1. Introduction

Welcome Coaches, Parents, Teachers and Administrators,

Tennis Australia is very excited to introduce the Tennis Australia Stroke and Tactical Fundamentals. Our objective is to provide you with the content and direction for teaching the most critical aspects of our game.

The Stroke and Tactical Fundamentals are based on relevant research and coaching experiences over a number of years. The purpose of the comparison between the initial stages of development through to the professional ranks is to draw attention to the similarities in technical development versus the often talked about differences.

It is our role to educate and teach our players the stroke fundamentals to ensure each player has the correct foundation to build their game. Correct biomechanical strokes are vital building blocks that must be learnt in the early stages of childhood development.

The tactical fundamentals are designed to assist a player in reducing their unforced errors. The tennis court is a ‘mistake centre,’ and through applying a simple approach to decision making in tactics, players will minimise the number of mistakes.

Tennis Australia encourages all coaches, parents, teachers and administrators to understand and promote the use of both the technical and tactical fundamentals throughout the initial stages of a child’s development.

For further information on the development of your players, and to understand how the stroke and tactical fundamentals are integrated with the other important aspects of development, we encourage you to utilise the Tennis Australia Long-Term Athlete Development Matrix.

While the matrix is extensive, it has been designed to help you understand the key skills that should be implemented at various stages of development.

These educational tools have been designed to assist you in providing an ideal environment for the tennis development of a child, especially during the crucial formative years.

Yours Sincerely

Craig Tiley
Director of Player Development
2. Notes

Grip Systems

Left Handed

Semi Western Forehand Grip
- Bevel L #4
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach

Eastern Forehand Grip
- Bevel L #3
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach
- Forehand Slice Approach
- Forehand Volley

Continental Grip
- Bevel L #2
- Serve
- Overhead
- Forehand Volley
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Single)
- Bevel L #1
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Slice
- Backhand Topspin Approach
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Double)
- Dominant Hand Bevel L #1
- Non Dominant Hand Bevel R #3
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Topspin Approach

Right Handed

Semi Western Forehand Grip
- Bevel R #4
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach

Eastern Forehand Grip
- Bevel R #3
- Forehand Topspin Groundstroke
- Forehand Return of Serve
- Forehand Topspin Approach
- Forehand Slice Approach
- Forehand Volley

Continental Grip
- Bevel R #2
- Serve
- Overhead
- Forehand Volley
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Single)
- Bevel R #1
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Slice
- Backhand Topspin Approach
- Backhand Volley

Eastern Backhand Grip (Double)
- Dominant Hand Bevel R #1
- Non Dominant Hand Bevel L #3
- Backhand Topspin Groundstroke
- Backhand Return of Serve
- Backhand Topspin Approach
**Scientific Tennis Terms**

- **Acceleration**
  Increased change of velocity

- **Deceleration**
  Natural slowing down of body segments after impact

- **Dominant hand**
  Hand which aligns directly to the bevel of the grip in each stroke

- **Dynamic**
  Centre of gravity in motion

- **Extension**
  Refers to the increasing of the angle between two body parts (e.g. straightening the knee from a flexed position)

- **Flattened ‘U’ shape wrist**
  Refers to the shape created at the back of the wrist which provides each grip with the maximum amount of wrist stability

- **Flexion**
  Refers to the decreasing of the angle between two body parts (e.g. bending the knee or elbow)

- **Ground reaction force**
  The force emitted from the ground as a body pushes against it

- **Hitting zone**
  The zone where the racquet face is perpendicular to the ground during the impact phase

- **Impact**
  The area on a racquet face where the most effective impact will occur

- **Knuckle guidance**
  Keeping the knuckles facing the direction of the swing during the impact phase of the backhand groundstroke (single and double), return of serve, approach, slice and volley

- **Non dominant hand**
  Hand used to initiate the grip change and support the racquet head (opposite to dominant hand)

