



Learn to Play Tennis in Minutes

*The Ultimate Guide to
Teach Yourself Tennis!*

Lesson Eight

The Backhand Volley Confidence & Control

By Andrew Magrath & John Littleford
Modern Tennis International Limited

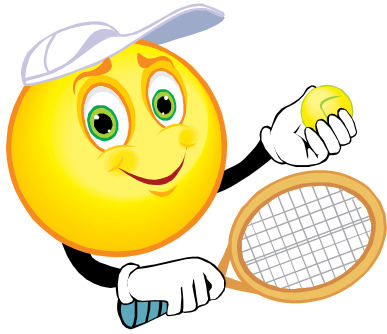
The Backhand Volley in Minutes

Introduction

Yes this book can teach you to play the backhand volley in minutes! Not weeks, not months or years, but here today. All you need is a partner, some tennis balls, a couple of racquets and of course, a tennis court! This guide will allow you to learn as you teach your partner, friend or child - whoever they may be.



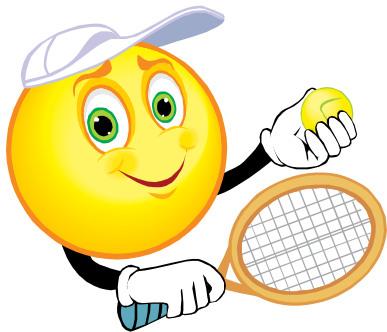
With the Backhand Volley you lead with the edge of the racquet



Let's get on court, but before we do here are some tips before we begin:

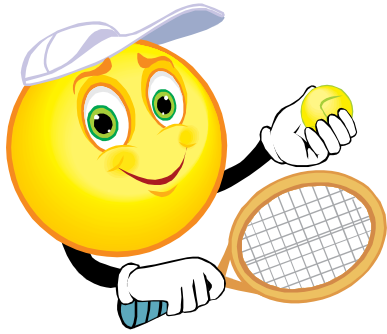
- ✿ With all shots we teach you, you begin close to the net no matter how good or natural you are!
- ✿ The following steps are an easy progression into tennis and it is crucial that you follow them and DO NOT miss any out - or your game will not blossom as it should
- ✿ Please note that even the top players re-take these steps to find their rhythm again
- ✿ During the tuition one of you will become the student and the other will become the coach. You will reverse roles as you progress through these simple steps
- ✿ Please take your time and make sure you fully grasp each step as you move along
- ✿ You will soon be hitting backhand volleys before you know it

- ☀ If followed in the steps provided, you will find your natural tennis talent - and believe as we do - that TENNIS is truly a simple game to play



So let's learn the **"The Backhand Volley"**

Please do not worry when you read the word spin, this all happens naturally if you follow the simple steps that follow. You don't even have to think about it, you will just witness it happening and feel control of the ball. Top spin is making the ball spin in a forward rotation. Slice on a groundstroke makes the ball spin backwards ('backspin'). Not to be confused with the slice serve this makes the ball spin sideways ('sidespin'). I know the terminology can be over confusing. Try being a coach having to explain it! No sympathy please.



Step 1 (No racquets yet - just your hands. Warning! You may need to use soft balls for the following exercises)

- ☀ Finding the ball! – Both players stand either side of the net, halfway in the service box facing each other. Get your partner to feed under arm 10 balls to you on your backhand side. Make sure the back of your hand is tilted slightly upwards. It can be easier for some if you use the magic hand



Open your hand slightly and stop the ball with the back of your hand

- ☀️ Now a volley means that you hit the ball before it bounces, meaning you are probably fairly close to the net. Count 1 to 5 after your partner releases the ball (This will encourage you to wait for the ball. **Say 1 when your partner releases the ball, then 2, 3, 4 and say 5 when you make contact and push the ball over the net with the back of your dominant hand. As you make contact, you must 'stop' your hand on the ball. Don't worry, the ball will still travel!**

- ☀️ As you push the ball, feel as if you are **leading with the edge of your hand**. As your hand is tilted slightly open, you should feel that your hand is making contact with the underside of the ball. This will cause backspin; you may even get a little side spin as well, try and watch the ball to see what effect you give it.

- ☀️ Now feed to your partner in the same way.

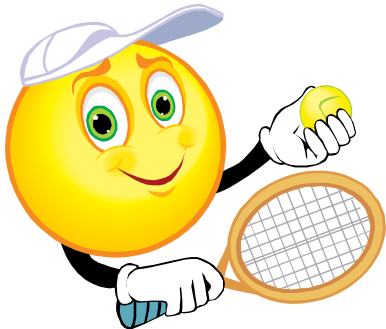
- ☀️ Once you have both had a go, get your partner to feed you in different places, making you move forwards, backwards and sideways around the service box whilst pushing the ball.

