



Tennis Rules

Updated April 4, 2025



1. Pre-Game – Equipment, Game Time, Defaults, Courts

Spirit of the League: The primary focus of FCSSC is FUN! This league is a positive and encouraging environment that is welcoming to players of all backgrounds and playing abilities, with the goal of getting moving, meeting new people, and having fun while doing it! We look forward to an awesome season of welcoming and inclusive play.

Play that is competitive, overly aggressive, rough and/or unsportsmanlike such as pushing, shoving, elbowing, shouldering, tripping, hacking, slashing, sliding, tackling, ball blasting, chirping, name calling, threats and intimidation, is prohibited and will not be tolerated by FCSSC. FCSSC IS FIRST-AND-FOREMOST-FOR-FUN. ANY ROUGH OR PHYSICAL PLAY WILL RESULT IN IMMEDIATE EXPULSION FROM THE GAME, THE LEAGUE, THE CLUB AND/OR ALL OF THE ABOVE. All players should go out of their way to avoid contact with other players and/or eliminate actions or behaviours that could jeopardize player safety. If accidental contact occurs it is expected that players will apologize for that contact, ensure everyone is alright and stop the game to seek appropriate help as required. This rule supersedes all others!

Equipment/Set-Up: FCSSC Game Hosts will provide balls for each game and will set-up the nets (if not built-in to the venue). Players are responsible for bringing their own racquet. They are also welcome to bring their own balls for warm-up and practice.

Game Time/Default:

- Please arrive 15 minutes early so that you can start your games on time.
- Games are 55 minutes in length with a 5 minute break for halftime.
- A full team consists of 2 players. A team can play with a minimum of 1 person, or play 3 player rotation singles match.
- A default will occur if any team cannot field a squad by 10 minutes after the official start time.

Alcohol: THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO DRINKING OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES PERMITTED WHILE PLAYING!! ANY OFFENDERS WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE THE LEAGUE WITHOUT REFUND. No exceptions.

2. In Game – General Rules

Game Set-Up:

- To determine who serves first, teams can either choose to play a rally game (minimum 3 crosses over the net), or rock-paper-scissors.
- Teams are responsible for keeping score and time.
- If the time runs out in the middle of a set, whichever team is winning at that moment is considered the winner.
- A team must win at least 5 points in a set in order for it to count as a win/loss. If neither team gets at least 5 points, the set is deemed a tie.

General Rules:

- The match begins with the server. For the first point, the server must stand behind the baseline on the right side of the center hash, which is considered the deuce court.
- The server must stand and serve from the boundaries of the singles court (or within the doubles court if playing doubles).

- Even-numbered points are played from the deuce court and odd-numbers points are played from the advantage court (or left side) of the centre hash.
- The server cannot serve a ball until the receiver is ready and the receiver is supposed to play at the server's pace.
- Serves from the deuce court have to land in the deuce court in the opponent's service box.
- Serves from the advantage court have to land in the advantage court in the opponent's service box.
- If the server misses the target twice, they lose the point.
- If the ball hits the net and goes in the correct service box, a "let" is called and another serve is granted. If a let occurs on a second serve, it remains second serve.
- If the server steps on the baseline before contact is made, the serve is deemed a fault (this is called a foot fault). If a foot fault occurs on a second serve, the server loses the point.

Scoring:

- Calling out the score before the point begins is not mandatory, but is encouraged to limit any confusion or conflict.
- The server calls out their score first, followed by the receiver's score.
- Love means zero in tennis and indicates the player references has a score of "0"
- The first point won earns a score of 15. (For example, if the server won the first point, the score would be 15-0 or 15-Love).
- The second point won by either player is called 30.
- The third point won is called 40.
- If a score of 40-40 is reached, the score is called "deuce" and should be called out as such, as opposed to 40-40 or 40-all. Once a game goes to deuce, one player must win two consecutive points in order to win the game.
- Advantage-In (Ad-in) indicates that if the server wins the next point, they win the game. Advantage-Out (Ad-Out) indicates that if the receiver wins the next points, they win the game.

