

Houston Tennis Association

The Rules for League Play—2011

The following set of “Rules for League Play” (the Rules) has been adopted by the Houston Tennis Association (HTA) for use by all participants in League play sanctioned by HTA.

Players shall be responsible for educating themselves and following the Rules as established by the HTA. The Code—a guide for unofficiated matches outlining tradition and etiquette—shall be followed at all times.

The definitions of terms used in this document are included as a Glossary.

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GLOSSARY

7-Point Set Tiebreak: The 7-Point Set Tiebreak is played when the players reach 6-all in a set. The first player or team to win seven points by a margin of at least two wins the set 7-6. See also Set Tiebreak.

10-Point Match Tiebreak: The 10-Point Match Tiebreak is played in matches in lieu of the deciding final set. The first player or team to win 10 points by a margin of at least two wins the final set 1-0 and the match.

Appeal: Request for reconsideration of a previous decision, determination, or finding.

Benchmark Rated Player: A player who advanced to championship or was disqualified, by whom other players' NTRP computer ratings are calculated.

Benchmark Rating: A computer rating determined by the USTA NTRP Computer Rating System for a player using a combination of their dynamic rating and their rating derived at championships.

Championship Level: Any League competition held beyond local league competition or playoffs.

“The Code”: A summary of the procedures that custom dictates players follow. [USTA guidelines](#) require players to follow “[The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficial Matches](#)” in all matches without officials.

Coman Tiebreak Procedure: The Coman Tiebreak Procedure requires the tiebreak to be played with the players changing ends after the first point and thereafter every fourth point. Scoring is the same as a traditional tiebreak. For additional information, see the [USTA's Frequently Asked Questions about tiebreaks](#).

Community Tennis Association (CTA): Any incorporated, geographically defined, not-for-profit, volunteer-based organization that supports or provides programs which promote and develop the growth of tennis.

Computer Rating: An NTRP rating assigned to Adult and Senior players to the 1/100th of a point at year-end that reflects level of ability. (See also *Current NTRP Rating*.)

Competitive: A match where the outcome is unpredictable.

Compatible: A match where the outcome is predictable, with the higher rated player winning routinely.

Current NTRP Rating: A rating generated by the USTA NTRP computer rating system based on two or more matches. (See also *Computer Rating*.)

Default: When a player or team fails to appear or is removed by an administrator or tournament official for misconduct or violation of regulations.

Disqualification: Action taken to remove from a team a player deemed ineligible to participate.

Dynamic Rating: A rating associated with a player that has the potential to change with every match played by the player. (See also *Current NTRP Rating*.)

Early Start League (ESL): A local league season that commences prior to January 1 of the league year. An ESL will use early start (midyear) ratings to determine NTRP level.

Eligibility: Qualifications to play.

Fifteen-Minute Default Rule: Any player—or entire team—that arrives 15 minutes past the regularly scheduled start time will be defaulted, and the opposing player or team will receive credit for the win as having played the defaulted matches and won 6-0, 6-0.

Flight: A group of teams competing at a specified NTRP level within a local league or Championship competition where every team in that group plays every other team to declare a winner. Also see [Subflight](#).

Forfeit: See *Default*.

Grievance: Written formal complaint regarding an alleged violation of a regulation or procedure.

Houston Tennis Association (HTA): The HTA is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit Community Tennis Association (CTA) in Houston, Texas, that administers HTA league tennis, USTA league tennis, WTT league tennis, junior and adult USTA sanctioned tournaments, Junior Team Tennis, and National Junior Tennis and Learning.

HTA League: Both USTA and HTA memberships are required. A program for men and women in which teams comprised of players with the same NTRP rating (with some exceptions) are established. Players must reach 18 years of age during the calendar year of the competition to be eligible.

Individual Line Match: Any singles or doubles match played as part of a team match. Also see [Team Match](#).

League Committee: A committee assigned to oversee the functioning and make decision regarding the direction of the organization's League tennis program. Both the HTA and USTA Texas have league committees.

League Coordinator: Person appointed or hired to implement and administer the League.

League Progression: Local league team winners have the opportunity to advance through area, sectional, and national championships competition.

Level of Play: NTRP skill levels offered in the Program.

Lineup: A lineup is a list of players from a roster taking part in a particular team match. Players for each individual line match will be listed in a lineup.

Local League: A team competition in a specified geographical area that applies specific local league regulations and consists of NTRP level(s) with a minimum of two or more teams per NTRP level. A local league may choose to divide any or all NTRP levels into flights and subflights. Where flights or subflights are used, a playoff structure may be established to determine a champion.

Match Tiebreak: Used in place of a third set, a match tiebreak is the first to 10 by a margin of two. Also see [Set Tiebreak](#).

Midyear Rating: A published NTRP level generated in the middle of the league year. ESL (Early Start League) uses midyear ratings to determine level.

Mixed Doubles: Mixed Doubles is a doubles match in which each team is comprised of a female player and a male player. Mixed Doubles uses a combined NTRP level to form a team of a male and female.

New Player: One who does not have an NTRP computer rating (generated within the last three years).

