

# TENNIS ETIQUETTE

## GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP:

We are excited you are joining some match play. The idea is to enjoy competitive and fun play while following the rules and some historically valued etiquette. Being a good sport is paramount at GRSC: if you're not sure of a call, it's IN. If the ball hits the line, it's IN. Compliment good shots. Don't celebrate misses. Yelling, swearing, throwing racquets, dropping racquets, whacking balls, leaving balls over the place for the opponent to retrieve between points is unsportsmanlike. Avoid these actions. What would Roger (Federer) do? You should be quiet while walking behind other matches, not passing until they are between points and certainly not going onto their court. Most players make 1-2 questionable calls per match *unintentionally*. If someone makes 3 or more, you can consider asking for someone to call lines. You ought not ask your opponent "Are they sure?" if you think they've made a questionable call. It's best to accept the call and move on. If a bad call was made, karma usually works it out and getting worked up will likely undermine your own performance.

## PROPER WARM UP:

A proper warm-up should be executed in the right order. The players often (not always) play a minute of mini tennis, then everyone backs up to the baseline to practice a variety of groundstrokes. After 2-3 minutes, one side of the court comes to net to practice volleys while the other side stays at the baseline. After hitting a series of volleys, you ask for a few lobs to practice a couple overheads. Then, you back up and your opponent(s) comes to net for their volleys and overheads. At this point, you have probably warmed up for 8 minutes or so. It's time to practice serves. You take a ball or two and serve cross court. Your opponent holds the balls and serves them back. If you miss a serve, give your opponent the ball and wait your next turn. After hitting a handful of serves on one side (say the deuce side), switch and do the same on the ad side. If you have finished serving, say to your opponent, "I'm all set. Are you ready to start?"

## START OF MATCH:

You congregate near the benches before or after warm up and one person spins the racquet, using the butt for the opponent to call (up or down, "W" or "M", etc.: whatever is available on the racquet.) The person who wins the toss can choose one of three things: start by serving, start by receiving or start on a side. The opponent then can choose what remains (if I choose to serve, you can pick side; if I choose side, you could choose to serve or receive).

## PACE OF PLAY:

Keep points moving along – players are there to play, not dilly dally! The server sets the pace but should not serve before the returner is facing you and the racquet is in the ready position (or something like ready). You start on the deuce (even) side and go back and forth each point. Even points are always played on the deuce side and odd points are always played on the ad side. You should say the score out loud, servers score followed by returners score, before each point before serving. Any questions in points should be resolved prior to moving on and if something cannot be recalled you go back to the last score you agree on. This can be avoided most of the time by saying the score out loud each point. The

first game begins and the opponents switch sides after odd games are completed. You get 90 seconds at each switchover to wipe off with a towel and take a drink and hand the tennis balls to your opponent (a second option is to leave all three tennis balls on the baseline where they will start serving). You should not be checking your phone.

#### SCORING:

Most matches include AD play (AD= Advantage, AD IN = serving team is ahead, AD OUT = returners are ahead). This means that after getting to deuce, one person needs to win two consecutive points to take the game, returning to deuce until that happens. AD IN means the server has won the deuce point and needs one more point to take the game. AD OUT means the returner has won the deuce point and needs one more point to take the game. Most matches are 2 out of 3 sets. Each set is first to 6, winning by 2 games. At 5-5, you play until 7-5. At 6-6 you play a tiebreaker (different scoring). Sometimes there are variations in scoring like no ad, 8 game pro sets etc. You can assume you are playing with AD, 2 out of 3 sets until time runs out unless you are told otherwise. Email us if you have more questions about scoring! We're happy to help.

League Play within the club is a little less formal so warm up can take a couple extra minutes and perhaps there is more (although hopefully not excessive) chit chat. Questioning line calls is considered bad form. Remember that everyone is there for both social interactions and physical activity. Be considerate of your group and the vibe.

#### USTA SPECIFIC:

In USTA play, the timing is stricter along with other court rules. Be ready, on time, to go on the court. Don't race in for a match 1 minute before! The warm-up should really be 10 minutes only. Stretching warm-up to 12 min is common. After 15 minutes, you can be penalized. The match ends at 2 hours with a variety of "match ending rules" depending on the league, should your match run 1 hr. 50 min. or longer, you should have a copy of the match-ending rules on the court. If you need to leave the court to go to the bathroom, wait until a switch over, preferably between two sets, ask the other player(s), leave your racquet on the court and hurry. You cannot ask other players on other courts for their advice. You may call someone down to make line calls but this is highly unusual and considered rather aggressive.