



# PLAYER DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL

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# Using a Tennis Journal to Improve Your Game

Your coach asked you to keep a tennis journal? Ugghh! What a pain! Why would she ask you to write in a journal? How could that actually help your tennis? Experienced players know that journaling is an effective way to improve and it is not painful!

Someone that has a Learning Mindset is continually focused on getting better every day. Players that improve faster than their opponents have 3 very important learning habits. They:

- 1. SET GOALS:** They set goals prior to practice. They have a plan for practice.
- 2. EXECUTE:** They work on their goals and give themselves feedback as they practice. They are engaged and aware of what they are learning as they practice.
- 3. REFLECT:** They think about goals they achieved in today's practice and what they want to achieve in the next practice. They set goals for the next day.

Benefits of Journaling:

1. Helps you **remember** goals. It keeps you focused on what is important for you.
2. All of your thoughts on paper so you can clearly see what is important and **find solutions** to problems.
3. Writing or typing in a journal helps you **commit** to your goals.

Getting Started – buy a notebook or get the Player Development Journal which has sample questions for you to answer.

Follow this link: <http://www.playerdevelopment.usta.com/Player-Resources-Main/>

Put the journal where you will see it every day (in your tennis bag). Put a pen or pencil with the journal.

What to write about – writing a journal is a personal choice, write about what helps you. At first, keep it simple. Write what you achieved today and what you want to achieve tomorrow. Then focus on how you played, what you learned, what you would do differently, did you follow your game plan, did you work on your goals, physical and mental strategies you used and how they worked.

How to write – be detailed and specific. The journal is to help you remember and apply what you are learning.

When to write – cool down and stretch after your practice, then write while you eat a snack and hydrate. If that is not possible then write while someone drives you from practice. Writing just before you go to bed is also good so you reflect on your day and prepare for tomorrow.

How to use what you are writing to improve as a player – look at your journal entries at the end of the week. Look at what goals you achieved. Congratulate yourself on your accomplishments. Look at what goals remain to be achieved. Get excited to work towards those goals. Look at what you did each day to achieve your goals. Plan what you will do in the next week to achieve more goals.

Tips on Journaling: <http://www.writingathletes.com/pro-athletes-write.html>  
<http://www.journalingsaves.com/how-to-journal/>

# Compete Like a Champion



Defining the Mission

**Engaged** – full focus on what matters in the moment

**Resilient** – ability to bounce back and refocus when facing adversity

**Professional** – demonstrates character, exhibits behaviors and attitudes of an athlete that is consistently prepared to practice and compete with full engagement

**Respectful** – acts in the way of appreciation, courteous to others, focused on the best in others, honors rules of game

**Tough** – endures periods of hardship and adversity in training and competition, accepts challenges fully motivated to succeed, embraces pressure, physically and emotionally strong

**Determined** – pushes through adversity and struggle, and continues to strive for success in a positive, productive manner

**Confident** – unshakable self-belief in abilities and skills, expects to be successful

Created from the values of the USTA Player Development national coaching staff by Dr. Larry Lauer. Thanks to Player Development leadership for their support of the campaign and USTA Marketing and specifically Meg Angeletti for their support in creating the banner and disseminating it to the American tennis public.

