Tennis Terms
Making Sense of Tennis Jargon
A Glossary of Tennis Terminology.

Tennis is a game full of terminology and jargon that can leave even experienced, let alone new players wondering what on earth these adages mean.

Here is an alphabetical list of tennis terms that will hopefully help the understanding of the game tennis... (Plus a quick overview of the MTI Method)
ACE: Serve where the tennis ball is served in and not touched by the receiver; thus, a shot that is both a serve and a winner is an ace. Aces are usually powerful and generally land on or near one of the corners at the back of the service box. Initially the term was used to indicate the scoring of a point.

ACTION: Synonym for spin.

AD: Used by the chair umpire to announce the score when a player has the advantage, meaning they won the point immediately after a deuce. Thus, the score might be "40-ad" or "ad in". See scoring in tennis for more details.

AD COURT: Left side of the court of each player, so called because the "ad" ("advantage") point immediately following a deuce is always served to this side of the court.

ADVANTAGE: When one player wins the first point from a deuce and needs one more point to win the game; not applicable when using deciding points.

ADVANTAGE SET: Set won by a player/team having won at least six games with a two-game advantage over the opponent(s). Final sets in the singles draws of the Australian Open, the French Open, Wimbledon, and the tennis Olympic event, as well as the Davis Cup, are all advantage sets.

ALL: Used by the chair umpire to announce scores when both players have the same number of points or the same number of games: 30–all (30–30), 15–all (15–15), two games all, four games all, etc. When both players are at 40, the preferred term is deuce.

ALL-COURT: Style of play that is a composite of all the different playing styles, which includes baseline, transition, and serve and volley styles.

ALLEY: Area of the court between the singles and the doubles sidelines, which together are known as tramlines.

ALTERNATE: Player or team that gains acceptance into the main draw of a tournament when a main draw player or team withdraws, when there is no qualifying tournament which could provide a lucky loser instead.

AMERICAN TWIST SERVE: (see topslice serve)

ANTI-GRAND SLAM: Said to be won by the player who finishes at the end of the tournament's longest losing chain.[1][2] Four former Grand Slam winners (two men and two women) have suffered this indignity: Goran Ivanišević, Marat Safin, Ana Ivanovic and Mary Pierce.
- **APPROACH SHOT**: Shot used as a setup as the player runs up to the net, often using underspin or topspin.
- **ATP**: Association of Tennis Professionals, the main organizing body of men's professional tennis; governs the ATP World Tour with the largest tournaments for men.
- **ATP CHAMPIONS RACE**: ATP point ranking system that starts at the beginning of the year and by the end of the year mirrors the ATP entry system ranking. The top eight players at the end of the year qualify for the ATP World Tour Finals.
- **ATP WORLD TOUR FINALS**: Formerly known as the Tennis Masters Cup (see T below), it is the annual season-ending tournament featuring eight of the top-ranked men in the world (plus two alternates).
- **AUSTRALIAN FORMATION**: In doubles, a formation where the server and partner stand on the same side of the court (deuce or advantage court) before starting the point.
- **BACKHAND**: Stroke in which the ball is hit with the back of the racquet hand facing the ball at the moment of contact. A backhand is often hit by a right-handed player when the ball is on the left side of the court, and vice versa.
- **BACKSPIN**: Shot that rotates the ball backwards after it is hit; also known as slice or underspin. The trajectory of the shot is affected by an upward force that lifts the ball. See Magnus effect.
- **BACKSWING**: Portion of a swing where the racquet is swung backwards in preparation for the forward motion to hit the ball.
- **BAGEL**: Colloquial term for winning or losing a set 6–0 (the shape of the zero being reminiscent of the round shape of a bagel). See also breadstick.
- **BAGNALL–WILD**: A method of draw which places all byes in the first round. Introduced in the 1880s.
- **BALL BOY (BALL GIRL OR BALLKID)**: a person, commonly a child tasked with retrieving tennis balls from the court that have gone out of play and supplying the balls to the players before their service. Ball boys in net positions normally kneel near the net and run across the court to collect the ball, while ball boys in the back positions stand in the back along the perimeter of the arena. Ball boys in the back are responsible for giving the balls to the player serving.
- **BASELINE**: Line at the farthest ends of the court indicating the boundary of the area of play.
- **BASELINER**: Player who plays around the baseline during play and relies on the quality of his or her ground strokes.

- **BIG SERVE**: Forceful serve, usually giving an advantage in the point for the server.

- **BISQUE**: One stroke (point), which may be claimed by the receiver at any part of the set. Part of the handicapping odds and used during the first decades of the sport.

- **BLOCK (BLOCKED RETURN)**: Defensive shot with relatively little backswing and shortened action instead of a full swing, usually while returning a serve.

- **BREADSTICK**: Colloquial term for winning or losing a set 6–1, with the straight shape of the one supposedly being reminiscent of the straight shape of a breadstick. See also bagel.

- **BREAK**: To win a game as the receiving player or team, thereby breaking serve. At high level of play the server is more likely to win a game, so breaks are often key moments of a match. Noun: break (service break) (e.g. "to be a break down" means "to have, in a set, one break fewer than the opponent", "to be a double break up" means "to have, in a set, two breaks more than the opponent").

- **BREAK BACK**: To win a game as the receiving player or team immediately after losing the previous game as the serving player or team.

- **BREAK POINT**: Point which, if won by the receiver, would result in a break of service; arises when the score is 30–40 or 40–ad. A double break point or two break points arises at 15–40; a triple break point or three break points arises at 0–40.

- **BRUTALISER**: Smashing the ball directly at the opponent.