No-Ad Scoring: A scoring system that is the same as the traditional system except that when the score reaches 40-40, only one additional point is played to determine the winner of that game. In Mixed Doubles, a male server serves this point to the male receiver, and the female player serves this point to the female receiver. In all other events, the receiver chooses the side from which the server must serve.

NTRP: National Tennis Rating Program. The system rates players by ability levels ranging from 1.5 to 7.0. Refer to the [USTA NTRP information page](#) for details.

NTRP Level: Generic term advising the minimum NTRP level in increments of .5 at which a player may participate.

NTRP Disqualification Criteria: Having reached disqualification level three times, as designated in the USTA NTRP Computer Rating System Procedures, during the local league competition and/or any level of championship competition below the national championships in the adult or senior division.

NTRP Computer Methodology Procedures: The document establishing procedures governing the USTA NTRP Computer Rating System. Refer to the [USTA NTRP information page](#) for details.

Numeric Scoring: Numeric scoring consists of substituting “zero,” “one,” “two,” and “three” for “Love,” “15,” “30,” and “40.” Deuce may be announced by “Deuce” or by “3-all”. When language is a barrier, hand signals are often used with a clenched fist indicating “Deuce.”

Player: The individual USTA and HTA Member who registers on a team.

Postponed Match: Either a team or individual match that could not begin as originally scheduled. Due to weather conditions or other considerations, a match may be postponed by mutual agreement between the team captains provided no point has yet been counted in the match.

Rating: See Computer Rating, Benchmark Rating, Self-Rating, Dynamic Rating, and NTRP Level.

Retirement: Occurs when an individual match has started and a player is unable to continue due to injury, loss of condition, or emergency. Retirements are entered in TennisLink with the final game count for NTRP calculation purposes (e.g., 2-6, 1-3) and the system will automatically credit the individual receiving the retirement with sufficient games as to make them the winner of the match (2-6, 6-3, 1-0.)

Roster: A roster is a list of the entire team.

Round Robin: Each team plays every other team in its flight or subflight.

Self-Rating: A rating for a new player entering the program determined in accordance with the National Tennis Rating Program (NTRP) Guidelines during the on-line player registration process. The player uses the NTRP guidelines to select the level of play that the player believes best describes the player's ability.

Set Break: The two minute period between the completion of the last game of a set and the beginning of a succeeding set. Breaks taken at other times should be limited to true emergencies.

Set Tiebreak: The Set Tiebreak is the 7-Point Tiebreak Game that is played to decide a set when the set score reaches 6-all. The winner is the first to reach seven points or more by a margin of two. Also see [Match Tiebreak](#).

Single Elimination Format: In this tournament format, once you lose you are out and do not get to play any additional matches.

Subflight: Flights may also be divided into subflights as needed.

Suspended Match: A match, either individual or team, that is stopped after the first point has been played. The team captains will mutually agree to reschedule a suspended match. The match will resume with the same players, the same service order, and at the same score.

Team Captain: Appointed to represent the team and perform administrative duties.

Team Match: (Local team match) A number of individual singles and doubles or any combination as determined by the local league. Also see [Individual Line Match](#).

TennisLink: TennisLink (www.usta.com/tennislink) is a user-friendly web-based system designed as a means to provide secure communication and flow of information between the USTA and its members via the Internet.

TennisLink allows users to:

- Register teams and players.
- Enter and confirm match scores.
- Access team rosters, schedules, and standings.
- Apply for and renew USTA memberships.

United States Tennis Association (USTA): The [United States Tennis Association](#) is a not-for-profit organization that is the national governing body for the sport of tennis.

USTA League: A program for men and women in which teams comprised of players with the same NTRP rating are established. USTA membership is required. Players must reach 18 years of age during the calendar year of the competition. Teams advance from local to district, sectional, and national competition.

USTA Section: One of 17 defined areas that comprise the USTA.

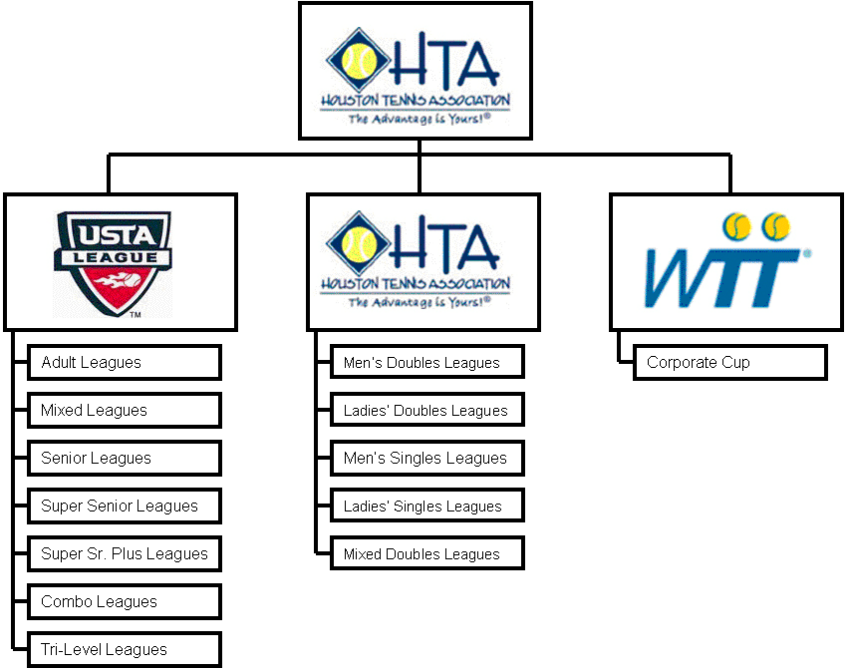
World Team Tennis Corporate League (WTT): World Team Tennis Corporate League is a league designed for organizations or companies. Organizations and companies form teams to compete against one another in team events.

