

## Week 1: Let's Rally

### Introduction to forehands

Time (approx)	Activity	Description
3 mins	Intros	Coach & player introductions. Start learning and using names right away. Teach them the different parts of a tennis court—baseline, service line & boxes, alleys, net.
5-10 mins	Dynamic warm up: Quick Feet & Partner Ball Drops	<p><b>Quick Feet:</b> Players line up in alley with first person on baseline. First person moves sideways along baseline by quickly stepping over line and back. When they get to other alley, they sprint to baseline on other end and do it again. Next player starts when first is halfway across baseline.</p> <p><b>Partner Ball Drops:</b> Partner 1 holds 2 balls (1 in each hand) with arms outstretched to the sides of body at shoulder height. Partner 2 stands about 5 feet away. Partner 1 opens fingers and lets one ball drop (make sure they give ball enough height to be catchable). Partner 2 tries to catch the ball on 1 bounce. Switch roles.</p>
3 min	Demo	Anatomy of a Racket: Racket face, butt, grip, strings, sweet spot. Show listening position (hug racket whenever coach is speaking or giving a demonstration). Demo forehand—prepare with hand, follow through (kiss your bicep).
20-25 mins	Tennis Skills: Rally Me, Lobster Trap & Toss, Hit, Catch	<p><b>Rally Me:</b> Each player has own ball. Tap ups with bounce in between. Move to tap downs (dribbling)—keep ball no higher than waist level</p> <p><b>Lobster Trap:</b> Pair up players. One player is feeder; the other has a racket and is the lobster. The feeder tosses the ball to the forehand side (palm forward) of lobster who traps it against racket with free hand after bounce. The lobster gently drop-hits it back to feeder. Switch roles.</p> <p><b>Toss, Hit, Catch:</b> Create teams of 3 (you can skip catcher role if you have a small group). One is feeder who is in middle of service box with supply of balls, next is hitter who is in the middle of service line, third person is catcher who is on service line on opposite side of net. Feeder tosses ball to hitter's forehand side. Encourage feeders to toss ball so it bounces in front and to the side of hitter. Encourage hitters to prepare with hand, follow through (kiss your bicep), and return to start position. After x balls, rotate positions until they have done all positions.</p>
10 mins	Game: Popcorn Rally with Build Up	<b>Popcorn Rally:</b> Two players rally, but instead of directly hitting ball back, player pops ball off strings first, lets it bounce, then hits forehand to partner. "Pop, bounce, hit." Stronger players can do it over net; weaker players can face each other in service boxes on same side of net. Choose a number of shots that each pair is trying to get in a rally (e.g., 4). When that number is achieved, increase goal by two, and so on.
5 mins	Relay	Divide players into 2 or more teams and line them up so first person is on baseline. Place one racket at net in front of each line. First person has a ball and runs to racket, place ball on it, and runs back to tag second person. Second person runs to racket, picks up ball, and gives it to third person. Keep going until everyone has had a turn.
3 mins	Team Wrap Up	Get your team together and review the basics of forehands and what they learned about the court and racket today. Encourage them to practice the tap ups and tap downs as homework.

## Week 2: Control It

Introduction to backhands (players can work on tap ups (palm up) & downs (palm down) while waiting for everyone to arrive)

