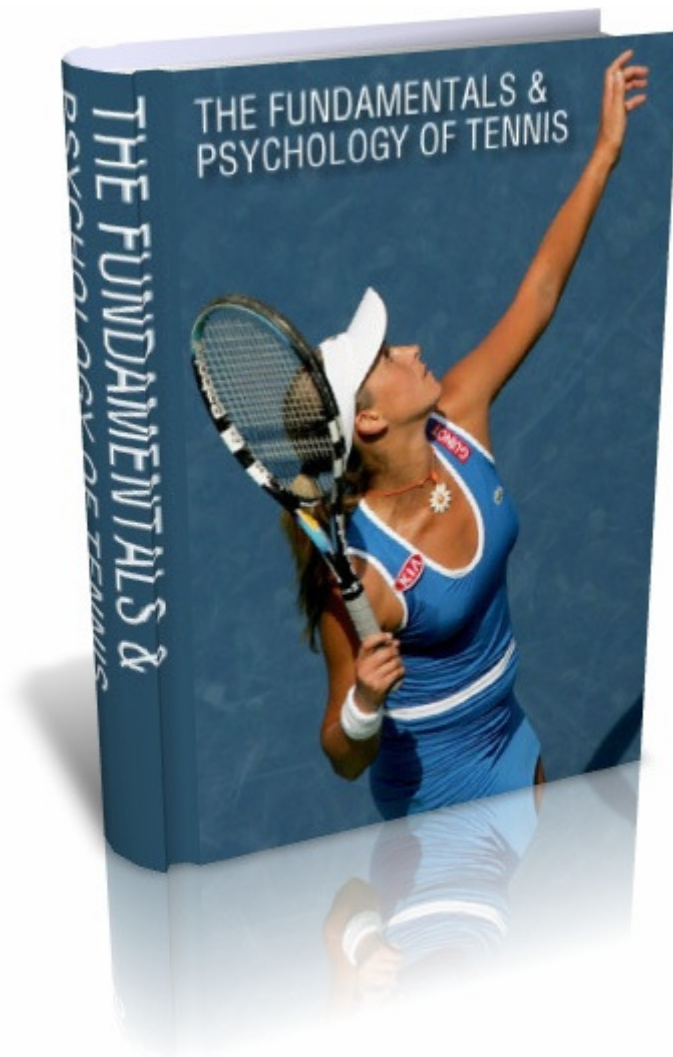


THE FUNDAMENTALS & PSYCHOLOGY OF TENNIS

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- **Women's Professional Tennis**
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- **ESPN Sports - Tennis**
<http://sports.espn.go.com/sports/tennis/index>
- **Yahoo! Sports - Tennis**
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THE FUNDAMENTALS OF TENNIS.

I trust this initial effort of mine in the world of letters will find a place among both novices and experts in the tennis world. I am striving to interest the student of the game by a somewhat prolonged discussion of match play, which I trust will shed a new light on the game.

May I turn to the novice at my opening and speak of certain matters which are second nature to the skilled player?

The best tennis equipment is not too good for the beginner who seeks really to succeed. It is a saving in the end, as good quality material so far outlasts poor.

Always dress in tennis clothes when engaging in tennis. The question of choosing a racquet is a much more serious matter. I do not advocate forcing a certain racquet upon any player. All the standard makes are excellent. It is in weight, balance, and size of handle that the real value of a racquet frame depends, while good stringing is, essential to obtain the best results.

After you have acquired your racquet, make a firm resolve to use good tennis balls, as a regular bounce is a great aid to advancement, while a "dead" ball is no practice at all.

If you really desire to succeed at the game and advance rapidly, I strongly urge you to see all the good tennis you can. Study the play of the leading players and strive to copy their strokes. Read all the tennis instruction books you can find. They are a great assistance.

More tennis can be learned off the court, in the study of theory, and in watching the best players in action, than can ever be learned in actual play. I do not mean miss opportunities to play. Far from it. Play whenever possible, but strive when playing to put in practice the theories you have read or the strokes you have watched.

Never be discouraged at slow progress. The trick over some stroke you have worked over for weeks unsuccessfully will suddenly come to you when least expected. Tennis players are the product of hard work. Very few are born geniuses at the game.

Tennis is a game that pays you dividends all your life. A tennis racquet is a letter of introduction in any town. The brotherhood of the game is universal, for none but a good sportsman can succeed in the game for any lengthy period. Tennis provides relaxation, excitement, exercise, and pure enjoyment to the man who is tied hard and fast to his business until late afternoon. Age is not a drawback. The tennis players of the world wrote a magnificent page in the history of the World War. No branch of sport sent more men to the colours from every country in the world than tennis, and these men returned with glory or paid the supreme sacrifice on the field of honour.

The following order of development produces the quickest and most lasting results:



1. Concentration on the game.
2. Keep the eye on the ball.
3. Foot-work and weight-control.
4. Strokes.
5. Court position.
6. Court generalship or match play.
7. Tennis psychology.

Concentration

Tennis is played primarily with the mind. The most perfect racquet technique in the world will not suffice if the directing mind is wandering. There are many causes of a wandering mind in a tennis match. The chief one is lack of interest in the game. No one should play tennis with an idea of real success unless he cares sufficiently about the game to be willing to do the drudgery necessary in learning the game correctly. Give it up at once unless you are willing to work. Conditions of play or the noises in the gallery often confuse and bewilder experienced match-players playing under new surroundings. Complete concentration on the matter in hand is the only cure for a wandering mind, and the sooner the lesson is learned the more rapid the improvement of the player.

The surest way to hold a match in mind is to play for every set, every game in the set, every point in the game and, finally, every shot in the point. A set is merely a conglomeration of made and missed shots, and the man who does not miss is the ultimate victor.