Year-End Rating: A published NTRP rating generated at the end of the league year.

HOUSTON TENNIS ASSOCIATION LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION CHART

The [Houston Tennis Association](http://www.hta.com) (HTA) is a Community Tennis Association administering three types (brands) of leagues in the Houston Metropolitan Area: United States Tennis Association (USTA) Leagues, HTA Leagues, and World TeamTennis (WTT) Corporate Leagues.

Each League, although similar in some respects, utilizes its own set of rules. The HTA leagues will follow USTA league rules in cases the HTA rules do not specifically address, therefore familiarity with USTA rules is useful. The rules contained within this document are regulations governing HTA leagues. For rules and regulations governing USTA leagues, refer to the USTA's website (www.usta.com). For rules and regulations governing WTT Corporate leagues, refer to the WTT's website (www.wtt.com).



NATIONAL TENNIS RATING PROGRAM (NTRP)

The [National Tennis Rating Program](#) (NTRP) is the official system for determining the levels of competition for USTA League. The USTA NTRP Computer Rating System assigns ratings based on play in the local league and at championship level during the current league year. The HTA uses this system to determine placement in HTA league events.

NTRP computer ratings are managed exclusively by the USTA. The HTA does not set or control NTRP ratings. For complete information about NTRP, visit the USTA's NTRP webpage at www.usta.com/Play-Tennis/USTA-League/Information/1237_NTRP/.

1.00 HTA LEAGUE REGULATIONS

All 2011 USTA League Regulations, with exceptions as noted, shall apply to the HTA Adult Leagues.

1.01 PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

1.01(a) All players must meet the following requirements:

- (1) Have a USTA membership that is current through the end of the Local League season.
- (2) Have an HTA membership that is current.
- (3) Must reach 18 years of age during the calendar year of the competition.

1.01(b) A player will be considered illegal, and disqualified from any match, whereby:

- (1) The player plays an HTA league match for that particular season prior to joining HTA for that calendar year.
- (2) The player is not listed in TennisLink prior to playing a match.

(3) The player does not play the line listed when lineups were exchanged. Also see [1.03\(j\)](#).

1.01(c) A player may play on multiple teams in a league, so long as the teams are at different NTRP levels.

1.01(d) A player may be added to a team anytime during the league season, so long as the team still has two scheduled matches remaining in the regular season.

1.01(e) Returning HTA or USTA League tennis players begin with their most current NTRP rating, keeping in mind the most current rating may be an early start league rating. A player may also self-rate into the program. See the Frequently Asked Questions items regarding [NTRP ratings](#) for more information.

1.02 LEAGUE SCHEDULE

1.02(a) The HTA leagues play throughout the year as scheduled and posted on the HTA calendar. See the [HTA League Calendar](#) and the [HTA League Website Page](#) for information about current league schedules.

1.02(b) League play will be a round robin format with the possibility of playoffs after round robin play.

1.02(c) A league season's round robin play will be considered completed two weeks after the last scheduled match for the overall league, not necessarily an individual flight or subflight. See Glossary entries for [Flight](#) and [Subflight](#).

1.03 MATCH SCHEDULING AND FORMAT

1.03(a) Each team shall appoint a team captain to handle administrative affairs and represent the team in HTA matters. Each team may also appoint a co-captain.

1.03(b) A captain may only captain one team at a given NTRP league level.

- 1.03(c) Both the captain and the co-captain (if there is one) must have an email address and telephone number in TennisLink.
- 1.03(d) Team captains must contact one another at least four days prior to the scheduled match to discuss the time the match will begin, individual line match times, directions, facility rules that might affect play, and any other pertinent information. Also see items 1.03(e) and 1.03(g).
- 1.03(e) If the home team fails to explain facility rules in writing to the visiting team, resulting in the visiting team player(s) violating a facility rule and thereby resulting in a visiting team individual line match or team match default, such default should be charged against the home team and awarded in favor of the visiting team. Also see the Frequently Asked Questions regarding [facility rules and attire](#) and [captains' responsibilities](#).
- 1.03(f) If teams do not communicate with each other and reach agreement, the League Coordinator will determine the match start and individual line times in accordance with facility rules.
- 1.03(g) The home team captain will decide at what time each individual line match will play in accordance with the rules of the league and facility start times.
- 1.03(h) The home team must provide at least two hard (indoor or outdoor) courts for each team match on the date scheduled. Clay courts are permissible provided the visiting team agrees in writing in advance.
- 1.03(i) A captain, or acting captain, must be present throughout the entire team match. Should a captain need to leave the match before the end of the entire team match, the captain should appoint a teammate to act as captain. The captain should notify the opposing team captain of the acting captain.
- 1.03(j) Lineups must be exchanged simultaneously prior to the start of the first line at the designated match time. All players should be on their assigned courts ready to play.
- 1.03(k) Players must be present and ready to begin line match play no later than 15 minutes after the designated start time according to

