

TENNIS



WHO CAN PLAY?

Anyone can play tennis! However, in order to be eligible to compete in ITF sanctioned wheelchair tennis tournaments and the Paralympic Games, a player must have a medically diagnosed permanent mobility related physical disability. This permanent physical disability must result in a substantial loss of function in one or both lower extremities. A quad player must meet the criteria for permanent physical disability as defined above. In addition, the player must have a permanent physical disability that results in a substantial loss of function in one or both upper extremities.

EQUIPMENT

All you need is a racquet and some tennis balls! Beginners can play in their everyday chairs, including power chairs, but the more serious player can use a sports chair specifically made for tennis. You may wish to strap yourself into the chair to improve your stability. Straps can be used around the waist, knees and ankles, depending on the player's balance. Ace wrap can be used to secure the racquet to one's hand if there is a lack of grip strength.

Adaptive equipment, including special socket devices with rings that attach to prostheses and which enable players to hold, toss, and serve balls, has also made tennis a popular sport among amputees.

Costs:

Racquets can cost anywhere between \$20 - \$100.

Prices of tennis wheelchairs vary, but usually cannot be found under \$1500.

RULES OF THE GAME

The game of wheelchair tennis follows the ITF Rules of Tennis with a few exceptions. Here are some of the significant exceptions:

a) The Two-Bounce Rule

The wheelchair tennis player is allowed two bounces of the ball. The player must return the ball before it hits the ground a third time. The second bounce can be either in or out of the court boundaries.

b) The Wheelchair

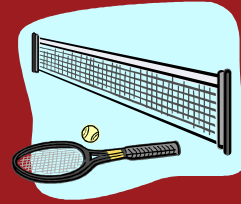
The wheelchair is considered part of the body and all applicable Rules which apply to a player's body shall apply to the wheelchair. One buttock must remain in contact with the wheelchair seat when contacting the ball.

c) Propelling the Chair with the Foot

If due to lack of capacity a player is unable to propel the wheelchair via the wheel then he may propel the wheelchair using one foot.

For a complete list of rules, visit

<http://www.itftennis.com/wheelchair/rules>.



RESOURCES

If you are looking to establish a wheelchair tennis program in your area, the United States Tennis Association (USTA), provides has Grassroots program that provides a manual on how to begin your community program. Visit www.usta.com/playnow/wheelchair for more information. You can also visit this website for more information about wheelchair tennis in your area.

The Southern district of the USTA is offering a wheelchair instructor clinic in Little Rock for anyone wanting to begin a wheelchair tennis program in their community. For more information, contact the AR committee member whose information is available under the community tennis tab at www.southern.usta.com.

For more information about international tennis, visit www.itftennis.com/wheelchair.

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Classification

To be eligible to compete, a player must have a medically diagnosed permanent mobility related physical disability which must result in a substantial loss of function in one or both lower extremities.

Classifier Eligibility

- The ITF Wheelchair Tennis Medical Commission (MC) will appoint Classifiers.
- Classifiers are individuals with formal training in neuromuscular evaluation and testing. For example: physical therapy, occupation therapy, and physiatry.
- Classifiers must have experience in the evaluation of individuals with physical disabilities.
- Classifiers must have knowledge of wheelchair tennis and the willingness to increase their knowledge through observation and study of the sport.
- Classifiers must demonstrate competence in manual muscle testing of the upper extremities.

Classifiers will represent the various world regions whose member nations participate in ITF Wheelchair Tennis programs.