# Gamestyles

| Game Styles                 | Characteristics  | Tactical Patterns*   |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Counter-attacker</b>     | <p>Counter-attackers are able to hit their targets with a high percentage of first serves. It is important that they are able to serve well enough so they are able to start each service point in a neutral position. They tend to utilize a good three-quarter first serve in order to keep their first-serve percentage high. Gilles Simon and Caroline Wozniacki are two counter-attackers with good serves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very consistent from the baseline (solid from both sides)</li> <li>• Great mover on the court, especially in a defensive capacity</li> <li>• Patient and persistent, with great ability to read opponents</li> <li>• Redirects pace (uses opponent's power)</li> <li>• Absorbs power well</li> <li>• Changes pace very well to throw off an aggressive player's rhythm</li> <li>• Possesses effective passing shots and is able to mix in the offensive lob</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Half X" — short angle deep cross-court, deep cross-court short angle</li> <li>• Keeps the ball deep and moves the opponent side to side; mixes in shots behind</li> <li>• Cross-court to cross-court, then recognizes the short ball and redirects it down the line</li> <li>• Serves into the body, first ball high and heavy, to push opponent back off the baseline</li> <li>• Slices backhand (BH) shorter cross-court, high heavy back behind (keeps opponent off balance)</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Aggressive Baseliner</b> | <p>Aggressive baseliners tend to hit a bigger first serve in order to win free points. Their main goal is to use effective serve-plus-one patterns (serve wide, first ball open court; serve "T", first ball behind). Aggressive baseliners like to start each service point in control of the middle of the court. Novak Djokovic and Victoria Azarenka are two aggressive baseliners with strong serves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses the forehand (FH) to dictate points</li> <li>• Covers 2/3 of the court or more with the FH</li> <li>• Looks to take ground and take time whenever possible</li> <li>• Able to give ground when necessary</li> <li>• Likes to play when holding a lead</li> <li>• Very solid BH with the ability to mix in an effective slice</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to take the cross-court rally ball and change direction down the line with different spins and height with excellent control</li> <li>• Multiple inside-out FHs to set up an inside-in FH or BH down the line</li> <li>• Aggressive cross-court BH to set up a FH inside-in</li> <li>• Takes time on the BH side by driving the ball down the line to set up the FH that can go back down the line or cross court</li> <li>• Starts the point with an aggressive middle ball that pushes the opponent back, so he/she can then take the short ball to either side</li> <li>• Serves wide first ball to open the court</li> <li>• Serves T first ball behind</li> <li>• Serves plus FH</li> </ul> |
| <b>All-Court Player</b>     | <p>All-court players are able to hit big serves to precise targets. They are able to keep their opponents off balance by mixing up the speed, spin and placement of their serves. They are looking to take control of the points and apply immediate pressure. This is all set up with efficient and effective serving. Roger Federer and Serena Williams are two great examples of all-court players with dominant serves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes the longest time to develop, as more skills are required to be truly effective in all areas of the court</li> <li>• Has excellent continental grip skills (volley, half volley, slice BH, overhead, serve)</li> <li>• Efficient and effective mover; likes to take ground and give ground with good diagonal movement</li> <li>• Great court position which allows to attack short balls effectively</li> <li>• Mixes up pace (speed, spin, height)</li> <li>• No apparent weakness; comfortable, confident and competent in all parts of the court</li> <li>• Great composure on the court, which leads to good decision making and problem solving</li> <li>• Out-of-the-air skills: swing volley from mid-court, or close on the shorter volley to drive from the mid-court area</li> <li>• Most adaptable player; is able to adjust to different styles of opponents and different conditions</li> <li>• Very effective at attacking second serves to gain control of the points</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moves opponent around the court to expose his/her weakness</li> <li>• Mixes up the speed, spins, heights and depth on the ball</li> <li>• Big inside-out FH, then take the ball out of the air to the open court (with slower players) and/or behind (faster players)</li> <li>• Short chip to BH side the hits a deep ball to the other side</li> <li>• Drives the opponents deep and able to step inside the court and to disguise the FH drop shot</li> <li>• Serves and volleys as a surprise tactic or when he/she is up in a game (looking to close out the game)</li> <li>• Serve plus FH patterns</li> </ul>  |



# Gamestyles

| Style Variations                        | Characteristics   | Tactical Patterns   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Serve and Volley</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More comfortable in the front court, finishing points off at the net</li> <li>• Looking to put instant pressure on the opponent's return</li> <li>• Hits spots on serve very well and volleys to the appropriate spot on the court</li> <li>• Playing match on your terms and at your rhythm</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serves wide, first ball to open court</li> <li>• Serves T, first volley behind</li> <li>• First volley deep, second volley short</li> <li>• First volley to weaker side</li> <li>• Defensive volleys keep deep and in front of you</li> <li>• Volleys deep middle to take away the angles for passing shots</li> </ul>     |
| <b>Chip and Charge / Hit and Charge</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong slice BH</li> <li>• Putting instant pressure on the server to make them come up with a passing shot</li> <li>• Great at taking your time away</li> <li>• Takes the ball early with very strong racquet skills (controlling the racquet head on balls that have different speeds and spins)</li> <li>• Compact swings and good on-the-rise skills</li> <li>• Good timing on split step and loading on the outside leg, which allows them to have a strong first step toward the net</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deuce court taking a kick serve down the T and penetrating it down the line or down the middle</li> <li>• Drive the FH/BH to BH corner and attack</li> <li>• Deuce: run around FH down the line and attack</li> <li>• Ad side: chip down the line and charge</li> <li>• Ad side: FH inside-out to BH and attack</li> </ul> |

| Game Styles             | Counter-attacker  | Aggressive Baseliner   | All-Court Player  |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Counter-attacker</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be patient</li> <li>• Comfortable playing extended rallies (make fewer mistakes)</li> <li>• Play with big margin to big targets</li> <li>• Early part of the match sets the tone</li> <li>• Create angles</li> <li>• Use the short slice to draw the player into the net on your terms</li> <li>• Start out moving the player to the open court; once the open court has been established, hit behind to catch the opponent off balance</li> <li>• Gain advantage by attacking the second serve</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be patient and consistent</li> <li>• Mix up the pace</li> <li>• Make them generate their own pace (give no pace at times)</li> <li>• Depth is key; they will look to attack short balls</li> <li>• Be able to use their pace and redirect the ball down the line to the open court off a cross-court exchange</li> <li>• Look to make them play in parts of the court where they are not comfortable (usually the net)</li> <li>• Try to keep the ball out of their strike zone (either high and heavy or chip low with slice)</li> <li>• Slow down the pace of the match; they like to play with the lead and at a higher tempo</li> <li>• Half X: deep cross-court (high and heavy) to short angle</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depth is key</li> <li>• Move your opponents (don't let them get comfortable)</li> <li>• Be able to use their pace and redirect the ball down the line to the open court off a cross-court exchange</li> <li>• Serve a high percentage of first serves as they will attack your second serve</li> <li>• Serve body, then first ball high and heavy to open court to get them off the baseline</li> <li>• Return deep middle to eliminate giving them any angles off first ball</li> <li>• Two-shot passing shot combos; mix in the lob early to get them off the net</li> </ul> |