the 15-minute default rule. A player arriving more than 15 minutes late to a match may be defaulted by the opposing team even if a court is not available. Also see the Glossary entry for the [Fifteen-Minute Default Rule](#).

1.03(l) Once lineups have been exchanged, players cannot be moved from one line to another. No player may be replaced or substituted except under the following conditions:

- (1) A player becomes ill or injured prior to the first point being played, and an eligible replacement (one not already listed on the lineup) can be made within the default time.
- (2) A player fails to show up, and an eligible replacement (one not already listed on the lineup) can be made within the default time.

1.03(m) It is the responsibility of the visiting team to ensure their players are playing the correct lines on the courts assigned by the home team.

1.03(n) Team captains may request photo identification of players.

1.03(o) Team matches:

- (1) Will consist of four individual matches.
- (2) Will be scored best two out of three sets, with the third set, if required, being a 10-point tiebreak ([Match Tiebreak](#)).
- (3) Will use “no-ad” scoring.
- (4) The Coman tiebreak procedure will be followed for both the set tiebreak and match tiebreak.
- (5) Warm-ups will be limited to five minutes.
- (6) The “spin” for serving/receiving or choice of side shall be done prior to warm-up.
- (7) All warm-ups, including serves, must be taken before the match begins.

- 1.03(p) Home team is responsible for providing one can of new championship-quality USTA-approved yellow tennis balls per line match to be played.
- 1.03(q) Home team is responsible for any fees, including, but not limited to, parking and court fees.
- 1.03(r) All matches are unofficiated and no linesmen or umpires will be provided. "[The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficiated Matches](#)" will be followed.
- 1.03(s) Children must be supervised at all times by someone not participating on court in a match.
- 1.03(t) All players are responsible for providing their own water and other personal supplies during play.
- 1.03(u) Cell phones must be silenced:
- (1) First Offense: Point penalty
 - (2) Second Offense: Game penalty
 - (3) Third Offense: Default of individual line match where hindrance occurred

1.04 COACHING AND SPORTSMANSHIP

- 1.04(a) No coaching is permitted.
- 1.04(b) Players should call the score after each point. If there is disagreement over the score, players should replay only those points that are in dispute. See the section titled, "Scoring," in "[The Code: The Players' Guide for Unofficiated Matches](#)."
- 1.04(c) Spectators may not aid players in making a line call or in determining the correct score.
- 1.04(d) Spectators may quietly watch a match in progress. They should not sit or stand on the court.

- 1.04(e) It is the responsibility of the captains to control the behavior of their teams and teams' spectators. Loud, boisterous, or unsportsmanlike behavior is unacceptable. If a problem arises, players should ask the spectator to refrain from the offensive behavior. If the behavior persists, the team captains should be summoned to handle the situation. If necessary, a grievance should be filed.
- 1.04(f) Disputes should be settled between players as soon as they arise. All points played in good faith will stand. Players are to resolve any dispute themselves. If they cannot, they should do the following:
- (1) The player should inform the opponent of the problem and intention to leave the court to obtain the assistance of the team captain. Racquets should be left on the court if a player must leave the court.
 - (2) The captain should contact the opponent's captain and they should try to resolve the dispute. If the captains are involved in playing a match, the players may have to postpone their play until the captains are available to assist them, or follow rule 1.04(f)(3)(A), below.
 - (3) If the captains and players cannot agree on a resolution to the conflict, the offended player(s) may either:
 - (A) Continue to play the match, but to do so under protest. The score and who was serving at the time of the protest must be indicated on the scorecard with the annotation, "played under protest." At the conclusion of the match, the offended player(s) may or may not file a grievance. If no grievance is filed, the results of the match stand as completed.
 - (B) Stop play, ensuring both captains and the opponents know why. Indicate on the scorecard that the match was stopped in protest, and note the score and who was serving at the time the match was stopped. The offended player or the player's captain should file a grievance. If no grievance is filed within the required timeframe, the match will be scored as a retirement by the offended

player. All points played will be recorded in TennisLink. For information about grievances and the grievance process, see [Section 1.11](#).

1.05 POSTPONED/SUSPENDED/DELAYED MATCHES

1.05(a) Postponed team matches prior to any individual line match commencement:

- (1) Do not postpone for rain until the day of the match, and not before 4:00 p.m. or at a time mutually agreed upon between the two captains. Matches held at staffed facilities will be called in accordance with the rules and management of that facility. If a postponement has not been called, all team members scheduled should arrive at the facility ready to play.
- (2) In the event of postponement prior to commencement, a team will not be held to any defaults given prior to postponement.