CHOP, HALF VOLLEY, AND COURT POSITION.

Chop Stroke.

In Tennis, a chop stroke is a shot where the angle towards the player and behind the racquet, made by the line of flight of the ball, and the racquet travelling down across it, is greater than 45 degrees and may be 90 degrees. The racquet face passes slightly outside the ball and down the side, chopping it, as a man chops wood. The spin and curve is from right to left. It is made with a stiff wrist.

The slice shot merely reduced the angle mentioned from 45 degrees down to a very small one. The racquet face passes either inside or outside the ball, according to direction desired, while the stroke is mainly a wrist twist or slap. This slap imparts a decided skidding break to the ball, while a chop "drags" the ball off the ground without break.

The rules of footwork for both these shots should be the same as the drive, but because both are made with a short swing and more wrist play, without the need of weight, the rules of footwork may be more safely discarded and body position not so carefully considered.

Both these shots are essentially defensive, and are labour-saving devices when your opponent is on the baseline. A chop or slice is very hard to drive, and will break up any driving game.

It is not a shot to use against a volley, as it is too slow to pass and too high to cause any worry. It should be used to drop short, soft shots at the feet of the net man as he comes in. Do not strive to pass a net man with a chop or slice, except through a big opening.

The drop-shot is a very soft, sharply-angled chop stroke, played wholly with the wrist. It should drop within 3 to 5 feet of the net to be of any use. The racquet face passes around the outside of the ball and under it with a distinct "wrist turn." Do not swing the racquet from the shoulder in making a drop shot. The drop shot has no relation to a stop-volley. The drop shot is all wrist. The stop-volley has no wrist at all.

Use all your wrist shots, chop, slice, and drop, merely as an auxilliary to your orthodox game. They are intended to upset your opponent's game through the varied spin on the ball.

The Half Volley.

This shot requires more perfect timing, eyesight, and racquet work than any other, since its margin of safety is smallest and its manifold chances of mishaps numberless.



It is a pick-up. The ball meets the ground and racquet face at nearly the same moment, the ball bouncing off the ground, on the strings. This shot is a stiff-wrist, short swing, like a volley with no follow through. The racquet face travels along the ground with a slight tilt over the ball and towards the net, thus holding the ball low; the shot, like all others in tennis, should travel across the racquet face, along the short strings. The racquet face should always be slightly outside the ball.

The half volley is essentially a defensive stroke, since it should only be made as a last resort, when caught out of position by your opponent's shot. It is a desperate attempt to extricate yourself from a dangerous position without retreating. never deliberately half volley.

Court position.

A tennis court is 39 feet long from baseline to net. There are only two places in a tennis court that a tennis player should be to await the ball.

1. About 3 feet behind the baseline near the middle of the court, or
2. About 6 to 8 feet back from the net and almost opposite the ball.

The first is the place for all baseline players. The second is the net position.

If you are drawn out of these positions by a shot which you must return, do not remain at the point where you struck the ball, but attain one of the two positions mentioned as rapidly as possible.

The distance from the baseline to about 10, feet from the net may be considered as "no-man's-land" or "the blank." Never linger there, since a deep shot will catch you at your feet. After making your shot from the blank, as you must often do, retreat behind the baseline to await the return, so you may again come forward to meet the ball. If you are drawn in short and cannot retreat safely, continue all the way to the net position.

Never stand and watch your shot, for to do so simply means you are out of position for your next stroke. Strive to attain a position so that you always arrive at the spot the ball is going to before it actually arrives. Do your hard running while the ball is in the air, so you will not be hurried in your stroke after it bounces.

It is in learning to do this that natural anticipation plays a big role. Some players instinctively know where the next return is going and take position accordingly, while others will never sense it. It is to the latter class that I urge court position, and recommend always coming in from behind the baseline to meet the ball, since it is much easier to run forward than back.



Should you be caught at the net, with a short shot to your opponent, do not stand still and let him pass you at will, as he can easily do. Pick out the side where you think he will hit, and jump to, it suddenly as he swings. If you guess right, you win the point. If you are wrong, you are no worse off, since he would have beaten you anyway with his shot.

Your position should always strive to be such that you can cover the greatest possible area of court without sacrificing safety, since the straight shot is the surest, most dangerous, and must be covered. It is merely a question of how much more court than that immediately in front of the ball may be guarded.

A well-grounded knowledge of court position saves many points, to say nothing of much breath expended in long runs after hopeless shots.



GRIP, FOOTWORK, AND STROKES IN TENNIS.

Footwork is weight control. It is correct body position for strokes, and out of it all strokes should grow. In explaining the various forms of stroke and footwork I am writing as a right-hand player. Left-handers should simply reverse the feet.

Racquet grip is a very essential part of stroke, because a faulty grip will ruin the finest serving. It is a natural grip for a top forehand drive. It is inherently weak for the backhand, as the only natural shot is a chop stroke.

To acquire the forehand grip, hold the racquet with the edge of the frame towards the ground and the face perpendicular, the handle towards the body, and "shake hands" with it, just as if you were greeting a friend. The handle settled comfortably and naturally into the hand, the line of the arm, hand, and racquet are one. The swing brings the racquet head on a line with the arm, and the whole racquet is merely an extension of it.

The backhand grip is a quarter circle turn of hand on the handle, bringing the hand on top of the handle and the knuckles directly up. The shot travels ACROSS the wrist.

This is the best basis for a grip. I do not advocate learning this grip exactly, but model your natural grip as closely as possible on these lines without sacrificing your own comfort or individuality.

Having once settled the racquet in the hand, the next question is the position of the body and the order of developing strokes.

