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# How to Take Notes in Tennis



Most sports use scorecards, stat sheets, or note cards to record useful information, and tennis is no different. Whether you play singles or doubles, taking notes offers a plethora of benefits. You'll likely square off against the same opponent over the course of your playing career, so jotting down match facts and your opponent's tendencies will give you the

upper hand in a rematch scenario. Putting pen to paper may seem somewhat "nerdy" or superfluous, but your game will undoubtedly improve as a result. This guide describes how to take notes during a match and explains the benefits of doing so.

## Build-a-book

The best way to keep your notes handy is to put together a book. Create a template on your computer that includes the following information, and print out multiple copies. Organize each sheet of paper in a binder, pack it in your tennis bag, and use it before, during, and after every tennis match. Make sure you keep track of the subsequent details:

## Match Information

Regardless of your opponent, you should note the following particulars:

- Name of facility
- Indoors/outdoors
- Weather
- Strong or calm winds
- Court surface
- Time of day

Knowing whether or not you sweated out a match in 110-degree blistering heat, or fought torrential wind storms greatly affects how you review the outcome of a match. Likewise, your style of play differs depending on the court surface you play on or the time of day your match begins.

## Opponent Information

Note sheets provide you with a database of accessible information that you can use to



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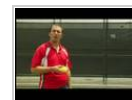
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formulate a game plan before your match even begins. Additionally, you can pull out your notebook or binder during a changeover, and review how you handled similarly-styled players (for example, big baseliners or massive servers) in the past.

No matter the scenario, you should always analyze your opponent's game. From the moment you begin warming up, pay attention to his strengths and weaknesses, and look to capitalize. If his serve is massive, you'll need to adjust your game and concentrate on your serve returns. If he struggles with his backhand, you should exploit his weaker wing.

You should record and analyze the following attributes, skills, and tendencies:

- Opponent's name
- Dominant hand
- Forehand technique and ability
- Backhand technique and ability
- Dominant wing
- First serve consistency and technique
- Second serve consistency and technique
- Style of play (i.e. baseliner, serve-and-volleyer)
- Quality of net play
- Better wing at the net
- Conditioning, footwork, and speed
- Greatest strength
- Greatest weakness

## Personal Information

Self-evaluation is one of the most important abilities for a competitive tennis player. You need to be able to reflect on your quality of play and assess specific strengths and weaknesses. During your match, track your performance as follows:

- Better wing from the baseline
- Better wing at the net
- Style of play
- Conditioning, footwork, and speed
- First serve consistency and quality
- Second serve consistency and quality
- Greatest strength
- Greatest weakness

*Tennis has to become everything to you if you're going to make it to the top. You have to live it.*

**Monica Seles**  
*Nine-time Grand Slam Singles Champion*

After you take note of these qualities and abilities, leave room for other important match details. Write down what you did to beat this particular player, or how he managed to get the best of you. Record the strategies that troubled your opponent the most, and areas of his game that you need to steer clear of in the future. If he loves to charge the net, for example, and

won the majority of his points by doing so, jot this information down. Lastly, don't forget to note the final match score.

## Book-keeping Benefits

Keeping track of your match facts helps you stay focused while on the court, but it's also a great way to track your overall progress. You can chronicle how opponents consistently play you and document your weaknesses. For example, you'll notice if opponents steadily pick on your backhand side, or that your first serve is erratic. Having tangible proof of your recent successes and failures is a great way to patch the holes in your game, and you can review your notebook with your coach to make the needed improvements.

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**Tim**

2 years ago.



Instead of a book, I was thinking of adding notes to my gmail contacts. That way it helps to keep my tennis bag from getting to heavy and also backs up this valuable information.

1 Reply

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**Rocco**

2 years ago.



Yeah, there are definitely some benefits to a computer. Namely, you'll never lose the information. However, I like being able to take notes during the match. It's hard to remember how every game played out hours after the fact, but your assessment will be extremely accurate during changeovers. I'm all for lightening my bag, but a notebook and pen shouldn't add too much extra weight.

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