

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS

WHEELCHAIR TENNIS originated in 1976 by American Brad Parks and it quickly evolved into a major competitive international sport. Wheelchair tennis first appeared at the 1992 Paralympic Games in Barcelona.

BASIC RULES

Wheelchair tennis is played on a standard tennis court and follows many of the same rules as able-bodied tennis. However, in wheelchair tennis, a player is allowed to let the ball bounce twice, not once, before hitting a return shot. In addition, the athlete's wheelchair is considered to be a part of the body, so rules which apply to the player's body apply to the chair as well.

DIVISIONS

There are women's, men's and quad divisions in wheelchair tennis. In addition, athletes can compete in singles or doubles competition.

EQUIPMENT

Standard tennis rackets and balls. In addition, athletes compete in a sport wheelchair.

GETTING STARTED

We encourage you to start by connecting with a local adaptive sports organization that offers wheelchair tennis or getting involved with a local wheelchair tennis club. To find a list of clubs in your area, please visit <https://playtennis.usta.com/Programming>.

TRAIN

Begin by working with a qualified tennis coach one time per week. Obtain information on the basic wheelchair tennis mobility patterns; train three times per week until you can execute the patterns and proper turns without thinking.

Train with other wheelchair tennis players two times a week to begin live ball skills. Stay involved in your local program until you are ready to compete in matches.

CLASSIFICATION

Classification determines which athletes are eligible to compete and how athletes are grouped together for competition. If an athlete has a Paralympic eligible impairment, the athlete may be eligible for a classification appointment. Once an athlete is ready to compete regionally or nationally, an athlete should seek national classification.

For more information on wheelchair tennis, please visit <https://www.usta.com/>.

PARALYMPIC ELIGIBLE IMPAIRMENTS

- Ataxia, Athetosis and Hypertonia
- Impaired Muscle Power
- Impaired Passive Range of Movement
- Limb Deficiency
- Leg Length Difference

PARALYMPIC SCORING

Wheelchair tennis follows standard tennis scoring rules, with the following amendments:

A player loses a point if:

- The player fails to return the ball before it has touched the ground three times.
- The player uses any part of his feet or lower extremities as brakes or as stabilizers while delivering service, stroking a ball, turning or stopping against the ground or against any wheel while the ball is in play.
- The player fails to keep one buttock in contact with his wheelchair seat when contacting the ball.

U.S. COLLEGIATE RESOURCES

Many Para athletes are engaging in collegiate wheelchair tennis programs. For more information on these schools, please visit <https://www.usta.com/en/home/play/college-tennis.html>, or view the collegiate manual [HERE](#).