

## Getting Balanced

Balance is a key issue in all of sport. In tennis it is important for transferring power from the ground up through the body to the impact point. Good balance enhances control, power, and movement and completes a player's 'ideal' relationship to the ball.

### BALANCE (Groundstrokes & volleys)

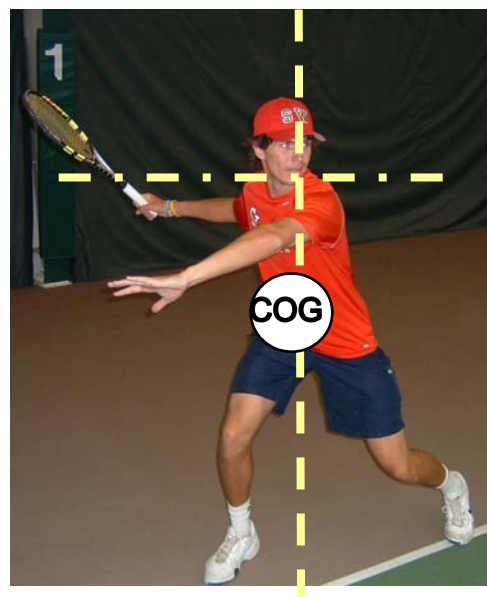
#### For the Beginner (Play Tennis Rating 1.0-2.5)

To check balance, imagine 2 'Balance Lines' running through your body. The first runs from the top of the head to the ground. This 'BBQ stick' must be kept straight for maximum balance. Avoid bending at the waist or leaning over when reaching for the ball. The goal is to get your 'Centre of Gravity' (COG) to the ball not just your racquet.

The second line runs level across your shoulders. The goal is to keep this line level and avoid 'tipping'. Level shoulders help to make a stable racquet path.

#### For the Intermediate player and above (Rating 3.0+)

A player doesn't have to be still in order to be balanced. 'Dynamic Balance' is when a player maintains balance on the move. For example, one often sees players on the grass at Wimbledon dive for the ball. They are still in 'dynamic' balance even when flying through the air.



For more advanced players balance can be subdivided into 3 key areas. These can be used by the coach to observe and analyze balance on groundstrokes & volleys.

HEAD	TRUNK (shoulders and hips)	BASE (Stance and feet position)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep head still and in front</li> <li>When moving or recovering, keep the head above the centre of gravity</li> <li>Minimize "bobbing" up and down when running</li> <li>Minimize moving the head laterally back and forth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep a reasonably straight line with the head over the Centre of gravity (COG)</li> <li>Minimize shoulder tilt on groundstrokes &amp; volleys</li> <li>Minimize bending at the waist</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feet should generally be shoulder width or wider to generate a good ground force reaction</li> <li>Stance should allow good rotation and some weight transfer</li> </ul>

## Court Home-work

**Beginner:** Start with a 'Mini-Tennis' rally (serviceline to serviceline). Both players cooperate to get team points. Give the team 1 point for contacting with both 'Balance lines' straight and one point for getting it in the court. Call out when points are achieved ("1point", "3 points", etc.) When both players reach 20, the drill is over. Progress to ¾ court, then baseline to baseline. Next have one player at the net hitting volleys and play again.

**Intermediate:** For groundstrokes, both players place a folded towel on their head and attempt to rally baseline to baseline. If the towel falls off they lose the point.

For volleys, Player 'A' at net volleys with one hand behind their back. This position will help the volleyer to feel balance in their body. Switch roles after 2-4 minutes.