



TENNIS

What is the Sport?

Tennis is a racket sport, where players hit a small ball over a net. The ball is allowed to bounce only once in the designated court area. If it bounces more than once, lands outside the court or doesn't clear the net points are awarded. The aim is to hit the ball across the net in such a way as to stop the opponent returning it. The game is traditionally played as singles or doubles on either grass, clay or indoor courts.

This resource uses games that could be tried out at home, in the garden or in a large open space. We hope that churches will create a safe bookable 'sports' space for those in its local community to enjoy, especially those with no or small gardens. These are ideal to be used by families or small groups of young people as per government guidelines.

Advice around how to run such a space and abide by current government guidelines can be found here <https://www.gloucester.anglican.org/sports> It is important to read these as they will be kept up to date.

Further advice on these activities are posted on <https://www.youtube.com/c/DiocesefofGloucester>

You will need:

Something to 'hit' – e.g. ball, balloon, rolled up sock. Your choice is influenced by what you have available, your skill level (balloons are much slower!) and if you're playing inside your house or outside.

Something to 'hit with' – e.g. racket, your hand, frying pan. Again choose depending on your skill level, where you're playing and what you have available.

Something to 'hit over' – e.g. a line of chairs, string/rope tied between two items, or a pop-up net if possible.

Something to 'mark a court' – e.g. chalk (if on tarmac), rope, jumpers, rope/string, cones

You can play:

At home inside or outside, depending on space.

At a local park, beach, open space, perhaps a space that a church has created in its grounds

A tennis court

Remember:

- * Drink lots of water during and after
- * Wear clothing suitable for the weather (hat, sun-cream if it's sunny)
- * Wear clothing and footwear suitable for physical activity
- * Stick to current physical distancing restrictions and be careful of others when playing in public

Warm-up:

- Jog on the spot or around an area (heart beating and legs moving)
- Star jumps (heart beating)
- Punching the sky (arms moving)
- Arm windmills (arms moving)
- Throw and catch a ball with a partner, if from the same household, or against a wall (hand-eye coordination)
- Stretching

'T' Time trial

Make an obstacle course out of household items or things you can find in the park. Each player has to complete the course, whilst either hitting a balloon with their hand or bouncing up a sock-ball or tennis ball on their racket. Time each person to see who completes the course quickest. This could also be done as a team relay.

Make it easier: players balance the balloon or ball, instead of hitting or bouncing it. Use easier and/or fewer obstacles.

Make it harder: if the balloon or ball hits the floor the player has to return to the start, make the course harder (maybe by going underneath something) or task players to use their non-dominant hand.

Pause for thought

Spend 30 seconds looking around your surroundings. What amazing things can you see, hear, smell, touch which you are thankful for? Christians believe that God created our amazing world and the animals and people in it – why not say a quick 'thank you' to him?

‘E’ Every step you take...

In pairs, have your players face each other about 2m apart with 1 ball between them. Players throw the ball between them with player 1 standing still the whole game. Player 2 takes a step backwards each time the ball is caught furthering the gap between them. After 30 seconds, see which team has the furthest gap. Swap roles and do the same. Then, introduce a racket so player 1 now hits the ball to player 2 to catch.

Make it easier: Don't introduce the racquet, but swap partners or make it so that if the ball is dropped at any point they have to return to their starting positions 2m apart. Introduce the racquet but allow one bounce before catching the ball.

Make it harder: If the ball is dropped at any point, that pair must return to their starting position 2m apart and start again. Player 2 faces away from player 1, who must shout 'go' as they throw/hit the ball which is the cue for player 2 to turn around and catch it.

Pause for thought

All of us like to be encouraged and when you're playing tennis as a team or family, you might encourage someone to try really hard, to play a good shot, to pick up the most balls. Think about the games you've played so far, what encouraging thing can you say about each of you players which you saw them demonstrate?

‘N’ Not there!

Someone feeds the balls on one side of the net, while the rest of the players on the other side hit them back. Using string, cones or other items mark out a small square on the feeder's side of the court. This square is the black hole and if the ball bounces in the square, then that individual loses a point. Start with 3 each. After each player has had a turn at hitting a few balls, increase the size of the 'black hole' making it more difficult! Play until one player loses all 3 points.

Make it easier: Remove the net, keep the 'black hole' the same size each time but just move its location around the court.

Make it harder: Have several 'black holes'. Players have to hit a certain shot e.g. backhand. Players lose a point if they hit it out of the court or into the net.

Pause for thought

The Bible says that God is a 'provider', someone who gives us what we need. What is the difference between 'want' and 'need'? Think about some of the needs people have in the world right now? Energy for doctors, wisdom for the government or your school, water/medicine/food for those in poverty. You might like to spend some time asking God to provide for them.

‘N’ ‘net-monster’

Have an adult one side of the net, the net monster, and the rest of the players on the other side in a line, side by side but following physical distancing rules. The adult throws a ball to one of the players to hit back over the net. If they miss or it goes 'out', the player loses a 'limb' – be sensitive to any players with physical disabilities. Keep going until they have lost both arms, then they join the 'monster' and can try and catch balls that are hit to make it even harder for the remaining players.

Make it easier: Instead of hitting the ball, players catch it. Players could be different distances from the net if playing with a mix of ages or catch one-handed or with their non-dominant hand.

Make it harder: Players have to play a specific shot e.g. forehand, backhand, volley. Have players face away from the 'monster' and then, when their name is called, they have to spin around and hit it (the ball not the monster!).

Pause for thought

In the Bible, it says that we should love our neighbours, but this is everyone, not just the people we live near. Have a chat about someone your family know and come up with a plan to make them smile this week e.g. sending a card, giving them a cupcake, phoning them etc.

‘I’ In the bin!

Give everyone a racket and some balls and stand around a bucket or container making a circle. The aim is to hit all your balls/sock-balls etc. into the bin as soon as you can. You will need to work on power, accuracy and as a team. The ball can bounce first, or go straight in.

Make it easier: Stand closer to the bin. Throw the balls instead of hitting them.

Make it harder: Stand further back from the bin.
Have a smaller bin.

Pause for thought

Lockdown has meant lots of the plans we had, haven't happened. Chat about what ideas you have for after-lockdown. You might want to make a list of all the things you'd like to do, places you'd like to visit, people you'd like to see. This will also give you something to look forward to.

'S' Squash that ball!

Get in pairs, with 1 ball and 1 racket between them. Player 1 has the ball and stands at one end of your space. You will need a rope/stick/cone to mark the other end of your court. Player 2 has the racket and stands 2 meters in front of player 1, facing away from them (the same direction) with their legs slightly apart. When player 1 shouts 'go', the ball is rolled between player 2's legs and player 2 then has to run and squash the ball with their racket before it reaches the end of your court. If they squash it, it's a point to player 2, if they don't it's a point to player 1. Play best of 5 and then swap roles.

Make it easier: Roll the ball at a slow speed. Count down from 3-2-1 to give the runner more warning.

Make it harder: Don't warn the 'squashing player' of when you're about to roll the ball, just roll it. Make the 'squashing player' face the 'roller', so they have to turn round and run.

Pause for thought

All of us make mistakes, in sport, in our homework, in our relationships with others and in many other ways. It's not always easy saying 'sorry', but have a think about something you might need to say sorry for (adults too!) and share with each other. It might be that you want to say sorry to God for something too. When we say sorry to God, he promises to forgive us and to help us live better lives in the future.

Cooldown:

- A light jog or walk, whilst moving the arms like windmills
- Stretches
- Remember to keep drinking!