

Frequently Asked Questions:

General:

When does the competition framework take effect?

The framework will take effect from 1st September 2007, so you can expect competitions from this date to be organised according to the new framework in terms of age group, ball and court. There will be a phasing-in process for age groups over 2 years so that players aren't forced back e.g. a 7 year old in year 1 can compete with an orange ball but not in year 2 and a 10 year old in year 1 can compete with a yellow ball but not in year 2.

Do other countries operate a similar system?

Similar systems operate in a number of major tennis playing nations. In France and Belgium the structure for 10&U competition has been in place for a number of years with great success. It is also widely recognised that to have players competing at the right age, with the right ball and on the right sized court has a huge benefit on the technical, tactical, mental and physical development of their game.

Why can 8 year olds play in red and orange ball competitions?

It is less clear when a player should progress from red to orange than it is from orange to green ball competition as it depends on when they started playing. A player that starts red ball competition at 6 may be ready to move to orange ball at 8 rather than 9. Once in orange ball competition this difference is not as relevant.

Players and parents:

How will players benefit from this new framework?

Players will have access to well organised, meaningful and fun competition, which is consistent across Great Britain. They will have the opportunity to regularly compete against players of the same age in an environment which will develop their game technically, tactically, mentally and physically. They will also be able to build their own player profile and see their results online.

How will parents benefit from this?

In addition to parents knowing their children will be playing in well organised, meaningful and fun competition they will also know when, where and how long each competition will last, allowing for more convenient planning. Players and parents will receive better communication and support through the talent ID and coach network.

How do I know what age group to play in?

Currently a player's eligibility to compete is based on the year in which they are born, e.g. from 1st September 07 a player born in 1998 is eligible for 10&U age group competition. Various options are open to all sports to determine whether a player is eligible to compete in a given age group, however, there is no firm evidence which proves the argument one way or another. As a result, there will be no change to the current age eligibility rule, the LTA will continue to keep a close eye on changes in tennis and in other sports in order to ensure all players have access to appropriate competition.

Will any players be allowed to 'play up' an age group?

All players are expected to compete in their own age group, 'playing up' is only allowed in exceptional cases when players are issued with a passport to 'play up' as well as in their own age group. There will be conditions in place for this:

- If a player has exhausted the competition opportunities in their own age group category
- If a player has a track record which proves they have no appropriate competition within their own category
- A passport to play may be approved by the Head of Talent Management in conjunction with the relevant Talent Performance Manager for the area and will be communicated to the National Competitions Department and local competition organisers

What happens for 11 and 12 year olds?

We realise that with more competition taking place for 10&U's there needs to be appropriate competition for these players when they move into 11/12&U competition. With this in mind we are looking to:

- Provide more competition opportunities at all grades for 11 and 12 year olds
- Ensure players are fully communicated with so they know where to go to get appropriate competition after they progress from green ball competition
- By registering all players earlier, the LTA can better monitor participation numbers by age group to ensure appropriate competition provision

Coaches:

How will coaches benefit from this?

Coaches will be supported by a competition framework which will have a huge impact on the technical, tactical, mental and physical development of their players. They will be able to see their players develop through a simple and consistent structure which measures their performances against other players on an equal playing field within their peer group.

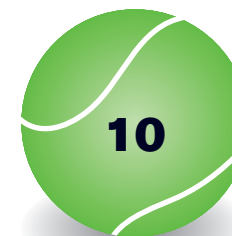
Should coaches progress players through red, orange and green in line with the competition framework?

Yes. Coaches are advised to use the appropriate ball and court size at the relevant ages as recommended in the competition framework.

Competition Organisers:

How will competition organisers benefit from this?

Competition organisers will have an easy to understand and consistent framework to deliver. They will be provided with support packages to help organise meaningful and fun competitions in which formats and scoring are consistent throughout British Tennis.



