

THE PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF A HIGH PERFORMANCE PLAYER

Introduction/Foundation Phase

Age of Player: 6-12
Years in Phase: 2-4

Learning Theme:
Fun & Fundamentals



What to teach

Physical Skills

- Agility, balance, coordination
- Throwing, jumping and running
- Encourage participation in other sports
- Promote development of athleticism

Tactical

- Height and depth
- Dynamics of the tennis court (space and time)
- Serving and returning skills
- Accuracy and consistency

Technical Skills

- Focus on basic striking skills with progression to sound stroke fundamentals
- Proper swing path & technique
- Acceptable grips
- Racket head acceleration

Mental Skills

- Enjoyment of sport
- Sportsmanship & respect
- How to score
- Working with others

Type of Instruction & Coaching

- Developmental coach
- Entry-level program with focus on fun and fundamentals
- Group instruction

Type of Competition

- 6-10 hours of structured weekly tennis activity
- USTA district and state tournaments

Refinement/Transitional Phase

Age of Player: 10-20
Years in Phase: 4-10

Learning Theme:
Training and Competing



What to teach

Physical Skills

- Complex coordination
- Continued participation (formal or informal) in other sports
- Injury prevention & fitness testing
- Pre-puberty focus (endurance, flexibility and core stability)
- Post-puberty focus (maximal strength, speed, power)

Tactical

- Development of personal gamestyle
- Offense and defensive skills
- Principles of high percentage play
- Clay court tactics
- Doubles skills

Technical Skills

- Fundamentally sound strokes, ready for competition
- Use of power and spin
- Weapon development (at least two weapons, serve plus one more)

Mental Skills

- Positive attitude towards winning and losing
- Goal setting
- Self-discipline
- Emotional control & error management
- Relaxation skills
- Concentration skills
- Practice and match preparation

Type of Instruction & Coaching

- High performance coach
- Established developmental plan
- Systematic training program (groups and private)

Type of Competition

- USTA Sectional & National Tournaments/ITF events
- At age 11, maximum of 40 tournament matches per year
- At age 14, a maximum of 70 tournament matches per year
- At Age 16, a maximum of 90 tournament matches per year

World-Class Performance Phase

Age of Player: 15-30+
Years in Phase: 4-10+

Learning Theme:
Personal Excellence



What to coach

Physical Skills

- Individualized training: speed, strength, endurance, power, flexibility and core stability.
- Injury prevention & fitness testing

Tactical

- Ability to adjust to opponent, court surface and environment
- Ability to impose personal tactics on opponent
- Clearly defined gamestyle

Technical Skills

- Complete technical mastery as it relates to personal gamestyle
- Multiple weapons
- Ability to generate power

Mental Skills

- Self-responsibility and independence
- Motivation
- Distraction control
- Able to positively deal with stress
- Competitive routines (pre-match, during match, post-match)

Type of Coaching

- High performance coach
- Physical trainer/strength coach
- Network of sport science specialists

Type of Competition

- ITF Group A events
- Collegiate Tennis
- Futures & Challengers
- ATP & WTA Tour tournaments
- Grand Slams
- Davis Cup & Fed Cup

