



# WHY TENNIS

## What are the benefits of playing my sport?

Tennis is fun, great for fitness and for developing hand-eye co-ordination. It can be played by all ages and abilities – boys and girls can play together, so it's ideal for mixed classes.

## TOP Tip!

The Durham & Chester-le-Street School Sport Partnership run a variety of tennis competitions and festivals to cater for a wide range of young people. The Year 3 Mini Tennis events have two components allowing schools to bring a whole Year 3 class, which means all abilities are able to get involved – a competition format for those ready for match play (four boys and four girls per school) and a fun station based festival for the rest of the class. They host 10 Mini Tennis events across the local area enabling 1,500 children to have a positive experience of tennis each year.

**Emma Nichol, School Games Organiser**

# TENNIS

**Spirit of the Games:**  
**Excellence through competition**  
How does your sport exemplify these values?



Tennis is your sport so enjoy it.  
Love the game.



Tennis is a game for everyone;  
respect others.



Call the score and lines loudly  
and fairly.



Be a role model. Behave as you  
expect others to.



Work together to create a safe, fun  
and fair tennis environment.



Fair play is an essential value in tennis.  
The LTA and Tennis Foundation are  
committed to ensuring that tennis is played  
in a fair, open and inclusive nature at all  
levels. To find out more please visit:  
[www.lta.org.uk/FairPlay](http://www.lta.org.uk/FairPlay)

## Priority competitions:

- **Name competition 1:** Year 3 and 4 Mini Tennis Red Schools Competition
- **Age group:** Year 3 and 4, Mixed Teams – two boys, two girls
- **Name competition 2:** Year 5 and 6 Mini Tennis Orange Schools Competition
- **Age group:** Year 5 and 6, Mixed Teams – two boys, two girls

**Year 3 & 4 Mini Tennis Red** and **Year 5 & 6 Mini Tennis Orange** competitions are aimed at young people who are new or beginners to the game, not for those who are regularly competing in Mini Tennis competitions outside of school. If a young person is regularly competing, they already get plenty of other opportunities to play and compete. However, we would still encourage schools to involve these young players by giving them a role such as team captain or assistant coach!

## Where do young people go next (from school to club/community)?

The Tennis Foundation encourages School Games Organisers to make links with tennis venues. The School Games is enabling more young people to access tennis, often for the first time. Many events are taking place at community venues, making it easier for coaches and schools to signpost the follow-on offers and local coaching programmes.

### Signpost links:

Great British Tennis Weekend: [www.lta.org.uk/gbtw](http://www.lta.org.uk/gbtw)

LTA Find a Court: [www.lta.org.uk/play/find-a-court/](http://www.lta.org.uk/play/find-a-court/)

## Young Leader/Officials courses/qualifications available:

Tennis Leader Modules – 5 modules (2–3hrs each) for 13yrs+

## Embracing the School Games Vision

**Development Competitions** provide an opportunity to engage all young people. Utilising the NGB format, consider:

- Identifying targeted participant groups (i.e. gender, physical activity levels, impairment groups).
- Using the STEP principles to condition activities.
- Consider how to reward success – what does it look like?

## Signposted competitions:

Team Tennis Schools is a programme of three nationally organised competitions, which provides secondary school and further education pupils with the opportunity to play regular competitive tennis and to represent their school/college.

All competitions begin locally and culminate in a national final.

### Don't miss out on:

- Online entry – schools enter direct with the LTA rather than via their SGO
- FREE entry for all schools and colleges
- FREE tennis balls

### Year 7 & 8 and Year 9 & 10 Competition:

- Events for Years 7 and 8 and Years 9 and 10
- Boys and girls events
- Local league organisers, feeding into a national structure
- Online entry in November until mid-January each year
- Competition runs April to July (League stage) and September to December (Knockout stages) each year
- Local leagues – regional knockouts – National Final

### Senior Students:

- Years 11–13
- Boys, girls and mixed events
- Nationally organised
- Online entry from June to September each year
- Competition runs October–March each year
- Local leagues – regional knockouts – National Final

### National Championships:

- Years 7–13
- Boys and girls events
- Nationally organised
- Online entry in November–January each year
- Competition runs March–July each year

For more information please visit:

[www.lta.org.uk/Team-Tennis-Schools](http://www.lta.org.uk/Team-Tennis-Schools)

## Relevant web links:

[www.schoolstennis.org](http://www.schoolstennis.org)

School Games Tennis Toolkit:

<https://www.tennisfoundation.org.uk/discover-tennis/school/competitions/school-games-tennis-toolkit/>

# TENNIS

## Competition Card 1

### Primary or Secondary:

Primary

### Name of competition:

Mini Tennis Red Schools Competition

### Age group:

Years 3 and 4

### How to enter:

Via your local SGO

### Tournament format:

Competition begins with local cluster events or leagues, which progress through to Inter School Competition (Level 2) and then through to County Final - Inter School Competition (Level 3).