- **Palm guidance**
  Keeping the palm perpendicular to the ground and parallel to the racquet strings during the impact phase of the forehand groundstroke, return of serve, approach and volley

- **Pronation**
  Rotation of the forearm to align the strings of the racquet to the ball at impact during the serve and overhead

- **Range of acceptability**
  Most efficient range for optimal execution

- **Separation angle**
  The angle created by the misalignment of where the shoulders rotate beyond the angle of the hips in the backswing phase

- **Stance**
  The stance of the player has not been referred to as a fundamental as it is a consequence of time and space and court position in the set up

- **Static**
  Centre of gravity stationary

**Swing Systems**

- **Circular Swing (topspin)**
  - Forehand Groundstroke
  - Forehand Topspin Return of Serve
  - Forehand Topspin Approach
  - Backhand Groundstroke (single and double)
  - Backhand Topspin Return of Serve
  - Backhand Topspin Approach

- **Shallow ‘U’ shape (slice)**
  - Forehand Slice Approach
  - Backhand Slice
  - Backhand Slice Approach

- **Horizontal**
  - Forehand Volley
  - Backhand Volley

- **Figure 8**
  - Serve
  - Overhead

**Swing Phases**

- **Preparation**
  Balance - Balance needed to prepare for the shot
  Initial turn - Shoulders begin to horizontally align to the ball path

- **Swing Phase**
  Backswing - Loading phase of the swing where the shape of the swing is created
  Forward swing - Acceleration phase of the swing leading to impact

- **Impact Phase**
  Impact - Phase of the swing where the racquet face is perpendicular to the ground and the palm or knuckles of the hand are facing the intended target

- **Balance & Recovery Phase**
  Deceleration of body segments to promote recovery and preparation for the next stroke

**References**

All references to Biomechanical principles have been taken from:
### 3. Strokes

#### Forehand Topspin Groundstroke

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<th>Impact Phase</th>
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<td><strong>Forward Swing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Slight flexion in the knees</td>
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<td>Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball</td>
<td>Full extension of palm guidance through contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assume a sound support base</td>
<td>Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips</td>
<td>Uncoiling of the body and effective use of accelerating and decelerating the body segments</td>
<td>Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)</td>
<td>Non-dominant hand balances the backward trunk rotation</td>
<td>Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory and an inside to outward swing pattern</td>
<td>Hitting shoulder finishes high</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non dominant hand supporting the racquet</td>
<td>Ideal separation angle 20° created by shoulder and hip misalignment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Grip</strong></td>
<td><strong>Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body</strong></td>
<td><strong>Backswing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Balance and Recovery Phase</strong></td>
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<td>Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip</td>
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<td><strong>Forward Swing</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip</strong></td>
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<td>Wrist stability (Flattened ‘U’ shape)</td>
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<td>Extension of legs up to impact</td>
<td><strong>Backswing</strong></td>
<td>Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment</td>
<td>Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone</td>
<td><strong>Forward Swing</strong></td>
<td>Hitting shoulder finishes high</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Single Hand Backhand Topspin Groundstroke

**Preparation Phase**
- **Balance**
  - Slight flexion in the knees
  - Assume a sound support base
  - Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
  - Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

- **Grip**
  - Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
  - Wrist stable

- **Initial Turn**
  - Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
  - Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
  - Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

**Swing Phase**
- **Backswing**
  - Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
  - Non dominant arm provides racquet head support
  - Beginning of circular swing motion
  - Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
  - Ideal separation angle 30° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
  - Racquet and hand are still visible on the hitting side of the body
  - Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
  - Effective loading of ground reaction force

**Forward Swing**
- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Hands begin to separate
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of the body segments
- Weight transfer from back foot to front foot
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory, creating an inside to outward swing pattern

**Impact Phase**
- Knuckle guidance system through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Dominant arm continues to lift through the impact zone
- Non dominant arm straightens – hand to hand forms a line
- Hitting shoulder finishes high
- Hips slightly open to begin recovery
Double Hand Backhand Topspin Groundstroke