# Gamestyles

| Game Styles                 | Counter-attacker  | Aggressive Baseliner   | All-Court Player   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| <b>Aggressive Baseliner</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aggressive swings with margin to big targets; they can't hurt you with any one shot, so patience is key</li> <li>• Make the extra ball; focus on playing very good defense</li> <li>• Use the big inside-out FH combo to set up the FH inside or BH down the line (aggressive with margin)</li> <li>• When the ball is in the middle of the court, look to take time away with strong ball recognition and your feet; then drive the ball to the weaker side</li> <li>• Side to side, then look to go behind them when the time is right (counter-attackers are typically pretty fast players and run to the open court)</li> <li>• Serve plus FH patterns</li> <li>• Look to attack the second serve and dictate with the FH</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High and heavy to the weaker side</li> <li>• Make the opponent move with good change of directions (control the cross-court rally and change direction to get opponent on the move when you are ahead in the point)</li> <li>• Keep the ball deep in the court; don't allow your opponent to step up and control the middle of the court</li> <li>• Use the BH cross-court to open up the inside-in FH</li> <li>• Serve patterns: serve wide, first ball open court; serve "T", first ball behind.</li> <li>• Return big middle on first serves, more aggressive targets on second serve returns</li> <li>• Serve plus FH look to dictate 2/3 of the court with the FH</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep the ball deep and moving</li> <li>• Serve plus FH; dictate with the FH</li> <li>• Look to control the middle of the court (must win that battle)</li> <li>• Be aggressive on 2nd serve returns; look to dictate</li> <li>• High percentage of 1st serves</li> <li>• Take the ball on the rise; look to take time away with good recognition and your feet. Get them out of their comfort zone</li> <li>• Half X: use angles when appropriate to open up the court and look to play aggressive to the open space</li> </ul>   |
| <b>All-Court Player</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take the ball early: give the opponent less time, create greater angles to open up the court</li> <li>• Play high and heavy to the weaker side</li> <li>• Be patient but attack whenever a good opportunity presents itself</li> <li>• Look to take balls out of the air when the opponent is on the defensive</li> <li>• Short chip to the BH side to draw them into the front court, where they are less comfortable</li> <li>• Attack the second serve (can come in behind if it is the right ball)</li> <li>• Approach deep middle to take away the angles on the passing shot or keep the ball in front of you (down the line)</li> <li>• Serve and volley in games where you have the advantage</li> </ul>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix up your shots</li> <li>• Slice BH shorter in the court to draw opponent out of their comfort zone</li> <li>• Change the speed, spin, height, and depths of the balls to keep opponent from establishing a good rhythm</li> <li>• Vary how and when you attack the net; aggressive baseliners like a target so keep them off balance</li> <li>• When attacking, mix your volleys between open court, behind, and short.</li> <li>• Serve big into the body so they cannot extend their arms</li> <li>• Mix in serve and volley as well as serve and staying back to keep the opponent guessing on their return</li> <li>• Be willing to play defense and make them hit one more ball</li> <li>• Work to get as many serves back and challenge them on each service game; keep the pressure on</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put pressure on your opponent by take control of the point early and looking to attack short balls</li> <li>• Play to the weakness to draw errors and shorter balls</li> <li>• Have the ability to play to the strength to open up the weakness</li> <li>• Controlling court position is key; look to take time with good ball recognition and strong footwork to establish better court position; this will allow you to control the tempo of the match</li> <li>• Be willing to run and defend to force opponent to play closer to the lines</li> <li>• Keep your opponent moving and off balance (hitting behind)</li> <li>• Two-shot passes; pass in combinations if a clear passing lane doesn't present itself</li> <li>• Concentrate on high-percentage tennis; aggressive with margin, with big shots to big targets</li> <li>• Serve plus FH combos work well to win points or gain advantage</li> </ul> |



# Athletic Development Warm-Up

## Mission Statement:

"To enhance athletic performance through a systematic, sequential and progressive approach to the total conditioning process in an environment that ensures success in athletics and life." - Vern Gambetta

| ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT DARTFISH COLLECTION                         |   | <a href="http://bit.ly/2FtqYJp">http://bit.ly/2FtqYJp</a>   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. <b>HEART RAISER</b><br>5 Minutes                              | <b>Technique: See Video</b><br>1. Jog – Forwards and Back<br>2. Skip – Forwards and Back<br>3. Side Shuffle facing the same direction.<br>4. Carioca with high knee on the front cross over facing the same direction.<br>5a. Front cross-over ONLY to the net<br>5b. Repeat but with non-dominant hand<br>6. Inside-out FH movement (Back cross-over/drop step)    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activation</li> <li>• Heart Raiser</li> <li>• Footwork Patterns</li> <li>• Strong Posture</li> </ul>   |
| 2. <b>MUSCLE ACTIVATION</b><br>5 Minutes                         | <b>SQUATS – Technique: See Video</b><br>A. Toes facing forwards X 3<br>B. Toes facing outward X 3<br><br><b>LUNGES – Perform on both legs. Repeat twice to both sides - Technique: See Video</b><br>A. Forward<br>B. Open Stance<br>C. Semi-open stance backwards   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Strength</li> <li>• Technique</li> <li>• Complex Coordination</li> <li>• Proprioception</li> </ul>  |
| 3. <b>ANKLE STABILITY</b><br>5 Minutes                           | <b>ANKLE STABILITY – Each exercise performed 6 times each leg. Technique: See Video</b><br>1a. Left leg – Using 1 ball<br>1b. REPEAT on right leg.<br>2a. Same exercise starting with inside hand catch<br>2b. REPEAT on right leg<br>3a. Add 2nd ball. One player tosses up while the other bounces down<br>3b. REPEAT on right leg. Then switch roles and REPEAT. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ankle Stability</li> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Strength</li> <li>• Technique</li> <li>• Complex Coordination</li> <li>• Spatial Awareness</li> <li>• Recognition</li> <li>• Eye Hand Coordination</li> </ul>            |
| 4. <b>LATERAL ENGAGEMENT</b><br>10 Minutes                       | <b>LATERAL ENGAGEMENT– Technique: See Video</b><br>LEVEL 1 – Leader/Follower<br>LEVEL 2 – Retrieve the Ball:<br>LEVEL 3 – 3-Way Stance  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Coordination</li> <li>• Speed Reaction</li> <li>• Complex Coordination</li> <li>• Spatial Awareness</li> </ul>   |
| 5. <b>TENNIS SPECIFIC MOVEMENT</b><br>5 Minutes                  | <b>VOLLEY TO OVERHEAD MOVEMENT –</b><br><b>Technique:</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/2rXe5Wr">http://bit.ly/2rXe5Wr</a>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Movement Patterns</li> <li>• Strength</li> <li>• Technique</li> <li>• Complex Coordination</li> </ul>   |
| 6. <b>TENNIS SPECIFIC MOVEMENT - SPEED REACTION</b><br>5 Minutes | <b>NORTH-SOUTH-EAST-WEST</b><br><b>Technique:</b> <a href="http://bit.ly/2nmseaC">http://bit.ly/2nmseaC</a>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agility</li> <li>• Balance</li> <li>• Coordination</li> <li>• Speed Reaction</li> <li>• Complex Coordination</li> <li>• Spatial Awareness</li> <li>• Efficient Footwork Patterns</li> <li>• Decision Making</li> </ul> |

# Developing Your Game Plan

## There are four sections to your Match Game Plan:

1. ABCs (process goals for the match)
2. Pre-Match Preparation Plan
3. During Match Routines
4. Post-Match Plan

In this section we describe how to develop your Match Game Plan (MGP).

## Process Goals: The ABCs

Before every match you want to have clear goals in mind. This will help you stay focused on “how” to play versus on the “what ifs” (what if win, lose, etc.). As you will hear often from Player Development coaches, you want to focus on the process during the match. So set three (3) process or “how to” goals that if you do them it will unlock your best performance. For example, one player may write in:

1. Bounce on my toes
2. Play aggressive
3. Big targets

These become this player’s “ABCs” or the basic process for how to play the match.

Think for a moment about your ABCs. What does your coach tell you are the keys to playing well? What do you think you do when you are playing your best? On the next page, on the Match Game Plan, write in your ABCs (process goals).

## Pre-Match Preparation Plan

The top tennis players in the world have a consistent way of getting ready for matches. This is something you want to begin developing for your own game. While a touring pro will have a number of things he or she does to get ready, let’s keep it simple for you at this time.

We want you to come up with several behaviors that you will do before EVERY match because it helps you to be ready, energized and focused. Take a moment to think about a time when you played great tennis. Then answer these questions in your mind:

- How did you feel prior to the match? (Write in specific words that describe how you felt. Players have talked about things like feeling loose, in control, pumped up, focused, energized, relaxed, calm, etc.)
- What were you thinking prior to the match? (Write in specific thoughts. Did you have doubts? Focused on your game plan?)
- How much energy did you have? (Give yourself a number between 0 and 100; 0 = no energy/flat, 50 = energized, 100 = overly energized/too much.)
- What did you do before the match? (Write in specific behaviors like gripped your racquet, did a dynamic warm-up...)

What you have listed is hopefully a “target” for where you want to be on match day. Now the goal is to come up with “how” you will get there consistently: a preparation plan.

# Developing Your Game Plan

## Physical Preparation

This is getting the muscles loose, warmed up, the heart going, etc.

The day before it is practice and the cool down after practice.

## Dynamic Warm-Up

Dynamic warm-up and flexibility training is an essential element of any pre-practice or pre-competition routine and helps prepare the body for the demands of today's tennis game. An effective warm-up does five very important things for tennis players.

1. Increases body temperature, allowing muscles to work more efficiently.
2. Gets the heart and lungs ready for vigorous activity.
3. Stretches muscles actively, preparing them for the forces experienced during tennis.
4. Establishes proper movement patterns and the coordination needed in tennis.
5. Wakes up the nervous system and gets the brain talking with the muscles.