### Downloads

For more information on the resource and support available to schools, from the Tennis Foundation and LTA, or to download the School Games Tennis Toolkit please visit: [www.schoolstennis.org](http://www.schoolstennis.org)



### Simple rules:

- Mini Tennis Red is played on small courts with short rackets and soft balls. It's just like the real game and gives young players opportunities to have long rallies and play different types of shots.
- Pupils from Year 3 and/or Year 4. Teams of 4 — two boys and two girls. Schools are encouraged to enter multiple teams.
- Mini Tennis Red uses badminton sized courts, 17" to 23" Mini Tennis rackets, Mini Tennis sponge balls if played indoors, or Mini Tennis red felt balls if played outdoors.
- It is recommended that Timed Tennis is used as the format; players play for a set period of time, until the whistle blows. The length of matches depends on time available and amount of entries, but matches normally last ten minutes.
- The serve is decided by a 'toss' at the start of the match. The nominated person serves for the first point; it then alternates every two points.
- When serving, players should stand behind the baseline and the ball must not be bounced before being hit.
- The serve can be hit over or underarm and should be hit diagonally, landing in the diagonally opposite service box.
- Mini Tennis Red uses simple numbered scoring (1-0, 2-0, 2-1 etc.) rather than traditional tennis scoring (15, 30, 40 etc.).
- Each court should have a helper/scorer, who calls out the scores and helps out with decisions (this is a great opportunity to use Tennis Leaders).

### Think inclusively!

Mini Tennis is a modified version of the game, which through the smaller court, shorter rackets, slower balls and simple scoring, makes it more achievable for all young people.

- **Space:** Adjust the size of the court, making it narrower or wider.
- **Task:** Adjust the length of each game.
- The number of bounces allowed can be appropriately adjusted for the ability of the players i.e one player allowed two bounces whilst their opponent only being allowed one.
- **Equipment:** Use smaller rackets, balloons, softer balls or lower the net.
- **People:** Use on-court helpers to help decide who serves first and to keep score/make decisions.

### Roles for young people:

- On court scorers
- Registration and results
- Competition organiser

Tennis Leaders provide the training required to conduct these roles. For more information please visit: <https://www.lta.org.uk/coach-teach/programme-development/becoming-a-tennis-leader/>

### How can depth in competition through extra teams be achieved?

Team sizes are relatively low at four (two boys, two girls), which makes the event realistic for new schools to enter, but schools are also encouraged to enter multiple teams (e.g. B, C and D teams), giving even more pupils the opportunity to experience and benefit from competitive school sport.

Increase the numbers and engage a wider group of young people by running a tennis festival format – involving tennis skills stations catering for all abilities and Mini Tennis matches for the most able and confident players. The match play element would still allow winners to progress to the County Finals.

### The route from here to County Final – Inter School Competition (Level 3)

This competition begins with local cluster/ Partnership events or leagues, often hosted by a local tennis venue — be it a club, park, or community centre. Winners of these events progress through to the County Finals, which are incorporated into the County Final - Inter School Competition (Level 3) events in many counties.

### How can regularity be achieved?

All elements of the competition follow round robin formats and the earlier rounds can take a league format, where appropriate.

### Relevant web links:

[www.schoolstennis.org](http://www.schoolstennis.org)

School Games Tennis Toolkit:

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# TENNIS

## Competition Card 2

### Primary or Secondary:

Primary

### Name of competition:

Mini Tennis Orange Schools Competition

### Age group:

Years 5 and 6

### How to enter:

Via your local SGO

### Tournament format:

Competition begins with local cluster events or leagues, which progress through to Inter School Competition (Level 2) and then through to County Final - Inter School Competition (Level 3).

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### Simple rules:

- Mini Tennis Orange is a great way for players to continue their progress from Mini Tennis Red. It is played with shorter rackets, softer balls and courts are bigger and wider than the red stage but still smaller than full-size tennis courts.
- Pupils from Year 5 and/or Year 6.
- Teams of 4 — two boys and two girls. Schools are actively encouraged to enter multiple teams e.g. B, C and D teams.
- A Mini Tennis racket of 58cm–63 cm (23”–25”) should be used depending on the size and strength of the player.
- Mini Tennis Orange is played on an 18m x 6.5m court and the net is lowered to 80cm at the middle of the net.
- A Mini Tennis Orange ball is used which is 50% slower than a yellow ball, giving players better control at this important stage of development.
- It is recommended that Timed Tennis is used as the format; players play for a set period of time, until the whistle blows. The length of matches depends on time available and amount of entries, but matches normally last ten minutes.
- The serve is decided by a ‘toss’ at the start of the match. The nominated person serves for the first point, it then alternates every two points.
- When serving, players should stand behind the baseline and the ball must not be bounced before being hit.
- The serve can be hit over or underarm and should be hit diagonally, landing in the diagonally opposite service box.
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