

General Info

Tennis is a great sport for individuals and for teams of all ages. In the USTA program, you meet new people and build friendships while pitting your tennis skills against each other. A good set of rules is a major component in maintaining an environment of healthy competition and good sportsmanship. The first principle of The Code is that courtesy is expected as tennis is a game that requires cooperation and courtesy. In the LA Area we expect that all players and captains will exhibit good sportsmanship and respect each other (on and off the court). Our matches are governed by the following sets of rules, and every captain (and player) should be familiar with them because questions invariably come up which can usually be answered in one of these documents (the below rules can be found on our website):

National and Sectional: 2022 USTA and SoCal League Regulations

Friend at Court

The Code: The Players' Guide for unofficiated Matches

Local: 2022 Los Angeles Area Local League Rules (LLR) and Supplement for each season

SEE LA AREA SUPPLEMENT for the league match format, the minimum number of players required to be registered prior to the Initial Roster Deadline in order to be included in the local league schedule, and important dates for the current season.

SEE <https://www.ustasocal.com/adult/leagues/los-angeles> for detailed information on registration, NTRP ratings, rules and various other information and announcements. NOTE: All players must follow the necessary COVID-19 protocols required by the County, City and facilities. Protocols will differ by facility. If you have COVID, COVID symptoms or have been exposed to COVID, please do not play in a USTA match.

For any additional questions and/or clarifications on the rules, please contact one of the LA League Coordinators:

Michelle Kramer: 818-425-0376

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General Reminders for Match Play

1. Players must be registered for the team on TennisLink before playing in a match.
2. Captains/Acting Captains are responsible for proper sportsmanship by their team members and spectators. The Home Captain will advise if spectators are permitted during league play.
3. No coaching is allowed in any LA Area match – this includes text messages and emails.
4. Cell phones must be turned off or turned to silent mode. It is assumed that if you are checking your phone that you are receiving coaching. A ringing cell phone is a hindrance, and the opponent may immediately stop play and claim the point.

5. The Coman Tiebreak Rotation (change ends after the first point and every 4 points thereafter) will be used for all tiebreaks (set and match tiebreak) in all matches (doubles and singles).
6. Home teams are to provide courts. Visitors are to provide match balls. (Any USTA approved ball may be used for USTA League matches).
7. Home teams are not required to provide warm-up courts, but as a courtesy, if able to secure for visiting team, the home team should do so. If there is fee for warm-up court, the home team may request payment from visiting team. If warm-up courts are not available, the first 15 minutes of match time will be used for warm up. No warm up courts may be reserved prior to the match at LA Pay facilities (with exception of early mornings at Griffith-Riverside and Westchester), but if there are open courts at the facility, teams may use such open courts for warm up.
8. Do not enlist the aid of spectators to assist with a call and/or to prove your point. If there are line disputes, the players may request that the captains or other volunteers (one from each team), if available, stand at each net post and serve as Line Monitors. The Line Monitors are responsible for calls on their side of the court – the court is divided lengthwise. Line Monitors can only confirm or overrule calls on their side of the court and **ONLY** if asked by the players. The Line Monitor's call is final. Line monitors may only be used at facilities that allow spectators or allow players to remain on site once match is completed. Line Monitors should only be used in extreme situations – players are strongly encouraged to resolve court disputes themselves.
9. Time Rules During Match: 15 minute default time (once courts are available)
10 minute warm-up; 15 minutes if warm up courts were not available
90 seconds to change ends (except continuous play required after 1st game of a set and during all tiebreaks)
20 seconds between points
2 minutes between sets
3 minutes for medical timeout (except bleeding timeout which is maximum of 15 minutes)
10. All LA Area matches are considered to be Timed Matches. If a match can't be completed in the allotted time and court is no longer available, the below Timed Match Procedure must be followed:
 - Play until the end of allotted match time (try to finish any game in progress).
 - If the game cannot be finished, the player/team that is ahead in the game wins the game.
 - If the set cannot be finished, the player/team that is ahead by one game, wins the set.
 - If a match tiebreak cannot be finished, the player/team that is ahead by one point, wins the match tiebreak and the match.
 - If it's even a "One Point Tiebreak" is played to decide the winner of the game, set or match tiebreak.
 - For a "One Point Tiebreak", serving rotation continues:
 - Doubles: Receiving team chooses which player will receive.
 - Singles: Receiving player chooses which side to receive.