Here are exercises that make up an effective dynamic warm-up as well as examples of exercises for a proper shoulder warm up and cool down:

| Dynamic Warm-Up   |  |
|---|--|
| Jogging w/ Progressive Arm Circles (Jog-Back pedal)                                     | Walking Spiderman w/ Rotation (Eyes follow hand) |
| Carioca (Shoulders square, rotate from hips down)                                       | Leg Swings (F/B/S) x10 Each                      |
| Knee-to Chest Tuck (Maintain proper posture)  | High Knees (Knees up toes up)                    |
| Lunge w/ Reach Back (focus on balance)  | Butt Kicks (Knees down, slight forward lean)     |
| Side Shuffle (Push off inside leg, swing arms across body)                              | Inchworms (Hips up, Knees straight)              |
| High Step w/ Trunk Rotation (Same side)   | A Skips (Aggressive march w/ rhythm)             |
| 3 Way Jumping Jack x 10 Each  | Reverse Skip w/ Hip Rotation (Knee up & out)     |
| Inverted Hamstring (Flat back, Hips square)   | Sprint 50/75/100% (Proper running form)          |
| Lateral Lunge (Push hips back)  |  |
| Perform ALL exercises in a controlled manner with abs engaged – focus on deep breathing |  |

| Cool Down/Stretches ≥ 30sec. holds                      | Shoulder Warm-Up                                       |
|---|--|
| Sleeper Stretch   | Lighter Bands, Smaller ROM with Quick Movement         |
| Hamstring + Quadriceps + Calves + Chest/Shoulders       | Scap Retractions (Elbows 90°, squeeze shoulder blades) |
| Seated Groin Stretch (Back flat lean forward from hips) | Rows (Shoulders down & back, chest up)                 |
| Pigeon (Hips square)                                    | Straight Arm Pull-down (Elbows straight)               |
| Piriformis Stretch (Stretch lying on back)              | Standing "U" "Y" "T" "W" (Hips back, abs tight)        |
| Hip Rotator Stretch (Up & across, shoulders down)       | ER/IR (Elbow to side of body)                          |
| Hip Flexor w/ Cross Arm Body (Front leg, opposite arm)  | 90/90 ER & IR (Hand away from body, elbow stationary)  |

For additional information on these exercises, visit <https://www.usta.com/en/home/improve/tips-and-instruction/national/dynamic-warm-up-and-flexibility-training.html>

# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## Mental Preparation

When preparing for a match, you want your mind focused on simple game plans. You also want to be looking forward to the match and excited to play. Finally, you want to be thinking positive and productive thoughts that prepare you to play well.

Many elite junior and professional players will do some of the following things to prepare mentally:

The Day/Night Before – visualize for 5-10 minutes how they will play, make sure their bag is packed and their equipment is ready, and just relax and involve their mind in other activities (read a book, watch TV, listen to music).

The Day of the Match – players are gradually focusing more and more on their match. They want to keep the mind positive by giving themselves positive reminders and focusing on their ABCs. Many players will also visualize how they will play. The last 10-15 minutes before your match starts, you want to be 100% focused on the match and physically ready to go. So listening to music and doing a warm-up are often the “go-to” strategies for top players.

Warm-Up with Opponent – At this point, you want to get your heart pumping and feel like you’ve already started the match by giving a good, physical effort. Forget grooving, really hit the ball and get your rhythm at the speed you will play at in the match. Keep the mind focused in the moment by thinking about your goals and game plan.

# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## During the Match

During matches you are looking to focus on every single point, one at a time. To do this you need routine for between points. The goal of the routine is to be fully ready to play the next point. This means you are fully focused, energized and believing in yourself and your game.

### Green Light Routine (In Between Points)

A Green Light Routine means “go” and you use it between every point. When a point ends, players go through 4 distinct stages until the next point starts:

1. Respond – they have an immediate response to the point, either positive, neutral (meaning no reaction) or negative. Our goal is to respond positive or neutral at all times. Sometimes you will vent some negativity but that should be with your back to your opponent and quietly. A good behavior to start now is to turn your back to your opponent and focus on your strings.
2. Recover – next, you briefly review the last point and take some deep breaths to recover. Tennis is an exhausting sport; you want to get as much oxygen in your body as possible. So deep breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth are crucial.
3. Refocus – in this stage you have walked behind the baseline and move from thinking about the last point to the next point. Using a towel, touching the fence or just grabbing two tennis balls, you plan your next point and commit by thinking “I will do this...” (such as serve wide and hit forehand open court).
4. Ready – this is the stage where you face your opponent, walk to the baseline and are fully committed to your plan for the next point. Here it is good to bounce on your toes to activate your feet. Also, keep the mind simple by thinking short things like “attack,” “aggressive,” “patient,” “feet.”... On the serve you bounce the ball a certain number of times and you serve. On the return you sway back and forth and step in to the serve.

Now, on the Pre-Match Plan, fill in two (2) things under Green Light Routine that you will do to be ready to play each point.

