TENN360

The Ultimate Masterclass Guide to Tennis. Master the language of the court, from Love to Championship Point. Scoring, Rules, and Match Structure.





TENNIS 121: THE BASICS

The Ultimate Masterclass Guide to Tennis Scoring, Rules, and Match Structure

2026 Edition



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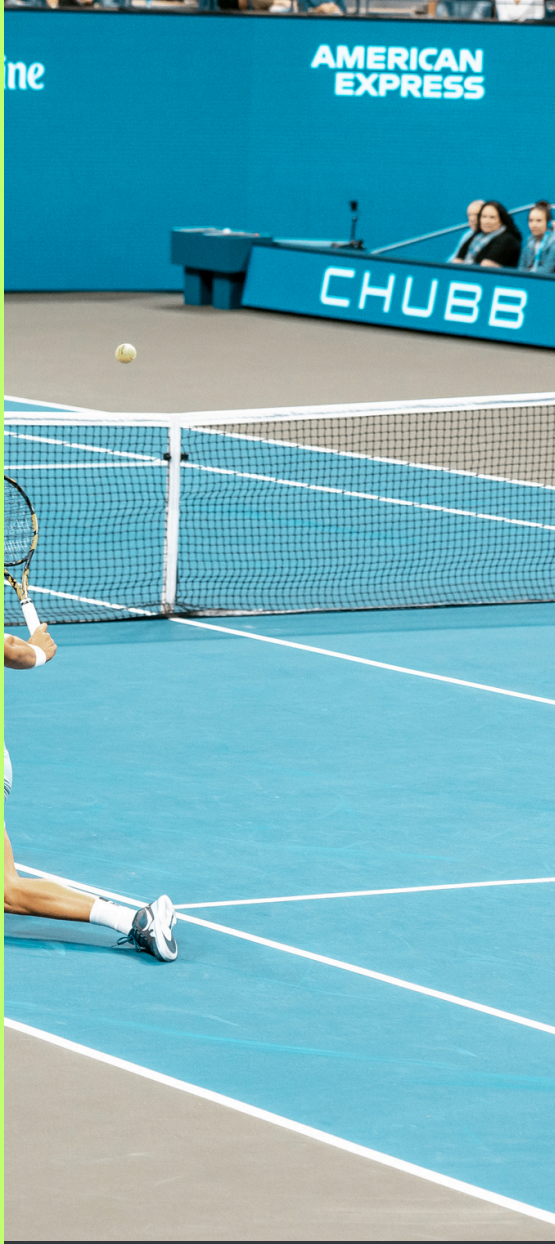
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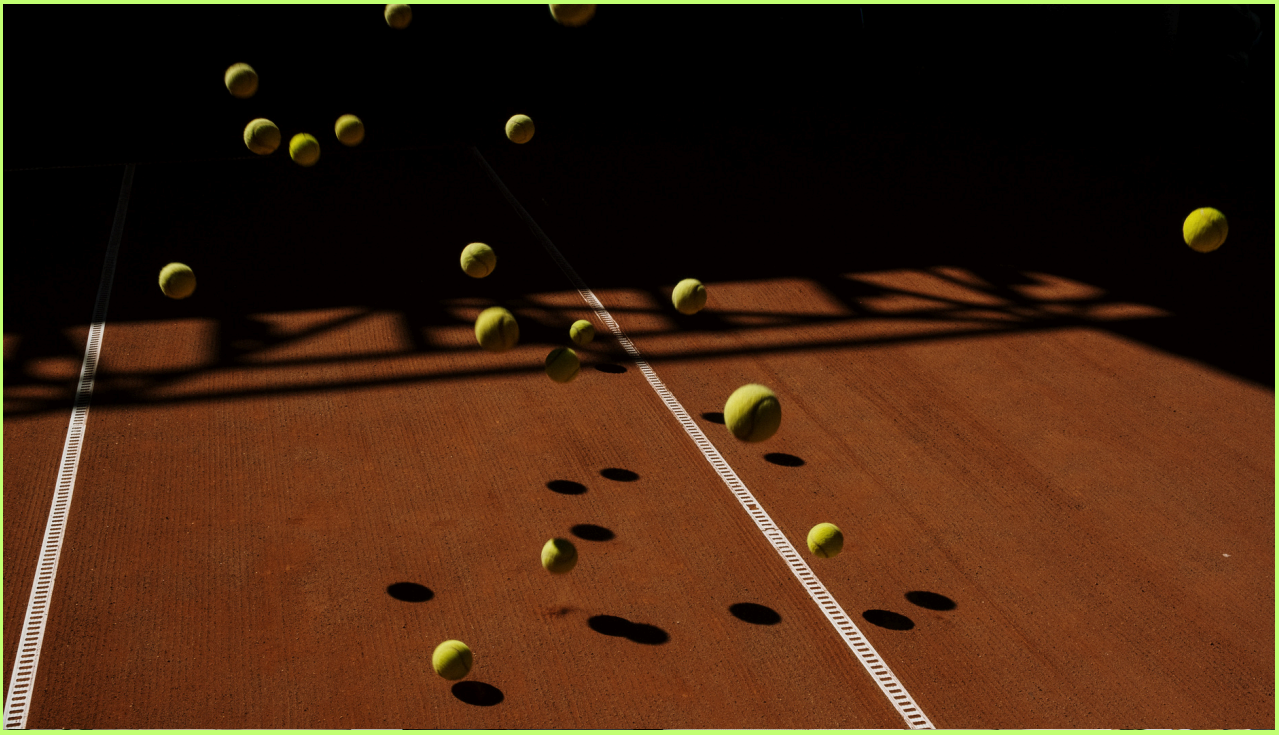
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Welcome to Tennis 121



