

“PLAY TENNIS” – SELF-RATING GUIDE

Find suitable playing partners and enjoy playing tennis more.



How?

- Use the “Play Tennis” Self-Rating Guide which identifies and describes different levels of tennis ability.

Purpose:

- Find your own general level of tennis ability.
- Find players of a similar level so that you can have competitive games.
- Play an individual at a higher level using handicap scoring to make the game more competitive.
- Participate in group lessons or league play with people of similar ability.

Guidelines to rate yourself:

- Study the “Play Tennis” self-rating chart - start reading from the top of the chart, beginning with Level 1.0.
- Find the level that best describes your general level of play.
- Ask your Instructor or Coach to validate your self-rating, if you think that will help.
- Results in social and competitive matches will validate whether your chosen level is reasonably accurate.
- Remember that as you play more, and improve, your rating may improve.
- Update your rating periodically.

Level	Groundstrokes	Return of Serve	Net Play	Serve
1.0	I'm just starting to play tennis.			
1.5	I've been introduced to the game, and am working primarily on getting the ball in play and rallying.			
2.0	I can get to the ball, but lack control so my rallying is inconsistent. I often choose forehand instead of backhand.	I have inconsistent returns and tend to position myself to protect my weaknesses.	In singles I'm reluctant to come to the net. In doubles, I understand the basic positions and am comfortable with forehand volleys (but avoid backhand volleys & overhead shots).	My toss is inconsistent and my service motion incomplete. Double faults common.
2.5	I can consistently rally 10 balls in a row over the net at moderate speed with an arced trajectory (especially forehand shots).	In singles, I can consistently return shots to the middle of the court. In doubles, I have difficulty returning cross-court to start the point.	I'm at ease at the net during practice, but still uncomfortable during a game.	I try a full-service motion on my first service, but it is still inconsistent (< 50%). I use an incomplete motion to ensure a steady second serve.
3.0	I can consistently rally 10 balls in a row using forehands and backhands. I'm able to maintain a moderately paced rally when receiving high, wide, short balls.	I can control the direction of the ball when receiving moderately paced serves.	I'm very consistent on moderately paced balls to my forehand, but still inconsistent on my backhand. I have overall difficulty with low and wide balls.	I have full motion on both serves and can achieve >50% success on my first serve; my second serve is much slower than the first.
3.5	I can make my opponent move around the court, hit harder when I receive easier balls, and perform approach shots with more than 50% consistency.	I can return fast or well-placed serves defensively, return an easier serve with pace or placement, and approach the net in doubles.	I'm becoming consistent on volleys & overheads requiring moderate movement. I can direct forehand volleys and control backhand volleys with little offense, but can have difficulty putting volleys away.	I can vary the speed or direction of a first serve and can direct the second serve to my opponent's weakness without double-faulting on a regular basis.
4.0	I'm able to develop points consistently by using a combination of shots; however, I'm erratic when attempting a passing shot or a quality shot from a fast or well-placed ball.	I have difficulty returning very fast or spin serves, but I can hit a good shot or exploit my opponent's weakness on moderately paced serves. In doubles, I can vary returns effectively on moderately paced serves.	I can follow an approach shot to net, poach on weak returns and put away easy overheads. In doubles, I can receive a variety of balls and volley offensively.	I can vary the speed and direction of the first serve and I can use spin.

4.5	I can use a variety of spins and am beginning to develop a dominant shot or good steadiness. I'm still erratic when attempting a quality shot in two of the following: when receiving fast balls, wide balls or in passing shot situations.	I can defend consistently off first serves, but am still inconsistent when trying an aggressive return (< 30%). In doubles, I have difficulty returning a first serve to the feet of the incoming serve and volleyer.	When coming to the net after serving, I'm consistently able to put the first volley in play but without pace or depth. Close to the net, I can finish a point using various options including drop, angle and punch volleys. I'm still inconsistent when trying to volley powerful or angled returns.	I have an aggressive first serve with power and spin. On second serves, I frequently hit with good depth and placement (without double faults). In doubles, I can serve and volley off first serves but still experience some inconsistency.
5.0	I can maintain a consistent rally, (10 faster balls in a row). Very steady strokes or has a dominant shot. Periodically succeeds (50%) when attempting a quality shot when receiving fast or wide balls, and in passing shot situations.	I can succeed (50%) at aggressive return off fast first serves using dominant shot (forehand or backhand). In doubles can return at the feet of serve and volleyer.	In doubles, after the serve, I have a good, deep crosscourt volley. I can hit overheads hit from almost any position.	My first serve can win points outright, or force a weak return. My second serve can prevent the opponent from attacking. Serve and volleys on first serves in doubles with consistency.
5.5	This player has developed a game style which is recognizable as either an all-court player, an aggressive baseliner, a serve and volleyer, or a retriever. Has developed good anticipation either technically (can read toss on serve, body position...) or tactically (can read opponents tendencies in specific situations). Has no major weaknesses and can counterattack effectively against a hard ball, wide ball or in passing shot situations. Capable of competing in "open" category provincial level tournaments. Ability to use specific shots in order to exploit opponent's weakness: drop-shot, lob, angle, moonball...			
6.0-7.0	These players will generally not need a rating. Rankings or past rankings will speak for themselves. The 6.0 player typically has had intensive training for national tournament competition at the junior level and collegiate levels and has obtained a provincial and/or national "open" ranking. The 6.5 player has extensive international "open" level tournament experience at the entry professional level (challenger or satellite experience). The 7.0 is a world class professional tennis player.			

Here's an abbreviated version of the above

Level 1.0 - just starting to play tennis

Level 1.5 – difficulty playing due to lack of consistency rallying and serving

Level 2.0 – gets the ball in play but lacks control

Level 2.5 – can rally 10 balls with Forehand (FH) consistently at moderate speed.
1st serve is under 50% in

Level 3.0 - can rally 10 balls with FH & Backhand (BH) consistently at moderate speed.
1st serve is over 50% in

Level 3.5 – can direct FH, BH, volleys, Overhead (OH),
1st and 2nd serves with pace and consistency.

Level 4.0 – can vary speed and direction of all strokes while constructing point combinations

Level 4.5 – can vary spin, speed and direction of all strokes starts to develop a dominant shot

Level 5.0 – can rally 10 balls at fast speed with a dominant shot & steadily succeeds over 50% of points

Level 5.5 – has no major weaknesses. Good all court player with anticipation and tactical abilities

Level 6.0 - has obtained a provincial and/or national "open" ranking at the junior and collegiate level

"Levels" beyond this are "open rankings" based on tournament experience