- **BUGGY WHIP**: Forehand hit with a follow-through that does not go across the body and finish on the opposite side, but rather goes from low to high, crosses the opposite shoulder (optionally) and finishes on the same side (similar to the driver of a horse-drawn carriage whipping a horse). Used, for example, by Rafael Nadal (racket head crosses the opposite shoulder) and Maria Sharapova (racket head stays on the same shoulder).

- **BYE**: Automatic advancement of a player to the next round of a tournament without facing an opponent. Byes are often awarded in the first round to the top-seeded players in a tournament.

- **CALL**: Verbal utterance by a line judge or chair umpire declaring that a ball landed outside the valid area of play.

- **CANNONBALL**: Somewhat archaic term for a hard, flat serve.
- **CAN OPENER**: Serve hit by a right-handed player with slice, landing on or near the intersection of the singles tramline and service line in the deuce court (landing in the ad court for a left-handed player).

- **CAREER GOLDEN SLAM**: In addition to having won all four major titles in their career, a player that has also won an Olympic gold medal is said to have achieved a career Golden Slam. Only four players have ever achieved this: Steffi Graf (1988), Andre Agassi (1996), Rafael Nadal (2010) and Serena Williams (2012). Tennis at the Olympics was not played 1928–1984.

- **CAREER GRAND SLAM**: Since a true Grand Slam happens so seldom, players who have won all 4 Major tournaments at any time in their career are said to have won a career Grand Slam.

- **CARVE**: To hit a groundstroke shot with a combination of sidespin and underspin.

- **CENTRE MARK**: Small mark located at the centre of the baseline. When serving the player must stand on the correct side of the mark corresponding with the score.

- **CHALLENGE**: When a player requests an official review of the spot where the ball landed, using electronic ball tracking technology. See Hawk-Eye. Challenges are only available in some large tournaments.

- **CHALLENGE ROUND**: Final round of a tournament, in which the winner of a single-elimination phase faces the previous year’s champion, who plays only that one match. The challenge round was used in the early history of Wimbledon (from 1877 through 1921) and the US Open (from 1884 through 1911), and, until 1972, in the Davis Cup.

- **CHALLENGER**: A tour of tournaments one level below the top-tier ATP World Tour. Currently, Challenger tournaments comprise the ATP Challenger Tour. Players, generally ranked around world no. 80 to world no. 300, compete on the Challenger tour in an effort to gain ranking points which allow them to gain entry to tournaments on the ATP World Tour.

- **CHANGE-OVER**: Rest time between certain games when the players change ends.

- **CHIP**: Blocking a shot with underspin.

- **CHIP AND CHARGE**: Type of approach shot which involves hitting a slice shot while rapidly moving forward and following the shot into the net. Aimed at putting the opponent under pressure.

- **CHOP**: Shot with extreme underspin.

- **CLOSED STANCE**: Classic technique in which the ball is hit while the hitter’s body is facing at an angle between parallel to the baseline and with his back turned to the opponent.

- **CODE VIOLATION**: On the ATP tour and WTA tours, a rule violation such as voicing an obscenity or hitting a ball into the stands (not during the point). The first violation results in a warning; the second, a point penalty; the third, a game penalty; and the fourth, forfeiting
the match.

- **CONSOLIDATE (A BREAK):** To hold serve in the game immediately following a break of serve.
- **COUNTERPUNCHER:** Defensive baseliner. See tennis strategy.
- **COURT:** Area designated for playing a game of tennis.
- **CROSSCOURT:** Hitting the ball diagonally into the opponent's court.
- **CROSS-OVER:** Player crossing the net into the opponent's court. It can be done either in a friendly fashion, or maliciously, thereby invoking a code violation. The latter sometimes happens when it is uncertain whether the ball on a decisive point landed inside or outside the court when playing on clay, thus leaving a mark.
- **CYCLOPS:** Device formerly used at Wimbledon and other tournaments to detect a serve that landed long, past the service line. The device emitted an audible noise when the serve was long.

- **DAVIS CUP:** International, annual men's tennis competition in which teams from participating countries compete in a single-elimination format, with matches occurring at several stages during the year.
- **DEAD NET (DEAD NET CORD):** Situation in which a player scores by inadvertently hitting the ball in such a way that it touches the upper cord of the net and rolls over to the other side; the player is said to have "gotten (caught) a dead net (dead net cord)" and considered to be lucky.
- **DEAD RUBBER:** Davis/Fed Cup match which is played after the victor of the tie has already been decided. Dead rubbers may or may not be played, depending on the coaches' agreement to do so, and are usually best of three, instead of five, sets. Typically, players who play the dead rubber are lower-ranked members of the team looking to gain Davis/Fed Cup match experience.
- **DECIDING POINT:** In doubles, the point played when the game score reaches deuce and there is no ad play; the game is decided in favour of whichever team wins the deuce point.
- **dedans:** An open gallery that is one of the winning openings placed at the service end of the court in court tennis; the spectators at a court-tennis match.
- **DEEP:** Shot that lands near the baseline, as opposed to near the net.
- **DEFAULT:** Disqualification of a player in a match by the chair umpire after the player has received four code violation warnings, generally for his/her conduct on court.
- **DEUCE**: Score of 40–40 in a game. A player must win two consecutive points from a deuce to win the game, unless the tournament employs deciding points, as in the 2010 ATP World Tour Finals. A player who has won one point after deuce is said to have the advantage.

- **DEUCE COURT**: Right side of the court of each player, so called because into which the ball is served when the score is deuce.

- **DINK**: Shot with no pace, usually hit close to the net.

- **DINNER SET**: Said to be won by a player who has achieved both a career Grand Slam and a runner-up finish at each of the four Grand Slam tournaments. Only Martina Navratilova, Steffi Graf and Roger Federer have achieved this in the Open Era.