### Yellow Light Routine (Breathe and Believe)

Yellow Light means “caution” and you have to slow down and make a decision. It is when you are struggling a little. For example, down Love-30 on your serve, when nervous, tight or frustrated. You go to Yellow Light any time that you are off your focus a little.

In the Yellow Light we do more mental work and take more time to fully prepare for the next point. You should not step to the line until you are ready to play! So use a towel, wipe off and try to settle down.

Write in the Match Game Plan under Yellow Light Routine what you will do to bounce back and play well.

# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## NUTRITION FOR TENNIS: EAT TO WIN

**Knowing what to eat and drink on and off the court can mean the difference between winning and losing. Follow these nutrition tips to help you perform like a pro!**

**Nutrition:** The food you put in your body directly impacts your performance on the court. Focus on whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats to play at your best.

|        | When?               | What?                 | How much?   |
|--------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Before | 3-4 hours prior     | carbs + protein + fat | meal        |
|        | 15-60 minutes prior | carbs                 | snack       |
| During | every hour          | carbs                 | 30-60 grams |
| After  | ≤ 30 minutes after  | carbs + protein       | snack       |
|        | ≤ 2 hours after     | carbs + protein + fat | meal        |

**carbs** = Gatorade sports drinks, energy chews, fuel bars, or energy gels; fruit; granola bars; cereal + milk; rice cakes; air-popped popcorn

**carbs + protein** = Gatorade protein shakes or protein bars; chocolate milk + granola bar; cottage cheese + fruit; hard-boiled egg + pretzels; apple + nut butter; turkey jerky + grapes; bean- or broth-based soup

**carbs + protein + fat** = sandwich (bread + meat + cheese + veggies); yogurt parfait (Greek yogurt + fruit + granola + nuts); smoothie; hummus + pita chips + veggie sticks; peanut butter & jelly sandwich; breakfast burrito (tortilla wrap + scrambled eggs + cheese + veggies)

**Multiple Events:** In tennis, it's common to have more than one event in a day. Whether it's morning and afternoon practices or back-to-back matches, refueling between events is key to performing consistently throughout the day. The amount of downtime that you have determines what and how much you should eat.

- <1 hour → fluids (e.g., sports drink)
- 1-2 hours → small snack (e.g., granola bar, banana)
- >2 hours → large snack (e.g., sandwich, chocolate milk, yogurt parfait)

### Tips:

- Eat within one hour of waking up to set the tone for your day and within 30 minutes of stopping play to allow your body to start the recovery process.
- Avoid trying anything new on the day of competition.
- Foods high in fat or fiber slow digestion and may cause an upset stomach if consumed too close to competition.
- Don't forget to hydrate—this will help you avoid cramps and heat illness.

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# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## Hydration Matters

**Hydration is one of the most important components of athletic performance. It is especially important for tennis players since the sport is usually played in hot, humid weather, and without a time limit. Unfortunately, a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach doesn’t work for hydration.**

**What is sweat rate?** If you’ve ever heard someone say they’re a “heavy sweater” or a “light sweater,” they’re referring to their sweat rate. This is simply the amount of sweat lost over a period of time. But this variable changes dramatically depending on temperature, location, and intensity of activity. Skiing in January in Colorado is likely to produce a much lower sweat rate than running in August in Florida.

*Ready to determine your sweat rate?* The easiest way to do so is by weighing yourself before and after exercise. Follow these four simple steps: (1) empty bladder; (2) weigh in before exercise; (3) exercise for one hour; (4) weigh in after exercise. Assuming you did not use the bathroom or consume any fluids during exercise, your weight loss is your sweat rate (1 pound = 16 fluid ounces).

**What is sweat sodium concentration?** Sodium is the main electrolyte lost in sweat and the amount lost varies dramatically from athlete to athlete. Athletes can lose as little as 200 mg/L to as much as 2000 mg/L of sodium in their sweat. Believe it or not, the average person loses about 920 mg/L!

*Ready to determine your sweat sodium concentration?* Unlike sweat rate, sweat sodium concentration is highly genetic and doesn’t really change throughout life. This means that once you’ve been tested, there’s no need to be retested—it’s one and done! This technology is only offered in select locations, so contact [tara@dietdiva.net](mailto:tara@dietdiva.net) to schedule your test today.

## Why does hydration matter?

Improper hydration and electrolyte replenishment can have a negative impact on performance. In fact, as little as a 2% loss of body weight due to dehydration can cause cramps, nausea and vomiting, fatigue, headaches, dizziness, mental changes, and hyponatremia. Adopt a fluid plan and drink according to a schedule to avoid these complications.

|        | When?                | What?                | How much? |
|--------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Before | 2-3 hours prior      | water                | >16 oz.   |
|        | 15-30 minutes prior  |                      | 8 oz.     |
| During | every 15-20 minutes  | water + sports drink | 4-8 oz.   |
| After  | for every pound lost | water                | 16-24 oz. |

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# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## Nutrition for Tennis

**Knowing what to eat and drink on and off the court can mean the difference between winning and losing. Follow these nutrition tips to help you perform like a pro!**

**Nutrition:** The food you put in your body directly impacts your performance on the court. Focus on whole grains, lean proteins, fruits, vegetables, and healthy fats to play at your best.