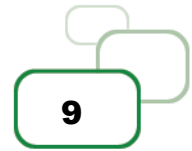
All tennis strokes, should be made with the body' at right angles to the net, with the shoulders lined up parallel to the line of flight of the ball. The weight should always travel forward. It should pass from the back foot to the front foot at the moment of striking the ball. Never allow the weight to be going away from the stroke. It is weight that determines the "pace" of a stroke; swing that, decides the "speed."

Let me explain the definitions of "speed" and "pace." "Speed" is the actual rate with which a ball travels through the air. "Pace" is the momentum with which it comes off the ground. Pace is weight. It is the "sting" the ball carries when it comes off the ground, giving the inexperienced or unsuspecting player a shock of force which the stroke in no way showed.

A great many players have both "speed" and "pace." Some shots may carry both.

The order of learning strokes should be:

The Fundamentals & Psychology of Tennis



1. The Drive. Fore and backhand. This is the foundation of all tennis, for you cannot build up a net attack unless you have the ground stroke to open the way. Nor can you meet a net attack successfully unless you can drive, as that is the only successful passing shot.
2. The Service.
3. The Volley and Overhead Smash.
4. The Chop or Half Volley and other incidental and ornamental strokes.

SERVICE-THE OPENING GUN OF TENNIS.

Service is the opening gun of tennis. It is putting the ball in play. The old idea was that service should never be more than merely the beginning of a rally. With the rise of American tennis and the advent of Dwight Davis and Holcombe Ward, service took on a new significance. These two men originated what is now known as the American Twist delivery.

From a mere formality, service became a point winner. Slowly it gained in importance, until Maurice E. M'Loughlin, the wonderful "California Comet," burst across the tennis sky with the first of those terrific cannon-ball deliveries that revolutionized the game, and caused the old-school players to send out hurry calls for a severe footfault rule or some way of stopping the threatened destruction of all ground strokes. M'Loughlin made service a great factor in the game. It remained for R. N. Williams to supply the antidote that has again put service in the normal position of mere importance, not omnipotence. Williams stood in on the delivery and took it on the rising bound.

Service must be speedy. Yet speed is not the be-all and end-all. Service must be accurate, reliable, and varied. It must be used with discretion and served with brains.

Any tall player has an advantage over a short one, in service. Given a man about 6 feet and allow him the 3 feet added by his reach, it has been proved by tests that should he deliver a service, perfectly flat, with no variation caused by twist or wind, that just cleared the net at its lowest point (3 feet in the centre), there is only a margin of 8 inches of the service court in which the ball can possibly fall; the remainder is below the net angle. Thus it is easy to see how important it is to use some form of twist to bring the ball into court. Not only must it go into court, but it must be sufficiently speedy that the receiver does not have an opportunity of an easy kill. It must also be placed so as to allow the server an advantage for his next return, admitting the receiver puts the ball in play.

Just as the first law of receiving is to, put the ball in play, so of service it is to cause the receiver to fall into error. Do not strive unduly for clean aces, but use your service to upset the ground strokes of your opponent.

Service should be hit from as high a point as the server can COMFORTABLY reach. To stretch unnecessarily is both wearing on the server and unproductive of results. Varied pace and varied speed is the keynote to a good service.

The slice service should be hit from a point above the right shoulder and as high as possible. The server should stand at about a forty-five degree angle to the baseline, with both feet firmly planted on the ground. Drop the weight back on the right foot and swing the racquet freely and easily behind the back. Toss the ball high enough into the air to ensure it passing through the desired hitting plane, and then start a slow shift of the weight forward, at the same time increasing the power of the swing forward as the racquet commences its upward flight to the

ball. Just as the ball meets the racquet face the weight should be thrown forward and the full power of the swing smashed into the service. Let the ball strike the racquet **INSIDE** the face of the strings, with the racquet travelling directly towards the court. The angle of the racquet face will impart the twist necessary to bring the ball in court. The wrist should be somewhat flexible in service. If necessary lift the right foot and swing the whole body forward with the arm. Twist slightly to the right, using the left foot as a pivot. The general line of the racquet swing is from **RIGHT** to **LEFT** and always forward.

At this point and before I take up the other branches of serving, let me put in a warning against footfaulting. I can only say that a footfault is crossing or touching the line with either foot before the ball is delivered, or it is a jump or step. I am not going into a technical discussion of footfaults. It is unnecessary, and by placing your feet firmly before the service there is no need to footfault.

It is just as unfair to deliberately footfault as to miscall a ball, and it is wholly unnecessary. The average footfault is due to carelessness, over-anxiety, or ignorance of the rule. All players are offenders at times, but it can quickly be broken up.

THE DRIVE IN TENNIS.

The forehand drive is the opening of every offensive in tennis, and, as such, should be most carefully studied. There are certain rules of footwork that apply to all shots. To reach a ball that is a short distance away, advance the foot that is away from the shot and thus swing into position to hit. If a ball is too close to the body, retreat the foot closest to the shot and drop the weight back on it, thus, again, being in position for the stroke. When hurried, and it is not possible to change the foot position, throw the weight on the foot closest to the ball.

The receiver should always await the service facing the net, but once the serve is started on the way to court, the receiver should at once attain the position to receive it with the body at right angles to the net.

The forehand drive is made up of one continuous swing of the racquet that, for the purpose of analysis, may be divided into three parts:

1. The portion of the swing behind the body, which determines the speed of the stroke.
2. That portion immediately in front of the body which determines the direction and, in conjunction with weight shift from one foot to the other, the pace of the shot.
3. The portion beyond the body, comparable to the golfer's "follow through," determines spin, top or slice, imparted to the ball.

All drives should be topped. The slice shot is a totally different stroke.

