

Tennis Skill Challenges

The following games are ideal for school yards, driveways, or any activity space in which kids can practice basic tennis skills in a self-directed manner. A teacher or program organizer can encourage students to attempt each of the challenges and offer a reward for successful completion.

The list of activities below can also serve as an effective assessment tool for teachers to use in a physical education class. As another option, the challenges can be incorporated into a School Tennis Festival or Tennis Field Day event with kids signing up and attempting to earn points for their team or class.

1. **Racquet Quickness:** Partners stand 6 feet apart while balancing their racquets upside down on the racquet tip. On signal, they release their racquet and try to catch their partner's racquet before it falls to the ground.
2. **Ball Balance:** While keeping a ball balanced on the racquet strings, student must walk 36 feet, touch the ground with their opposite hand, and return to the starting point without dropping the ball.
3. **Ups and Downs:** With the palm facing down, try tapping the ball 10 times in a row, waist high. Switch – with the palm pointing up, try and bump the ball up in the air 10 times without missing, eye high.
4. **Partner Ball Pass:** Successfully pass a ball (or bean bag) in the air to a partner, using a racquet to lift and catch the ball.
5. **Drop-Hit Forehands** (“courtesy serve”): Drop-hit 10 forehands to a partner. The partner should be able to catch the ball against their racquet strings to count as a point.
6. **Toss-Hit-Catch Backhands:** Return 10 backhands directly back to a partner, from an underhand toss.
7. **Wall Rally:** Hit 10 consecutive ground strokes against a wall or backboard using forehands and backhands.
8. **Partner Rally:** Rally the ball 10 times in a row over a line or makeshift net with a partner.
9. **Ball Pick-Up:** Players must be able to pick a ball up off the ground with their racquet, but without using their hands.
10. **Tennis Knowledge:** Students must be able to demonstrate basic knowledge of tennis terms, rules, and sportsmanship.

USTA School Tennis

Tennis Skill Test - Check List

Student's Name:

Completed

Racquet Quickness

1

Partners stand 6 feet apart while balancing their racquets upside down on the racquet tip. On signal, they release their racquet and try to catch their partner's racquet before it falls to the ground.

Ball Balance

2

While keeping a ball balanced on the racquet strings, student must walk 20 feet, touch the ground with their opposite hand, and return to the starting point without dropping the ball.

Ups and Downs

3

With the palm facing down, try tapping the ball 10 times in a row, waist high. Switch – with the palm pointing up, try and bump the ball up in the air 10 times without missing, eye high.

Partner Ball Pass

4

Successfully pass a ball (or bean bag) in the air to a partner, using a racquet to lift and catch the ball.

Drop-Hit Forehands ("Courtesy serve")

5

Drop-hit 10 forehands to a partner. The partner should be able to catch the ball against their racquet strings to count as a point.

Toss-Hit Catch Backhands

6

Return 10 backhands directly back to a partner, from an underhand toss.

Wall Rally

7

Hit 10 consecutive ground strokes against a wall or backboard using forehands and backhands.

Partner Rally

8

Rally the ball 10 times in a row over a line or makeshift net with a partner.

Ball Pick-up

9

Players must be able to pick a ball up off the ground with their racquet, but without using their hands.

Tennis Knowledge

10

Students must be able to demonstrate basic knowledge of tennis terms, rules, and sportsmanship