**Preparation Phase**
- **Balance**
  - Slight flexion in the knees
  - Assume a sound support base
  - Racquet in neutral position with elbows away from the body
  - Non-hitting hand supporting the racquet

- **Grip**
  - Dominant hand on grip L/R #1 Eastern backhand grip
  - Non dominant hand on grip L/R #3

- **Initial Turn**
  - Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
  - Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
  - Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

**Swing Phase**
- **Backswing**
  - Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
  - Non dominant arm is slightly bent and raised
  - Beginning of circular motion
  - Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
  - Ideal separation angle 20º created by shoulder and hip misalignment
  - Racquet and hand are still visible on the hitting side of the body
  - Both knees are flexed to provide a base which trunk rotation and forward body movement can be created
  - Effective loading of ground reaction force

- **Forward Swing**
  - Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
  - Both arms working in unison to generate maximum amount of power
  - Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of body segments
  - Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory forming an inside to outward swing pattern
  - Transfer of body weight from back foot to front foot

- **Impact Phase**
  - Extension of legs up to impact
  - Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
  - Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
  - Hips and shoulders are facing the net
  - Wrist and forearm remain stable

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Full extension with both arms through impact
- Both arms finish high
- Racquet deceleration promotes recovery
### Forehand Topspin Approach

#### Preparation Phase

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened ‘U’ shape)

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment
- Beginning of dynamic movement

#### Swing Phase

**Backswing**
- Beginning of circular motion
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Non-dominant hand balances the backward trunk rotation
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force
- Dynamic movement up to the ball

**Forward Swing**
- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of accelerating and decelerating the body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory and an inside to outward swing pattern
- Dynamic movement through to impact

#### Impact Phase

- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders have rotated to face the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Added acceleration of racquet through impact by ground reaction force and body segments

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Full extension of palm guidance through impact
- Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery
- Hitting shoulder finishes high
- Dynamic movement towards the target
### Single Hand Backhand Topspin Approach

**No suitable pro footage currently available**

#### Preparation Phase

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Beginning of dynamic movement

#### Swing Phase

**Backswing**
- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head support
- Beginning of circular swing pattern
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Racquet and hand are visible on the same side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force
- Dynamic movement up to the ball

**Forward Swing**
- Racquet and hands begin to drop below the ball
- Hands begin to separate
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of the body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory, creating an inside to outward swing pattern
- Dynamic movement through to impact

#### Impact Phase

- Knuckle guidance system through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate
- Added acceleration of racquet through impact by ground reaction force and body segments

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Dominant arm continues to lift through the contact zone
- Non dominant arm straightens – hand to hand forms a line
- Full extension at completion of swing
- Hips slightly open
- Dynamic movement towards the target
**Slice Backhand**

*No suitable pro footage currently available*

### Preparation Phase

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

### Swing Phase

#### Backswing
- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head stability with the elbow raised
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

#### Forward Swing
- Hands begin to separate
- Racquet acceleration with a shallow ‘U’ shape trajectory
- Uncoiling of the body with effective use accelerating and decelerating body segments
- Non dominant arm remains raised
- Racquet head remains above the wrist
- Transfer of body weight from back to front foot

### Impact Phase
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on contact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

### Balance and Recovery Phase
- Racquet follows path towards target
- Non dominant arm straightens and remains back - hand to hand forms a line
- Full extension of knuckle guidance at the completion of swing
- Hips slightly open to begin recovery
**Forehand Volley**

**Preparation Phase**

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non hitting hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #2 Continental grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened ‘U’ shape)

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

**Swing Phase**

**Backswing**
- Forms part of the initial turn with the hand and arm in front of the hitting shoulder
- Strings in line with the path of the ball
- Effective loading of ground reaction force
- Knee flexion range of acceptability 135º ± 10º (shoulder high volley)