To drive straight down the side-line, construct in theory a parallelogram with two sides made up of the side-line and your shoulders, and the two ends, the lines of your feet, which should, if extended, form the right angles with the side-lines. Meet the ball at a point about 4 to 4 1/2 feet from the body immediately in front of the belt buckle, and shift the weight from the back to the front foot at the **MOMENT OF STRIKING THE BALL**. The swing of the racquet should be flat and straight through. The racquet head should be on a line with the hand, or, if anything, slightly in advance; the whole arm and the racquet should turn slightly over the ball as it leaves the racquet face and the stroke continue to the limit of the swing, thus imparting top spin to the ball.

The hitting plane for all ground strokes should be between the knees and shoulders. The most favourable plane is on a line with the waist.

Never step away from the ball in driving cross court. always throw your weight in the shot.

The forehand drive from the left court is identically the same for the straight shot down your opponent's forehand. For the cross drive to his backhand, you must conceive of a diagonal line from your backhand corner to his, and thus make your stroke with the footwork as if this

imaginary line were the side-line. In other words, line up your body along your shot and make your regular drive. Do not try to "spoon" the ball over with a delayed wrist motion, as it tends to slide the ball off your racquet.

All drives should be made with a stiff, locked wrist. There is no wrist movement in a true drive. Top spin is imparted by the arm, not the wrist.

The backhand drive follows closely the principles of the forehand, except that the weight shifts a moment sooner, and the R or front foot should always be advanced a trifle closer to the side-line than the L so as to bring the body clear of the swing. The ball should be met in front of the right leg, instead of the belt buckle, as the great tendency in backhand shots is to slice them out of the side-line, and this will pull the ball cross court, obviating this error. The racquet head must be slightly in advance of the hand to aid in bringing the ball in the court. Do not strive for too much top spin on your backhand.

I strongly urge that no one should ever favour one department of his game, in defence of a weakness. Develop both forehand and backhand, and do not "run around" your backhand, particularly in return of service. To do so merely opens your court. If you should do so, strive to ace your returns, because a weak effort would only result in a kill by your opponent.

Do not develop one favourite shot and play nothing but that. If you have a fair cross-court drive, do not use it in practice, but strive to develop an equally fine straight shot.

Remember that the fast shot is the straight shot. The cross drive must be slow, for it has not the room owing to the increased angle and height of the net. Pass down the line with your drive, but open the court with your cross-court shot.

Drives should have depth. The average drive should hit behind the service-line. A fine drive should hit within 3 feet of the baseline. A cross-court drive should be shorter than a straight drive, so as to increase the possible angle. Do not always play one length drive, but learn to vary your distance according to your man. You should drive deep against a baseliner, but short against a net player, striving to drop them at his feet as, he comes in.

Never allow your opponent to play a shot he likes if you can possibly force him to one he dislikes.

Again I urge that you play your drive:

1. With the body sideways to the net.
2. The swing flat, with long follow through.
3. The weight shifting just as the ball is hit.

THE VOLLEY AND OVERHEAD SMASH.

The net attack is the heavy artillery of tennis. It is supposed to crush all defence. As such it must be regarded as a point-winning stroke at all times, no matter whether the shot is volley or smash.

Once at the net hit from the point at the first opportunity given to get the racquet squarely on the ball. All the laws of footwork explained for the drive are theoretically the same in volleying. In practice you seldom have time to change your feet to a set position, so you obviate trouble by throwing the weight on the foot nearest to the ball and pushing it in the shot.

Volleys are of two classes: (1) the low volley, made from below the waist; and (2) the high volley, from the waist to the head. In contradistinction to the hitting plane classification are the two styles known as (1) the deep volley and (2) the stop volley.

All low volleys are blocked. High volleys may be either blocked or hit. Volleys should never be stroked. There is no follow through on a low volley and very little on a high one.

You will hear much talk of "chop" volleys. A chop stroke is one where the racquet travels from above the line of flight of the ball, down and through it, and the angle made behind the racquet is greater than 45 degrees, and many approach 90 degrees. Therefore I say that no volleys should be chopped, for the tendency is to pop the ball up in the air off any chop. Slice volleys if you want to, or hit them flat, for both these shots are made at a very small angle to the flight-line of the ball, the racquet face travelling almost along its plane.

In all volleys, high or low, the wrist should be locked and absolutely stiff. It should always be below the racquet head, thus bracing the racquet against the impact of the ball. Allow the force of the incoming shot, plus your own weight, to return the ball, and do not strive to "wrist" it over. The tilted racquet face will give any required angle to the return by glancing the ball off the strings, so no wrist turn is needed.

Low volleys can never be hit hard, and owing to the height of the net should usually be sharply angled, to allow distance for the rise. Any ball met at a higher plane than the top of the net may be hit hard. The stroke should be crisp, snappy, and decisive, but it should stop as it meets the ball. The follow through should be very small. Most low volleys should be soft and short. Most high volleys require speed and length.

The "stop" volley is nothing more than a shot blocked short. There is no force used. The racquet simply meets the oncoming ball and stops it. The ball rebounds and falls of its own weight. There is little bounce to such a shot, and that may be reduced by allowing the racquet to slide slightly under the ball at the moment of impact, thus imparting back spin to the ball.

Volleying is a science based on the old geometric axiom that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. I mean that a volleyer must always cover the straight passing shot

since it is the shortest shot with which to pass him, and he must volley straight to his opening and not waste time trying freakish curving volleys that give the base-liner time to recover. It is Johnston's great straight volley that makes him such a dangerous net man. He is always "punching" his volley straight and hard to the opening in his opponent's court.

A net player must have ground strokes in order to attain the net position. Do not think that a service and volley will suffice against first-class tennis.