- **DIRTBALLER**: A clay court specialist.

- **DISADVANTAGE**: Player or team which is 40-advantage down.

- **DOUBLE BAGEL**: Two sets won to love; see bagel.

- **DOUBLE FAULT**: Two faults in a row in one point, causing the player serving to lose the point.

- **DOUBLES**: Matches played by four players, two per side of the court.

- **DOWN THE LINE**: Ball hit straight along the sideline to the opponent’s side of the court.

- **DRIVE VOLLEY (SWING VOLLEY)**: Attacking type of volley usually executed from a position in mid-court and played at shoulder height.

- **DRAW**: The schedule of matches in a tennis tournament. The starting fixtures are determined by a combined process of player seeding and random selection, and may or may not involve a public draw ceremony. A qualifying draw is set up to arrange the starting lineup of the qualifying competition (qualies), from where unseeded players qualify for a place in the starting lineup or the main draw of the tournament.

- **DROP SHOT**: Play in which the player hits the ball lightly enough to just go over the net, usually with backspin; designed to catch a player who is away from the net off guard.

- **DROP VOLLEY**: Drop shot executed from a volley position.

- **DUCK**: Colloquial term for winning or losing a set 6–2 (the shape of the two being reminiscent of a duck or anatidae in water).
**E**

- **EGG**: Situation in which the ball is struck high enough to obscure its visibility.

- **ELBOW**: Corner of the baseline and the doubles alley.

- **ENTRY SYSTEM**: Ranking system used by the ATP and WTA tours, so named because it determines whether a player has a sufficiently high ranking to gain direct acceptance (not as a qualifier or wildcard) into the main draw of a tournament. A player's Entry System ranking is different from his or her Race ranking, which is reset to zero at the beginning of each year. A player carries points and the associated Entry ranking continuously unless those points are lost at a tournament at which the player had previously earned them.

- **EXHIBITION**: Tournament in which players compete for the purpose of entertaining the crowd or raising money, but not ranking points on the ATP or WTA tours.

**F**

- **FAULT**: Serve that fails to land the ball in the correct area of play, therefore not starting the point.

- **FED CUP**: International, annual women's tennis competition in which teams from participating countries compete in a single-elimination format tournament with matches occurring at several stages during the year.

- **FIRST SERVE**: The first of the two attempts to serve that a player is allowed at the beginning of a point. A let serve that lands inbounds does not count as a serve.

- **FIVE**: Number of games completed (e.g. "7–5" is spoken as "seven–five"), or a spoken abbreviation of "15" in points (e.g. a score of 40–15 is sometimes spoken as "forty–five").

- **FLAT**: Shot with relatively little spin.

- **FLATLINER**: Player who hits the ball flat with a very low trajectory with exceptional depth and accuracy so that the ball often strikes the line. Examples include Andre Agassi and Lindsay Davenport.

- **FLAT SERVE**: a powerful serve where the ball travels straight with little spin

- **FOLLOW THROUGH**: Portion of a swing after the ball is hit.

- **FOOT FAULT**: Type of service fault in which a player, during the serve, steps on or over the baseline into the court before striking the ball. A foot fault may also occur if the player steps
on or across the centre hash mark and its imaginary perpendicular extension from the baseline to the net.

- **FORCED ERROR**: Miss caused by an opponent's good play; contrasted with an unforced error. Counting forced errors as well as unforced errors is partly subjective.

- **FOREHAND**: Stroke in which the player hits the ball with the front of the racquet hand facing the ball; contrasted with backhand.

- **FRAME**: A mishit on the frame of the racquet rather than the strings.

- **FRY**: Winning or losing a set 6–1. The term is used in the Golden Bagel Award. See also breadstick.

- **FUTURES**: Series of men's tour tennis tournaments which comprise the ITF Men's Circuit, a tour two levels below the ATP World Tour and one level below the ATP Challenger Tour. Players compete in Futures events (generally when ranked below world no. 300 or so) to garner enough ranking points to gain entry into Challenger events.

- **GAME POINT**: Situation in which the server is leading and needs one more point to win the game. See also break point.

- **GHOST IN TO THE NET**: To approach the net from the baseline while the opposing player is focused on retrieving a ball and therefore unaware that the player is approaching the net.

- **GOLDEN BAGEL AWARD**: Award for male players winning the most bagels (sets won 6–0), from January 1 until the year-end tournament. Davis Cup matches and incomplete sets are not counted.

- **GOLDEN SET**: Set which is won without dropping a single point.

- **GOLDEN SLAM**: Winning the Grand Slam and the tennis Olympic gold medal in a calendar year. This has only been achieved by Steffi Graf in 1988. See also career Golden Slam.

- **GRAND SLAM**: Like the Grand Slam in golf or the Triple Crown in American thoroughbred racing, the Grand Slam means winning all four Major tournaments in a calendar year. Since it happens so rarely, "Grand Slam" is commonly misused to refer to any one of the four most prestigious tournaments (Majors): the Australian Open, the French Open (Roland Garros), Wimbledon, and the U.S. Open. See also career Grand Slam.

- **GRINDING**: Playing out points with a series of shots from the baseline. See also attrition.

- **GRIP**: A grip is a way of holding the racket in order to hit shots during a match. The three most commonly used conventional grips are the Continental, the Eastern and the Western.
Most players change grips during a match depending on what shot they are hitting. For further information on grips, including all the types, see grip (tennis).

- **GROUNDIES:** Colloquial word for a groundstroke.
- **GROUNDSTROKE:** Forehand or backhand shot that is executed after the ball bounces once on the court.
- **GRUNTING:** Noises made by players while either serving or hitting the ball.
- **GUT:** Type of racquet string. Can be made from catgut or synthetic gut.