To the uninitiated, tennis can feel like a foreign language. Why is zero called "Love"? Why does scoring jump from 30 to 40? And why can't a match just be decided on a timer?

Unlike many mainstream sports governed by a running game clock, tennis is dictated entirely by points and structure. There is no running out the clock; a player must actively win the final point to close out a match.

This creates a unique psychological landscape where pressure mounts with every single shot.

At its core, tennis hierarchy is built on four escalating pillars: Points make Games, Games make Sets, and Sets make Matches. Understanding this hierarchy is your first step to unlocking the tactical beauty of the sport.



Chapter 1: Anatomy of a Single Game

Anatomy of a Single Game

A single game of tennis is a sprint within a marathon. To win a game, a player must score at least four points, but they must always win by a margin of two.

The Mysterious Point Scale (01): Points do not increase sequentially by ones. They follow the traditional progression of **15, 30, 40, and Game**. While historians debate the exact origin—some point to medieval clock faces (divided into quarters: 15, 30, 45 adjusted to 40 for ease), others to French gambling stakes—this scale is universal today. A score of zero is universally called "Love", likely derived from the French word l'oeuf (egg), representing a zero shape.

The Two-Point Cushion (02): Tennis does not allow sudden-death wins on standard points if scores are close. You must secure a two-point clear margin to claim the game.

Universally

0 Point = Love

Points

15, 30, 40, Game

Remember

2 Points Separation to win

Key words

Advance and Deuce

The Drama of **Deuce** (03):
When both players reach **40–40**, the score is announced as Deuce. This is tennis's ultimate pressure-cooker state. The slate resets to a sudden-death-style battle where the momentum can swing violently.

Advantage In & Out (04 & 05):
From Deuce, the player who wins the next point is awarded Advantage. If they convert the following point, they win the game. If the opponent wins it, the score reverts straight back to Deuce, extending the battle indefinitely until a two-point separation is achieved.

Once games are won, players accumulate them to capture sets and, ultimately, the match.