Strive to kill your volleys at once, but should your shot not win, follow the ball 'cross and again cover the straight shot. Always force the man striving to pass you to play the hardest possible shot.

Attack with your volleys. Never defend the ball when at the net. The only defensive volley is one at your feet as you come in. It is a mid-court shot. Volleys should win with placement more than speed, although speed may be used on a high volley.

Closely related to the volley, yet in no way a volley stroke, is the overhead smash. It is the Big Bertha of tennis. It is the long range terror that should always score. The rules of footwork, position, and direction that govern the volley will suffice for the overhead. The swing alone is different. The swing should be closely allied to the slice service, the racquet and arm swinging freely from the shoulder, the wrist flexible and the racquet imparting a slight twist to the ball to hold it in court. The overhead is mainly a point winner through speed, since its bounce is so high that a slow placement often allows time for a recovery.

Do not leap in the air unnecessarily to hit overhead balls. Keep at least one foot, and when possible both feet, on the ground in smashing, as it aids in regulating the weight, and gives better balance. Hit flat and decisively to the point if desired.

Most missed overhead shots are due to the eye leaving the ball; but a second class of errors are due to lack of confidence that gives a cramped, half-hearted swing. Follow through your overhead shot to the limit of your swing.

The overhead is essentially a doubles shot, because in singles the chances of passing the net man are greater than lobbing over his head, while in doubles two men cover the net so easily that the best way to open the court is to lob one man back.

In smashing, the longest distance is the safest shot since it allows a greater margin of error. Therefore smash 'cross court when pressed, but pull your short lobs either side as determined by the man you are playing.

Never drop a lob you can hit overhead, as it forces you back and gives the attacking position to your opponent. Never smash with a reverse twist, always hit with a straight racquet face and direct to the opening.

Closely connected to the overhead since it is the usual defence to any hard smash, is the lob.

A lob is a high toss of the ball landing between the service-line and the baseline. An excellent lob should be within 6 feet of the baseline.

Lobs are essentially defensive. The ideas in lobbing are: (1) to give yourself time to recover position when pulled out of court by your opponent's shot; (2) to drive back the net man and break up his attack; (3) to tire your opponent; (4) occasionally to, win cleanly by placement. This is usually a lob volley from a close net rally, and is a slightly different stroke.

There is (1) the chop lob, a heavily under-cut spin that hangs in the air. This, is the best defensive lob, as it goes high and gives plenty of time to recover position. (2) The stroke lob or flat lob, hit with a slight top spin. This is the point-winning lob since it gives no time to, the player to run around it, as it is lower and faster than the chop. In making this lob, start your swing like a drive, but allow the racquet to slow up and the face to tilt upward just as you meet the ball. This, shot should seldom go above 10 feet in the air, since it tends to go out with the float of the ball.

The chop lob, which is a decided under cut, should rise from 20 to 30 feet, or more, high and must go deep. It is better to lob out and run your opponent back, thus tiring him, than to lob short and give him confidence by an easy kill. The value of a lob is mainly one of upsetting your opponent, and its effects are very apparent if you unexpectedly bring off one at the crucial period of a match.

GENERAL TENNIS PSYCHOLOGY.

Tennis psychology is nothing more than understanding the workings of your opponent's mind, and gauging the effect of your own game on his mental viewpoint, and understanding the mental effects resulting from the various external causes on your own mind. You cannot be a successful psychologist of others without first understanding your own mental processes, you must study the effect on yourself of the same happening under different circumstances. You react differently in different moods and under different conditions. You must realize the effect on your game of the resulting irritation, pleasure, confusion, or whatever form your reaction takes. Does it increase your efficiency? If so, strive for it, but never give it to your opponent.

Does it deprive you of concentration? If so, either remove the cause, or if that is not possible strive to ignore it.

Once you have judged accurately your own reaction to conditions, study your opponents, to decide their temperaments. Like temperaments react similarly, and you may judge men of your own type by yourself. Opposite temperaments you must seek to compare with people whose reactions you know.

A person who can control his own mental processes stands an excellent chance of reading those of another, for the human mind works along definite lines of thought, and can be studied. One can only control one's, mental processes after carefully studying them.

A steady phlegmatic baseline player is seldom a keen thinker. If he was he would not adhere to the baseline.

The physical appearance of a man is usually a pretty clear index to his type of mind. The stolid, easy-going man, who usually advocates the baseline game, does so because he hates to stir up his torpid mind to think out a safe method of reaching the net. There is the other type of baseline player, who prefers to remain on the back of the court while directing an attack intended to break up your game. He is a very dangerous player, and a deep, keen thinking antagonist. He achieves his results by mixing up his length and direction, and worrying you with the variety of his game. He is a good psychologist. The first type of player mentioned merely hits the ball with little idea of what he is doing, while the latter always has a definite plan and adheres to it. The hard-hitting, erratic, net-rushing player is a creature of impulse. There is no real system to his attack, no understanding of your game. He will make brilliant coups on the spur of the moment, largely by instinct; but there is no, mental power of consistent thinking. It is an interesting, fascinating type.

The dangerous man is the player who mixes his style from back to fore court at the direction of an ever-alert mind. This is the man to study and learn from. He is a player with a definite purpose. A player who has an answer to every query you propound him in your game. He is the most subtle antagonist in the world. He is of the school of Brookes. Second only to him is the man of dogged determination that sets his mind on one plan and adheres to it, bitterly, fiercely

fighting to the end, with never a thought of change. He is the man whose psychology is easy to understand, but whose mental viewpoint is hard to upset, for he never allows himself to think of anything except the business at hand. This man is your Johnston or your Wilding. I respect the mental capacity of Brookes more, but I admire the tenacity of purpose of Johnston.