Time (approx)	Activity	Description
5-10 mins	Dynamic warm up: Quick Feet & Partner Ball Drops	<b>Quick Feet:</b> Same set up as Week 1, except players shuffle across baseline, before sprinting to other end. <b>Partner Ball Drops:</b> Same activity as Week 1, except encourage them to catch the ball with one hand. If Partner 1 drops ball out of right hand, Partner 2 catches it with left hand, and vice versa. Switch roles.
3 min	Demo	Review forehand stroke. Introduce athletic ready position. Demo backhand stroke (using two hands). Help them position hands so dominant hand is on bottom—emphasize preparing with the (non-dominant) hand and following through so racket finishes over opposite shoulder. Backhand is like a forehand on opposite side of body.
20-25 mins	Tennis Skills: Lobster Trap & Toss, Hit, Catch	<b>Lobster Trap:</b> Pair up players. One player is feeder; the other has a racket and is the lobster. The feeder tosses the ball to the backhand side of lobster who traps it against racket with free hand after bounce (the lobster holds racket in non-dominant hand). The lobster gently drop-hits it back to feeder (using a non-dominant forehand). Switch roles. <b>Toss, Hit, Catch:</b> Create teams of 3 (you can skip catcher role if you have a small group). One is feeder who is in middle of service box with supply of balls, next is hitter who is in the middle of service line, third person is catcher who is on service line on opposite side of net. Feeder tosses ball to hitter's backhand side. Encourage feeders to toss ball so it bounces in front and to the side of hitter. Encourage hitters to start in athletic ready position, then prepare with non-dominant hand, follow through (over opposite shoulder), and return to start position. After x balls, rotate positions until they have done all positions.
10 mins	Game: Champs & Challengers	<b>Champs &amp; Challengers:</b> Choose 2 players to be Champs on each court; everyone else is a Challenger. First challenger duo drops hits the ball to Champs and they play out the point. Challengers keep track of points won, when they have won 2 points, they say "Dangerous" before starting the point. They take Champs place when they have won 3 points. To encourage backhands, you can award extra points for winning the point with a backhand or even allow them to automatically become Champs.
5 mins	Racket Circle	<b>Racket Circle:</b> Start in a fairly close circle. Each player balances racket on its head and tries to grab the racket on their left in the circle before it drops. Each time whole group grabs the rackets without one falling, the group take a step back. See how big the circle can get. If group is really big, divide into 2 (or more) teams and see which circle is biggest at end.
3 mins	Team Wrap Up	Get your team together and review the basics of forehands and backhands. Encourage them to practice the tap ups and tap downs or the lobster trap with friend or family member (or even against a wall) as homework.

## Week 3: Party at the Net

Introduction to volleys (players can work on tap ups & downs while waiting for everyone to arrive)

Time (approx)	Activity	Description
5-10 mins	Dynamic warm up: Silly Walks & Make 'Em Move	<p><b>Silly Walks:</b> Line all the kids up on one doubles sideline. Choose different “silly” walks/runs for them to do. Suggestions include kangaroo hops, carioca, shuffles, Frankenstein walk, bear crawl, frogger, butt kicks, or create your own (or have them create something).</p> <p><b>Make 'Em Move:</b> Pair up players who will face each other about 4-6 feet apart. Feeder tosses ball to partner who has to move to catch ball on one bounce using right hand on right side and left hand on left side. Catcher returns to starting point. Make sure that feeder gives enough height so that partner can catch it on a bounce. Switch roles every minute.</p>
3 min	Demo	Introduce and demo volleys, including the higher racket position when in ready position. Show how to “catch” with hand out in front and to the side of torso around face level to “cut off/cut to the ball” while stepping in with opposite foot.
20-25 mins	Tennis Skills: Make 'Em Move, Volley Edition & Toss, Hit, Catch with Volleys	<p><b>Make 'Em Move (no racket):</b> Partners start about 3 feet apart, facing each other. Partner 1 underhand tosses ball off to forehand side and around head height of Partner 2 who catches ball out of air with one hand with no bounce. Encourage little adjusting steps and “stepping forward” and cutting to catch ball off to the side at at face height before it drops. Catcher underhand tosses ball back to partner. Switch roles every minute. Next round, toss to backhand side and catch with non-dominant hand and crossover step.</p> <p><b>Toss, Hit, Catch:</b> Create teams of 3 (you can skip catcher role if you have a small group). One is volleyer who is in middle of service box, next is feeder who is on opposite side of net with balls, third person is catcher who is on service line on opposite side of net. Feeder tosses ball to hitter’s forehand side, with enough height for volleyer to hit above the waist. Catcher tries to catch the volley on one bounce. After x balls, rotate positions until they have done all positions. Then, repeat with backhand volley.</p>
10 mins	Game: Up-and-Back Volley	<b>Up-and-Back Volley:</b> Pair up players and have on half-court at service line. Player One drop-hits an approach shot to Player Two, comes to net, and split steps. Player Two traps the ball, and drop-hits back to Player One, who volleys the ball in the air back to Player Two. Player Two lets the ball bounce, and traps the ball. Then Player One retreats to the service line, and Player Two drop-hits an approach shot to Player One, comes to net, and split steps. Player One traps the ball, and drop-hits back to Player Two, who volleys the ball in the air back to Player One. Every time the pair successfully hits an approach and a volley, they score 1 point. See which team can earn the most points.
5 mins	Relay	Divide players into 2 or more teams and line them up so first person is on baseline. Each team will use only one racket and ball. The first walks/runs to net while balancing ball on strings of racket, touches the net, returns to team, and gives second person racket & ball. Keep going until everyone has had a turn.
3 mins	Team Wrap Up	Get your team together and review the basics of volleys and when they are used. Encourage them to practice toss & hit (with or without a racket) with a friend or family member as homework.

