

HOST A  
**TENNIS**  
FESTIVAL  
THIS MARCH

# Helpful tips and suggestions to make your Tennis Festival a success for all ages!

## Be creative with your tennis festival by including....

- Bounce House
- Face Painter
- Prize court
- Music and Entertainment
- Team up with a local sponsor for refreshments and drinks
- Create fun stations on different courts (ideas on back)
- Invite a local high school or college team to play with the kids.
- Have a drawing for tennis lessons at local tennis facilities or new a new tennis racquet.
- Rent a karaoke machine
- Invite your local mascot to cheer on the tennis activities.
- If you have old tennis balls create a station for the kids to paint and color on them.
- For more game ideas please contact your local USTA Tennis Service Rep or go online to search for other creative tennis games. Games should be appropriate for each skill level and large group participation.





# Tennis Games by age and skill level

## Beginner 12 and Under:

**Caterpillar :** This is a group game. Divide the players into two teams with at least three players per team. Have the players line up, side by side (shoulder to shoulder), behind the baseline. Each player has a racquet and holds it out in front of him with the racquet face pointing to the sky. Only the last person in line has a ball and it is placed on the strings. You say “go” and the player with the ball rolls the ball from her racquet to the next player’s racquet. After the ball is on her teammate’s racquet, she runs to the front of the line and touches shoulders with the teammate there. This is continued over and over until the team makes its way to the designated finish line. It is best if the players run behind the line after they pass the ball.

**Can You? :** This game is a combination of racquet skill activities and your imagination. For example, bounce the ball down the court with your racquet consecutively (“downs”) and (“ups”) and pat your head. (Rub your belly, hop on one leg, spin around, stick your fingers in your ear, etc.)

**Tunnel Ball :** This partner game requires one tennis ball. Player 1, without a ball, stands in front of Player 2 with their back to Player 2. Player 2 rolls the ball between the legs of Player 1. Player 1 then runs down the ball & catches it.

**Train Wreck :** This partner game requires one ball for each player. Players may sit or stand. If standing the player positions themselves in a side stance with one front leading the other. Roll the balls back and forth at

the same time trying not to let them crash. Once they have this part of the game mastered, change it up by yelling “train wreck”. They will then have to collide the two balls together. Four or more people can be put into a train wreck circle as shown. Same game but with four (or more) in a circle.

**Splat:** This partner game requires 5 balls. Each pair is given one ball. The other 4 balls make up the pyramid in the center of the players. Partners toss ball back and forth, underhand, trying to hit a ball pyramid set up between them. As players develop add a racquet for a challenge!

**Call My Name:** This partner game requires one to two tennis balls. Player 1, without ball, turns their back to Player 2 with ball. Player 2 calls out the name of Player 1 while they toss the ball in the air. Player 1 turns and tries to catch the ball after one bounce. Add bounces if necessary to make it easier or add two balls to make it more challenging.

**Set up stations of jump ropes, ball up and down games, team relay games with a racquet and ball or the games shown above. Giving the kids a goal or a certain of points to obtain before moving on to the next skill will add competitiveness and focus.**

## Intermediate 18 and Under:

**Twenty One :** Divide players into teams of 3 or 4. Line the teams up at the baseline (closer if necessary). Each player (one at a time) from every team will hit two balls per turn, one groundstroke (forehand or backhand) and one volley (FH or BH) and then return to the end of their teams’ line. Every player will continue to take one turn until the game is over. Players score points for their teams with every successful shot that they hit over the net and into the court. Players receive two points for each groundstroke and one point for each volley. Play continues until a team scores 21 points.

**Around the World :** Divide the group into two groups. Put each group at the “T” or baseline (depending on the level of the players) in a single file line facing the net. You start the game by throwing a ball to the first person in one of the lines. That person tries to bump the ball back over the net to the first person in the opposite line. Once the player hits the ball, then they run around the net to the end of the opposite line. Everyone continues to do this until someone misses. As long as the ball lands in the designated court, the player is still “in”. Have the players sit out once they miss. Once it gets down to just two players, instead of having the players run around the court after they have hit the ball, have them either: a) put the racquet down on the court and run around it; b) spin around in a circle; c) do two jumping jacks or d) something else creative.

### Variations:

- Give each player three “strikes” or chances instead of sitting him out on his first miss.
- Do not sit a player out at all when the player misses.
- Play mini-tennis (using just the service boxes).

**King of the Court:** Six or more players are needed for this game. One team of two players is designated as the “kings” or “queens” and goes to one side of the court. The other players make a line behind the baseline of the opposite side. One challenging team steps up and plays a doubles point against the “kings.” The point is started with either a serve or a drop hit. If the challengers win, they replace the “kings” on the other side of the court. Variations of this game include the challengers having to win two or three points in a row. This game practices playing a point of doubles.

**Monkey in the Middle :** This game is played in triples formation (a triangle with two players behind the baseline and the third in the team at the net). The game can be played with a feeder positioned off of the court, usually by the net, or without the feeder. A point is begun by feeding the ball to one of the baseline players on either team. The point is played out. Each point is worth one point. If the net player (also known as the monkey), hits a winner, the player earns his/her team 2 points. The next point is begun with a ball being fed to the opposite side of the team that just won the point’s). Games are played to any score  $10n + 1$  (ex: 11, 21, 31 etc.).

**One Ball Live:** At least eight players are needed for this game. Two players start on the baseline, the back line of the tennis court, of each side with the court split in half vertically. Two [tennis balls](#) are played simultaneously on each half of the court starting with a drop hit. A drop hit is an underhand hit by bouncing the ball first. Once one player loses a point on his or her side of the court, they call out “One ball live!” and the single remaining ball is played out among the four players with the court no longer split down the middle. The team that wins this point stays, while two new players on the other side replace the losing team and the game starts over with two balls. The first team to reach ten points wins. This game is designed for use in practicing groundstrokes, the forehand and backhand, at first and then doubles strategy once “One ball live” is called.

## Intermediate to advanced Adult:

**Beat the Pro:** Have a local pro tennis player or college tennis player on one court playing against your adult tennis You can make the scoring how ever you may like, (first to 4 points or one point and out) Offer a prize if they win.

**Adult Play Day :** For a different pace use the 10 and Under Play Day format to create adult competition and fun. This adds something new and different and challenges adult players to be more skillful with the shots.