

Intermediate Red Ball

(8 Week - 90 Minute Class Curriculum)

Kids who are playing in the Red- Intermediate Program have demonstrated that they can hit balls (self-fed) across the net successfully (a majority of the time with follow throughs). They can differentiate between their forehand, backhand and serve. They know the court boundaries and can call the ball out when it bounces out. They pay attention, follow instructions and are enjoying the sport. At this stage of development, it is important that kids follow through on every shot, run to every ball, and are beginning to enjoy and get excited to play in points/ games.

- Racquet Skills - 5-8 minutes
- Target Practice - 20 Forehands, Backhands, Serves (Self Fed) 15 minutes
- Target Practice - Running Forehands and Backhands (Pro Feeds) 15 minutes
 - Four Square 20 minutes
- Champion of the Court (Self Fed) Backhands, Forehands, Serves 20 minutes
 - Running Forehand/ Running Backhand (Pro Feeds) 10 minutes

Racquet Skills

Toss Bounce Trap- 5 in a row not moving feet

Toss and Trap- 5 in a row not moving feet

Self Rally (Ups with the bounce)- set goals to get to 8, 10 or even 20

Ups (without the bounce) set goals to get to 8, 10

Flip Flops set goals to get to 6, 8 or 10

Flip Flop Edge - Do a flip flop, then hit the ball up on the edge of the racquet and repeat

Spin - Use your hand to produce side spin in the same direction. Move your hand from right to left "Spin, Spin, Spin"

Edge - Do a down with the edge of your racquet "Edge, Edge, Edge"

Bounce Bounce Catch - Hit the ball off the ground using a down. Use your strings, not your frame, hit it hard enough to make sure the ball goes up high enough to do another down and catch the ball in your hand.

The Sneaker Squeeze- Place the ball next to your sneaker (on the outside of your foot), squeeze the ball into your shoe using your racquet, bring both the shoe and racquet up together at the same time to make the ball lift up high, do a down, catch the ball in your hand

Toss and Catch on Strings with No Bounce - Throw the ball up with your hand and catch the ball on the strings without having it bounce. Make sure your racquet goes down to absorb the bounce, like you're catching an egg or a water balloon, so the ball doesn't crack or burst. To

make this more difficult, have the student put the ball on their strings and toss it directly from their strings up, and then catch it without the bounce

Self Volley (Forehand/ backhand 2 hands, forehand/ backhand two hands) Ups on both sides of your body

Ups Using the Non Dominant Hand

Dead Ball Drills Forehands, Backhands and Serves (10 - 15 minutes) With Competitions

Depending on the Class Size/ Strength of the Class, start competitions for the entire court. If there are an even number of players, or multiple courts, you may pick teams and tell them to hit a specific amount of targets. Backhands should be the lowest number of target hits, with weaker groups starting at 2, and stronger groups going anywhere from three to as high as five. Forehands should be a slightly higher number than Backhands, starting at 3 and even going as high as 5. Serves should be slightly higher than forehands, starting at 4 and even going as high as 6.

Backhands (Self Fed 3-5 Minutes)

Focal Points

From the Baseline With a Follow Through

1. Turn Sideways
2. Place the Ball in the Neck of The Racquet, or toss the ball from the non-dominant hand, catch the racquet with the non dominant hand
3. Make sure both Hands are on the Racquet (Dominant hand at bottom, non-dominant hand closer to the ball)
4. Toss- They must let it bounce before hitting. The best toss goes up around the height of their head and bounces to the side and in front
4. Grip- Players should be holding their racquet with their dominant hand knuckles pointed forward. Their opposite hand should be gripping the racquet with fingertips pointed forward. Their hands should be touching but not overlapping.
5. Racquet Face Angle - Players should be trying to point their racquet face forward through contact. "Point your stings and fingertips to the chair/ forward"
6. Swingpath.. Swing Forward and Up and follow through... **Keeping Both Hands on the Racquet**
7. Follow Through
 - Follow through with both hand on the racquet above their opposite shoulder
 - Swing forward and up and across your body
 - Touch the back on the opposite side of your body with your buttcap pointing forwards, elbows up
8. Vocal Repetition - Up Bounce Hit, Up Bounce Hit, Follow Through

Forehands (Self Fed 3-5 Minutes)