✓ **Remember, Push and stop, don't swing and hit!**

☀ Now feed your partner in the same way

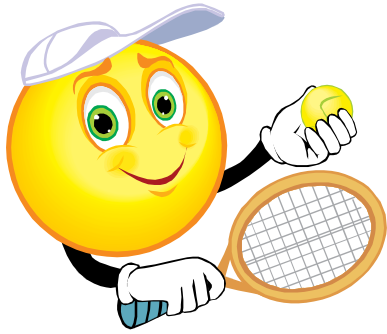
☀ Now try and play a rally of backhand volleys to each other. Try and keep the ball off the floor

✓ **Remember to Find, Feel and Finish (the three 'fs')**



So what will success feel like at step 1?

1. You will be **finding** and **feeling** the ball on your backhand side
2. You will be **pushing and stopping on the ball**, not hitting
3. You will be **leading with the edge** of your hand
4. You will be noticing the **spin** off the back of your hand



Step 2 (Okay, go on - pick up the racquet!)

Introduce the Racquet

- ✿ Make sure both of you are once again facing each other, standing halfway in the service box. One of you holds a racquet in the dominant hand with your hand pinching the frame at the throat with your thumb and index finger either side of the frame. (Continental or hammer grip).



- ✿ Whilst holding the open faced racquet in front of you on your backhand side (non dominant side), get your partner to feed 10 balls to you. Remember to count to 5 as before and push the ball up over the net.

- ✓ By the way, should the ball go too high, then close the racquet face a little, and should the ball go in the net, open the face a little.

- ☀ Make sure that when you are waiting for the ball, your racquet head is above your hand with your strings facing the net. **Your wrist is laid off or cocked.** In other words, if you were to hold your arm in front of you and turned your fist upwards, that is a laid off wrist.

- ☀ Now, hold the racquet to your backhand side but keeping it in front, with your non dominant hand supporting the racquet just behind the throat

- ☀ Now tilt the racquet back a little to point the racquet butt towards the ball. This will help you track the ball. Don't forget to count 1 when your partner releases the ball, lead with the edge and push the ball over the net on 5. Get your partner to feed 10 balls

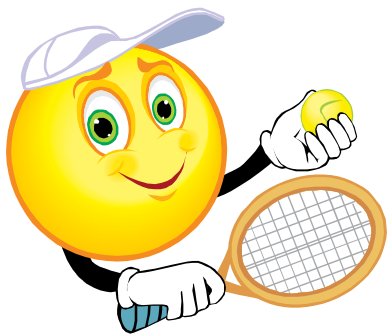
- ☀ Now get your partner to feed you 10 balls that make you move backwards, forwards and sideways around the service box.

- ☀ As you are doing this, start to slide your grip down the grip whilst maintaining the continental grip as you feel confident

☀️ Now feed your partner in the same way



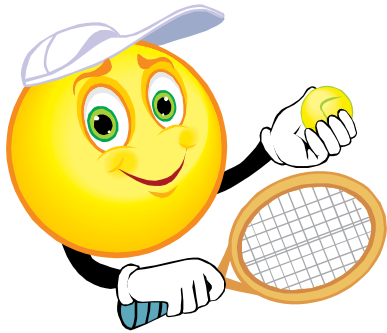
*Work your way down the grip until you
feel comfortable and in control*



So what will success feel like at step 2?

1. You will be feeling as though you are **hitting down and across** the ball with an open racquet face
2. You will be **pushing and stopping on the ball**, not hitting
3. You will be **leading with the edge** of the racquet frame

4. You will be noticing the **back and sidespin** on the ball when it leaves your strings



Step 3 – Now Use the Navel Ready Position



- ☀ Introducing the **Navel Ready Position**. Hold the butt to your navel in ready position. Make sure you are holding your new found continental grip. Make sure you are again standing opposite each other in the service box.

- ☀ Get your partner to feed you 10 balls. From ready position, make sure that you track the ball with the butt of the racquet, count 1 to 5 making sure that you push the ball on five
 - ✓ Remember as you come to the ball; approach it with the head above your hand and your wrist crooked. Feel like you are sliding the strings under the ball. **Lead with the edge and stop on the ball!**

- ☀ Feel free to slide your hand down the grip as you feel comfortable. In time you may place your thumb around the grip for more feel and control as your hand slides down the grip