1.05(b) Suspended matches after any individual line match has begun:

- (1) Incomplete matches must be continued by the same players and resumed at the exact place—set, game and point—they stood when play was suspended.
- (2) Defaults will stand. Also see the Frequently Asked Question about [make-up matches](#).

1.05(c) Delayed matches:

If both team captains do not agree to suspend play, both teams (all players to play that match) must be available at the site for 30 minutes beyond the scheduled match time. After that period, if the courts remain unplayable, the match is automatically suspended.

1.05(d) Rescheduling:

- (1) Teams will have 48 hours to reschedule a postponed or suspended match with the League Coordinator. Once a make-up match has been rescheduled, teams are committed to play on that date. If a match has not been rescheduled within 48 hours, the League Coordinator will have discretion to select a make-up date.
- (2) Postponed or suspended matches must be played within 14 days of the postponement/suspension unless written permission has been granted from the League Coordinator.
- (3) A new lineup may be given for a rescheduled match so long as the new line-up conforms to [1.05\(b\)](#), above.

1.06 TEAM ROSTERS

- 1.06(a) Team registration will be online through the TennisLink [team registration page](#).
- 1.06(b) Teams will register at the NTRP level (flight) of the majority of its players, with the following exceptions:
- (1) The written consent of the HTA League Coordinator.
 - (2) The team has played in the previous season and won its subflight or flight thereby earning the privilege to play at the next higher NTRP level if desired.
- 1.06(c) A player may be moved from one team to another if the player has not played any matches for that league season.
- 1.06(d) The HTA does not make refunds of registration fees unless the level entered has too few teams/players to allow that level to be scheduled in the upcoming league season.

1.07 TEAM MATCH SCORING

1.07(a) Team Results and Standings:

- (1) Team match results and standings will be determined using the following calculations applied in the order shown:
 - (A) Winner of the most individual lines.
 - (B) Loser of the fewest number of sets.
 - (C) Loser of the fewest number of games.
 - (D) If all calculations are equal after using the preceding scoring methods, the visiting team will be awarded the overall team point based on the presumption the home team should have won because of home court advantage.
- (2) TennisLink will maintain the accurate team standings according to team points won, individual line matches won, fewest sets lost and fewest games lost. In the event teams cannot complete their full schedule before championship play begins, scores will be calculated by percentages of individual matches won to individual matches played.

1.07(b) Recording Team Match Results:

The home team has right of first refusal for entering match results in TennisLink. If the home team has not entered the scores within 24 hours of the conclusion of the final individual line match, they forfeit their right to enter results and the visiting team may enter the results in TennisLink. The team that does not enter the match results is responsible for ensuring the match results have been correctly entered in TennisLink. Match results must be confirmed within 48 hours after the conclusion of the final individual line in TennisLink. For additional information, see the Frequently Asked Questions item regarding the [reporting of match scores](#).

1.07(c)

1.07(c) Disputing Team Match Results:

Match results entered incorrectly may be disputed. When the results are entered, the objecting captain has 48 hours to dispute the results. TennisLink automatically confirms results 48 hours after the results are entered. Failure to dispute results within the time allowance will forfeit an individual's right to protest. Any dispute made beyond 48 hours will be handled in accordance with the rules of TennisLink. For additional information, see the Frequently Asked Questions item regarding [confirming/disputing match scores](#).

1.07(d) Teams must not default more than 25% of scheduled line matches. If a team defaults more than 25% of their individual line matches, the team and captain may face sanctions from HTA ranging from written reprimand to suspension from future league play.

1.07(e) Unless the majority of a team is at the NTRP level in which the team is playing, a team must win 30% of total possible individual lines in order to compete on the same level the next league season.

1.08 FORFEITS/DEFAULTS

A forfeit/default of an individual line match may be taken on any line.

A team defaulting a line in advance of the match should notify the opposing captain no less than four hours before the team match start time. Habitual violators of this rule will be considered using gamesmanship and are subject to sanctions or suspensions from league play.

1.09 CHAMPIONSHIPS

1.09(a) Championship play may be offered to NTRP levels (flights) that contain more than one subflight.

1.09(b) Championship (post season) information will be sent to all captains at the beginning of each league season.

- 1.09(c) To be eligible to participate in championship competition (Local League Championship, Sectionals, etc.), all players must have two match results during the Local League season; one result may be by default.

1.10 VIOLATIONS/PENALTIES

The Discipline and Grievance Committee will determine if any violations have occurred after reviewing a grievance, and appropriate actions and penalties will be assessed.

