

# **LOVE THE GAME... YOUR GUIDE TO TENNIS ETIQUETTE!**

Good tennis etiquette is about the little things that help a match go smoothly, don't spook your opponent, and show consideration to players on other courts. Most of what follows is common sense, but here it is!

By following these guidelines and you will find friendly, competitive tennis more fun than ever, and you will not spend an entire match butting heads with your opponent.

## **THAT BALL WAS OUT!**

**RULE #1, NEVER, EVER CALL A BALL OUT UNTIL IT HITS THE GROUND. EVER! IF YOU ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT WHAT THIS MEANS...SEE RULE #1.**

**RULE #2, IF A BALL HITS ANYWHERE ON THE WHITE LINE OF THE COURT YOU ARE PLAYING...IT IS IN. THE ONLY THING TO REMEMBER IS THAT SINGLES PLAYERS WATCH THE SINGLES LINES, DOUBLES PLAYERS WATCH THE DOUBLES LINES. IF THE BALL HITS ANYWHERE ON THE WHITE, EVEN THE TINIEST SECTION OF WHITE...IT IS IN. IF YOU ARE UNCERTAIN WHAT THIS MEANS...SEE RULE #2.**

You call the ball on your side of the net. If you saw the ball out, it is out and your opponent has to accept it with good grace. But you have to be sure that it was truly out. If you are in any doubt at all, then the ball is in! Don't suggest to your opponent that you will play a "let" (i.e. play the point again), and don't agree to do so if he or she asks. This lengthens the game, then it undermines your ability to make a judgement call when questioned. It could also allow a dominant player the opportunity to steamroller his or her opponent.

You may, of course, challenge your opponent's call. The most effective approach is to ask if he or she is sure. If they are not, then the point is yours. I advise my players to say, "That ball really looked like it was (on the line, in or really close to the line) are you certain it was out?"

Recap:

1. If you aren't sure, the ball is in.
2. We want to be remembered as a fair line calling team.
3. Remember people make mistakes all the time (especially from bad angles) don't assume they are cheating deliberately; instead assume they are bad at calling. It helps you to cope!

## THERE'S A BALL ON MY COURT!

Any balls on your side of the court are your responsibility, and if you are receiving it is your job to make sure they are returned to the server. In fact, your opponent should never need to come to your side of the court (and some players would think it ill-mannered if you did). If a ball heads off to a neighboring court, don't rush after it. Wait until a suitable break in your own match and crucially, wait until whoever is playing on the neighboring court has finished their point. **DO NOT EVER RUN ONTO ANOTHER COURT WHILE A POINT IS BEING PLAYED!**

## LET'S PLAY A "LET"...

Just say no if it is a disputed line call (see above), but if the point is interrupted in another way, this is the fairest thing to do. If you are in the middle of the point and your neighbors hit a ball onto your court, either player on your court should yell "LET!", stop playing your point, retrieve your neighbors ball, return it to them, and **THEN** replay the point you were in the middle of playing. Go back to the last score announced, repeat the first serve, and then continue on with your match.

## SCORE KEEPING

This is the server's responsibility, and the easiest way is to announce the score at the beginning of each point. If your opponent disagrees try to track back the points. If you really can't agree on the score, you must go back to the last point you both agree on.

## YOU NEED TO LET OFF STEAM!

Let's try and keep it contained. Tennis is a tense, adrenaline-fuelled game and no one expects it to be played in silence. Emotions are part of the game,

but if you swear and shout, you will be visited by coaching staff sooner versus later. The best players keep the chit chat, the screaming and the shouting to a minimum. Please remember that we are maintaining a team with good ethics and sportsman-like behavior.

## YOU WANT TO BRING SUPPORTERS TO YOUR MATCHES!

It can be nice to have some support court side, but if your family and entire fan base do want to watch remember that you can only talk to coaching staff during a match. Parents, siblings, friends are not permitted to coach from the sidelines. Common courtesy demands that spectators remain outside the courts and show their support respectfully - and they should never get involved in line calls! EVER! If a parent/spectator has issue with line calls, please see coaching staff immediately. We will address it.

## BE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR AREA!

Tennis ball cans that roll around on a court like plastic tumbleweeds are annoying. But, the aluminum lids that keep the can pressurized and get tossed aside are downright hazardous. Out of respect for your fellow players, always throw them away. Water bottles, grip tape, bandaids, whatever it may be! Trash is trash, it doesn't matter if it's on the street or on the court — **DO NOT LITTER.**

## BE RESPECTFUL AT ALL TIMES!

No cursing, no slang cursing, please! Be mindful of what you say about teammates, coaches, opponents, parents and spectators. No eye rolling, tongue clucking, gossiping, or talking badly about teammates or their matches. If a coach is speaking, please wait until they are done to ask questions. Do not interrupt. If you have questions during matches, come to the fence and get one of the coaches attention. We will be there as soon as we can.