## Week 4: I Can Serve

Introduction to serves and returns (players can work on tap ups & downs while waiting for everyone to arrive)

Time (approx)	Activity	Description
5-10 mins	Dynamic warm up: Team Jog & Quarterback	<p><b>Team Jog:</b> The team jogs around court(s) at medium pace, in one line, following the leader. Every 30-45 seconds, call "Go!" The person who is last in line sprints to the front of the line and becomes the new leader. Encourage them to act as a team and not try to block out the person becoming new leader.</p> <p><b>Quarterback:</b> Pair up players and give a ball to each pair. The players play catch, throwing the ball overhand like a football quarterback. Add distance between players as they improve.</p>
3 min	Demo	Introduce and demo the serve. You may want to have players start in back scratch position so you should demo it that way as well as the full serve. Encourage them to keep the tossing arm simple and to toss it up gently to their dominant side. Servers should follow through across their bodies.
20-25 mins	Tennis Skills: Serve/Return Progression & Serve Pyramids	<p><b>Serve/Return Progression:</b> Pair up players and position them on service line, diagonally across the net. One player throws overhand to their partner who catches it and throws it back overhand. After they have completed this x times, have one player serve overhand to partner who traps it and serves it back.</p> <p><b>Serve Pyramids:</b> Same set up as above; designate a spot on side of court for each pair to build a four-ball pyramid. Player one serves the ball diagonally to their partner; the partner returns the ball back to the server, who traps it. For every successful serve and return, add a ball to the pyramid. Switch roles after completing the pyramid. You can show kids how to do an underhand serve if they are really struggling or have them move back if they are doing really well.</p>
10 mins	Game: Champs & Challengers	<p><b>Champs &amp; Challengers:</b> Choose 2 players to be Champs on each court; everyone else is a Challenger. The Challengers start point with a serve, but it can go anywhere in the court (you can let them underhand or drop-hit the second serve if you don't think they can get it over the net or if they are stronger, require serve to go crosscourt). Challengers keep track of points won, when they have won 2 points, they say "Dangerous" before starting the point. They take Champs place when they have won 3 points.</p>
5 mins	Star Relay	<p><b>Star Relay Race:</b> Divide players into teams. Place a ball on baseline where each singles sideline and baseline meet. Do same where service line and singles sideline meet, and one near the net strap. One racket at baseline at service mark. First player starts next to racket and must sprint collecting all 5 balls one at a time and place on baseline racket head. Next player must put them all back one at a time in original positions.</p>
3 mins	Team Wrap Up	Get your team together and review the basics of the serve. Encourage them to practice overhand throws (if they have a football, they can work on throwing spirals) as homework.

## Week 5: I Love Doubles

Introduction to doubles formation & scoring (players can work on tap ups & downs while waiting for everyone to arrive)

