

MARLBOROUGH TENNIS ASSOCIATION

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RULES and GUIDELINES

INSPIRE TENNIS PRIMARY SCHOOL TENNIS COMPETITION 2025-26

1. Teams consist of a minimum of four players. Ideally the team should be made up of two boys and two girls but it is not compulsory. A team can consist of up to six players.
2. An adult (teacher/parent/coach) **MUST** accompany **each team**. In divisions one and two players should be able to keep the score themselves, however there should be an active parent/manager on hand to help out if there is a disagreement over the score or confusion has arisen for some reason. Active adult supervision is required for all teams in all divisions. In division 2 some players may struggle to keep the score themselves and so managers should be prepared to keep the score if necessary (particularly at the start of the season).
3. All grades will start at either 8.45 a.m. or at 10.15am with late games aiming to be completed by 12.15pm.
4. Games consist of first to six games (four for Kiwi division), with **short deuce** i.e. NO advantage, sudden death deuce to be played (so at 40-all the next point decides the game). Matches can be won 6-5 (or 4-3 for Kiwi division).
Except for:
Division One singles matches:
 - Players 1 & 2 will play one set to 9 games, win by 2 with standard tie break at 8 games all (first to 7, win by 2).
 - Players 3 & 4 will play one set to 6 games, win by 2 with standard tie break at 5 games all (first to 7, win by 2).

NOTE: Div 1 – short deuces will apply for all games, player 1 and 2 will play long deuces in the singles.
5. Normally each player will play ONE singles and ONE doubles match. However, for division three and below it is permissible to field five players on the day so that two players play one match each (either a singles or a doubles).
6. The team must be graded according to ability, numbered 1–4. **The number one player will be the strongest player and MUST play against the number one player from the opposing team.** In doubles 1 & 2, 3 & 4, will play against their opposite numbers.

7. Official score sheets will be sent to each school but additional ones can be obtained from the Marlborough Tennis Club. Please ensure the team Captain / Adult in charge has sufficient copies for the season. You may copy extra sheets yourself.
8. After all the games are finished, Team managers must record the results on the Matchpoint score app. Results must also be recorded on the official score sheet. Please ensure that the sheet is filled in correctly giving all details: the **full name** of each player, the school name, team name, and the result of each match. Team Managers are asked to ensure that the results are clear and easy to read. Once completed the results sheet should be either scanned or simply take a photo of it and email the image to pscomp.admin@mtatennis.co.nz by 9am Monday following the match. **Hold onto the original paper version of your results which can be referred to if there are any discrepancies.**
9. The draw for each Saturday's play will be on the Marlborough Tennis website.
10. Please avoid defaulting a match. If you have no option but to default, please advise the school / team concerned and the Marlborough Tennis Association by noon on Friday. A results sheet must still be filled in, marked "default" and sent in.
11. The team shown first in the draw is the host team. EACH team supplies two pairs of good balls (Head Tour is the official ball adopted by the Marlborough Tennis Association).
 - a. **Division 1** will play with **YELLOW** grade HEAD Tour balls - 3 cans (12 balls) will be issued to each team at the start of the competition - should additional balls be required they can be purchased from either Mitchells Sports Power in Blenheim or from the Inspire Tennis Pro Shop at the Marlborough Tennis Centre.
 - b. **Divisions 2 and 3** will play with **GREEN** grade HEAD balls - 4 cans (12 balls) will be issued to each team at the start of the competition - should additional balls be required they can be purchased from either Mitchells Sports Power in Blenheim or the InspireTennis Pro Shop at the Marlborough Tennis Centre.
 - c. **Division 4** will play with **ORANGE** grade HEAD balls - 4 cans (12 balls) will be issued to each team at the start of the competition - should additional balls be required they can be purchased from either Mitchells Sports Power in Blenheim or the Inspire Tennis Pro Shop at the Marlborough Tennis Centre.

