

HOW TO BE A TEAM PLAYER

Although tennis is often thought of as an individual sport, once you play with a partner or become part of a larger squad, you are no part of a team. To be an effective team player you need to make a fundamental shift in your mindset from "I" to "we." It doesn't matter how you play as an individual as much as how well you perform as a team. The win or loss is attributed to the team and not the individual.

A team player functions by always answering the following questions: "What's in the best interest of my team?" The answer almost always requires a high degree of caring, commitment and sacrifice. Here is a partial checklist of team player behaviors:

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1. Do you come to practices on time and stay through the end?
2. Do you practice and play matches with a high degree of enthusiasm regardless of your partner, opponent or the score.
3. Do you make every effort to play at each match, which you are scheduled?
4. Do you willingly play with whatever partner you are asked at the position you are asked without making a big fuss?
5. Are you open and receptive to feedback from others?
6. Do you make every effort to stay and support your team if your match has finished early?
7. Do you look for opportunities to provide praise and encouragement?
8. Are you generous with compliments and stingy with criticism?
9. Do you demonstrate good sportsmanship both on and off the court?
10. Do you know and abide by the rules of the game, team, league and facility you represent?

Your responses to these questions can provide you with goals you can work on to become a great team player.

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