

THE SERVICE RITUAL
by Peter Farrell

Playing Standard: ITN 1 to 8
Long Term Player Development Pathway: Phase 3

Advanced players always take plenty of time as they get ready to serve – after all there are several decisions to be made before the serve is hit:

- 1. Where to serve to** – depends on receivers position, his favoured returning side, what has worked well in the match so far...
- 2. What type of serve to hit** – flat, slice, kick.
- 3. What to do immediately after the serve** – the decision to serve and volley or serve and stay back must be made *before* the serve is hit.

The best way to give yourself an opportunity to make these decisions, and to prevent you from rushing into the point, is to have a set number of times that you always bounce the ball before you start the service action. If you miss the first serve, this `service ritual` should be repeated in preparation for the second serve, since you will probably change your plan for the second delivery.

Most experts agree that the serve is the most important shot in the game – so always take your time...

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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