**Rules of the Game:**

The area in which tennis is played is called a **court**. Across the middle of the court, stretched between two posts, is a **net**. When two people play what is known as the “singles game,” the playing area is bounded on the sides by the “side lines” and on the ends by the “base lines.” The line down the center of the court is called “center service line.” The area thus enclosed is called the “service court.”

When four people play what is known as a “doubles game” (two players on each team), the playing area is widened by the addition of strips down each side. These strips are called “alleys,” and enlarge the playing area but do not affect the service courts. (See diagram).

![Tennis Court Diagram](image)

Play in tennis consists of one player putting the ball in play with what is called “the service.” Play continues, then, with the ball being hit back and forth across the net until one player fails to return it to the playing area.

A player is allowed two serves on two tries to hit the ball into his opponent’s right service court to begin a game. After each point, service is made into the opposite service court. The serve must be allowed to bounce but after the serve has been
returned, the ball can be struck “on the fly” (before it bounces) or after the first bounce. If a player strikes a ball after it has bounced twice, he loses the point.

**Court:**

The dimensions of the tennis court for singles and doubles are as shown in the previous diagram.

**Server and Receiver:**

The “server” is the player who puts the ball into play and the “receiver” is his opponent.

**Choice of Sides or Service:**

1. The winner of the toss has the choice of:
   a. Service or receiving
   b. Side of court
2. The toss is made by placing the head of the racket on the court and spinning it. As it spins, the opponent calls some differentiating characteristic on the racket such as roughness or smoothness of the trim at the top and bottom of the racket head or a trademark.

**Service Delivery:**

1. Before the server begins to serve, he must stand with both feet behind the base line within imaginary extensions of the center mark and side line.
2. The service always begins to the right of the center-mark and is made to the opponent’s right service court. After each point is played, service courts are changed for the next service in alternating fashion.
3. The server has two service attempts to put the ball into play.
4. The serve is made by tossing the ball into the air and hitting it with the racket before it touches the ground.
5. The ball must clear the net and land in the proper service court on one of the lines of the proper service court before being hit by the receiver. However after the service, the ball may be hit before it bounces.

**Foot Fault:**

1. During the delivery of the service, the server must not:
   a. Change his position by walking or running;
   b. Touch with either foot any area other than that behind the base line within imaginary extensions of the center mark and side line.

**Faults:**

1. The service is a fault if the server:
   a. Does not take the proper position before serving;
   b. Commits a foot fault;
c. Misses the ball in attempting to strike it. However, the server may toss and catch the ball without penalty;
d. Fails to hit the ball into the proper service court;
e. Serves the ball so that it hits a permanent structure other than the net, strap, or band;
f. Hits his partner or anything he wears or carries with the served ball.
2. If any of these occurs on the first service, it is a single fault.
3. If any of these occurs on both services, it is a double fault and the point is lost.

The Let:

1. A let is a ball which on service touches the net, strap or band and is otherwise good.
2. A let is called when a player is unable to play a shot due to circumstances beyond his control such as interference by a ball or a player from another court.
3. A let also occurs if a service is delivered before the receiver is ready. If, however, the receiver attempts to return the service, he is considered to be ready.
4. When a let occurs on a service, only that service is repeated; if it occurs during play, the point is replayed (this allows two services).

Player Loses Point:

1. The ball bounces twice on his side of the net or if he does not return the ball to his opponent’s court.
2. His body, clothing, or racket touches the net while the ball is in play.
3. He reaches over the net to play a ball unless the ball has bounced back over the net due to spin or to the wind.
4. The ball strikes him during play even if he is out-of-bounds.
5. He throws the racket at the ball and makes an otherwise good return.
6. He hits the ball more than once. In doubles the ball may be returned by only one partner.

Good Returns:

1. It is a good return if:
   a. The ball lands on any boundary line;
   b. The ball touches the top of a net post or the net and falls into the proper court;
   c. A player goes beyond the net posts to play a ball and successfully returns it outside the posts and either above or below the net height;
   d. A player follows through over the net but does not touch the net.

Scoring Rules:

1. The server’s score is always called first.
2. The score in tennis is 15 for the first point won, 30 for the second, 40 for the third and the fourth point won is “game.” A score of zero is referred to as “love.” When each side has a score of 40, the score is “deuce,” which means that the one side must win two consecutive points in order to win the game. If the server
wins the next point, the score is called “advantage in” and if he wins the following point, it is game. If the receiver wins the first point after deuce, the score is called “advantage out” and if he wins the next point it is his game. However, if after the score is either “advantage in” or “advantage out,” and the other player wins the next point, the score then becomes deuce again.

3. The side reaching six games first wins the “set” unless the score is love games a piece, call a “deuce set,” in which case one side must gain a two game lead in order to win the set. Two out of three sets constitutes a “match.”

**Tie Breakers:**

1. **Singles:**
   a. 12 point tiebreaker will be used at 6 games all.
   b. In the best of 3 set match, the 12 point tiebreaker will be used in the first and second sets only.
   c. Conventional scoring will be used in the third set.

2. **At six games all:**
   a. Each server in the established service order will serve two points, first from the right court and then from the left.
   b. The players will change ends of the court after the first two points and every four points thereafter.
   c. The first player to reach seven points, and who is ahead by two points, is the winner of the set which is recorded 7-6.

3. **At six points all:**
   a. The players should alternate serves, each serving one point only starting from the right court in normal rotation (right and left) until one player has won by two points. The players change ends of the court after every odd point until one player has won by two points.
   b. The receiver of the first point in the 12 point tiebreaker starts serving from the side the tiebreaker ends in the following set.
   c. In changing balls, the tiebreaker will be considered one game.

4. **Doubles:**
   a. 12 point tiebreaker will be used at 6 games all.
   b. In the best of 3 set match, the 12 point tiebreaker will be used in the first and second sets only.
   c. Conventional scoring will be used to play the third set.