**Forward Swing**
- Body is dynamic moving through the volley with a transfer of body weight
- Racquet head above the wrist
- Strings move along a horizontal line towards the target
- Knees extend with dynamic forward movement

**Impact Phase**
- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Impact occurs in front of the body while the body moves through the volley
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Racquet follows path towards the target
- Deceleration of body weight to recover
### Backhand Volley

#### Backswing
- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm provides racquet head stability with the elbow raised
- Racquet head is kept above the wrist
- Strings in line with the path of the ball
- Knee flexion

#### Forward Swing
- Forward swing initiated by the separation of the arms
- Body is dynamic, moving through the volley with a transfer of body weight
- Racquet head is kept above the wrist
- Strings move along a horizontal line towards the target

#### Impact Phase
- Knuckle guidance through hitting zone
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on contact point
- Impact occurs in front of the body while the body moves through the volley
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate

#### Balance and Recovery Phase
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Racquet follows path towards target
- Non-hitting arm straightens and remains back - hand to hand forms a line
- Deceleration of body weight to recover

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#### Swing Phase

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</table>
**Overhead**

### Preparation Phase

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume sound support stance
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non-hitting hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- #2 Continental grip

### Swing Phase

**Backswing**
- Transfer of body weight onto the back leg to initiate ground reaction force
- Both knees are flexed in preparation for full leg drive
- Arms begin to separate while palm stays down

**Forward Swing**
- Elbow bends to initiate throwing motion
- Full leg drive which creates racquet displacement away from the body
- Uncoiling of hips followed by truck rotation
- Extension of elbow and forearm to initiate pronation
- Racquet follows an upward and outward swing path
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

### Impact Phase

- Impact out to the right and in front for a right hander, contact out to the left and in front for a left hander
- Non dominant arm tucks in close to the body to allow for continued acceleration of dominant arm
- Head and shoulders aligned with eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders rotate parallel to the net
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

### Balance and Recovery Phase

- Completion of natural forearm pronation
- Deceleration of racquet speed
- Use of dynamic balance to ensure efficient recovery
Serve

Preparation Phase

Balance
- Serving stance – feet perpendicular to the net and assume a sound support base
- Front foot angled towards the net post
- Back foot behind the front, parallel to the baseline
- Non dominant hand supports ball and throat or racquet

Grip
- #2 Continental grip

Initial Turn
- Shoulders rotate away from the net
- Arms begin to separate
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

Swing Phase

Backswing
- Transfer of body weight onto the back leg to promote effective use of ground reaction force
- Back knee flexion at 110° ±10° range of acceptability
- Tossing arm leads hitting arm (non dominant arm leads dominant arm)
- Tossing arm raises up towards the net post
- Palm of hitting arm remains down facing the ground

Forward Swing
- Elbow bends to initiate throwing motion
- Full leg drive initiated which creates racquet displacement away from the body
- Uncoiling of hips followed by trunk rotation
- Weight transfer from back to front foot
- Extension of elbow to turn palm in for beginning rotation
- Racquet follows an upward and outward swing path
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

Impact Phase
- Impact points varies due to the type of serve executed
- Tossing arm tucks in close to the body to allow for continued acceleration of dominant arm
- Head and shoulder aligned with eyes focused on impact point
- Shoulder over shoulder rotation
- Hips and shoulders rotate to parallel position to the net
- Palm guidance in pronation (palm in, palm flat, palm out)

Balance and Recovery Phase
- Completion of natural forearm pronation
- Deceleration of racquet speed
- Use of dynamic balance to ensure efficient recovery
Forehand Return of Serve

**Preparation Phase**

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position (Elbows away from the body)
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Range of acceptability: #3 Eastern forehand grip to a #4 Semi Western forehand grip
- Wrist stability (Flattened ‘U’ shape)

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

**Swing Phase**

**Backswing**
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Non dominant hand balances the backward trunk rotation
- Backswing is short and compact
- Ideal separation angle 20º created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