Chapter 2 — Building Momentum (Sets & Matches)

Sets, Tie-Breaks, and Match Glory

Winning a Set (06): A standard set requires a player to **win six games**. However, just like games, sets require a **two-game buffer**. If the score reaches 5–5, the set continues until someone wins 7–5.

The Tie-Break Solution (07): To prevent marathon sets that exhaust players, tennis introduced the Tie-break at 6–6. In a standard tie-break, players race to 7 points (must win by 2), serving in an alternating rotation that tests absolute nerves under pressure.

The Match Structure (08): Matches are won by securing the best of 3 or 5 sets. Regular ATP and WTA tour events feature best-of-3 sets. Meanwhile, the historic Grand Slams (Australian Open, Roland Garros, Wimbledon, and US Open) require men's singles matches to be fought over a grueling best-of-5 sets.



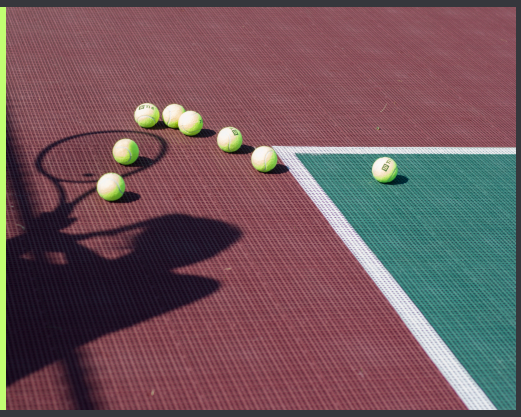




Meet Our Quick-Reference Cheat Sheet & Glossary

The Tennis 121 Cheat Sheet & Glossary

1



Hierarchy Quick-Check:

Point -> Game -> Set -> Match

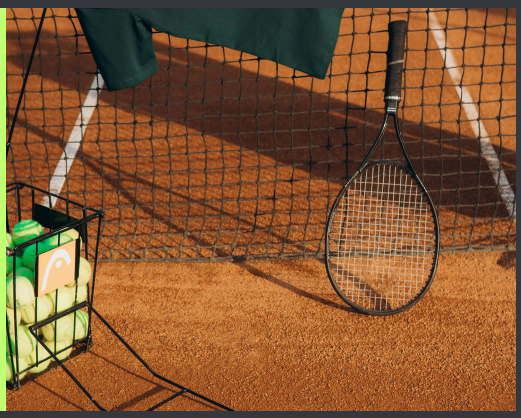
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Scoring sequence:

Love (0) -> 15 -> 30 -> 40 -> Game

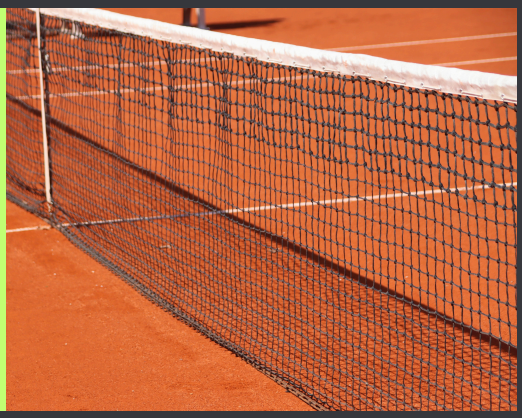
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Key Term Glossary:

- Love: A score of zero.
- Deuce: A tied score at 40–40 requiring two consecutive points to win.
- Break Point: A point that, if won by the receiver, means they win the game while the opponent was serving.

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Footer Call-to-Action:

Continue your academy journey with Tenn360: Next up is The Court!

TENNIS 121

THE BASICS

Flowchart

8 THINGS ABOUT SCORING

01. Points are scored: 15, 30, 40, Game.



02. You must win by two clear points.



03. 40-40 is called deuce.



04. From Deuce, win a point to get advantage.



05. Win the next point from advantage to win the game.



06. First to six points wins the Set (by two clear games).



07. At 6-6 a Tie-break decides the set.



08. Best of 3 or 5 sets decides the match.



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