

HOW TO SIGN UP FOR USTA TOURNAMENTS

1. Become a USTA member. This is free for anyone under the age of 18. Go to USTA.com under the About USTA tab at the top click on USTA Memberships then click on "Become a Member".
2. Go to USTA.com under the "Play" tab at the top look for "Find Local Tennis" and under that click "Find Tournament".
3. Here you will find all of the USTA tournaments. Use the search boxes to narrow down your search results. Start with Player Category, then select Junior (for those 18 and under), then hit Search.
4. Select your distance, level, gender, and age division.
5. Select the tournament you would like to sign up for.
6. Scroll down and select the age division you would like to sign up for.



WHAT LEVEL SHOULD YOU PLAY?

Ages 11-18

Level 7: All players who are new to tournaments should start with a Level 7 tournament. This level offers a bottom-up selection process, where players with no USTA ranking will be selected first, and minimal time commitment. Tournaments are no more than one day.

Level 6: These tournaments are still entry-level, but players with highest rankings are selected first. There are no ranking caps for entry, so you have the opportunity to play against highly-ranked competitors. Level 6 tournaments can be two-day events.

Level 5-1: These are considered "Elevated Events". These tournaments become more challenging in both competition and gaining entry. They offer a substantial increase in ranking points for the winner.

Goal: The idea is to start with level 6 and 7's and ascend your way through the levels. Just for a reference, the Boys 16/18's Nationals Kalamazoo hosts every year is a level 1!

PLAYERS AGED 5-10

Orange Ball: Anyone ages 5 to 10 can play Orange Ball events, but more recommended for 7 to 10-year-olds.

Green Ball: 7 and 8 year-olds can move to Green Ball in two ways:

1. Play 10 Orange Ball Events (get 1,000 PlayTracker Points).
2. Get evaluated by a certified coach through the system.

Green Ball: 9 year-olds are eligible immediately.

Yellow Ball: 7 to 10-year-olds must achieve at least 1,500 Points to move to Yellow Ball. This must include 1,000-win points and a max of 500 play points. Any combination of 1,500 works as long as the play points are not over 500. Play points are awarded for playing a tournament. There is not a coach evaluation option to move from Green to Yellow.

Yellow Ball: 11 year-olds are eligible immediately.

POINT SYSTEM

For Red, Orange, and Green Ball tournaments, 100 points are awarded for participation. 100 points are awarded per win.

In Green Ball, 100 points are awarded per win *only*.

A maximum of 500 points is awarded per tournament.

WHAT IS PLAYTRACKER?

The Net Generation PlayTracker is for players ages 5 to 10 and their parents to track progress at USTA competitive events, all in one place.

Using the American Development Model (ADM) framework, players and parents will learn more about the recommended development pathway and earn digital incentives along the way.

10U players and their parents can access their PlayTracker points within their usta.com account profile, underneath the Family tab. Here, you will see a player's current competition ball color, coach-assigned skill level (if applicable), and total points at each competitive level.

Players will collect points on PlayTracker after playing in USTA Team Challenges, USTA Junior Team Tennis, and USTA Junior Circuits.



THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURNAMENT PLAY

Tournaments put you in different situations, environments, and mindsets than practice! **They present you with an ideal environment to improve the four key skills every tennis player should consistently work to improve:**

- **Fundamentals** — proper strokes and footwork
- **Physical Fitness** — tennis is a demanding sport! By pushing yourself, you can improve your game
- **Intelligence** — tennis is a fast-paced game, with endless options, limited only to a player's creativity
- **Mental Fortitude** — performing under pressure is necessary in tennis, and tournaments shine in improving this skill

PLAYING UNDER PRESSURE

Tennis doesn't care how good a player is during practice—only what they can do under pressure.

Unlike other sports, in tennis, you have to be an individual. You are on an island when you're on the court. It's up to you to calm yourself down, change strategies when necessary, and most importantly—you have to build up your own confidence when the game gets tough. There aren't coach-called timeouts to calm down, and you cannot rely on others to build that confidence for you!

While these factors are what make our sport so special, they're also what make it challenging. Mental fortitude is something that gets built over time, and unfortunately, we've seen that this skill is what gets neglected the most in training.

Whether your goal is to make your school's Varsity team, continue tennis into university, or go beyond, playing in tournaments is a crucial part of every young player's development.