-- Mixed Doubles: The receiver will always be the same gender as the server.

- The score is entered exactly as it finished, choose "Timed Match" and designate a winning team [Note: A Match Tiebreak score is entered as 1-0 and a Set Tiebreak score is entered as 7-6 or 6-7].

11. Captains are encouraged to play each player on their roster at least 2 times per league season.

Communication Before and on Match Day

A. Captains must confirm the matches at least 3 days before the match day. If you are not receiving a response from your opponent, please contact the League Coordinators.

B. If the captain or co-captain will not be present at the match, an Acting Captain should be designated and his/her contact info provided to opposing captain. The Acting Captain must have the lineup, pay the court fees (if required), etc.

C. If a team needs to default a line, they must contact the opposing captain as soon as possible. If you need to notify opposing captain of any changes, including not having full team, within 24 hours of the match, please call or text them.

D. Entire team defaults for a match are unacceptable and poor sportsmanship. Only 4 players are needed to play a valid match (2 lines in a 3-line format; 3 lines in a 5-line format) or 3 players in the 40 & Over local league format using 1 singles/2 doubles format. If a team is not able to field the minimum number of players needed for a match, the Captain must notify the Coordinators – failure to do so will result in possible sanctions, including the captain and players being barred from participation in a future league. Unavailability of strongest player(s) is not a valid reason for defaulting a match.

E. Captains should exchange team scorecards simultaneously.

F. A line default can be called after 15 minutes from when the match is scheduled, called, a court is available, and a player has not arrived.

G. If a team defaults a line with no notification, the opponents have the option of adjusting their line-up, even if the line-ups have already been exchanged.

H. If a player becomes available after the default has been confirmed, the match can still be played (and counted) if both captains/acting captains agree.

I. Captains/acting captains must compare scores with each other before leaving the facility. Please make sure correct names (including last names) are on the score sheet.

J. Generally, the winning team enters the score in TennisLink but either captain or any player can do so. Scores must be entered within 48 hours of the completion of the team match. Teams will be given a warning if score has not been entered in a timely manner – the next time one of these teams fails to enter the score within 48 hours, a Double Team Default may be entered by the Coordinators.

K. When entering scores in TennisLink, the winner's score is always entered first. The match tie-break (in lieu of third set) is recorded as 1-0.

L. If there is an error in the score entry on TennisLink, please contact the Coordinators via email (and cc your opponent) and they will correct the score.

Scheduling

When requesting a team number, Captains must inform the coordinators of the following:

Home courts

Preferred days and time for home matches

Team bye dates – dates when team can't play match either at home or away.

Facility blackout dates

Schedules will be randomly generated by TennisLink and published on TennisLink. Once the preliminary schedule has been published, the captains will be given 7 days to reschedule matches, home or away. [Note: Due to the holidays, more time is normally given for schedules published in late December] Captains should check with teammates as to availability for the matches and if there is a date when it is clear that fielding a team will be difficult, the captain should work cooperatively with opposing captain to reschedule the match. Teams must do their best to complete all scheduled matches. If, after final schedule is published, a team needs to reschedule a team match due to insufficient number of players, the new date and time must be agreed upon within one week of the original match date and must be played before the end of the local league season or it will be recorded as a Team Default against the team that asked for a reschedule. The team that is asked to reschedule may impose the below penalties against the team asking for a reschedule (unless it falls under No Penalty situation):

- A 1-line penalty will be imposed for a 3 doubles line format. The #3D line will be defaulted.
- A 1-line penalty will be imposed for a 1 single and 2 doubles line format. The team that was asked to reschedule will decide if either the #1S or 2D line will be defaulted.
- A 2-line penalty will be imposed for 5-line formats. The team that was asked to reschedule will decide if (a) both singles lines; (b) #2D and #3D; or (c) #2S and #3D lines will be defaulted. Note: If the match needs to be rescheduled again or needs to be postponed due to unplayable conditions, penalties will carry over.