Pick out your type from your own mental processes, and then work out your game along the lines best suited to you.

When two men are, in the same class, as regards stroke equipment, the determining factor in any given match is the mental viewpoint. Luck, so-called, is often grasping the psychological value of a break in the game, and turning it to your own account.

We hear a great deal about the "shots we have made." Few realize the importance of the "shots we have missed." The science of missing shots is as important as that of making them, and at times a miss by an inch is of more value than a return that is killed by your opponent.

Let me explain. A player drives you far out of court with an angle-shot. You run hard to it, and reaching, drive it hard and fast down the side-line, missing it by an inch. Your opponent is surprised and shaken, realizing that your shot might as well have gone in as out. He will expect you to try it again, and will not take the risk next time. He will try to play the ball, and may fall into error. You have thus taken some of your opponent's confidence, and increased his chance of error, all by a miss.

If you had merely popped back that return, and it had been killed, your opponent would have felt increasingly confident of your inability to get the ball out of his reach, while you would merely have been winded without result.

Let us suppose you made the shot down the sideline. It was a seemingly impossible get. First it amounts to TWO points in that it took one away from your opponent that should have been his and gave you one you ought never to have had. It also worries your opponent, as he feels he has thrown away a big chance.

The psychology of a tennis match is very interesting, but easily understandable. Both men start with equal chances. Once one man establishes a real lead, his confidence goes up, while his opponent worries, and his mental viewpoint becomes poor. The sole object of the first man is to hold his lead, thus holding his confidence. If the second player pulls even or draws ahead, the inevitable reaction occurs with even a greater contrast in psychology. There is the natural confidence of the leader now with the second man as well as that great stimulus of having turned seeming defeat into probable victory. The reverse in the case of the first player is apt to hopelessly destroy his game, and collapse follows.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF PHYSICAL FITNESS.

Physical fitness is one of the great essentials of match play. Keeness can only be acquired if the physical, mental, and nervous systems are in tune. Consistent and systematic training is essential to a tournament player.

Regular hours of sleep, and regular, hearty food at regular hours are necessary to keep the body at its highest efficiency. Food is particularly important. Eat well, but do not over-eat, particularly immediately before playing. I believe in a large hearty breakfast on the day of a big match. This should be taken by nine-thirty. A moderate lunch at about one o'clock if playing at three. Do not eat very rich food at luncheon as it tends to slow you up on the court. Do not run the risk of indigestion, which is the worst enemy to dear eyesight. Rich, heavy food immediately before retiring is bad, as it is apt to make you "loggy" on the court the next day.

It is certain injury to touch alcoholic drink in any form during tournament play. Alcohol is a poison that affects the eye, the mind, and the wind three essentials in tennis. Tobacco in moderation does little harm, although it, too, hits eye and wind. A man who is facing a long season of tournament play should refrain from either alcohol or tobacco in any form. Excesses of any kind are bad for physical condition, and should not be chanced.

"Staleness" is the great enemy of players who play long seasons. It is a case of too much tennis. Staleness is seldom physical weariness. A player can always recover his strength by rest. Staleness is a mental fatigue due often to worry or too close attention to tennis, and not enough variety of thought. Its symptoms are a dislike for the tennis game and its surroundings, and a lack of interest in the match when you are on the court. I advocate a break in training at such a time. Go to the theatre or a concert, and get your mind completely off tennis. Do your worrying about tennis while you are playing it, and forget the unpleasantness of bad play once you are off the court. Always have some outside interest you can turn to for relaxation during a tournament; but never allow it to interfere with your tennis when you should be intent on your game. A nice balance is hard to achieve, but, once attained is a great aid to a tournament player.

The laws of training should be closely followed before and after a match. Do not get chilled before a match, as it makes you stiff and slow. Above all else do not stand around without a wrap after a match when you are hot or you will catch cold.

Many a player has acquired a touch of rheumatism from wasting time at the close of his match instead of getting his shower while still warm. That slight stiffness the next day may mean defeat. A serious chill may mean severe illness. Do not take chances.

Change your wet clothes to dry ones between matches if you are to play twice in a day. It will make you feel better, and also avoid the risk of cold.

Tournament players must sacrifice some pleasures for the sake of success. Training will win many a match for a man if he sticks to it. Spasmodic training is useless, and should never be attempted.

The condition a player is, in is apt to decide his mental viewpoint, and aid him in accustoming himself to the external conditions of play.

All match players should know a little about the phenomenon of crowd-psychology since, as in the case of the Church-Murray match I related some time back, the crowd may play an important part in the result.

It seldom pays to get a crowd down on you. It always pays to win its sympathy. I do not mean play to the gallery, for that will have the opposite effect than the one desired.

The gallery is always for the weaker player. It is a case of helping the "under-dog." If you are a consistent winner you must accustom yourself to having the gallery show partiality for your opponent. It is no personal dislike of you. It is merely a natural reaction in favour of the loser. Sometimes a bad decision to one play will win the crowd's sympathy for him. Galleries are eminently just in their desires, even though at times their emotions run away with them.

Quite aside from the effect on the gallery, I wish to state here that when you are the favoured one in a decision that you know is wrong, strive to equalize it if possible by unostentatiously losing the next point. Do not hit the ball over the back stop or into the bottom of the net with a jaunty air of "Here you are." Just hit it slightly out or in the net, and go on about your business in the regular way. Your opponent always knows when you extend him this justice, and he appreciates it, even though he does not expect it. Never do it for effect. It is extremely bad taste. Only do it when your sense of justice tells you you should.

