

SERVING IN DOUBLES

By Peter Farrell

Playing Standard: ITN 1 to 6

Long Term Player Development Pathway: Phase 5

Serving in doubles and serving in singles are two different sides of the same coin. In doubles it's vital to get a high percentage of first deliveries into play. If you are forced to hit a lot of second serves, the receiver will be able to pressurize your partner at the net with an aggressive return. A high percentage of first serves in also makes it easier for you to serve and volley – an important aspect of good doubles play.

So what should you do in order to get lots of first serves in? Add some spin to the shot. This will automatically take some pace off it, while the spin helps with control.

Here's my favourite practice exercise for working on this aspect of doubles play: play a set of doubles where the server has only one serve per point.

To the non-tennis player, doubles can look just like singles only with twice the amount of players! In fact, there are many subtle and not-so-subtle differences between the two, and the serve is one area where you need different plans for singles and doubles.

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For individual advice on this or any aspect of tennis, please contact your local Tennis Coach Ireland coach – see www.tenniscoachireland.ie

For more information on the ITN: http://www.tennisireland.ie/player_database/what_is_the_itn

For more information on the Long Term Player Development Pathway: http://www.tennisireland.ie/coaches/player_development_pathway