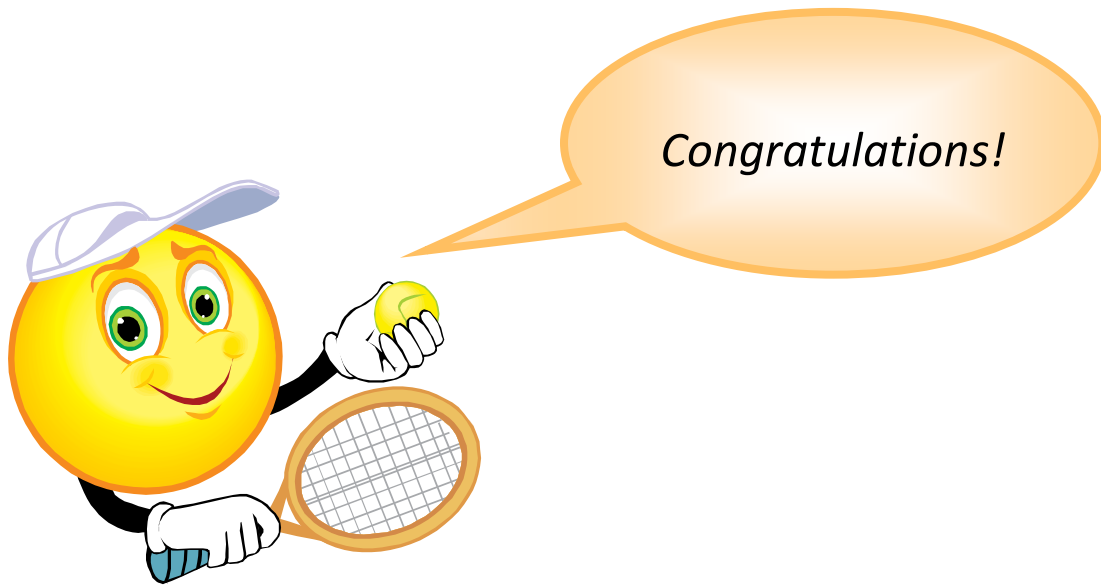
- ☀ Now get your partner to feed you 10 balls that make you move backwards, forwards and sideways around the service box, whilst hitting the backhand volley

- ☀ Now feed your partner in the same way

- ☀️ Ok its play time! Try and have a 10 ball rally or more of backhand volleys. Try and keep the ball off the floor.
- ☀️ Now play a few competitive games with this shot included. Have fun!



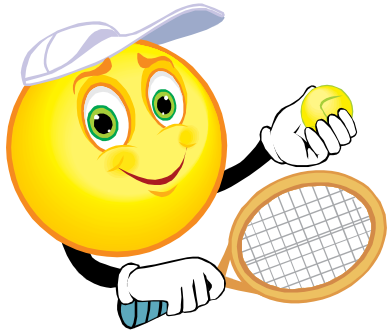
Hold your free hand behind the racquet head to help track the ball



You have just learned to hit a

“Backhand Volley”

in just 3 easy steps!



In summary the Backhand Volley

Hand/racquet in front, racquet head above the hand, wrist cocked (laid off), lead with the edge and push and stop on the ball with an open racquet face to get back/side spin

Encourage each other to experiment with varying contact angles on hitting the ball. Open the racquet face and see the ball go up as a lob volley, then close the racquet face and see the ball stay low, just going over the net.

- ✓ Note the behaviour of back spin. It stays very low and ‘bites’ the surface and holds up when it hits the surface whereas topspin kicks up higher towards the opponent
- ✓ **Remember.** Don’t rush any of the progressions. Even though you have got this far, it is imperative that you revisit each progression again and again in order to perfect the shot.

- ☀ As you have now experienced topspin and backspin, try to rally utilising both kinds of spin for experimentation

- ☀ Have a rally of both forehand and backhand volleys. See how many you can do without stopping

- ☀ As you have now experienced ground strokes (where the ball hits the floor first before you make contact) and now volleys, try to rally utilising both kinds of shots for experimentation.

- ☀ **Drill** – Stand on the baseline, get your partner to feed 10 balls short. (Around the service line area) you will then approach the ball with a topspin or slice shot and continue to advance to the net. Your partner then feeds a second ball which you will volley away for a winning shot! This should feel good! Then you will feed your partner.
 - ✓ A progression could be that with both players on the baseline, once the first volley has been played, play the point out to a finish

- ☀ **The Drop Volley** is a volley, (forehand or backhand) that is hit from close to the net that is hit with a very open racquet face

causing huge amounts of backspin. This causes the ball to drop just over the other side of the net.

☀️ **The Low Volley** is a volley that is played from below net height. You need to open the racquet face a bit more and hit down on the ball and hey presto! The ball pops up and over.

☀️ **The Half Volley** is also a volley that is played from below net height. Only this time the ball drops a bit further away so it actually hits the floor first, but you immediately lift the ball as soon as it touches the floor with a brushing up feel.



***Feel the ball and lift as you contact the ball
(nice passive hands help with this shot)***

End of Lesson 8.

I hope you are enjoying these simple progressions!

See you for on court

for

Lesson 9 – The Forehand Smash