**Impact Phase**
- Palm guidance through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders rotate to face the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Full extension of palm guidance through impact
- Racquet begins to decelerate to promote recovery
- Relaxation at the elbow

**Forward Swing**
- Racquet face closes and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Forward swing is short and compact
- Transfer of body weight from back to front foot
- Racquet acceleration on a low to high trajectory with a shortened circular swing
Single Hand Backhand Return of Serve

No suitable pro footage currently available

### Preparation Phase
**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in a neutral position with elbows away from the body
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Acceptability: #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Wrist stable

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

### Swing Phase
**Backswing**
- Hitting arm remains slightly flexed
- Non hitting arm provides racquet head stability with the elbow raised
- Backswing is short and compact
- Dominant hand positioned between shoulders and hips
- Ideal separation angle 30º created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand is still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Back knee is flexed in preparation for forward body weight transfer
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

**Forward Swing**
- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Hands begin to separate
- Forward swing is short and compact
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of the body segments
- Weight transfer from back foot to front foot
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory with a shortened circular swing

### Impact Phase
- Knuckle guidance system through hitting zone
- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders remain perpendicular to the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable
- Arms continue to separate

**Balance and Recovery Phase**
- Dominant arm continues to lift through the impact zone
- Non dominant arm straightens – hand to hand forms a line
- Hitting shoulder finishes high
- Hips slightly open to begin recovery
Double Hand Backhand Return of Serve

No suitable pro footage currently available

**Preparation Phase**

**Balance**
- Slight flexion in the knees
- Assume a sound support base
- Racquet in neutral position with elbows away from the body
- Non dominant hand supporting the racquet

**Grip**
- Dominant hand on grip L/R #1 Eastern backhand grip
- Non dominant hand on grip L/R #3

**Initial Turn**
- Shoulders begin to align horizontally to the ball path
- Use non dominant hand to initiate grip change
- Maintain balanced neutral shoulder-head alignment

**Swing Phase**

**Backswing**
- Dominant arm remains slightly flexed
- Non dominant arm is slightly bent and raised
- Beginning of circular motion
- Backswing is short and compact
- Dominant hand positioned between the shoulders and hips
- Ideal separation angle 30° created by shoulder and hip misalignment
- Racquet and hand are still visible on the hitting side of the body
- Both knees are flexed to provide a base which trunk rotation and forward body movement can be created
- Effective loading of ground reaction force

**Forward Swing**
- Racquet and hand begins to drop below the ball
- Both arms working in unison to generate maximum amount of power
- Uncoiling of the body and effective use of the acceleration and deceleration of body segments
- Racquet acceleration with a low to high trajectory forming an inside to outward swing pattern
- Forward swing is short and impact
- Transfer of body weight from back foot to front foot

**Impact Phase**

- Extension of legs up to impact
- Racquet face is vertical for a longer hitting zone
- Head remains stable and eyes focused on impact point
- Hips and shoulders are facing the net
- Wrist and forearm remain stable

**Balance and Recovery Phase**

- Full extension with both arms through impact
- Both arms finish high
- Racquet deceleration promotes recovery
4. Fundamental Tactical Concepts

The following tactical concepts should be used as a base when building a tactical understanding within your players.

1. Play Consistent Percentages
Each player should understand the difference between creating unforced errors compared to forced errors.

**Unforced errors:** mistakes made with no applied pressure from your opponent

**Forced errors:** loss of a point when pressure has been applied from your opponent. Pressure can be created by taking away time and space from your opponent.

A player should look to reduce the numbers of unforced errors made and increase the number of forced errors of the opponent.

2. Know the Zones of the Court (traffic lights)
The court is broken up into three equal sections. Using the analogy of traffic lights the following rules can exist to create an understanding of correct shot selection depending on your court position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Zone</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red Zone</td>
<td>Baseline – safe, consistent play</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Zone</td>
<td>Mid-court – proceed through, transition ball to net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Zone</td>
<td>Net – finish off the point with volley or overhead</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Understand the Court and the Target Areas
The following four rules help to explain the court and its dimensions to the player. Following these will allow for a higher percentage of tennis to be played.

