

## BASIC STRATEGIES

*Tennis is a game. Every game has ways to win points. To be purposeful about winning, players need a plan to win. The general and overall plans to win are called "**Strategies**". More specific ways to implement the strategies are called "**Tactics**". The combination of shots used to execute the tactic are called "**patterns**". It is good for players to understand these concepts to develop a winning game.*

### Basic strategies:

This article identifies the 6 Basic tennis strategies that are foundational to a player's tactical development. Each one represents a tried and true procedure that has worked for players in the past, and are still employed by the most successful players of today. Each strategy can be used independently, or in combination with others. They are in a suggested order of development (but not, 'written in stone').

#### 1. Keep the Ball in Play:

Up to very advanced levels of play, most points are won off, 'unforced errors'. The most basic way to win more points is to give less away. To win a point, get the ball over the net one more time than your opponent. They should always feel they must earn points.

#### 2. Move them Around:

Making an opponent move decreases their shot quality by challenging their consistency, positioning, and timing. Also, moving an opponent opens up more court to hit into.

#### 3. Gain Territory:

Being closer to the net (and keeping your opponent further back) gives you more angles and takes away their time.

#### 4. Use your Strength:

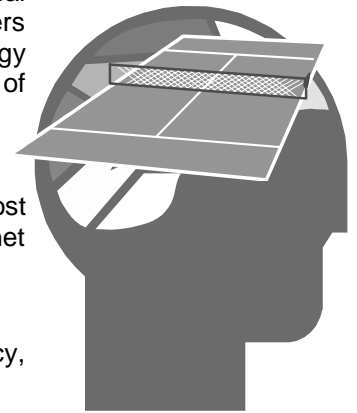
You will pressure opponents more by using the things you are good at. E.g. Use your big forehand, get to the net to use your strong volleys, etc.

#### 5. Play an Opponent's Weakness:

Picking on an opponent's flaws means you will win more points and they will hurt you less.

#### 6. Mix it Up:

Sending a variety of shots creates uncertainty in opponents and makes all your shots 'surprise attacks'. E.g. vary the placement of your serve. Mix deep volleys with angles.



**TENNIS IS AS MUCH  
MENTAL AS PHYSICAL**

### CONSTRUCTING TACTICS & PATTERNS:

Each strategy should be broken down into tactics and then patterns. Organize this by applying the strategies to the following 5 Game Situations:

- **When Serving**  
(e.g. Keeping the Ball in Play when serving)
- **When Returning**
- **When Both Back** (baseline exchange)
- **When Approaching and at Net**
- **Passing**

### CREATING ADVANCED STRATEGIES:

These six are only the basic package. Many more strategies can be used. To create advanced strategies use the following categories:

- **Environment** (e.g. strategies for playing with sun, wind, different court surfaces, etc.)
- **Score** (e.g. strategies when ahead or behind, strategies for 'big' points, etc.)
- **Opponent** (e.g. strategies against lefties, neutralizing an opponent's weapon)
- **Your playing characteristics** (How to maintain your style of play in various situations)