the ball doesn't get over the net)
- c. Scoring: 0 points = Love, 1st point = 15, 2nd point = 30, 3rd point = 45, 4th point = game
- d. Deuce: if the game is tied you are at deuce. You must win 2 points in a row to win the game after deuce.

- e. Winning Points: Serving an un-returnable serve (an ace), if ball bounces twice in opponents court, if opponent hits ball outside the boundary, if opponent serves 2 faults in a row

DRILL - Practice Match

Equipment Needed: Racquets, Balls

Set Up: No set up needed.

How to Play:

1. Place players into pairs.
2. The pairs of players will face off in a match.
3. Play a quick practice match – up to 5 points.
4. The rest of the students should watch and help ref the game to learn the rules.

2. GRIP/STANCE/FOOTWORK/NET PLAY

a. GRIP/STANCE SKILL –

- Grip: Shake hands with your racquet
- Stance: Open stance (feet shoulder width apart) or square stance (left foot in front of right, ready to hit the ball)

b. FOOTWORK SKILL –

- Start in ready position.
- Emphasize staying on toes, knees slightly bent, hands on racket
- Move quickly around the court

DRILL – Simon Says Defense

Equipment Needed: Racquets

Set Up: No set up needed.

How to Play:

1. Have players line up in front of the instructor.
2. Tell each player to grab their racket and practice the correct grip.
3. Now practice stance.
4. Have them slide/run around the court to get a feel for holding the racket.
5. Instructor calls out a command.
6. Example: slide left, slide right, 5 steps forward, touch the baseline, touch the sideline, etc.
7. Then Instructor starts adding a ball and the players must move to where it is hit.

3. FOREHAND SKILL –

- a. Grip the racquets like taught last week
- b. Start in your ready position/stance

- c. Bring racket back in a slight loop (make sure it is a continuous motion)
- d. Place the weight on your back foot, then transfer to front foot as you hit
- e. Try to hit the ball in the center of the racket (the SWEET SPOT)
- f. Ready Position – Slight Loop – Make Contact – Follow Through

DRILL – Volley Stacks

Equipment Needed: Rackets, Balls

Set Up: No set up needed.

How to Play:

1. Place players into stacks; Instructor has balls.
2. First player in the stack gets in their ready position.
3. Instructor volleys a ball to them, they hit it back.
4. Next player goes.

4. BACKHAND

SKILL –

- a. Grip is like the forehand, but you add your second hand
- b. Racket will be on your non-dominant side
- c. Use backhand when the ball is hit to your non-dominant side
- d. Start in ready position
- e. Swing the racket backwards and turn your shoulder
- f. As the ball comes close, swing racket forward and make contact
- g. Follow through

DRILL – Volley Stacks

Equipment Needed: Rackets, Balls

Set Up: No set up needed.

How to Play:

1. Place players into stacks; Instructor has balls.
2. First player in the stack gets in their ready position.
3. Instructor volleys a ball to them, they hit it back.
4. Next player goes.

5. SERVING

SKILL –

- a. Feet should be shoulder width apart

- b. Put ball in your non-dominant hand
- c. Weight on your back foot
- d. Toss ball in air (higher than head)
- e. Bring racket upwards, make contact and swing downwards
- f. Do not let toes come past the baseline
- g. Server must stand to the right of the center hash and serve to the diagonal service court

DRILL – Partner Serving

Equipment Needed: Rackets, Balls

Set Up: No set up needed.

How to Play:

1. Place players into pairs.
2. Split the pairs into stacks.
3. First person in line has a ball.
4. Stand behind baseline.
5. Practice serving to their partner.
6. If a fault, they get 1 more try.
7. Partner practices serving back.

6. DOUBLES MATCHES

SKILL –

- a. Doubles match you play with a partner
- b. The serving team is responsible for announcing the score before serving
- c. Scoring is the same
- d. Partners take turns serving

DRILL – Two Way

Equipment Needed: Rackets, balls

Set Up: No set up needed.

How to Play:

1. Place players into pairs.
2. Each pair will play a doubles match against another pair.