

TENNIS COURT ETIQUETTE

We love our game of tennis. We come to play to have fun, to learn, to be challenged, and to enjoy the social atmosphere that a tennis club can provide. If you are new to the game, there are many things you have to learn, including how to behave on a tennis court. If you do not know them already, please make yourself aware of the following basic rules of behavior to ensure that everybody gets to enjoy our wonderful game:

WAIT YOUR TURN Don't barge your way onto court until your allotted booking time. When your turn comes, let the people before you finish the game they are playing.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS To decide who will serve first, toss a coin or spin a racquet. The person who wins the toss may choose to serve, receive, pick which end of the court they would like or even make their opponent choose.

WARM-UP LIKE A PRO Keep your pre-match warm-up brief – the pros stick to five minutes, and so should you.

SERVE THE RIGHT WAY Before you serve, make sure your opponent is ready to receive. While the rules say you should take no more than 20 seconds between points, you don't want to win a point by serving at your opponent's back.

NO RETURN NECESSARY If your opponent serves a first-serve fault, don't hit a return back unless the call was so close that you had no option but to hit the ball.

WALK WITH CARE Don't walk behind another court during a point, across someone else's court while they're in the middle of a game or interrupt a point on another court to retrieve a ball.

LINE CALLS Make line calls clearly and promptly and give your opponent the benefit of the doubt if you're unsure. While it's rude to question your opponent's line calls, if you really think your shot was in ask once, firmly: "are you sure?" then move on.

NOISE TRAVELS We are fortunate to live in a multicultural society, but swearing or abuse in any language, for any reason only reflects badly on you and can be upsetting to others playing with you or nearby, and may be heard by children in the adjacent playground or at our club's neighbours – maintain respect and dignity at all times.

SCORING MADE EASY If you are serving, call the score out loudly and clearly. It will help to minimise disagreements.

GOT TWO? Make sure the server always has two balls at their end of the court. When you are feeding balls up the court, hit or roll them gently within reach of the server.

A TIME AND A PLACE Be respectful of your opponent. While it's fine to celebrate your successes, it's not polite to pump your fists, hiss "yes" or high-five spectators when your opponent makes an error.

DO THE RIGHT THING Apologise if you win a lucky point or if you accidentally hit your opponent with a ball.

FOCUS ON YOUR MATCH Keep your attention on the court – don't chat to spectators, interrupt a game to answer your mobile phone or do anything else that might distract your opponent or delay play.

YOU ARE AT A TENNIS CLUB, NOT THE BEACH Getting hot and sweaty is quite normal when you are playing tennis. If you are uncomfortably hot, take a break and wash down or towel down –keep your shirt and shoes on – no-one wants to see your naked torso or get a whiff of your smelly feet.

LEAVE THE TANTRUMS TO THE KIDS Don't have a tantrum if things aren't going your way.

CONGRATULATIONS Shake hands firmly and congratulate your opponent at the end of the match. Nobody wants to grasp a limp, clammy dead fish in celebration of a big victory.

These rules of etiquette are simple and easy to learn. If you can't abide by them don't be surprised if you are asked to change your behavior, or leave.