Receiving and Boundaries:

- The receiver is considered ready if an attempt is made to return the opponent's serve. The receiver can stand anywhere on the court, but must let the ball bounce in the service box before attempting to return the serve. If the opponent strikes the ball before the ball bounces on a serve, the server is awarded the point.
- Except on the server's first service attempt, any player that hits the ball into the net loses the point.
- If a shot lands outside of the boundaries of the court, the player loses the point.
- If the ball hits the net during the point and lands in the boundaries of the opponent's court, the ball is considered live and in play.
- A ball struck that hits the line is considered in.
- If at any time during a point, a player touches the net, hits a ball which bounces on his/her side before going over the net, or hits a ball that makes contact with object's that are not part of the tennis court such as a ceiling or bench, that player loses the point.
- If a ball touches an opponent, the point is awarded to the player that hit the ball.
- If a player is not sure whether a ball landed in or out of bounds and cannot make a definite call, the ball is considered to be in.

Violations:

- Players are to call their own fouls and violations. If an obvious foul is missed, a player on the opposing team may politely point this out, assuming their opponent either does not know the rule or missed their own foul. Generally, teams should not call fouls against their opponents.
- Obvious fouls include - carries, double hits (allowed on serves), touching the net, going under the net and contacting another player.
- If the ball is driven into the net causing the net to touch an opponent, no fault is committed.
- A player is permitted to pass his/her hand above the plane of the net in the following scenarios:
 - o While blocking an attack.
 - o If a player is spiking the ball, their hand can cross the net as long as contact is initiated on their own side.
- An infraction has occurred if a player interferes with their opponent's attack (e.g. if a setter is trying to set their player, the opponent can't reach over the net and block that set).

- Players are not permitted to penetrate fully into the opponent's space under the net. Player's feet must remain in contact with the centre line and any part of the body above the feet. Players need to be as cautious as possible when crossing under the plane of the net, so as to avoid injury to themselves or their opponents.

Rules of Service:

- The match begins with the server. For the first point, the server must stand behind the baseline on the right side of the center hash, which is considered the deuce court.
- The server must stand and serve from the boundaries of the singles court (or within the doubles court if playing doubles).
- Even-numbered points are played from the deuce court and odd-numbered points are played from the advantage court, or left side, of the center hash.
- The server cannot serve a ball until the receiver is ready and the receiver is supposed to play at the server's pace.
- Serves from the deuce court have to land in the deuce court in the opponent's service box.
- Serves from the advantage court have to land in the advantage court in the opponent's service box.
- If the server misses the target twice he or she loses the point.
- If the ball hits the net and goes in the correct service box, a "let" is called and another serve is granted. If a let occurs on a second serve, it remains second serve.
- If the server steps on the baseline before contact is made — this is called a "foot fault" — the serve is deemed a fault. If a foot fault occurs on a second serve, the server loses the point.
- A player must hit the ball before it bounces twice on his side. If the player cannot make contact with the ball within two bounces, a "not up" is called and the point is awarded to the opponent.

Discrepancies: All games are self-refereed. Any disputes will be discussed amongst the two team captains. Please play honestly and call your own infractions (in the kitchen, net, etc). If a dispute cannot be settled the point should be re-served

3. Post-Game – Departure & Score Reporting

Departure: Each week after your game, it is important to leave the field in a timely manner. Teams could be playing after you and will need to get their game started on time. It is also possible that the facility could be closing upon the completion of your game and all staff and members will need to depart the building at that time.

Score Reporting: FCSSC Game hosts will report the score for each game (if applicable). Please be sure to inform your Game Host of the game's score before leaving the facility! Scores and standings can be viewed through your account at www.forestcityssc.ca

4. Playoff Games

No Ringers: To play on playoff nights players must have played a minimum of 2 regular season games for that team.

Substitutes: A player is only allowed to play for one team in each playoff round. Players cannot sub in for another team during the same round, most particularly in a championship game. Exception: a player may sub for another team in the same league during the same play-off round IF the game is not a championship game (ie, title on the line) and the team needing a sub would default the game without the substitute player (resulting in both teams being unable to play).

Tiebreaker: If a game ends in a tie during playoffs, one additional point must be played to determine a winner.