

How To Hit Perfect Tennis Volleys In 3 Steps



Three Ways To Improve Your Volleys In Tennis:

1. Ready Position
2. Swing
3. Footwork

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Ready Position:

Your ready position is the foundation of being a solid net player. All good volleyers have three things in common when they're waiting at the net:

1. Grip - use a continental grip, which will allow you to hit the forehand volley, backhand volley and the smash, without having to change grips. Perfect at the net, since you have much less time.
2. A wide, athletic base. The split-step and ready position should be slightly wider than when on the baseline, your centre of gravity (COG) should be lower, this will allow you to push off more explosively and reach wider balls.
3. Racket position - the racket should be in front of your upper body, between waist and chest height. The racket should be in the middle of either your forehand or backhand volley. The racket head should be above the grip, this will create an L shape.



Tennis Volley Swing

Your swing will determine a lot at the net. It all starts with your “L” shape, this is the shape you create between the arm and racket which will give you stability on your volleys and leverage over the ball.

There are three main volley swings in tennis:

1. Block volley
2. Power volley
3. Standard volley

It's important to know how to hit each style of volley and when to use each one. If you try to generate power on a fast ball, you'll hit the ball late and most likely, miss that volley.



With all three types of volleys, it's important to keep the racket head higher than the grip level when preparing for the volley.

This will ensure you have stability at contact with the L shape in the racket and arm.

Block Volley

The block volley is where you block the ball, redirecting the volley using the power that is already on the opponent's shot.

The swing will be minimal, you're simply getting the racket to the contact point and blocking the ball. Imagine you were catching a ball, you wouldn't swing your hand backwards before reaching out in front to catch it, you would simply place your hand at the catching point.

By simply placing the racket at the point of contact, you'll be sure of making contact out in front of your body.



Power Volley

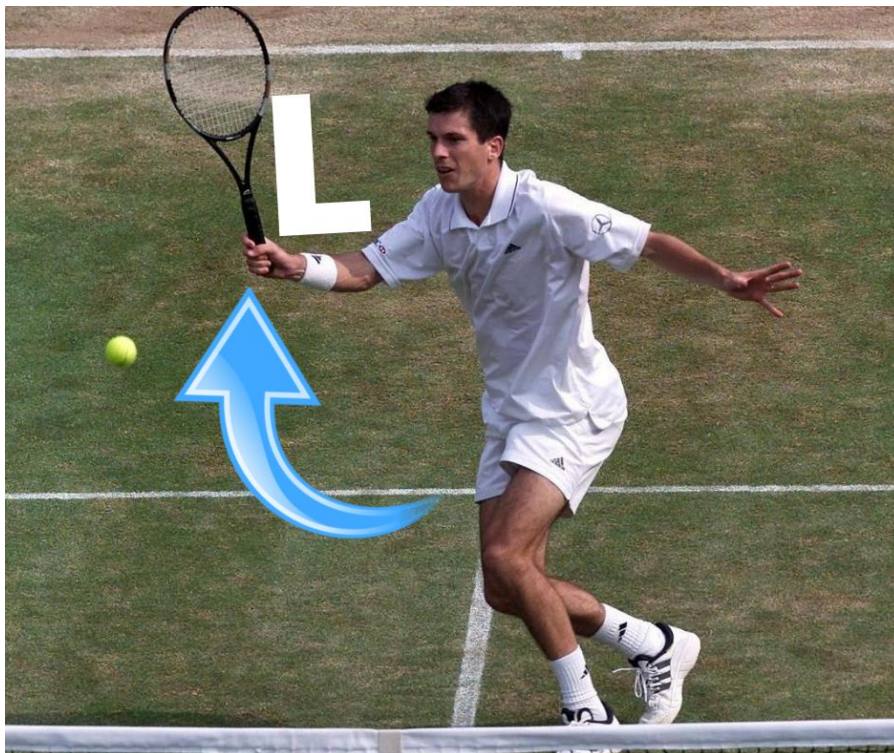
The power volley should be used when you have time, on many slower, floating balls that tend to be around shoulder or head height.

This is when you can use more of a swing on your volleys.

The key here is to use your body to generate much of the swing, by coiling the upper body.

When you turn your shoulders on either side, you'll create a good amount of backswing, and then as you open up to make contact, that will produce racket head speed through the point of contact.

Try to keep the L shape in the racket and arm, which will give you leverage (force) over the ball.



Standard Volley

On average, around 60% of your tennis volleys will be a “standard” one. This is where you’ll have some time, not as much as a power volley, but more than a block volley. The backswing will be small, normally just a unit turn with the racket stopping on the side of the body.



The key to many of these volleys will be using underspin (slice) on the ball. By imparting underspin, you’ll be able to control the ball easier, especially if your opponent has hit with lots of topspin, and you’ll be able to keep the ball low after the bounce.

A flat volley will sit up, giving your opponent the chance to hit the ball at around waist height, which is much easier than a low ball that’s around knee height or even lower.

To create the underspin, simply open the strings towards the sky as you make contact, this will help you to hit under the ball and create the slice.

Volley Footwork

Using the correct footwork patterns will allow you to get more power on your volleys but also reach wider balls, making you a tougher player to beat at the net.

When the ball is close to you, it's easy and convenient to use one step to reach the ball.

Forehand volley - if you're a right handed player, when the ball comes close to you on your forehand volley, you'll step into the contact point with your left leg.

Imagine doing a half lunge when hitting the volley, this action will help you stay balanced.

This will help you transfer your body weight into the volley, making it more powerful and stable at the contact point.



Backhand volley - for right-handed players on the backhand volley, try to step into the contact with your right leg. Once again, this step forward will help you get the body weight behind the volley.



Wider Balls?

In order to cover wider balls or close down on the net, you'll need to work on and master the two-step volley footwork pattern.

This all starts with the outside leg, so on the forehand volley, the right leg would take the initial step outwards or forwards to then allow you to step into the volley with the left leg as the last step.

On the backhand volley, the first step would be with the left leg to then allow you to step into the volley with your right leg as you make contact.

This two-step footwork pattern is the key to reaching wider balls.

Forehand volley - right then left
Backhand volley - left then right

If you've enjoyed this volley guide, make sure to check out our volley lessons on the Top Tennis Training YouTube channel and our volley course on Top-Tennis-Training.com

If you got this far, well done, you're a true student of the game!
Thank you for reading and we hope you have picked up a few tips to use in your own game.



By Coach Simon Konov
Top Tennis Training