

# TOURNAMENTS 101

All you need to know about playing your first USTA New England Tournament

**WHAT IS A TOURNAMENT:** Tournaments are **play opportunities** offered throughout the year outlined by skill level or age division and spread geographically throughout the section. The formats are either **Round Robin or Draw** and are determined by age division and skill level.

**WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF PLAYING A TOURNAMENT:** In addition to being an opportunity for valuable match-play experience, it's an opportunity to **meet other tennis players** while supplementing your tennis training. For many junior players, tournaments are fun, social, exciting, and challenging. At all levels, the challenge of an upcoming tournament can **bring purpose and motivation** to a junior's practice program. Tournament tennis is where juniors learn to manage nerves, overcome weaknesses, and **build on strengths**. They learn what confidence feels like and what they need to work on.

**DO I NEED A USTA MEMBERSHIP TO PLAY?** Yes, you will need a membership to play a **sanctioned junior tournament**. To participate in a youth progression event, you do not need a USTA junior membership. Please visit [usta.com/membership](https://usta.com/membership) to join or renew.

**HOW DO I KNOW WHEN I'M READY TO PLAY A TOURNAMENT AND WHERE DO I START?** To start tournament tennis, a junior player should be **able to serve, rally, and score**. They should also know the basic rules and have familiarity with the Code of Conduct. Level 7 is the entry point to tournament play and is considered Low Intermediate. Some players will find this level suitable for several years while others will want to participate in more competitive events. These would be Level 6 (Intermediate) and Level 5 (Advanced). Players do not need to "graduate" to the next level - they can simply **register when ready**. Levels 4 through 1 are very advanced. If you have not played a tournament in the past, you will want to start with Level 7 events and **work your way through the levels**. Once you begin to see success in Level 7 you can begin to play Level 6 events.

**WHAT AGE GROUP DO I PLAY?** Tournaments have Boys (B) and/or Girls (G). If you are 12, you can play in the Boys or Girls 12s until the first of the month in which you turn 13. A player "ages up" the first of the month of the year of their odd birthday. Note: \*You should consider **"playing up" in the next age level** as you get closer to your odd birthday as points will count in both age groups until the month of your birthday.

**WHERE DO I FIND TOURNAMENTS?** <https://tennislink.usta.com/>

**HOW DO I EARN POINTS?** A player must **win a match** to receive any points for a tournament (byes do not qualify as wins). The number of points awarded **depends on the tournament** in which the player is participating: the level being played, how many matches are won, the type of tournament format. **Points accumulated equal your ranking**.

**WHAT IS A RANKING LIST?** A ranking list is a **record of the point totals** earned by players at tournaments.