- **HACKER:** Player whose strokes seem more accidental than intentional.
- **HAIL MARY:** Extremely high lob, for defensive purposes.
- **HALF VOLLEY:** Shot made after a short bounce or simultaneous to the bounce and played with the racket close to the ground.
- **HANDICAPPING:** A system in which competitors are given advantages or compensations to equalize the chances of winning.
- **HAWK-EYE:** Computer system connected to cameras to track the path of the ball for replay purposes; used with the player challenge system to contest and review designated line calls.
- **HEAD:** Portion of the racket that contains the strings.
- **HEAVY (BALL):** Ball hit with so much topspin that it feels "heavy" when the opposing player strikes it.
- **HOLD (SERVE):** To win the game when serving. Compare break.
- **HOPMAN CUP:** An international team tennis event in the calendar of ITF. Teams face each other in one men’s singles, one women’s singles and one mixed doubles match.
- **HOT DOG:** See tweener.
- **I-FORMATION**: Formation used in doubles where the net player begins roughly at the centre of the net; used mainly to counter teams that prefer a crosscourt return.

- **INSIDE-OUT**: Running around the backhand side and hitting a crosscourt forehand. Vice-versa for inside out backhand.

- **INSIDE-IN**: Running around the backhand side to hit a forehand down the line. Vice-versa for inside in backhand.

- **INSURANCE BREAK**: Break that achieves an overall advantage of two breaks of serve.

- **ITF**: International Tennis Federation, the governing body of world tennis. Founded in 1913 as the International Lawn Tennis Federation (ILTFT).

- **IPIN**: International Player Identification Number, a registration number required for all professional tennis players and administered by the governing body ITF.

- **JAMMING**: Serving or returning straight into the opponent's body.

- **JUNK BALL**: A shot or return stroke in which the ball tends to be slow and possibly also without spin; often introduced unpredictably to upset the flow of the game and the rhythm of the opposition.

- **KICK SERVE**: Type of spin serve that bounces high.

- **LAWN TENNIS**: "Regular" tennis, as opposed to real tennis, the game from which tennis is derived. Reflects the fact that the game was first played on grass.

- **LET (DO-OVER)**: A call that requires the point to be replayed. The umpire indicates this type of let by announcing "Let. First serve," or "Let. Second serve." Lets typically occur when an otherwise-valid serve makes contact with the net before hitting the ground. Theoretically, a player could serve an infinite number of otherwise-valid let serves, but a serve that touches the net and then lands out of bounds counts as one of the two allowed serves. A let can also be called during play when there is some distraction to either player not caused by the players themselves, such as a ball boy moving behind a receiver, debris flying across the
court in windy conditions, or a ball accidentally falling out of a player’s pocket or entering from a neighbouring court. The call is made by the chair umpire when one is assigned to the match, as in professional matches, or one of the players when there is no chair umpire. When a receiver is legitimately unprepared for a serve, a let is technically the result, even if the word goes unspoken.

- **LET-CHECK**: Electronic sensor on the net that assists chair umpires in calling lets by detecting vibration. Typically, it is used only on show courts in professional matches, like electronic review. Players and commentators occasionally complain that such devices are too sensitive, that is, indicate too many false positives.

- **LINE JUDGE**: Person designated to observe the passage of tennis balls over the boundary lines of the court. A line judge can declare that a play was inside or outside the play area and cannot be overruled by the players. Line judges must defer to an umpire’s decision, even when it contradicts their own observations.

- **LOB**: Stroke in which the ball is hit high above the net. If the opposing player or players are up at the net, the intention may be an offensive lob in order to win the point outright. In a defensive lob, the intent is to give the player time to recover and get in position, or, if the opponents are at the net, to force them to chase down the lob.

- **LINGERING DEATH TIEBREAK**: Version of the tiebreak played as the best of twelve points, with a two-point advantage needed to clinch the set.

- **LOB VOLEY**: Type of volley shot aimed at lobbing the ball over the opponent and normally played when the opponent is in the vicinity of the net.

- **LOVE**: Zero (score) (e.g. "15-0" is spoken "fifteen-love"; "to hold to love" means "to win the game when serving with the opponent scoring zero points"; "to break to love" means "to win the game when receiving with the opponent scoring zero points"). Thought to be derived from the French term, l’oeuf, literally the egg, meaning nothing.

- **LOVE GAME**: Shutout game, won without the opponent’s scoring.

- **LUCKY LOSER ("LL")**: Highest-ranked player to lose in the final round of qualifying into a tournament, but still ends up getting qualified due to a sudden withdrawal by one of the players already in the main draw. In Grand Slam events, one of the four highest-ranked losers in the final qualifying round is randomly picked as the lucky loser.

- **MAC-CAM**: High-speed video camera used for televised instant replays of close shots landing on/near the baseline. Name derived from John McEnroe.

- **MAIN DRAW**: See draw.
**MASTERS CUP**: Former name of the year-end ATP championship, in which the eight highest-ranked players compete in a round-robin format.

**MATCH POINT**: Situation in which the player who is leading needs one more point to win the match. Variations of the term are possible, e.g. championship point is the match point in the final match of a championship.

**MERCEDES SUPER 9**: Former name for the nine ATP Masters Series Tournaments

**MINI-BREAK**: Point won from the opponent's serve. The term is usually used in a tiebreak, but it can be used during normal service games as well. To be "up a mini-break" means that the player has one more mini-break than his/her opponent.

**MINI-HOLD**: Point won by the server, usually in a tiebreak.

**MIPTC**: Acronym for Men's International Professional Tennis Council, administrative body of the tournaments that comprised the Grand Prix tennis circuit. Existed from 1974 until the creation of the ATP Tour in 1989.

