

**MATCHING YOUR CHILD'S TENNIS PROGRAMME WITH THEIR AMBITIONS –
A PARENT'S GUIDE**

CLUB PLAYERS
Social and Team Players

Where would I play and what sort of coaching would I	U8-U18: At your local tennis club. Club groups when available and occasional individual lessons to resolve any technical issues.
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attend?	
Why do I play?	U8-U18: For fun, social reasons, to improve fitness and to learn a new skill. Club group coaching weekly to learn the basics of the game and have lots of fun.
Who might my coach be?	U8-U18: Your local club coaches.
How often would I train?	U8-U18: As frequently as you like. Most club players will play tennis once or twice a week mainly consisting of group coaching. Much play will be informal with friends at the club.
What level would I compete at?	U8-U18: There is no obligation to compete. Competitions available to club players will be annual club championships, representing club teams, local grade 7 and 6 tournaments, box leagues and ladder challenges. Your coach will help if you'd like advice on how to get involved in playing competitive tennis.
What venue would I play at?	U8-U18: Your local club.
How much commitment is required playing tennis at this level?	U8-U18: Very little. Tennis is your hobby and a sport to play mainly for enjoyment and social interaction. You might play seasonally or all year round, but tennis is one of many extracurricular activities that you enjoy.
Summary:	<p>You play tennis for fun. You do not travel far to compete and may not compete at all.</p> <p>Tennis provides excellent social opportunities and is a game you can play all your life. It will help you to keep fit as well.</p> <p>At any stage of your life you can always aim to improve your level. This will mean playing more frequently and including some coaching lessons. Many take up playing more seriously at Seniors age as and when they have more time. There are a wide range of tournaments available for all age groups 35-80.</p>

COMPETITIVE CLUB PLAYERS Higher Club Level and County Standard	
Where would I play?	U8-U18: A club, probably with floodlights to enable year-round tennis. This type of club is likely to have more than 1 coach and offer a comprehensive weekly coaching schedule all year round.
What type of coaching would I receive?	U8-U18: Mainly group coaching that might be held at a variety of club and tennis centre (indoors) along with some regular 1-1 lessons.
Who might my coach be?	U8-U18: A Coach who has a good understanding of the standards required to play at a good club and county level.
How often would I train?	U8-U10: 2-3 times per week (2-3 hours per week). U11-U14: 2-3 times per week (4-6 hours week). U15-U18: 2-4 times per week (5-7 hours per week).
What level would I compete at?	U8-U10: You would be in the top 20 players in the county for your age group. In addition to individual events at grade 5-3, represent your club in team events and possibly play for the county team. U11-U18: Play grade 5-2 LTA ranking events, represent your club in team events and possibly play for the county team.
How much commitment is required playing tennis at this level?	U8-U18: A fair amount. Tennis is more than just a hobby. You are committed to competing regularly and want to improve your game. It is the one of the main sports you play. You train regularly each week and some weekends and school holidays are taken up playing tournaments. As you get older, you will be introducing some specific off-court fitness training.
What tennis offers at this level	A real focal point in your life and something to feel proud of and which will provide a sense of achievement. You will enjoy the fun, team spirit and pressure of competing for your teams/county against other counties – for as long as you retain this level. You may consider selecting a university place in GB or abroad which will help further your tennis skills. You have a good basis to raise your game to a higher level if you consistently reach the final stages of tournaments and you win a high proportion of your county matches. However you will have to raise your commitment of time and effort to progress further. This is an excellent standard to reach that will enable you to play competitive tennis for as long as you wish to and to enjoy competing in high level club competition. You will still be able to follow a career path away from tennis whilst hopefully retain a strong interest in the sport. You may also wish to consider a career in tennis as a coach.

PERFORMANCE PLAYERS Regional / National Level Players (Top County Players)	
Where would I play?	U8-U10: Most likely a club with a targeted performance training set up and possible indoor access. You might train at multiple venues. U11-U14: As above but some players could be selected to attend Regional Player Development Centres (RPDC). U15-U18: Highly likely to train at a National Training Centre or at a centre offering tailored performance training.
What sort of coaching would I receive?	U8-U10: Group coaching with players who are a similar age level and who have similar aspirations. Ideally this should be in small groups with 1-1 coaching 1-2 times per week U11-U18: Group coaching with players who are a similar playing level and who have similar aspirations. 1-1 coaching 2-3 times per week.
Who might my coach be?	U8-U18: A Coach who has extensive experience working with other players of this level. Someone who is committed to watching you compete, set goals and assists you with other off court aspects of the game such as strength and fitness and tournament scheduling.
How often would I train?	U8-U10: 3-4 times per week (5-8 hours per week). U11-U14: 3-5 times per week (6-10 hours per week). U15-U18: 4-6 times per week (10-15 hours per week).
What level would I compete at?	U8-U10: You would be one of the best players in your county and play regional and national level competitions. U11-U14: LTA grade 2-1 events, be one of the top players in county teams and starting to look at playing some tournaments abroad U15-U18: Tennis Europe Junior Tour and ITF events at home and abroad. LTA grade 1 events, adult county tennis and division one county league tennis as well and being a top player in your county age group team.
How much commitment is required playing tennis at this level?	This involves huge levels of commitment from both player and parents. Often significant time as well as costs are involved. Playing matches most weekends and in school holidays will involve significant travelling, often the need to stay away from home, sometimes abroad. You simply do not reach this level without large sacrifices being made.
What tennis offers at this level	The enjoyment and pressures of being one of the best players in your age group in the country. The potential to play competitively in GB and abroad (starting to see the world and get some great life experiences). The possibility to make a living from tennis perhaps through competing and after that through becoming a top-level coach. As you get older the ability to enjoy top club or county level tennis throughout your life. You may consider selecting a university place in GB or abroad which will help further your tennis skills. This is an excellent standard to reach that most never will attain - enabling you to play competitive tennis for as long as you wish, and no doubt develop skills and friendships that you keep for life. You will still be able to follow a career path away from tennis whilst hopefully retaining a strong interest in the sport. You may wish to consider a career in tennis as a coach which will help improve standards by you passing on your experience and expertise.

