

# Stop saying sorry.

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- **Shift Your Perspective on Mistakes:** View mistakes as opportunities for learning rather than failures. Instead of apologising, acknowledge the error and focus on what can be improved next time.
- **Use Positive Language:** Replace negative words like "sorry" with affirmations. For example, if you miss a shot, instead of saying "sorry," tell yourself "I'll get the next one."
- **Set Realistic Expectations:** Understand that perfection is unattainable and every player makes mistakes. This mindset will help you be less harsh on yourself when errors occur.
- **Practice Mindfulness:** Stay in the present moment during practice. If you find yourself ruminating on a mistake, gently bring your focus back to the current point or activity.
- **Celebrate Small Victories:** Acknowledge and celebrate your small improvements and successes. This positive reinforcement will motivate you to keep improving.

Remember, the way you talk to yourself during practice significantly impacts your mental state and overall game performance. Keeping a positive mindset helps in building mental resilience and improving your tennis skills.



# Only 16.7%



In competitive tennis, players are actively engaged in play for less than 20% of the match duration. This statistic means that over 80% of the time is spent not directly playing the ball. This non-playing time includes moments between points, changeovers, and other pauses in play.

To manage this substantial portion of non-playing time effectively and maintain focus, professional tennis players often adopt various routines. These routines are critical for several reasons:

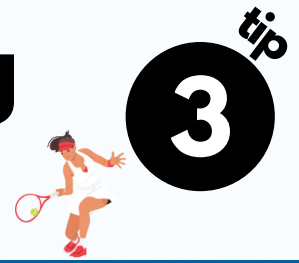
- **Mental Preparation:** Routines help players mentally prepare for the next point or game, keeping their minds engaged and focused.
- **Physical Readiness:** They ensure that players stay physically warmed up and ready to play, even during longer breaks in the game.
- **Stress Management:** Consistent routines can be calming and help manage stress and nerves, especially in high-pressure situations.
- **Consistency and Habit Formation:** Routines encourage consistency in performance, turning specific actions into habits that can positively influence gameplay.

On average, top tennis players incorporate around 14 different routines into this 80% of non-playing time. These routines vary widely but can include specific breathing exercises, mental visualisation, strategic planning, and physical movements or stretches.

Incorporating such routines into one's tennis play, especially during the significant non-playing time, can improve focus, performance, and overall enjoyment of the game.



# Breathe out when making contact with the ball.



Breathing out when making contact with the ball is a widely practiced technique among professional tennis players. This technique involves the following key aspects:

- **Timing with Stroke Execution:** The act of exhaling aligns with the moment of striking the ball. This synchronised timing helps in stabilising the body and smoothing the stroke.
- **Role of Exhalation or Grunting:** Exhaling or grunting during the hit can enhance rhythm and provide explosiveness to the stroke.
- **Impact on Consistency and Power:** Proper breathing, especially exhaling on impact, can increase hitting power and improve the consistency of stroke.
- **Reduction in Misshits:** Consistent breathing out or grunting at the moment of contact with the ball has been shown to reduce the likelihood of misshits. This occurs because the technique helps players maintain better focus and control during the stroke execution.
- **Relaxation of Muscles:** Exhaling during a stroke helps relax the muscles, which can lead to a more fluid and effective movement.

In summary, exhaling upon contact with the ball is a crucial aspect of stroke mechanics in tennis, contributing to enhanced performance and reduced errors.



# Always be defiant.



In the context of personal behavior and attitude, defiance can be categorised into two types: destructive defiance and constructive defiance.

- **Destructive Defiance:** This type of defiance is characterised by behaviors and attitudes that ultimately harm oneself. It might manifest as consistently resisting authority or rules in a way that leads to negative outcomes, such as in the case of oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) where there's a pattern of angry, argumentative, or vindictive behavior.
- **Constructive Defiance:** On the contrary, constructive defiance refers to the use of a defiant attitude in a positive and self-beneficial manner. It involves challenging the status quo, norms, or conventional thinking in a way that leads to personal growth, positive change, or improved performance. In the context of sports like tennis, being constructively defiant might mean channeling one's energy towards overcoming obstacles, pushing beyond one's limits, and not conforming to self-imposed limitations.

The key difference lies in the outcome and intention behind the defiance. While destructive defiance often leads to adverse consequences and is usually driven by negative emotions, constructive defiance is goal-oriented, positive, and leads to beneficial outcomes.

To win more matches or succeed in challenging situations, adopting a constructively defiant attitude can be more effective. This means using your inner strength and determination to overcome challenges, rather than allowing defiance to manifest in counterproductive ways.



# Breathe through your nose.



Nose breathing, as opposed to mouth breathing, has distinct advantages, especially in terms of calming the mind and nervous system:

- **Nose Breathing and Mind Calmness:** Breathing in and out through the nose is known to have a calming effect on the mind. This is because nose breathing is associated with a slower, more controlled breathing pattern which can promote relaxation and stress reduction.
- **Effect on Stress Levels:** Deep breaths taken through the mouth are often associated with heightened stress or anxiety. In contrast, nose breathing tends to slow down the breathing rate and depth, which can help in reducing stress level.
- **Breathing Technique for Calmness:** A specific technique involving two short breaths in through the nose followed by one long exhale can effectively calm the nervous system. This pattern can trigger the body's relaxation response, helping to reduce anxiety and bring about a state of tranquility.
- **Physiological Benefits of Nose Breathing:** Breathing through the nose helps in filtering, heating, and humidifying the air, which can be more soothing and less agitating to the body compared to mouth breathing.

In summary, nose breathing is a simple yet powerful tool for mental and physiological relaxation. It can be particularly beneficial in situations requiring calmness and focus.



# Train with patterns



Tennis training typically incorporates two distinct styles of rallying: reactive rallying and proactive rallying with rally patterns.

- **Reactive Rallying:** In regular training sessions, players often engage in reactive rallying. This style is characterised by reacting to the ball as it comes, without a pre-planned sequence of shots. Players focus on returning the ball based on where it is played by their opponent, making decisions spontaneously.
- **Proactive Rallying with Rally Patterns:** Contrary to reactive rallying, proactive rallying involves the use of predetermined rally patterns. This method requires players to follow a specific sequence of shots during a rally. It's a more strategic approach where players anticipate and execute planned strokes, rather than merely reacting to their partner's shots. This proactive style is often used in professional training to enhance strategic thinking, shot consistency, and tactical execution during matches.
- **Benefits of Proactive Rallying:** Proactive rallying with rally patterns helps players develop a deeper understanding of match play strategies. It trains them to think ahead, plan their shots, and maintain control over rally dynamics. This approach is crucial for developing a more strategic and thoughtful style of play, as opposed to relying solely on reflexes and reactions.
- **Implementation in Training:** Incorporating rally patterns in training sessions allows players to simulate match conditions more effectively. It encourages players to be more aggressive, take charge of the point, and practice specific combinations of shots that can be advantageous in actual match play.

In summary, while reactive rallying focuses on responding to the ball, proactive rallying with rally patterns emphasises strategic planning and execution. Both styles have their place in training, but incorporating rally patterns can significantly enhance a player's tactical skills and mental preparedness for competitive matches.