**MIS-HIT**: Stroke in which the racket fails to make contact with the ball in the "sweetspot" area of the strings.

**MIXED DOUBLES**: Match played by four players, two male, two female, one of each sex per side of the court.

**MOONBALL**: Offensive rally stroke hit high above the net. The difference from what is called a lob is that this is not necessarily a defensive Hail Mary attempt from out of position, nor is there any particular intent to force the opponent go on a chase.

**MOP**: Point at 0–30; stands for major opportunity point.

**MTI METHOD**: is the simplest way to learn tennis strokes

**NET**: Interlaced fabric, cord, and tape stretched across the entire width of the court; it is held up by the posts.

**NET CORD**: see dead net cord

**NET POINT**: Point won or lost on approaching the net, as opposed to a point won or lost by a stroke from the baseline.

**NEW BALLS**: New set of balls replacing the old ones during the game from time to time due to the fact that strokes make the ball heat up and alter its bounce characteristics; the player
first to serve one of the new balls shows it to the opponent.

- **NO-MAN’S LAND**: Area between the service line and the baseline, where a player is most tactically vulnerable.

- **NON-ENDEMIC PRODUCTS**: Products for tennis sponsorship that are not intrinsic to the sport such as watches, cars, jewellery.

- **NOT UP**: Call given by the umpire when an opponent plays a ball that has already bounced twice i.e. the ball was out of play when the player played it

- **NTRP RATING**: National Tennis Rating Program rating; ranks players on a scale from 1 to 7, with 1 being an absolute beginner and 7 a touring pro.

- **OFFICIAL**: Member of the officiating team: tournament referee, chair umpire, or linesman.

- **OFF FOREHAND/BACKHAND**: (see inside out shots)

- **OP**: Stands for opportunity point; 15–30, an opportunity to potentially break serve.

- **OPEN STANCE**: Modern technique in which the hitter’s body facing is at an angle between parallel to the baseline and facing the opponent. See also closed stance.

- **OUT**: A ball that has landed outside the play area.

- **OVERHEAD**: Stroke in which the player hits the ball over his/her head; if the shot is hit relatively strongly, it is referred to as a smash; smashes are often referred to as simply overheads, although not every overhead shot is a smash.

- **OVERRULE**: To reverse a linesperson's call, done by the umpire.

- **OVERWRAP**: Material wrapped over the handle of the racket to absorb moisture or add gripping assistance. Includes gauze or Tournagrip (tradename).

- **PAINT THE LINES**: To hit shots that land as close to the lines of the court as possible.
PASSING SHOT: Type of shot, usually played in the vicinity of the baseline, that passes by (not over) the opponent at the net. See also lob.

PERCENTAGE TENNIS: Style of play consisting of safe shots with large margins of error. Aimed at keeping the ball in play in anticipation of an opponent's error.

PLASTERER FOREHAND/BACKHAND – where the player hits across the ball on shoulder high shots

POACHING: In doubles, an aggressive move where the player at the net moves to volley a shot intended for his/her partner.

POINT: Period of play between the first successful service of a ball and the point at which that ball goes out of play.

PRE-QUALIFYING: Tournament in which the winner earns a wildcard into a tournament’s qualifying draw.

PRESSURELESS BALL: Special type of tennis ball that does not have a core of pressurized air as standard balls do, but rather has a core made of solid rubber, or a core filled tightly with micro-particles. Quality pressureless balls are approved for top-pro play generally, but pressureless balls are typically used mostly at high altitudes, where standard balls would be greatly affected by the difference between the high pressure in the ball and the thin air.

PROTECTED RANKING: Players injured for a minimum of six months can ask for a protected ranking, which is based on his or her average ranking during the first three months of his or her injury. The player can use his or her protected ranking to enter tournaments' main draws or qualifying competitions when coming back from injury.

PULP: 30–30, not quite deuce.

PUSHER: Player who does not try to hit winners, but only to return the ball safely; often used in a derogative manner.

PUTAWAY: Offensive shot to try to end the point with no hope of a return.

QUALIES: Qualifying competition of a tournament, where each participant competes for a place in the tournament's main draw.

QUALIFICATION ROUND: Final round of play in a pre-tournament qualification competition, also known as qualifiers.
Tennis Terminology

- **QUALIFIER ("Q")**: Player who reaches the tournament's main draw by competing in a pre-tournament qualifying competition, rather than automatically by virtue of his/her world ranking, by being awarded a wildcard, or other exemption.

- **QUALIFYING DRAW**: See draw.

- **RACQUET (RACKET)**: Bat with a long handle and a large looped frame with a string mesh tautly stretched across it, the frame made of wood, metal, graphite, composite, or some other synthetic material, used by a tennis player to hit the tennis ball during a game of tennis.

- **RACQUET ABUSE (RACKET ABUSE)**: When a player slams their racket into the ground or net in frustration. Can result in a warning from the umpire or docking of points.

- **RALLY**: Following the service of a tennis ball, a series of return hits of the ball that ends when one or other player fails to return the ball within the court boundary or fails to return a ball that falls within the play area.

- **RECEIVER**: Person who is being served to.

- **REFEREE**: Person in charge of enforcing the rules in a tournament, as opposed to a tennis match. See also umpire.

- **REFLEX VOLLEY**: Volley in which the player has no time to plan the shot, and instead reacts instinctively to get the racket in position to return the ball. This occurs frequently in doubles and in advanced singles.

- **RETIREMENT ("RET.")**: Player's withdrawal during a match, usually due to injury, causing the player to forfeit his/her place in the tournament. For a pre-match withdrawal, see walkover.

- **RETRIEVER**: Defensive baseliner. See tennis strategy.