The crowd objects, and justly so, to a display of real temper on the court. A player who loses his head must expect a poor reception from the gallery. Questioned decisions by a player only put him in a bad light with the crowd and cannot alter the point. You may know the call was wrong, but grin at it, and the crowd will join you. These things are the essence of good sportsmanship, and good sportsmanship will win any gallery. The most unattractive player in the world will win the respect and admiration of a crowd by a display of real sportsmanship at the time of test.

Any player who really enjoys a match for the game's sake will always be a fine sportsman, for there is no amusement to a match that does not give your opponent his every right. A player who plays for the joy of the game wins the crowd the first time he steps on the court. All the world loves an optimist.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF MATCH PLAY IN TENNIS.

The first and most important point in match play is to know how to lose. Lose cheerfully, generously, and like a sportsman. This is the first great law of tennis, and the second is like unto it to win modestly, cheerfully, generously, and like a sportsman.

The object of match play is to win, but no credit goes to a man who does not win fairly and squarely. A victory is a defeat if it is other than fair. Yet again I say to win is the object, and to do so, one should play to the last ounce of his strength, the last gasp of his breath, and the last scrap of his nerve. If you do so and lose, the better man won. If you do not, you have robbed your opponent of his right of beating your best. Be fair to both him and yourself.

"The Play's the thing," and in match play a good defeat is far more creditable than a hollow victory. Play tennis for the game's sake. Play it for the men you meet, the friends you make, and the pleasure you may give to the public by the hard working yet sporting game that is owed them by their presence at the match.

Many tennis players feel they owe the public nothing, and are granting a favour by playing. It is my belief that when the public so honours a player that they attend matches, that player is in duty bound to give of his best, freely, willingly, and cheerfully, for only by so doing can he repay the honour paid him. The tennis star of today owes his public as much as the actor owes the audience, and only by meeting his obligations can tennis be retained in public favour. The players get their reward in the personal popularity they gain by their conscientious work.

There is another factor that is even stronger than this, that will always produce fine tennis in championship events. It is the competitive spirit that is the breath of life to every true sportsman: the desire to prove to himself he can beat the best of the other man; the real regret that comes when he wins, and feels the loser was not at his best.

The keen competitive spirit that stimulates a match player also increases the nervous strain. This should be recognized by tournament committees, and the conditions of play should be as nearly standardized as weather permits.

The first thing to fix firmly in your mind in playing a match, is never to allow your opponent to play a shot he likes if it is possible to force him to make one he does not. Study your opponent both on and off the court. Look for a weakness, and, once finding it, pound it without mercy. Remember that you do not decide your mode of attack. It is decided for you by the weakness of your opponent. If he dislikes to meet a netman, go to the net. If he wants you at the net, stay back and force him to come in. If he attacks viciously, meet his attack with an equally strong offensive.

Remember that the strongest defence is to attack, for if the other man is occupied in meeting your attack, he will have less time to formulate his own system.

If you are playing a very steady man, do not strive to beat him at his own game. He is better at it than you in many cases, so go in and hit to win. On the other hand, if you find that your opponent is wild and prone to miss, play safe and reap the full crop of his errors. It saves you trouble and takes his confidence.

Above all, never change a winning game.

Always change a losing game, since, as you are getting beaten that way, you are no worse off and may be better with a new style.

The question of changing a losing game is a very serious thing. It is hard to say just when you are really beaten. If you feel you are playing well yet have lost the first set about 3-6 or 4-6, with the loss of only one service, you should not change. Your game is not really a losing game. It is simply a case of one break of service, and might well win the next set. If, however, you have dropped the first set in a 2 out of 3 match with but one or two games, now you are outclassed and should try something else.

Take chances when you are behind, never when ahead. Risks are only worth while when you have everything to win and nothing to lose. It may spell victory, and at least will not hasten defeat. Above all, never lose your nerve or confidence in a match. By so doing you have handed your opponent about two points a game a rather hard handicap to beat at your best.

Never let your opponent know you are worried. Never show fatigue or pain if it is possible to avoid, since it will only give him confidence. Remember that he feels just as bad as you, and any sign of weakening on your part encourages him to go on. In other words, keep your teeth always in the match.

Don't worry. Don't fuss. Luck evens up in the long run, and to worry only upsets your own game without affecting your opponent. A smile wins a lot of points because it gives the impression of confidence on your part that shakes that of the other man. Fight all the time. The harder the strain the harder you should fight, but do it easily, happily, and enjoy it.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF SINGLES AND DOUBLES IN TENNIS.

Singles, the greatest strain in tennis, is the game for two players. It is in this phase of the game that the personal equation reaches its crest of importance. This is the game of individual effort, mental and physical.

A hard 5-set singles match is the greatest strain on the body and nervous system of any form of sport. Singles is a game of daring, dash, speed of foot and stroke. It is a game of chance far more than doubles. Since you have no partner dependent upon you, you can afford to risk error for the possibility of speedy victory. Much of what I wrote under match play is more for singles than doubles, yet let me call your attention to certain peculiarities of singles from the standpoint of the spectator.

A gallery enjoys personalities far more than styles. Singles brings two people into close and active relations that show the idiosyncrasies of each player far more acutely than doubles. The spectator is in the position of a man watching an insect under a microscope. He can analyse the inner workings.

The freedom of restraint felt on a single court is in marked contrast to the need for team work in doubles. Go out for your shot in singles whenever there is a reasonable chance of getting it. Hit harder at all times in singles than in doubles, for you have more chance of scoring and can take more risk.

Singles is a game of the imagination, doubles a science of exact angles.

Doubles is four-handed tennis. Enough of this primary reader definition.

