

Ball Control Basics

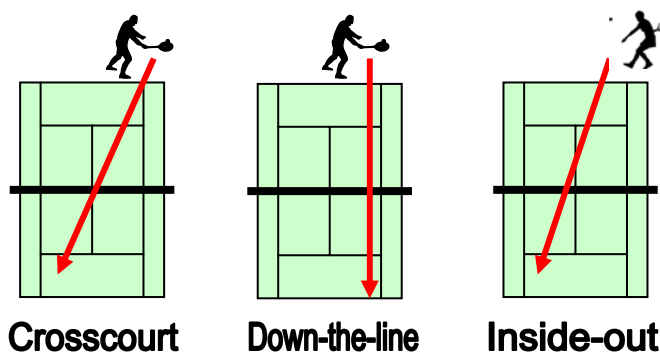
"Making the little round yellow fuzzy ball do what you want is what tennis is all about". Ball Control is the way a player solves problems on the court. For example, controlling the direction of a ball allows a player to hit away from an opponent. To master tennis, a player must learn to receive and send variations of the 5 Ball Controls (Height, Direction, Distance, Speed, and Spin)

DIRECTION ON GROUNDSTROKES & VOLLEYS

Sending different Directions

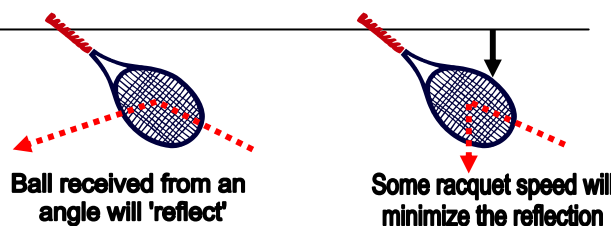
The determining factor in what direction the ball goes is the angle of the racquet at impact. In other words, it doesn't so much matter your body position, or where you follow-through, it is where the racquet face is 'looking' that makes the ball go in a specific direction. The 3 basic directions in tennis are:

- **Crosscourt** (Sending the ball diagonally across the court)
- **Down-the-line** (sending the ball from one side straight down the court)
- **Inside-out** (sending the ball diagonally across the court with the opposite side stroke than usual)



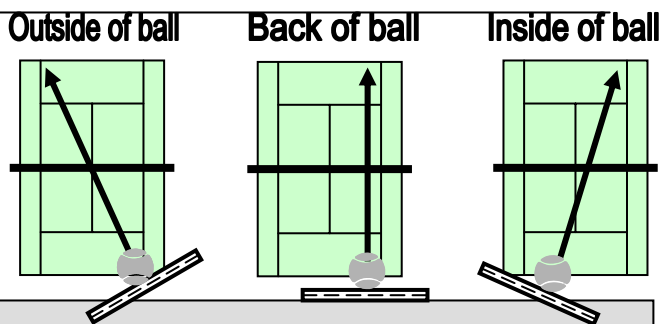
Receiving different Directions

A quick start and early preparation are key for receiving a ball hit away from you. On volleys especially, the angle the ball comes from should also be considered. To minimize any 'reflection' make sure your racquet is moving through the stroke with some speed.



Kinesthetic Key (Key feeling when doing it)

The key feeling is to imagine the ball has 3 'sides' (back, outside, inside). For example, on a forehand volley or groundstroke, feeling you are hitting the outside of the ball will send it crosscourt. Feeling the impact on the back of the ball will make it go straight.



~~Court~~ Home work

Sending & receiving different directions drill: Start with a partner on the opposite baseline (serviceline for beginners). Player one starts by hitting a medium paced groundstroke to player 2. Player 2 then sends the ball in a specific direction. Start with player 2 calling out ahead of time which direction they will send (crosscourt, down-the-line, inside-out). Progress to sending the direction at random with no warning. Player 1 should try to 'defend' against the placement with quick movement and preparation. Play out the point. First player to reach 7 points wins.

For volleys, a similar game can be played. Player 1 sends a medium paced ball to player 2 at the net (start just behind the serviceline where the typical first volley is hit). Player 2 sends a volley placement. Player 1 tries to chase the volley down and pass player 1. Play out the point. First player to 7 points wins.