1.11 GRIEVANCES

- 1.11(a) Grievances must be filed in writing with the Local League Coordinator prior to commencement of the next team match involving said player or team, or within 24 hours after the end of local league play, whichever occurs first.
- 1.11(b) Grievance complaints may be filed not only for infractions of the regulations but also for failing to abide by good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship.
- 1.11(c) A complaint based on ineligibility may be filed at any time after learning the person is ineligible.
- 1.11(d) Any situation not covered in these league rules will be settled at the discretion of the team captains, League Coordinator, or the Discipline and Grievance Committee, in that order. A team or player violating an HTA League Regulation is subject to disciplinary action deemed necessary by the HTA.
- 1.11(e) Self-rated players:
- Players that incorrectly self-rate are subject to suspension from the HTA according to the discretion of the Discipline and Grievance Committee/and or the USTA.
- 1.11(f) Captains who knowingly break the rules are subject to suspension or expulsion.

- 1.11(g) The grievance form may be found on HTA's website at www.houstontennis.org/Content-Public/Page-Edit/Page.asp?iID=350700867.

2.00 HTA DOUBLES LEAGUE REGULATIONS

All HTA League Regulations, with the following exceptions, shall apply to the HTA Doubles League.

2.01 SCHEDULE

- (a) Team matches will be played approximately 7:00-10:30 p.m. Individual line matches in a team match shall not begin earlier than 7:00 p.m. unless both team captains agree in writing to the change. Individual line matches in a team match shall not be scheduled after 9:00 p.m. unless both team captains agree in writing.
- (b) Ladies' Doubles will play all scheduled team matches Tuesday evenings.
- (c) Men's Doubles will play all scheduled team matches Thursday evenings.

2.02 TEAM ROSTERS AND LINEUPS

- 2.02(a) Team rosters must consist of a minimum of eight players. There is no maximum.
- 2.02(b) Team rosters may contain players rated at an NTRP level .5 higher than the level the team is playing. Players rated .5 higher than the team level may only partner with a player rated at or below the team level. A maximum of two .5-higher players may be fielded in the lineup for any given team match. If there is one .5-higher player, he or she must compete at Line 1; a second .5-higher player must compete at Line 2.
- 2.02(c) 4.5+ League will be allowed to field 5.0 and 5.5 players. Players rated 5.0 or 5.5 may only partner with a player rated at or below 4.5. A maximum of two 5.0 or 5.5 players may be fielded in the

lineup for any given team match. If there is one 5.0 or 5.5, he or she must compete at Line 1; a second 5.0 or 5.5 player must compete at Line 2.

2.02(d) Should a default be taken at Line 1, a .5-higher player may still compete at Line 2. See [Section 1.08](#).

3.00 HTA SINGLES LEAGUE REGULATIONS

All HTA League Regulations, with the following exceptions, shall apply to the HTA Singles League.

3.01 SCHEDULE

- (a) Team matches will be played approximately 7:00-10:30 p.m. Individual line matches in a team match shall not begin earlier than 7:00 p.m. unless both team captains agree in writing to the change. Individual line matches in a team match shall not be scheduled after 9:00 p.m. unless both team captains agree in writing.
- (b) Ladies' Singles will be played Wednesday evenings.
- (c) Men's Singles will be played Monday evenings.

3.02 TEAM ROSTERS AND LINEUPS

3.02(a) Team rosters must consist of a minimum of four players. There is no maximum.

3.02(b) 4.5+ League will be allowed to field 5.0 and 5.5 players. A maximum of two 5.0 or 5.5 players may be fielded in the lineup for any given team match. If there is one 5.0 or 5.5, he or she must compete at Line 1; a second 5.0 or 5.5 player must compete at Line 2.

4.00 HTA MIXED DOUBLES LEAGUE REGULATIONS

All HTA League Regulations, with the following exceptions, shall apply to the HTA Mixed Doubles League.

4.01 SCHEDULE

- 4.01(a) Team matches will be played approximately 5:00-9:00 p.m. on Sunday evenings, unless facility rules dictate otherwise. Individual line matches in a team match shall not begin earlier than the time scheduled in TennisLink unless both team captains agree in writing to the change. Individual line matches in a team match shall not be scheduled after 7:30 p.m. unless both team captains agree in writing.

4.02 TEAM ROSTERS AND LINEUPS

- 4.02(a) Team rosters must consist of a minimum of eight players. There is no maximum.
- 4.02(b) Mixed Doubles is played using a combination of NTRPs to comprise a level. The HTA offers 7.0/7.5, 8.0/8.5 and 9.0/9.5 levels. There may be only a 1.0 difference in partners' NTRPs, with the exception of 9.0/9.5 level.

(1) 7.0/7.5

The highest rated player may be a 4.0. Any combination of 7.0 may play on any line. A combination totaling 7.5 may only be placed in the Line 1 or Line 2 position, and may only play in the Line 2 position if another 7.5 combination is playing in the Line 1 position during the same team match.

(2) 8.0/8.5

The highest rated player may be a 4.5. Any combination of 8.0 may play on any line. A combination totaling 8.5 may only be placed in the Line 1 or Line 2 position, and may only play in the Line 2 position if another 8.5 combination is playing in the Line 1 position during the same team match.

(3) 9.0/9.5

The highest rated player may be a 5.5.