ELITE PLAYERS* Top National / International Level	
Where would I play?	U8-U9: As detailed under Regional / National Level Players above (no National/International events are available at this age). U10-U14: LTA RPDC venue or at a centre offering tailored performance training (maybe overseas). Through talent identification and competitive results your high standard of play will become increasingly evident. U15-U18: A national training centre such as Loughborough or Sterling, or an academy overseas.
What sort of coaching would I receive?	U10-U14: Group coaching in small groups (4-6 players) and regular 1-1 lessons and some 1-2 lessons. U15-U18: Group coaching in groups (4-6 players) and regular 1-2 lessons and some 1-1 lessons.
Who might my coach be?	U10-U18: Coach/es with experience of the game at the highest junior levels and beyond.
How often would I train?	U10-U14: 4-6 times per week (9-15 hours per week). U15-U18: 5-6 times per week (12-20 hours per week).
What level would I compete at?	U10-U14: LTA grade 1, Tennis Europe Junior Tour, ITF, division one county league tennis and some senior county tennis. You will be the top payer in your county team age group and most likely play up several age groups as well. U15-U18: LTA grade 1, U18 ITF, Futures, men's/ladies' County Cup.
How much commitment is required playing tennis at this level?	HUGE AMOUNTS. Tennis will consume most of your life. You will need regular time away from school or to train at a venue that offers both schooling and tennis. You will regularly compete abroad and be away from family a fair amount. You will most likely sacrifice many other life experiences throughout your tennis journey to be able to maintain this ELITE level. Commitment, sacrifice and very hard work are three ingredients that are required as an ELITE tennis player trying to become one of the world's best!
What tennis offers at this level	A very good living if you reach the world's top 100. Superstar status and huge wealth if you reach the world's top 20. A potential career path as a top national coach or administrator if you reach the top 1,000 in the world. You will be talented and committed and will have had a range of experiences most cannot imagine which will shape the rest of your life. However, such dedication is likely to impact on other career and education opportunities. You may consider selecting a university place in America which will help further your tennis skills and there is proof that many top players have come out of the American university system. Opportunities will be available after your playing career to consider roles connected with tennis in coaching, administration and the media. Hopefully you will retain a love of the game and continue playing recreationally or in lower intensity Seniors competition.

**If you reach this level, you will be increasingly aware of your standard from the age of 11 upwards. You will be one of a select few players in the country within your age group. There will be many people wanting you to train at their centre and you will almost certainly be offered significant funding support from LTA (or other sources) to assist with training and competing opportunities.*

COACH QUALIFICATIONS – A PARENT’S GUIDE

Who should coach my child?	<p>Firstly, you should look for a suitably qualified coach. In GB they are most likely to be an LTA accredited or accredited + coach. This qualification provides reassurance that they not only have appropriate coaching skills but also are periodically checked for safeguarding purposes and have basic first aid training. The best way to find a coach is via an LTA registered tennis place to play. The registration process demands that only qualified coaches or helpers overseen by qualified coaches are permitted. Most clubs will be LTA registered but do check.</p> <p>As your child’s playing standard progresses it is important that your coach has the ability and experience to help their development. It is therefore likely that your child will have a number of coaches along their tennis journey, particularly if they aspire to county level or above. If you have one key coach but attend county or regional training with other coaches, they should provide feedback to your key coach.</p> <p>Finally it is important that coach and player understand each other and work positively together. This is as vital as qualifications and experience.</p> <p>Below we outline the LTA coach qualifications.</p>
Level 1 LTA Assistant	Trained to deliver on-court assistance with group coaching sessions mainly with tennis for U8-U10 age groups. They must be supervised (line of sight overview) by a more senior coach. Players aged 16 and older can apply to do this course.
Level 2 LTA Instructor	Trained to deliver quality group coaching sessions to beginners, both children and adults primarily in accordance with LTA products including LTA Youth, Cardio Tennis, Tennis 4 Kids.
Level 3 LTA Coach	Can offer a broad range of coaching roles including group and individual sessions. Will have received training to work on longer term technical and tactical development. A sound all-round coach likely to be working as a full time professional.
Level 4 LTA Senior Participation Coach	Will normally be a head coach in a club capable not only of a wide range of on-court coaching but also of setting up suitable and sustainable coaching programmes within a club, school or park environment. They may manage a team of other coaches. Likely to prioritise participation but will also be able to identify performance players and ensure they are offered an appropriate programme.
Level 4 LTA Senior Performance Coach	A Senior Performance Coach will work full time in a performance environment and will have more direct experience of assisting higher level performance players and be trained to have an awareness of 14 and under world junior standards.
Level 5 LTA Master Participation Coach	A highly experienced coach working at the very highest level of club coaching with significant expertise working in all tennis environments. May be running their own business, heavily involved with management of a larger club, overseeing a team of coaches or involved with other aspects of tennis administration in addition to on court work.
Level 5 LTA Master Performance Coach	A Master Performance Coach will have significant experience of working with high performance players of county, regional, national and international level. Their focus is on daily improvement of players and they have qualified to be able to take them to International Junior Level. They will work primarily in a Performance Centre.