- **RETURN ACE**: Shot in which the opponent serves, the receiver returns the serve, and the opponent does not hit the ball.

- **RISING SHOT**: Shot in which the ball is hit before it reaches its apex; also hitting on the rise.

- **ROUND OF 16**: Round of a tournament prior to the quarterfinals in which there are 16 players remaining, corresponds to the fourth round of 128-draw tournament, the third round of a 64-draw, and second round of a 32-draw tournament.

- **ROUND ROBIN ("RR")**: Tournament format in which players are organised into groups of three or four players and compete against all other members of the group. Players are then ranked according to number of matches, sets, and games won and head-to-head records.
The top one, two, or four players then qualify for the next stage of the tournament.

- **RUBBER**: Individual match, singles or doubles, within a Davis Cup tie.

- **SCRATCH**: withdraw from a match due to an injury.

- **SECOND SERVE**: Second and final of the two serve attempts a player is allowed at the beginning of a point, not counting net cord let serves that would otherwise be good.

- **SECOND SNAP**: a tennis ball struck for top spin against lubricated or co-poly strings will get extra rotation on the ball from the mains popping back in position before the ball leaves contact with the racquet.

- **SEED**: Player whose position in a tournament has been arranged based on his/her ranking so as not to meet other ranking players in the early rounds of play. Named for the similarity to scattering seeds widely over the ground to plant them. For a given tournament there is a specified number of seeds, depending on the size of the draw. For ATP tournaments, typically one out of four players are seeds. For example, a 32-draw International Series tournament would have eight seeds. The seeds are chosen and ranked by the tournament organizers and are selected because they are the players with the highest ranking who also, in the estimation of the organizers, have the best chance of winning the tournament. Seed ranking is sometimes controversial, because it does not always match the players’ current ATP ranking.

- **SERVE (NOUN ONLY: SERVICE)**: The starting point stroke of each game. The ball must be hit into the opponent's half within the service box.

- **SERVICE BOX**: Square area of the court, marked by the sidelines and the service lines, that a serve is supposed to land in.

- **SERVICE GAME**: With regard to a player, the game in which the player is serving (e.g. "Player A won a love service game" means that Player A has won a game where (s)he was serving without the opponent scoring).

- **SERVE AND VOLLEY**: Strategy to serve and immediately move forward to make a volley.

- **SET POINT**: Situation in which the player who is leading needs one more point to win a set. If the player is serving in such a situation, (s)he is said to be "serving for the set".

- **SHAMATEURISM**: Amalgamation of 'sham' and 'amateurism', term used to describe a phenomena that widely existed before the open era where an amateur player would receive financial remuneration in violation of amateur laws.
**SHANK**: Significantly misdirected shot, the result of hitting the ball in an unintentional manner, typically with the frame of the racket. Such shots typically go very high in the air, go into the stands or an adjacent court, and/or land far outside the lines. However, it is possible to hit a shank that lands validly in the court.

**SHORT ANGLED SHOTS**: when the ball is hit with an acute angle cross court

**SHOULDER FINISH**: where the player finishes their stroke with the racket over their opposite shoulder

**SINGLES**: Game played by two players.

**SINGLES STICKS**: Pair of poles which are placed underneath the net near the singles sideline for the purpose of raising it for singles play.

**SITTER**: Shot which is hit with very little pace and no spin, which bounces high after landing, thus being an easy shot to put away.

**SLAM DUNK**: a smash that resembles a basketball slam dunk action

**SLEDGEHAMMER**: Two-handed backhand winner down the line.

**SLICE**: Shot with underspin (backspin)

**SLICE SERVE**: a serve that is hit with sidespin so that the ball curves in flight

**SMASH**: Strongly hit overhead, typically executed when the player who hits the shot is very close to the net and can therefore hit the ball nearly vertically, often so that it bounces into the stands, making it unreturnable.

**SPANK**: To hit a groundstroke flat with a lot of pace.

**SPECIAL EXEMPT (“SE”)**: Players who are unable to appear in a tournament’s qualifying draw because they are still competing in a previous tournament can be awarded a spot in the main draw by special exempt.

**SPIN**: Rotation of the ball as it moves through the air, affecting its trajectory and bounce. See backspin, topspin, and underspin.

**SPLIT STEP**: a footwork technique in which a player does a small bounce on both feet, just as the opponent hits the ball. This lets the player go more quickly in either direction.

**SPOT SERVING/SPOT SERVER**: Serving with precision, resulting in the ball landing either on or near the intersection of the centre service line and service line or singles tramline and service line.

**SQUASH SHOT**: Forehand or backhand shot typically hit on the run from a defensive position, either with slice, or from behind the player’s stance.
**STICK VOLLEY:** Volley hit crisply, resulting in shot with a sharp downward trajectory.

**STOPPER:** Player who will not win or go deep in a tournament but is good enough to stop a top seed from advancing.

**STOP VOLLEY:** (see drop volley)

**STRAIGHT SETS:** Situation in which the winner of a match does not lose a set. A straight set may also mean a set which is won by a score of 6-something; i.e. is won at the first opportunity and does not reach five games all.

**STRINGS:** Material woven through the face of the racquet. The strings are where contact with the ball is supposed to be made.

**STRING SAVER:** Tiny piece of plastic that is sometimes inserted where the strings cross, to prevent the strings from abrading each other and prematurely breaking.

**STROKE:** Striking of the ball.

**SUDDEN DEATH TIEBREAK:** Version of the tiebreak played as the best of nine points, with the last being a deciding point to clinch the set.

**SUPER TIEBREAK:** A tiebreak variation played to ten points instead of seven; used in some tournaments to decide a match instead of playing a third set.