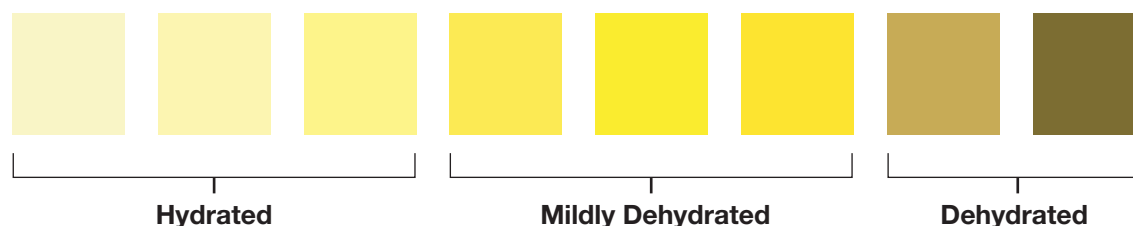
|        | When?               | What?                 | How much?   |
|--------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Before | 3-4 hours prior     | carbs + protein + fat | meal        |
|        | 15-60 minutes prior | carbs                 | snack       |
| During | every hour          | carbs                 | 30-60 grams |
| After  | ≤ 30 minutes after  | carbs + protein       | snack       |
|        | ≤ 2 hours after     | carbs + protein + fat | meal        |

**Hydration:** Water is the most important nutrient for tennis players since the sport is usually played in hot, humid weather, and without a time limit. Adopt a fluid plan and drink according to a schedule to avoid cramps and heat illness.

|        | When?                | What?                | How much? |
|--------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|
| Before | 2-3 hours prior      | water                | >16 oz.   |
|        | 15-30 minutes prior  |                      | 8 oz.     |
| During | every 15-20 minutes  | water + sports drink | 4-8 oz.   |
| After  | for every pound lost | water                | 16-24 oz. |

**Do I REALLY need a sports drink?** If training for more than 60 minutes—YES! Choose a sports drink to help replenish fluids and electrolytes lost in sweat and provide a quick energy source to sustain performance during intense and longer duration training sessions.

**Dehydration:** As little as a 2% loss of body weight due to dehydration has a negative impact on performance. The easiest way to determine your hydration status is to check the color of your urine.



**Recovery:** Be sure your recovery plan includes the 4 Rs—Refuel, Rebuild, Rehydrate, and Recharge—check off all 4 with adequate carbs, protein, water, and rest after intense workouts!

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# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## Nutrition for Recovery

After intense training sessions, what you eat really matters. Choosing the right foods can help replenish energy depleted in your muscles and liver, repair damaged muscle fibers, AND reduce inflammation throughout your body. Here are a few foods and tips to speed up your recovery.

### Goals for Recovery Nutrition

- Restore fluid and electrolytes (sodium and potassium) lost in sweat
- Replace muscle fuel (carbohydrate) utilized during exercise
- Choose protein to aid in repair of damaged muscle tissue and to stimulate development of new tissue
- Begin recovery by eating a snack (carbohydrate + protein) within 30 minutes of completing exercise, and eating a meal (carbohydrate + protein + fat) within 2 hours of completing exercise

### Rehydration Post-Exercise

- Carbohydrate-electrolyte sports drink to replenish fluids and electrolytes lost in sweat
- Monitor urine color—dark color indicates dehydration (may also be due to vitamins and/or foods ingested); lighter color indicates adequate hydration
- Monitor sweat loss through change in body weight before and after exercise to prevent dehydration

### Top 10 Recovery Foods

- Tart Cherries—heals joint pain & muscle soreness
- Coconut Water—restores fluid balance & potassium (an electrolyte lost in sweat)
- Blueberries—anti-inflammatory; quercetin improves endurance and recovery
- Chia Seeds—omega-3 fats reduce inflammation & improve flexibility
- Salmon—vitamin D increases jump height, power, & strength
- Kefir—boosts immunity with probiotics
- Beets—nitrates increase blood flow & delay fatigue
- Oranges—vitamin C supports collagen formation & joint health
- Kale—vitamin A improves vision & skin
- Ginger—anti-inflammatory that relieves muscle soreness & joint pain; improves digestion

### Recovery Snack and Meal Ideas

- Smoothie (kefir or whey protein + berries + tart cherry juice + dark leafy greens + ginger)
- Low-Fat Chocolate Milk + Protein Bar
- Cottage Cheese or Greek Yogurt + Fresh Fruit + Chia Seeds
- Salmon + Mashed Potatoes + Mixed Veggies
- Burrito Bowl (brown rice + chicken + beans + cheese + salsa + avocado + lettuce)
- Stir Fry (lean meat + broccoli + bell pepper + carrots + brown rice)
- Turkey Sandwich + Salad

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# Developing Your Match Game Plan

## Sleep Matters

Sleep is where the magic happens. It's proven to decrease fatigue, increase energy, enhance focus at match time, AND accelerate post-match recovery time. Tryptophan is an amino acid that makes melatonin in the brain, which is secreted at night for a healthy sleep cycle. There are certain things you should and shouldn't do to help get the best night's sleep possible and in turn, perform optimally.