Time (approx)	Activity	Description
5-10 mins	Dynamic warm up: Jumping Jacks & Make 'Em Move	<p><b>Jumping Jacks:</b> Good old-fashioned jacks. Make it more fun by having them do them for 30 seconds and rest for 30 seconds. Repeat.</p> <p><b>Make 'Em Move:</b> Pair up players who will face each other in athletic stance about 4-6 feet apart. Feeder tosses ball to partner who has to move to catch ball on one bounce using right hand on right side and left hand on left side. Catcher returns to starting point. Have the feeder vary high/low and deep/short tosses. Switch roles every minute.</p>
3 min	Demo	Introduce the basics of doubles—serving team positions & receiving team positions, one up/one back formation. Go over tennis scoring.
20-25 mins	Tennis Skills: What's the Point? & All Positions Doubles	<p><b>What's the Point? (No rackets):</b> Pair up players &amp; have them spin a racket to choose the server. Using 36' court, the server starts the point with an underhand toss and then they play out the point only using underhand tosses, moving each other from side to side and short and deep. Only 1 bounce is allowed. As soon as ball is caught, partner tosses it back again quickly to keep "rally" going. Server keeps score using tennis scoring. Rotate players once someone has won a game.</p> <p><b>All Positions Doubles:</b> Four to six players per court. Players begin in one-up/one-back position. Serving team starts point with serve (can drop-hit second serve or have coach feed). Play two doubles points, then rotate positions one spot at a time. If you have 5 players per court, have one player out. If you have 6 players, have one player at each net post.</p>
10 mins	Game: Champs & Challengers	<b>Champs &amp; Challengers:</b> Choose 2 players to be Champs; everyone else are Challengers. Deuce court players are back and ad court players are at net (split formation). Coach feeds a ball to Challenger in deuce court. If the Challengers win the point, the ad court players move back and the deuce court players move to net. Coach feeds to ad court Challenger. If the Challenger team wins both points, they take the Champs spot.
5 mins	Star Wars	<b>Star Wars:</b> Divide group into 2 teams (max of 6 per team). Coach feeds ball 1 v 1. Whoever wins, another person from that team comes in, so 2 v 1 (loser on other team rotates out). If same team wins, 3rd person in and other team rotate singles player. If Singles player wins, all 3 players are knocked out on other team, and new singles player comes in (1 v 2). Team scores point only if all their players come into court and win.
3 mins	Team Wrap Up	Get your team together and review the basics of doubles and tennis scoring. Encourage them to find a wall or garage door and practice rallying for homework.

## Week 6: Let's Play

Time (approx)	Activity	Description
5-10 mins	Dynamic warm up: Team Jog & Quarterback	<p><b>Team Jog:</b> The team jogs around court(s) at medium pace, in one line, following the leader. Every 30-45 seconds, call "Go!" The person who is last in line sprints to the front of the line and becomes the new leader. Encourage them to act as a team and not try to block out the person becoming new leader.</p> <p><b>Quarterback:</b> Pair up players and give a ball to each pair. The players play catch, throwing the ball overhand like a football quarterback. Add distance between players as they improve.</p>
10 mins	Tennis Skill: Serve Plus One	<p><b>Serve Plus One:</b> Pair up players who are diagonal from each other. Server serves to returner who returns ball to server who hits another groundstroke to returner. Returner traps ball and becomes the server, continuing the sequence. After each player has completed 4 sequences or after x time, switch sides (e.g., deuce to ad).</p>
15 mins	Game: What's It Worth	<p><b>What's It Worth:</b> Create teams of 2-6 players. Play out points (2 v 2), which can be started with a serve, a drop-hit, or coach feed. Players earn points for the team based on the number of shots hit (e.g., a 10-shot rally earns 10 points for the winning team). Rotate players every 2 points. Play to 50 or for a set time, then switch opponents or teams.</p>
15 mins	Game: Team Challenge	<p><b>Team Challenge:</b> Divide group into teams of three to four players of similar level. Teams play against another team of a similar playing level. Set up individual matches, two matches per court. Players will play one point, and rotate out with another pair (alternate points). Points are started with a drop-hit anywhere in the court. After players serve twice, switch roles. With a large number of players and/or shortage of courts, play doubles points. Each match is timed (2-3 minutes). After each match, have the players shake hands with their opponent. Points played for each match contribute to their team's score. At the end of point play, add up total points, and change opponents to make matches as even as possible.</p>
10 mins	Game: Rip City	<p><b>Rip City:</b> Designate 2 Champs; everyone else are Challengers. Coach feeds a short ball to first Challengers team and both partners must come to net. If the Challengers win that point, the coach feeds them a volley. If they win that point, they become the new Champs.</p>
3 mins	Team Wrap Up	<p>Get your team together to discuss the details of the All-City Team Challenge at Varsity on June 5. Maybe come up with a team cheer?</p>