THESE ARE BASED ON RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE ITF THAT YOUNGER AND LESS EXPERIENCED PLAYERS WILL GAIN BENEFIT FROM THESE SLOWER BALLS. THE MTA HAS ENDORSED THIS RECOMMENDATION BY TENNIS NZ.

12. The Competition will be divided into grades, keeping the older children in the 1st and 2nd Divisions and the younger players in the 3rd and 4th divisions, with exceptions for top younger players. Kiwi Division – is designed for beginner players **up to nine years old**. (See Kiwi Division rules below.)
13. **PROMOTION/RELEGATION/BYES** - at the break at the end of Term 4, teams towards the top or bottom of Divisions may request to be considered for promotion or relegation. Schools must request this prior to the end of the pre-Xmas round. If a team is promoted or relegated the points won before Christmas will not count. Teams which are promoted or relegated will have their points multiplied by 1.5 at the end of the end of the competition. Teams which are

disadvantaged by way of points because they had a bye (if not all teams had a bye) will be given average points (in the round in which the bye occurred).

14. Players that have commenced the season as a member of a team and then go on to Secondary School in the New Year may continue to play for that team all season. Alternatively, a new team can be made up for the second half of the season (i.e. after the summer holidays). New teams should be advised to Marlborough Tennis no later than the Christmas break.
15. When serving:
 - a. Division 1 and Division 2 players must serve correctly as per Tennis New Zealand rules (stand behind the baseline, hit the ball overarm (or underarm) but the ball must not bounce before being hit).
 - b. Division 3 players must serve the first serve from the correct position behind the baseline and serve over-arm. If the ball is a fault, they can then serve their second serve from the service line, under-arm only.
 - c. Division 4 players have the option of serving from either the correct position behind the baseline (serving over-arm or under-arm) or from the service line, under-arm only.**Serving over arm from the service line is not permitted.**
16. Most games will be played at the Forrest Winery Marlborough Tennis Centre, the Marlborough Girls' College, Rapaura Tennis Club, Renwick Tennis Club, Springlands School, Fairhall School, Witherlea School, Bohally Intermediate, Spring Creek (Awarua Park). Other venues such as Seddon School, Ward Domain or Rarangi Domain may be used if required.
17. The Marlborough Tennis Association reserves the right to regrade teams if necessary.
18. The Marlborough Tennis Association would like to encourage teams to contact the team they are to play that week to make sure the team is not short of players, if the team is short of players they may be able to offer them a player to fill the gap.
19. Fill-in players can be used from another school or team **as long as they are in the same grade or below**. If a player from a higher division is used, the match can be played but no points will be awarded if the match is won (i.e. the match will be defaulted to the opposition). Please indicate on the form if you are using a fill-in and the name of their school and usual team.
20. If an issue arises which is not covered by these rules please contact the Marlborough Tennis Association at pscomp.admin@mtatennis.co.nz for a final decision.
21. Points: one point per match won.
22. Cancellations: Cancellations due to weather will be posted on Facebook and the home page of the Marlborough Tennis Association website www.mtatennis.co.nz on Saturday morning. An email will also be sent out to team managers.

KIWI COMPETITION

1. For younger beginner players up to 9 years old. All these matches will be played at the Marlborough Tennis Centre starting at either of the starting times so the modified courts are not over congested.
2. This grade is played across the court using mini nets - NORMAL RULES OF TENNIS APPLY.
3. This grade will play with **RED** grade HEAD balls - 4 cans (12 balls) will be issued to each team at the start of the competition - should additional balls be required they can be purchased from either Mitchells Sports Power in Blenheim or the Inspire Tennis Pro Shop at the Marlborough Tennis Centre.
4. Games consist of the first to **four** games with NO advantages. Deuce to be played (i.e. at 40-all the next point decides the game). Matches can be won 4-3.
5. **Underarm** serving must be from behind the baseline (doubles sideline) and can land anywhere in the opponent's court. Serving may be in any form to commence rallying.



This image shows 2 mini courts
(red) set up on a full sized court