**SWEETSPOT:** Central area of the racquet head which is the best location for making contact with the ball.

**SWING VOLLEY:** See drive volley.

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**T (THE T):** The spot on a tennis court where the centre line and the service line intersect perpendicularly to form a "T" shape.

**TANK:** To lose a match because of poor mental game; or to purposely lose a non-vital set, so as to focus energy and attention on a match-deciding set.

**TAPE IT:** To play an unforced error that hits the tape at the top of the net.

**TENNIS BALL:** Soft, hollow, air-filled rubber ball coated in a synthetic fur, used in the game of tennis.
- **TENNIS BUBBLE**: Indoor tennis facility consisting of a domed structure which is supported by air pressure generated by blowers inside the structure.

- **TENNIS DAD**: Father of a tennis player, often used in reference to a parent actively participating in the player’s tennis development and/or career.

- **TENNIS ELBOW**: Common injury in beginner to intermediate tennis players, possibly due to improper technique or a racket which transmits excessive vibration to the arm.

- **TENNIS HALL OF FAME**: International Tennis Hall of Fame located in Newport, Rhode Island; it hosts an annual tournament around the inductee ceremony.

- **THE VINEYARD OF TENNIS**: Southern California as characterized by Bud Collins.

- **TIE**: Synonymous with match, but used for the Davis Cup.

- **TIEBREAK**: Special game played when the score is 6–6 in a set to decide the winner of the set; the winner is the first to reach at least seven points with a difference of two over the opponent.

- **TOPSLICE SERVE**: A serve that is hit with a combination of both sidespin and topspin where the ball spins on its axis at around 45 degrees. The ball kicks up and breaks to one side on the bounce.

- **TOPSPIN**: Spin of a ball where the top of the ball rotates toward the direction of travel; the spin goes forward over the top of the ball, causing the ball to dip and bounce at a higher angle to the court.

- **TOPSPIN SERVE**: A serve that is hit with topspin. The ball kicks up high on the bounce.

- **TOSS**: In the beginning of a match, the winner of a coin toss chooses who serves first.

- **TOUCH**: Occurs when a player touches any part of the net when the ball is still in play, losing the point.

- **TRAMLINE**: Line defining the limit of play on the side of a singles or doubles court.

- **TRAMPOLINING**: Effect which occurs when striking a ball flat with a racket that is strung at a very loose tension. Trampolining results in a shot that has a very high velocity.

- **TREE**: Player who is playing much better than normal, or a shot that a player hits that he/she would not usually make.

- **TREEING**: Someone who is playing much better than normal.

- **TRIPLE BAGEL**: Three sets won to love. See bagel. • triple crown: Winning the championship in all three tennis disciplines (singles, doubles and mixed doubles) at one event, especially a
Grand Slam tournament.

- **TTFF**: Tracking, timing, feel and finish - the four ingredients for mastering every tennis stroke with the MTI Method

- **TWEENER (HOT DOG)**: Trick shot in which a player chasing to retrieve a lob hits the ball between the legs with his or her back to the net. A shot pioneered in professional tennis by Guillermo Vilas in the 1970s and, in women's tennis, by Gabriela Sabatini in the 1980s. Passing the ball between the legs from back to front becomes a forward facing tweener.

- **TWIST SERVE**: Serve hit with a combination of slice and topspin which results in a curving trajectory and high bounce in the opposite direction of the ball’s flight trajectory. See also kick serve.

- **TWO BALL PASS**: Passing an opponent that has come to the net with a first shot that causes them trouble on the volley followed up by hitting the second ball by them.

- **UNDERSPIN**: Spin of a ball where the top of the ball rotates away from the direction of travel; the spin is underneath the ball, causing the ball to float and to bounce at a lower angle to the court.

- **UMPIRE**: Person designated to enforce the rules of the game during play, usually sitting on a high chair beside the net.

- **UNDERHAND SERVE**: Service in which the player serving delivers the ball with his or her racquet below shoulder level. In intermediate level tennis this is considered unusual but an acceptable ploy. In upper-intermediate and professional events, the practice would generally be considered insulting, but there may be exceptions (for example, if the server is injured).

- **UNFORCED ERROR**: Error in a service or return shot that cannot be attributed to any factor other than poor judgement and execution by the player; contrasted with a forced error.

- **UNSEEDED PLAYER**: Player who is not a seed in a tournament.

- **VERTICAL POWER**: The modern way to add power to your tennis game using the MTI Method
- **Volley:** a shot hit by a player before the ball bounces on his own side of the court.

- **VASSS:** acronym for Van Alen Streamlined Scoring System, an alternative scoring method developed by James Van Alen aimed at avoiding very long matches that can arise under the traditional advantage scoring system. The only element of VASSS to be adopted by the tennis authorities was the tiebreak.

- **Walkover ("WO" or "W/O"):** Unopposed victory. A walkover is awarded when the opponent fails to start the match for any reason, such as injury.

- **Wild Card ("WC"):** Player allowed to play in a tournament, even if his/her rank is not adequate or he/she does not register in time. Typically a few places in the draw are reserved for wild cards, which may be for local players who do not gain direct acceptance or for players who are just outside the ranking required to gain direct acceptance. Wild cards may also be given to players whose ranking has dropped due to a long-term injury.

- **Windshield Wiper Finish:** where the player finishes their stroke with the racket across their body waist height

- **Winner:** a shot that is not reached by the opponent and wins the point; sometimes also a serve that is reached but not returned into the court.

- **WCT:** World Championship Tennis, a tour for professional male tennis players established in 1968 and lasted until the emergence of the ATP Tour in 1990.