National Competition Framework

The LTA have consulted extensively with the tennis community about the direction in which to move British Tennis forward. The result, the Blueprint for British Tennis, recognised the need for a straight forward, high quality competitive framework that gives juniors the stimulus they need to get on and stay on the winning pathway. This framework will ensure the right competition is provided to the right players at the right time, giving clear guidance to coaches and players about when to move through the **red**, **orange** and **green** stages of mini tennis. This will ensure players have access to high quality competition and the opportunity to be the best that they can!

Please turn over for further details...

Competition Framework

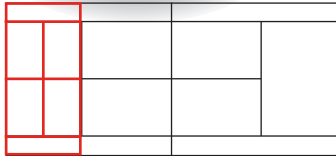


FOR PLAYERS AGED 8 & UNDER

Ball: RED (sponge indoor, felt outdoor)
Court: 12m x 6m (across a court)
Net Height: 80cm
Where: Within the club, Locally, Within the county
Recommended Racket Size: 43cm – 58cm (17" – 23")

Competition Formats:

- Team
- Round Robin, Matchplay
- Match tie break to 10 points
- 1- 3 hours

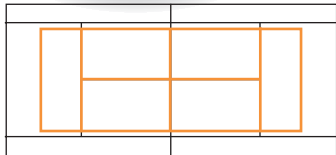


FOR PLAYERS AGED 8 / 9

Ball: ORANGE
Court: 18m x 6.5m
Net Height: 80cm (at the middle of the net)
Where: Within the club, Locally, Within the county, Regionally
Recommended Racket Size: 58cm – 63cm (23" – 25")

Competition Formats:

- Team and Individual
- Round Robin, Matchplay
- Best of 3 tie breaks, 1 short set
- 2-4 hours

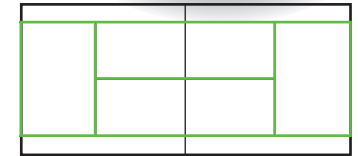


FOR PLAYERS AGED 10

Ball: GREEN
Court: Full
Net Height: Full
Where: Within the club, Locally, Within the county, Regionally, Nationally
Recommended Racket Size: 63cm – 66cm (25" – 26")

Competition Formats:

- Team and Individual
- Compass, Round Robin, Matchplay
- 1 short set, Best of 3 short sets (optional match tie break to 10 points)
- 1 or 2 days

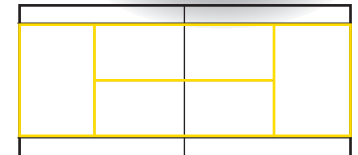


FOR PLAYERS AGED 11 & OVER

Ball: YELLOW
Court: Full
Net Height: Full
Where: Within the club, Locally, Within the county, Regionally, Nationally
Recommended Racket Size: Full size, when physically ready (27")

Competition Formats:

- Team and Individual
- Compass, Round Robin, Matchplay
- Best of 3 short sets, Best of 3 full sets (optional match tie break to 10 points)
- 1 or 2 days



The preferred competition formats may vary depending on 'where' the competition takes place

e.g. Green ball competition within the club may be 1-3 hours but 2 days at national level

There will be a phasing-in process of the age groups over a 2 year period

Year 1 - Age in 2007/2008	8&U (00 or later)	9, 8, 7 (99/00/01)	10, 9 (98/99)	11,10 (97/98)
Year 2 - Age in 2008/2009	8&U (01 or later)	9, 8 (00/01 only)	10 (99 only)	11+ (98 or over)

WHY?

- Players will be able to compete on a scaled down court that is appropriate to their size, strength and ability
- Players will be able to develop tactical awareness from an early age while learning good technical skills
- Players will be able to develop competitive and mental skills to help them progress their tennis
- Players will be able to progress to full tennis in a system that is appropriate to their developmental needs
- Players will be able to compete under the same conditions which will allow effective talent ID to take place

WHAT'S NEXT?

- All players competing in the framework will be registered with the LTA enabling regular communication and monitoring
- A simple and easy to understand method of recording results
- A simple and easy to understand 'player measurement system' based on results
- A simple and easy to use resource pack for competition organisers, to include a recommended calendar of competition, grading ideas and online access to competition tools