**Four quadrants** – as you move into the two sections of the court closer to the net, a greater angle is created in which you can execute the stroke, allowing / putting your opponent under more pressure.

**Height equals depth** – having your strokes clear the net by over a metre will help create depth on your strokes. Depth is the backbone of any attacking game, as it creates pressure on your opponent and can often lead into a short ball.

**Safelines** – each player should know the safe lines to hit through which will give them some margin for error. By creating safelines a metre inside the lines, it will help to reduce errors and build pressure on the opponent; this is specifically useful when approaching the net.

**Safe spots** – each player should understand the areas of the court to hit to when under pressure and out of position. When taken out of court a player should aim for a high and deep down the middle to buy time to get back in position.
4. Limit Directional Changes
A player should only look to change direction when in excellent court position and has time to correctly execute to help guarantee success. This court position is when the player has both feet inside the court which will help increase the angles for successful change.
When the player is positioned behind the baseline, they should be encouraged to go back crosscourt, over the lowest part of the net and where there is the greatest distance from point to point.
The difference between down the line and cross court is 19.1 degrees. Chances of errors increase when changing direction off a deep crosscourt ball (angle of incidence – where the ball is coming from vs where the ball is going to – angles of reflection).

5. Centre the Ball
The best error a player can make is long. A player should understand by hitting the ball through the baseline they are reducing their margins for error while reducing the area and angles their opponent can hit in to.
To help a player understand this, they can imagine their strokes having to bounce twice before dissecting the sideline.

6. Attack the Short Ball
A player needs to understand when coming towards the net, it is essential to get into a great net position. If a player comes forward off a short ball and cannot get into a good volleying position then they have come in off the wrong ball. Their short ball range is the position of where the ball lands when moving forward to gain this effective net position. Effectiveness at the net should result in winning 2 out of 3 points.
When approaching, the player should understand to come in towards their opponent’s weaker side, which is the side they will hit longer and higher. Always look to approach up the line and move through the approach to help gain effective net position.
7. Winning Plays (1-2 sequence)
Each player must understand tennis is combinations of strokes which will lead to successful outcomes. Many junior players only see the winner; however it is often the stroke prior which has created an opening in the court to execute the point. It should be stressed to players to win the point off the second stroke in the sequence, for example, a wide serve into the forehand court and an off forehand to the backhand corner.

Winning plays or 1-2 sequences can come in many different combinations such as a serve and volley, first and second passing shot, approach and volley and backhand cross court and aggressive down the line.

8. D-N-O (Defensive, Neutral and Offensive)
This is similar to the traffic lights concept. It is directly associated with the court position of the player.

- Defensive – when behind the baseline
- Neutral – when on the baseline
- Offensive – when inside the baseline

By following this simple rule, it will reduce the number of unforced errors and create opportunities to increase their opponents forced errors.

9. Hold the Line on Low Volleys
This concept outlines the importance of playing the percentages and holding good court positioning at the net by volleying down the line and at the safe target line off low volleys.

10. Changing Gears (changing tactics & rhythm during a match)
The final concept outlines the ability of the player to change their tactics through the match depending on their current success rate. Junior players need to understand there are different ways they can change the play by altering their shot selection. This is an important skill for all players to understand.

The following are some different ways players can create tactical change during a match:

- More or less topspin
- Use of the slice backhand
- More height over the net
- Stay on the baseline longer
- Vary speed of the ball
- Attack only on very short ball
- Hit your 1st serve as if it was your 2nd serve
- Take more time between points (control the tempo)

These tactical concepts are to be utilised in your everyday coaching of both beginner and competitive players. They can be incorporated during different sessions according to the objectives of the session.
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