Focal Points

From the Baseline With a Follow Through

1. Hold the racquet in the dominant hand
2. Turn Sideways
3. Toss- The toss should be performed with their palm up and they should be tossing to head height with the ball bouncing on their side and slightly in front of them. They must let it bounce before hitting.
4. Grip- Players should be holding their racquet with their fingertips pointed forward.
5. Racquet Face Angle - Players should be trying to point their racquet face forward through contact. "Point your strings and fingertips to the chair/ forward"
6. Swing.. Swing Forward, Up and Follow Through
Follow through with their hand above their opposite shoulder
 - Swing up and across your body
 - "Give yourself a hug"
7. Up Bounce Hit, Up Bounce Hit, Follow Through vocal repetition

Serves (Self Fed 10 - 15 Minutes)

Focal Points

From the Baseline With a Follow Through

1. Place the Racquet above your shoulder
2. Toss: Hold the Ball in your hand and toss it above your head
3. Hit the ball above your head /Hi-Five the ball
4. Point your strings and fingertips to the chair
5. Tell Students to Reach Up/ Reach High
6. Follow Through - Finish at your opposite hip, pocket
7. Vocal Repetition: Up Bounce, Hit Follow Through

Fed Ball Drills Forehands, Backhands (10 - 15 minutes) With Competitions

Depending on the Class Size/ Strength of the Class, start competitions for the entire court. If there are an even number of players, or multiple courts, you may pick teams and tell them to hit a specific amount of targets. Backhands should be the lowest number of target hits, with weaker groups starting at 1, and stronger groups starting at 2. Keep in mind, there may be groups that have left handed players, so when doing competitions, a player who is hitting running backhands as a right handed player, the left handed players will be practicing their running forehands.

Running Backhands First/ Then Running Forehands

The majority of kids are right handed, so start with the running Backhands

- Set up lines along the single side line of the court for the amount of students you have in the class, and place an Orange Cone on the Black Line behind the baseline on the opposite side of the court for players to run around after they hit and rotate to the back of the line
- A pro feeds the ball to the opposite side of the court
- The feed should land close to the service line with ample height so the ball will bounce up and continue to move away from the player
- As the pro feeds, they should say Run, Bounce, Swing
- Players needs to follow through on their shots, keeping both hands on their backhand as they follow through
- After the player hits the ball, they need to run around the cone and return to the back of the line
- When the kids hit their target goal, switch to running forehands
- Pros may suggest kids to run faster, swing earlier, the ball is too close or too far away, keeping the jargon simplified for kids of a young age
- Pros should see when the child needs to swing and yell “SWING” at the appropriate time
- Keep praising kids for good swings, even if the ball goes out but they follow through and make good contact

Four Square (20 minutes)

(4 - 7 Players one court/ 7-12 players 2 courts)

(When there are only 4 or 5 players on a court, a pro should play in to challenge the kids)

- Four Square is explained in Entry Level Curriculum but if players have not been exposed, remind them of the rules in the first week of a new session. Four square is played every week, unless there are absences from classes, and thus more time should be spent playing Champion of the Court.
- Four Square Boundaries are from the Baseline to the Sidelines
- A Pro may need to throw down lines in the middle of a court to divide the court into four quadrants
- Kids should start with their backhands, then forehands, then serves (5-7 minutes each)
- Kids should pay attention when it is their turn and have a ball waiting in their hands when they are waiting in line
- While playing on two courts, a pro should help direct a kid to the open court, or have the kids be able to see when there are openings in square number one
- Follow Throughs Are Necessary Unless.... If a kid does not follow through, they are out unless they were running for a difficult ball, and made a play on the shot, (we want to encourage them to run and try for every ball)
- Kids need to call the ball out clearly, loudly and know to rotate when they win/ lose a point
- When the point is over, say “rotate” and give a countdown 3, 2, 1 go

- When a pro plays in, they should be hitting with a continental grip, alternating to players on court. If there is a stronger player amongst weaker intermediate level players, a pro may try to hit multiple shots to the stronger player to invoke a desire to sustain a rally, challenge them with speed, depth, or vary the height of their shots.
- Pros may also hit a ball as a volley if it is going out, to encourage the students to continue the rally. Keep in mind, students may not know their ball is going out until it bounces, but intermediate tennis is about connecting with balls and hitting them over the net.
- Four Square at Intermediate Level does not involve as much running, but focuses more on receiving the first ball and having success sending it back. The stronger the class, the longer the rally.