- (A) A 5.5 player must be play on Line 1 only and must be paired with a 4.0. This is the only exception to the 1.0 difference in NTRPs.
- (B) Any combination of 9.0 may play on any line. A combination totaling 9.5 may only be placed in the Line 1 or Line 2 position, and may only play in the Line 2 position if another 9.5 combination is playing in the Line 1 position during the same team match.

FAQS

Q: Who is the HTA contact person for leagues?

A: Catherine Blevins—Local League Coordinator, HTA

281-889-1050

htaleagues@houstontennis.org

Q: How do I form a team?

A: Contact the HTA League Coordinator for assistance, and:

- Determine if your team wants to play Singles, Doubles, or Mixed.
- Select the NTRP level best for your team (majority of your team will be at this level).
- Select the facility your team will call “home.” (League Coordinator can assist.)
- Determine what league you want to play (HTA, USTA, or WTT). The time of the year will also help to determine which league to play.

HTA recommends a minimum of 12 players on a doubles’ roster and a minimum of six players on a singles’ roster.

Q: Can my team play at any facility?

A: Houston has many facilities (public and private) that can host league matches, but not all facilities allow league match play. If it is a neighborhood facility, check with the League Coordinator or the Property Owner’s Association. If the facility is private, please check with the tennis director of the facility or ask the League Coordinator for further assistance. Keep in mind a minimum of two courts is required.

Q: How can my team get on a waiting list for facilities that are full?

A: Some facilities, such as Memorial Park, have very limited courts that are offered for league match play. The HTA gives first right of refusal to current teams. In order to add your team to a waiting list to play at

a facility that is full, please email the League Coordinator. Your team will be added to a waiting list once a written request has been made.

Q: Do I have to be a USTA member to play HTA league?

A: Yes. To join the USTA, go to www.usta.com.

Q: How do I join HTA and become a member?

A: In order to participate in an HTA administered league match, a player must be a member of the HTA. To join HTA, go to www.houstontennis.org and click "Join."

Q: How can I see if a player's HTA membership is current?

A: To search the membership directory, you must be a current HTA member. Go to HTA's website and click "Login." Use the username and password you selected when you joined. Click "Member Directory Search." Type in the name of the player you would like to check, then click "Search." The search results will yield all players in our directory listed by that name that are current members. Please note that some players' names are listed differently than they are in TennisLink. For example, your opponent, Bill Smith, might be listed in TennisLink as William Smith and in the HTA membership directory as Bill Smith. If you suspect a player is not a member and would like to confirm, please contact the League Coordinator.

Q: What is TennisLink?

A: [TennisLink](#) is a user-friendly web-based system designed as a means to provide secure communication and flow of information between the USTA and its members via the Internet.

TennisLink allows users to:

- Register teams and players.
- Enter and confirm match scores.
- Access team rosters, schedules, and standings.
- Apply for and renew USTA memberships.
- Access captain's reports, captain's contact lists, etc.

Q: How do I access TennisLink?

A: To access TennisLink, go to HTA's website, www.houstontennis.org. Click on "Leagues" then click on "TennisLink." If this does not work, go directly to www.usta.com/TennisLink.

Q: How do I report my match scores?

A: Both teams should be involved in score reporting. Note the HTA rules on [Recording Team Match Results](#).

After logging on to [TennisLink](#) with your USTA number, select "Record a Score" under "League Players". Enter the match number listed on your schedule and click "Next". Fill in all the blanks on the online scorecard. Select the players that played each individual line match from the dropdown list for each team and enter the scores. The winning team's score must be entered in the left score box (i.e., 6-0, 6-4 or 6-4, 5-7, 1-0). Record the match as completed, double default, default, or retired on the dropdown. Make sure you select the correct winner of the individual line match and press "Next". If the information on the confirmation screen is correct, click "Finish" to post the scores.

Note that once you click "Finish" to confirm your posting of the scores, you do not have the ability to make changes. Triple-check the scores before you submit them. Once scores are posted, you will need to contact the League Coordinator to have any mistakes corrected.

Q: How do I confirm/dispute my match scores?

A: After logging on to [TennisLink](#) with your USTA number, select "Record a Score" under "League Players". Enter the match number listed on your schedule and click "Next". Review the scores. Select either confirm or dispute. Disputed scores will be researched and resolved by the HTA League Coordinator; therefore, also send an email to the League Coordinator explaining the reason for the dispute. The League Coordinator can correct scores reported incorrectly.

Q: How can I access information about my Team, Schedules, and Standings?

A: Go to [TennisLink](#). Go to the Blue (middle) Section near the bottom under “View League and Championship Stats and Standings.” Enter your USTA number and click “Go”. A page that shows all your USTA teams will appear. Click on your team. The page you are now viewing is the Team Summary tab. This page shows roster information, current standings, and results of matches played. Click Player Roster to view your players and their contact information. Click on Match Schedule to view your team’s schedule. Click on Match Summary to view results of each match your team has played.

Q: How do I register for a team?

A: You will need to know the team number for the team you wish to join. Your team captain will provide you with this information.

Connect to TennisLink. Find the Red Section on the right: “League Players”. Click on “[Register for a Team](#).” Enter the team number and your USTA number. VISA, MasterCard or American Express are the only forms of payment TennisLink accepts. Once you have completed the payment instructions, you are registered.