- **Wrap Finish:** where the player finishes their stroke with the racket across their body just below shoulder height

- **WTA:** Women’s Tennis Association, the main organizing body of women’s professional tennis; governs the WTA Tour with the largest tournaments for women.

- **WTA Tour Championships:** The annual season-ending tournament featuring eight of the top-ranked women in the world (plus two alternates).

- **WTA Tournament of Champions:** Held a week after the WTA Tour Championships, it features the six best-ranked women who won an WTA International event during the season (plus two pre-determined wildcard entries as decided by the tournament).
ZERO POINTER: Ranking points received by skipping selected professional tennis tour events which a top ranked player is committed to participate in (mandatory tournaments). Therefore the player risks getting no points added to his or her ranking even when participating in an alternative tournament in place of the mandatory event.

The MTI Method

The Secrets behind the Method & what sets it apart from Traditional Teaching Systems

Never should players be taught backswing at the start. By doing this, they will hinder their coordination in discovering their contact point and success will be slower.

Plus when have you ever seen the top pro players turn sideways with their racquet back for a topspin forehand?

Players must first learn to ‘track’, ‘time’ and ‘feel’ the ball with their hands and ultimately discover their contact point. Then this should be repeated with the racquet.

This albeit gentle, leads to the player moving from day one. They must learn TTFF.

Tracking, Timing, Feel and Finish – master these crucial factors on every shot, you will then be able to master the shot.

Every shot should be first taught using just the hands. This radically accelerates the learning process. Once they understand where they need to be in relationship with the ball, their hands will send a message to their feet telling them to move.

Footwork patterns can be learned merely by the player walking naturally to the ball

You will then discover that it won’t matter what position your feet are to either hit the ball cross court or down the line. If you learn to find the ball with your hands first, your feet will naturally take you to the ball. Tennis is not a dance!

As stated above, the information must be taught in the CORRECT ORDER and certainly not rushed in the pursuit of hitting powerful strokes such is the human frailty of impatience. Ignore these fundamentals at your peril!

Unless you master these crucial foundations the whole building will fall and you can forget mastering tactics! – ‘For every tactical problem, there is a technical solution’.

www.playmodernntennis.com
Once you have mastered the contact point which is encompassed within TTFF, then they encourage their players to discover how they can achieve great power on their shots.

Having studied karate for many years, I knew there were similarities with tennis with regard to power production. We introduced this martial art approach to the system. However our information had to remain simple.

We all know that this subject matter can be over complicated with bio mechanical terms which are true but remember what great teaching is; the delivery of simple, clear and concise information.

You may have heard of the phrases; ‘hip and shoulder turn’ or ‘unit turn’ in order to generate power. But the problem is that players focus on what their bodies are doing and less on the ball.

*MTI do not use these phrases but we can obtain the same result without losing focus on the ball.*

It is so important to establish what the fundamentals are behind every shot. Once these are totally embedded then you can move on to the cosmetics; in other words; the personalised ‘style’ of a shot.

The MTI Method offers different service styles for example, or you may choose to change your grip for a certain forehand depending on the situation you are faced with.

We encourage you to adapt and to self-discover what works personally for you. We do not bark incomprehensible instructions at you.

Neither do we start you half way up the ladder so to speak. We will take a player from the beginning and take them through the whole journey. Once you master one area, you will be ready to move on; it’s as simple as that.

If you were a budding entrepreneur and wanted to start a successful business model, where would you look for help? Would it be the local college who offer endless mind numbingly boring lectures about business studies?

Or....

Would you research as to what the top gurus did and copy their model and advice?

Exactly, you would find a successful formula and copy it wouldn’t you?

After all, that’s what Roger Federer did. He modelled his game on Pete Sampras and the rest as they say is history.

Well this is precisely what MTI have done. All the information comes from the professional players. And we hasten to add, not just from the likes of Federer or Nadal, but from the likes of Rod Laver who prevailed in the sixties and players even earlier!!
Would you be surprised to learn that even players of that era hit huge amounts of topspin with open stance forehands with wooden racquets?

Well they did. When we saw a split screen example of Rod Laver hitting a topspin forehand alongside Roger Federer, there really wasn’t much difference in their technique!

Obviously modern racquet technology helps the top pros of today achieve huge power, but the basic technique is very similar.

*This method will get you to hit the ball like a top player whilst maintaining your focus on the most important thing; where you are going to hit that ball in order to win the point and thence the match!*

When you watch a pro match what they actually do is very simple. Yes they do it at 100 mph but simple nonetheless. And even when they impart great power, the technical process starts very slow. Anyway they show you this.

Just go onto YouTube and watch other organizations trying to dissect what the pros are doing in slow motion, they still don’t get it!

Yep, and you still have coaches advise the ‘side on’ stance for a topspin forehand!

**NOOO! HEY!! KEEP TENNIS SIMPLE, STOP OVER COMPLICATING IT!!**

They end up concentrating on the wrong areas with making players conscious of things that should be sub conscious; such as the size of their backswing or ‘pivoting’.

This is like saying ‘hey, if you touch a hot kettle, then all you have to do is to straighten your fingers, tense your wrist and remove your fingers making sure that you turn your wrist a quarter turn clockwise!

’WHAT??

Yes this is a slight exaggeration but this is how tennis is being taught in many areas!!

Why is this? The answer is traditionalist perception. Conventional tennis coaching was borne out of what coaches of yesteryear thought was happening on the pro tour.

Also many misconceptions about what players should be conscious about.

Too many players were being taught to be too mechanical and any natural talent was being over coached until the player became less dynamic.

Once we had assembled our method of progression, we took to the road and delivered course after course. The feedback was truly awesome! We knew that this is what many coaches and players had been waiting for.

**Download the MTI Method Now** and watch how quickly you can improve your game or others