Champion of the Court (20 minutes)

(2-4 Players 1 court/ 5-7 players 2 courts, 8-12 players 3 courts)

(When possible, a pro or multiple pros should play in so long as kids are not waiting, hence dividing courts according to the number of students in a class)

- Champion of the Court is explained in Entry Level Curriculum but if players have not been exposed, remind them of the rules in the first week of a new session

Coaching Reminders to Players Before Champion of the Court Starts:

1. Follow Through
 2. Run Faster
 3. Try to hit the ball faster
 4. Try to hit the ball away from your opponent
 5. Pay Attention
 6. Call the ball out when it bounces out
 7. Try to run to every ball, even if you don't think you can get to it
- Kids should start with their backhands, then forehands, then serves (5-7 minutes each)
 - Kids should pay attention when it is their turn and have a ball waiting in their hands when they are waiting in line
 - While playing on two or more courts, a pro should help direct a kid to the open court, or have the kids be able to pay attention to where they need to go when there are open courts
 - Follow Throughs Are Necessary Unless.... If a kid does not follow through, they are out unless they were running for a difficult ball, and made a play on the shot, (we want to encourage them to run and try for every ball)
 - When the point is over, say "rotate" and give a countdown 3, 2, 1 go

- When a pro plays in, they should be hitting with a continental grip, making the child run side to side, sometimes forwards, sometimes hitting high balls. A pro should challenge a player just enough, making the rally more difficult for the player as the point develops.
- Pros may also hit a ball as a volley if it is going out, to encourage the students to continue the rally. Keep in mind, students may not know their ball is going out until it bounces, but intermediate tennis is about connecting with balls and hitting them over the net.
- Kids need to call the ball out clearly, loudly and know to rotate when they win/ lose a point

Running Forehand Game/ Running Backhand Game (10 minutes)

(3-6 Players 1 court/ 6-12 players 2 courts if there are 2 coaches)

Coaching Reminders to Players Before Running FH/ BH Game

1. Follow Through
 2. Run Faster
 3. Try to hit the ball faster
 4. Try to hit the ball away from your opponent
 5. Pay Attention
 6. Call the ball out when it bounces out
 7. Try to run to every ball, even if you don't think you can get to it
- Pro Sets up waiting lines off to the side of the champion court so players wait in safety
 - Pro Feeds ball to the open court to make the child run to either their forehand or backhand
 - Points are played just like in champion of the court, except the pro feeds the first ball and children rotate after winning, losing
 - If player on the champion side wins, they play an additional bonus point
 - Make sure the players rotate to the appropriate side of the court so they do not run into the middle of a court when a point is being played
 - Start to intro
 - ***** Introduce scoring up to 10 if the majority of players on the court are of excellent in class, are already in red rally club, or getting ready to move into red rally club/ red advanced

Capture the Cone (at Pro's Discretion)

When there are only 2 players due to absences

- Set up four or five cones on each side of the court
- Pro may feed to either side, making the student hit either forehands or backhand
- When a player wins a point, they go collect a cone from their opponents side
- When one player collects all of the cones on their side, they win the game

- Make sure players high five racquets and say good game

Important Notes for Champion of the Court, Four Square, Running FH/BH

- These games are crucial to determining the success of the kids hitting balls over the net, and having the ability to return them and engage in rallies
- These games do not involve keeping score
- Keep the kids engaged and moving
- Make sure to use Countdowns, New Champion (in Champion of the Court), Rotate (Four Square), "Name of Child" You're Out, "Name of Child" You're In
- Make sure the kids are paying attention when it is their turn
- These are the games that will help determine if we will be able to move a kid from Intermediate to Red Rally Club, or Red Advanced

Moving Into Red Rally Club

Players Should be able to consistently return 2 shots in a row after it is hit to them, enjoy playing tennis, pay attention and love competing

Moving into Red Advanced/ Intro to Orange

Players are consistently winning a majority of the points they play in Intermediate, have been in a semester of Red Rally Club, or are genuine athletes that need to be streamlined into higher level classes. They can run fast, make good decisions, are consistent and love competing.