Q: How do I find the right team for me?

A: Contact the HTA League Coordinator and:

- Determine where you would like to play. The League Coordinator will assist in finding a team.
- Determine what NTRP level you will play. There are USTA guidelines to help a player self-rate. The League Coordinator will also assist.

Q: What are the captain’s responsibilities?

A: As a team captain, your responsibilities include:

- Representing your team in HTA matters.
- Knowing the rules of the league you are playing (HTA, USTA, or WTT).
- Knowing your players’ NTRP ratings.

- Verifying your team members are HTA and USTA members and are registered on TennisLink before they are allowed to participate in a match.
- Establishing lineups for matches and inform team members in advance.
- Learning strategies to help your team win.
- Reminding players of the rules.
- Communicating with opposing captains.
- Performing administrative functions, such as entering the scores in TennisLink, communicating with the League Coordinator, etc.
- Not coaching or allowing coaching.
- Controlling the spectators: the crowd must not interfere with the concentration of the opposing team.
- Being present at all matches, or appointing an acting captain to be present throughout the duration of a team match. A captain should notify the opposing captain if the necessity arises to appoint an acting captain. The acting captain's contact information should be immediately sent to the opposing captain if the captain knows in advance he/she will not be present at the team match.

Q: What kinds of reports are available on TennisLink?

A: In TennisLink there are several reports available for all players/captains to view or print.

Some of the reports listed are:

- Team Summary
- Match Summary
- Match Schedule
- Player Roster
- Blank Scorecard
- Captain List (access limited to captains)

To view/print any of these reports:

1. Go to TennisLink and enter your USTA number in the Captain/Coordinator section and click “Go.”
2. Enter your password.
3. Go to the middle section on the home page of TennisLink to the bottom of the page to Report Drill-Down. Click on Leagues Advanced Search.
4. Enter the Championship year.
5. Enter USTA Texas Section.
6. Enter Houston District.
7. Enter the league to view (e.g. 2011 HTA Spring Ladies’ Doubles).
8. Enter your flight (NTRP level).

The reports available will be listed at the top of the page.

Q: What’s the best way to handle make-up matches?

A: Make-up matches should be played no later than two weeks after the originally scheduled match.

Contact the League Coordinator within 48 hours of the originally scheduled match to ask the date be changed in TennisLink.

Often it is impossible to reschedule all individual line matches to play at the same time, therefore it is recommended to play the individual line matches on different dates in order to get them all in within the two week time period.

Q: How do I find my NTRP rating?

A: To locate your current NTRP rating, you can search TennisLink by your name under “[Find a Rating](#).”

Q: What if I don’t have an NTRP rating?

A: Players without an NTRP rating should determine their rating before registering for a team. Guidelines for determining ratings can be found on TennisLink or by assessment from a tennis professional.

Once a player has been invited to join a team, he/she will receive a team number. After joining the USTA, the player will be able to register for a team (see the Frequently Asked Question: "[How do I register for a team?](#)"). As the player begins registration for a team, TennisLink will prompt all players that do not have a current NTRP to self rate. Instructions are easy to follow.

Q: Why do I have two NTRP ratings?

A: The reason most players have two ratings is because they have received a midyear rating, but they also have a year-end rating. The fall season of HTA will use the midyear rating to determine NTRP level. Any other tournaments or some other leagues will use the year-end rating. If you search TennisLink, the rating you will see is the player's year-end rating. The rating that is used in the league will be the rating listing on the team roster. This will be the most current NTRP.

Q: Can I appeal my NTRP rating and if so, how?

A: You may appeal your NTRP rating, but appealing doesn't mean the USTA will change it. You can learn more about [automated and medical NTRP appeals](#) at the USTA website.

Q: What is "stacking" lines and is it legal?

A: Stacking lines is a team strategy, whereby a lower ability player will play at a higher line and a higher ability player will play at a lower line in order to win the lower line.

A league tennis match is meant to be won. This strategy is not considered illegal or unethical provided all rules are followed.

Q: Should I file a grievance and if so, how?

A: A player should first contact the League Coordinator to determine if a complaint should be sent to the Discipline and Grievance Committee.

Complaints/Grievances will only be sent to the Discipline and Grievance Committee for the following reasons:

- A rule does not address the grievance
- A rule was broken and sanctions are necessary

Any grievance regarding the League Coordinator should be sent to htacheryl@houstontennis.org.

The grievance form may be found on HTA's website at www.houstontennis.org/Content-Public/Page-Edit/Page.asp?iID=350700867.

Q: What attire is required?

A: The HTA does not have a dress code, but some facilities do. For the safety of our members, shoes specifically designed for tennis are recommended. Track (running) shoes are designed for a different motion and do not provide the proper ankle support for the side-to-side motions of tennis, and the tread on a track shoe may damage a tennis court.

Facilities have their own rules. Home team captains are required to inform players of the facility rules. Certain facilities require shoes specifically designed for tennis to be worn during play. Some facilities require a player to wear a collared shirt.