It is just as vital to play to your partner in tennis as in bridge. Every time you make a stroke you must do it with a definite plan to avoid putting your partner in trouble. The keynote of doubles success is team work; not individual brilliancy. There is a certain type of team work dependent wholly upon individual brilliancy. Where both players are in the same class, a team is as strong as its weakest player at any given time, for here it is even team work with an equal division of the court that should be the method of play. In the case of one strong player and one weaker player, the team is as good as the strong player can make it by protecting and defending the weaker. This pair should develop its team work on the individual brilliancy of the stronger man.

The first essential of doubles play is to PUT the ball in play. A double fault is bad in singles, but it is inexcusable in doubles. The return of service should be certain. After that it should be low and to the server coming in. Do not strive for clean aces in doubles until you have the opening. Remember that to pass two men is a difficult task.

Always attack in doubles. The net is the only place in the court to play the doubles game, and you should always strive to attain the net position. I believe in always trying for the kill when

you see a real opening. "Poach" (go for a shot which is not really on your side of the court) whenever you see a chance to score. Never poach unless you go for the kill. It is a win or nothing shot since it opens your whole court. If you are missing badly do not poach, as it is very disconcerting to your partner.

The question of covering a doubles court should not be a serious one. With all men striving to attain the net all the time every shot should be built up with that idea. Volley and smash whenever possible, and only retreat when absolutely necessary.

When the ball goes toward the side-line the net player on that side goes in close and toward the line. His partner falls slightly back and to the centre of the court, thus covering the shot between the men. If the next return goes to the other side, the two men reverse positions. The theory of court covering is two sides of a triangle, with the angle in the centre and the two sides running to the side-lines and in the direction of the net.

Each man should cover overhead balls over his own head, and hit them in the air whenever possible, since to allow them to drop gives the net to the other team. The only time for the partner to protect the overhead is when the net man "poaches," is outguessed, and the ball tossed over his head. Then the server covers and strives for a kill at once.

Always be ready to protect your partner, but do not take shots over his head unless he calls for you to, or you see a certain kill. Then say "Mine," step in and hit decisively. The matter of overhead balls, crossing under them, and such incidentals of team work are matters of personal opinion, and should be arranged by each team according to their joint views. I only offer general rules that can be modified to meet the wishes of the individuals.

Use the lob as a defence, and to give time to extricate yourself and your partner from a bad position. The value of service in doubles cannot be too strongly emphasized since it gives the net to the server. Service should always be held. To lose service is an unpardonable sin in first-class doubles. All shots in doubles should be low or very high. Do not hit shoulder-high as it is too easy to kill. Volley down and hard if possible. Every shot you make should be made with a definite idea of opening the court.

Hit down the centre to disrupt the team work of the opposing team; but hit to the side-lines for your aces.

Pick one man, preferably the weaker of your opponents, and centre your attack on him and keep it there. Pound him unmercifully, and in time he should crack under the attack. It is very foolish to alternate attack, since it simply puts both men on their game and tires neither.

If your partner starts badly play safely and surely until he rounds to form. Never show annoyance with your partner. Do not scold him. He is doing the best he can, and fighting with him does no

good. Encourage him at all times and don't worry. A team that is fighting among themselves has little time left to play tennis, and after all tennis is the main object of doubles.

Offer suggestions to your partner at any time during a match; but do not insist on his following them, and do not get peevish if he doesn't. He simply does not agree with you, and he may be right. Who knows?

Every doubles team should have a leader to direct its play; but that leader must always be willing to drop leadership for any given point when his partner has the superior position. It is policy of attack not type of stroke that the leader should determine.

Pick a partner and stick to him. He should be a man you like and want to play with, and he should want to play with you. This will do away with much friction. His style should not be too nearly your own, since you double the faults without greatly increasing the virtues.

Recommended Resources

- **How To Play Tennis: Instructional Videos For Tennis Beginners.**
49 Step-by-step Tennis Instruction Videos Covering All 6 Basic Strokes In Tennis.
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.tennishow.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.tennishow.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **Tennis EBooks On Strategy And Mental Toughness**
Will Help You Win Even Against Your Toughest Rivals.
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.menco.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.menco.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **Insider Tennis Strategies And Tactics.**
Improve Your Tennis Game With Insider Strategies Of The Top Players.
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.tennis007.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.tennis007.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **The Ten Laws Of Tennis Success Ebook, Workbook, + Focus & Win Ebook.**
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.coachkyril.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.coachkyril.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **The Ultimate Tennis Training Rolodex Featuring 57 Tennis Specific Exercises Including Over 150 Photos, Step-by-Step Descriptions, Plus A 33 Minute Video.**
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.toddscott.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.toddscott.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **Renegade Mindset Techniques For Tennis.**
Cutting-Edge Tennis Psychology Technique.
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.stephen77t.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.stephen77t.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **Cure Tennis Elbow Ebook And Step-by-Step System.**
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.4amtech.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.4amtech.hop.clickbank.net/)
- **Tennis Site Full Of Ebooks, Articles And Much More.**
[Click here to know more: http://redirect11.puffafish1.hop.clickbank.net/](http://redirect11.puffafish1.hop.clickbank.net/)

Additional Resources

- **Men's Professional Tennis**
<http://www.atptennis.com/1/en/home/>
- **Women's Professional Tennis**
<http://www.sonyericssonwtatour.com/1/>
- **Women's Tennis Photos & Wallpapers**
<http://www.wtnphotos.com/>
- **Women's Tennis Screensavers & Wallpaper**
http://www.chooseyouritem.com/screensavers/sports-tennis-female_players.html
- **Tennis.quickfound.net**
<http://tennis.quickfound.net/>
- **Tennis.com**
<http://www.tennis.com/>
- **ESPN Sports - Tennis**
<http://sports.espn.go.com/sports/tennis/index>
- **Yahoo! Sports - Tennis**
<http://sports.yahoo.com/ten>



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