### Sleep Promoting Foods to Eat

- Containing melatonin:
  - Tart Cherries
  - Pineapple
  - Oranges
  - Bananas
  - Gogi Berries
  - Grapes
- Containing tryptophan:
  - Milk
  - Cheese
  - Yogurt
  - Nuts (walnuts, peanuts, almonds)
  - Salmon
  - Tuna
  - Chicken
  - Turkey
  - Shrimp
  - Eggs

### Sleep Promoting Lifestyle Enhancements

- Make lists to keep you organized on match day so you don't forget anything.
- Before bed, breathe deeply, in through your nose and into your belly for 5 minutes to calm your mind and lower your heart rate.
- While breathing, visualize great match day performance.
- Avoid bright light in the evening (that includes the light from cellphones, laptops, etc.); it can inhibit melatonin production by sending alerting signals to the brain.
- Keep your room cool, at about 65°F. Body temperature is tied to your sleep cycle, so if you're too hot it can interfere with that cycle causing restlessness.

### Sleep Disrupting Foods to Avoid

- Caffeine (remains in your system for hours)
- Alcohol (disrupts later stages of sleep that promote memory and motor skills)
- Processed foods high in fat and sugar (causes indigestion and heartburn)

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# Player Journal

## Pre-Practice Worksheet

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives of today's practice:

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Two areas of focus (technical and/or tactical):

1. \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

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# Player Journal

## Post-Practice Evaluation

### Rate the following:

1. Engagement (listening to the coach, trying to execute the drill the correct way, making good technical and tactical decisions)

|      |   |   |   |           |
|------|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Poor |   |   |   | Excellent |

2. Energy Level & Effort (run for every ball, look to do your best)

|      |   |   |   |           |
|------|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Poor |   |   |   | Excellent |

3. Attitude (positive energy, positive body language, handled my mistakes well)

|      |   |   |   |           |
|------|---|---|---|-----------|
| 1    | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5         |
| Poor |   |   |   | Excellent |

How did you improve your two (2) areas of focus:

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What did you learn in practice and what can you improve on in the next practice:

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# Player Journal

## Pre-Practice Worksheet

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What did you learn in practice and what can you improve on in the next practice:

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# Player Journal

## Pre-Match Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Process Goals: The ABCs

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Tactical game plan set prior to match

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Mental and Emotional Goals During the Match

Green Light Routines (In Between Points)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Yellow Light Routine (Breathe & Believe)

1. Breathe \_\_\_\_\_
2. Believe \_\_\_\_\_

# Player Journal

## Post-Match Evaluation

### Post-Match Routine

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

Explain how you achieved your process goals:

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### The positive areas of the match were:

1.

2.

### Positive adjustments made during the match (technical, tactical and competitive)

1.

2.

### The areas to be improved:

1.

2.

If you had to play the match again, what would you do differently?

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# Player Journal

## Player Scouting Report/Post Match Evaluation of Opponent

Opponent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tournament: \_\_\_\_\_

Surface: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Opponent's Style of Play (counter-attacker, aggressive baseliner, all-court player):

\_\_\_\_\_

Opponent's Strengths

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Opponent's Weaknesses

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My Strengths

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My Weaknesses

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

My two main strategies that I will use the next time I play this opponent will be:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

# Player Journal

## Journal Entry Notes

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# Player Journal

## Pre-Match Plan

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Process Goals: The ABCs

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Tactical game plan set prior to match

1.

2.

3.

## Mental and Emotional Goals During the Match

Green Light Routines (In Between Points)

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## Post-Match Evaluation

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Tournament: \_\_\_\_\_

Surface: \_\_\_\_\_ Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Opponent's Style of Play (counter-attacker, aggressive baseliner, all-court player):

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Opponent's Strengths

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\_\_\_\_\_

Opponent's Weaknesses

\_\_\_\_\_

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[illegible]

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## Journal Entry Notes

[illegible]

# Player Journal

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[illegible]

# Compete Like a Champion



## Defining the Mission

**Engaged** – full focus on what matters in the moment

**Resilient** – ability to bounce back and refocus after failure

**Professional** – demonstrates character, exhibits behaviors and attitudes of an athlete that is consistently prepared to practice and compete with full engagement

**Respectful** – acts in the way of appreciation, courteous to others, focused on the best in others, honors rules of game

**Tough** – endures periods of hardship and adversity in training and competition, accepts challenges fully motivated to succeed, embraces pressure, physically and emotionally strong

**Determined** – pushes through adversity and struggle, and continues to strive for success in a positive, productive manner

**Confident** – unshakable self-belief in abilities and skills, expects to be successful

Created from the values of the USTA Player Development national coaching staff by Dr. Larry Lauer. Thanks to Player Development leadership for their support of the campaign and USTA Marketing and specifically Meg Angeletti for their support in creating the banner and disseminating it to the American tennis public.



# PLAYER DEVELOPMENT JOURNAL