Requests to reschedule a match due to the following reasons will not be subject to penalties:

1. "Unplayable conditions" (see below): heat, rain, unhealthful air quality, etc.
2. When a team has a minimum of 4 players representing the LA area at USTA/SCTA Sectionals or Nationals.
3. When the facility becomes unavailable due to an unplanned event. Note: If the visiting team facility is available, the match should be played at that facility and any fees should be paid by the original home team.
4. When the teams arrive at a facility, but the courts are not available, despite the home captain having booked them. Note: If visiting facility is nearby and available, the match should be played there with the original home team paying any court fees.

Unavailability of strongest player is not a valid reason for rescheduling a team match.

Unplayable conditions: Unplayable conditions are those that make it impossible to play (or continue playing) which may include, but are not limited to: heat, rain, fire, ash, unhealthful air, flooding, state of emergency that prevents players from arriving safely at the match. Captains must make decisions using their own discretion and keeping the health of their players in mind. Matches that are not started due to Unplayable Conditions will be considered "Postponed" matches. Any previously announced line defaults for a postponed match will be voided.

Heat Rule: A match may be rescheduled if air temperature of 95 degrees or higher is forecast on www.accuweather.com at the time and location of the match. The decision to reschedule due to heat forecast may be agreed to by both captains the day before the scheduled match –this will allow teams playing out of

public facilities to cancel the courts. The Heat Rule will not apply once a match has started – it must be played to its completion.

Rain: A match may be rescheduled if accuweather.com forecast has at least 70% chance of rain 2 hours prior to match time or during match time at the match location. The decision to reschedule due to rain forecast may be agreed to by both captains the day before the scheduled match – this will allow teams playing out of public facilities to cancel the courts. On the day of the match, the Home Captain is responsible for verifying that the courts are playable at least one hour before match time. If courts are dry one hour before, the match should be played. If it begins to rain during a match, the match will need to be completed at another time, with the match picking up where it left off. If a match has been rescheduled for any reason, teams must inform the League Coordinators of the new time, date and location so that TennisLink can be updated.

Staggered Matches: If a team's home facility does not have enough courts to play all lines at the same time, the captain must notify the league coordinators and opposing captains prior to their first home match when each line will play, i.e. "Doubles at 1:00pm and Singles no later than 3:00pm". Line-ups for ALL lines must be exchanged prior to the start of the earlier matches.

Recent National/Sectional Regulations & Clarifications

1. Players must be 18 years of age before playing in the USTA Adult League program.
2. Adult 40 & Over Format for Sectionals and Nationals will be 1 line of Singles and 3 lines of doubles. Local LA league will be 1 line of Singles and 2 lines of Doubles.
3. Eligibility to advance to Nationals for self-rated and computer-rated appealed players requires playing at least 4 matches on the same team at the same level/age group. No defaults received will count. Note: SoCal Sectionals will only require 2 matches played (one of which can be a default received).
4. If a match score is not entered within 48 hours of the completion of the match, the League Coordinator has the authority to record it as a Double Team Default.
5. Weekend/Weekday Policy – Minimum of 4 weekday teams needed in order to be considered as a separate area/flight with the winner advancing to Sectionals. Eligible leagues are: Adult 40 & Over, Adult 18 & Over, Tri-Level and SCTA Fall Doubles.
6. NTRP Dynamic DQ, etc.: If a self-rated or computer-rated appealed player is dynamically disqualified, all matches played at that level will be reversed in all "live" leagues, including Mixed Doubles. Matches played at or above promoted level will stand.
7. Wildcard for Sectionals -- If a wildcard is needed it will go to the best second and/or third place team in the Section with the highest games won percentage.
8. See SoCal Section League Regulations for procedures followed to determine flight winner in case of tie, incomplete matches, full team defaults, etc.
9. See SoCal Section League Regulations regarding special rules for Plus leagues and Open Level leagues.
10. Medical Time Out (MTO) -- One Medical Time Out (MTO) for each treatable medical condition is allowed during warmup and one during the match. Only one MTO for loss of condition (heat related issues such as cramps) is allowed even if it's in different parts of the body. Each treatable condition is a maximum of 3 minutes, except for bleeding. Bleeding time outs are a maximum of 15 min. (Visible bleeding must be completely stopped).