



# USTA Youth Tennis Progression FAQs



## **Why did USTA start the Youth Tennis Progression?**

The USTA has launched the Youth Tennis Progression, which is designed to create an enhanced experience for children starting tennis and playing in junior tennis tournaments. The goal is to ensure that young players ages 7-10 years old are competing at appropriate levels as they progress through competitive stages based on age, participation and achievement. Our system will track the progress of junior players as they advance from Orange Level 2 to Orange Level 1 to Green Level 1 and then to the yellow-level junior/youth competition. (Levels are determined by the type of ball the player is using.) This new system serves as a guide for coaches, parents and players to help ensure that kids 10 and under participate in events using the appropriate ball and court for their skill level.

## **Does my child have to be a USTA member to participate in youth progression events?**

Some sections offer entry-level tournaments and Junior Team Tennis programs that do not require membership. However, players will need a USTA account number in order to be tracked (i.e., to accumulate stars and trophies – see below for more information). A free account can be set up by [clicking here](#).

When you're ready to get a paid membership, your membership number will be upgraded so you can keep your current progression profile and status.

## **What are the stars and trophies you receive as part of Youth Tennis Progression? How does a player earn them?**

A child can advance to another level (Orange Level 2 to Orange Level 1 to Green Level 1 and then to the yellow-level junior/youth competition) by earning the required amount of stars and trophies. Players have to collect a combination of 20 stars and/or trophies to advance to the next level.

Players collect stars for tournament and Junior Team Tennis participation. Additionally, players collect trophies for winning a singles tournament or reaching the final.

## **What if we are visiting from another USTA section? Can my child get credit in another section?**

Players can receive participation stars for playing outside their home section, provided the event is in same ball color or level as the player regularly participates in, or one level down. Points earned will follow the criteria set by the home section. Players will not be eligible for bonus trophies when playing outside of their home section.

## **What is a Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournament?**

Events that appear in TennisLink with Orange Level 2, Orange Level 1 or Green Level 1 are called progression tagged events. Players can collect progression stars and trophies for participating in these events.



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## **Which events count toward progression?**

Players can receive participation stars by playing in the following events:

- 10 and Under Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournaments
- Junior Team Tennis

Players collect “bonus trophies” in singles for achievement by either:

- Winning a 10 and Under Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournament
- Reaching the finals

## **My child played in a doubles tournament but never received any stars?**

Players only receive credit for playing 10 and Under singles. Playing doubles in 10 and Under tournaments does not count towards progression at this time.

## **My child played in a tournament but never received any stars?**

Check to see if the tournament was a Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournament (Orange Level 1, Orange Level 2 or Green Level 1). If it wasn't, then they would not receive any stars. Also, if your child won a defaulted or retired match, he/she will not receive credit.

## **My child played one match for his/her JTT team but never received any participation stars?**

Players must play a minimum of two matches for their team in order to receive any participation stars.

## **My child played on more than one JTT team in a season but only received credit for one team?**

Players will only receive participation stars for one JTT team per season and a maximum of two seasons per year.

## **At what level does a new player start?**

All new players starting after January 1, 2017 will begin playing in Orange Level 2 tournaments.

## **How come my child, who is an Orange Level 1 player, was allowed to register for a 10 and under green Junior Team Tennis league?**

Players can play in either 10 and Under orange ball or 10 and Under green ball Junior Team Tennis leagues and receive participation stars in their current level.

## **My child is 6 years old or younger. Why can't he/she play orange ball events?**

The red ball is the recommended place to start on the progression at ages 6 and under. The minimum age to start playing an Orange Ball 2 tournament is 7 years old. Players 6 and under are encouraged to participate in Play Days, Junior Team Tennis and junior tournaments using the red ball. The focus should be on fun, team play, skill development and learning the game.



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## **How long do you expect it to take for the average player to progress through each level?**

How a child progresses through the progression is entirely up to them. We've made the progression flexible so that more advanced or dedicated players can go through the system faster, while other players might want to take their time and play more events and go through on the participation track. The number of events needed to advance to each level will vary depending on the section. As is now, decisions of how fast or slow a child will move through the progression is a collaborative decision made between the player, parent and coach. Counting participation and results will ultimately provide a system for parents and coaches to be able to evaluate their child's readiness to move ahead based on their success against their peers.

## **Is it true that my child can't start playing yellow ball until 11 or older?**

No, players can start playing 12 and under yellow ball events as soon as they have fulfilled the orange and green progression requirements. They don't have to wait until age 11. A player could possibly play yellow ball in the 12 and under divisions as young as age 7 if they advance through the progression extremely quickly and fulfill the requirements to advance.

## **Does the parent/player or coach make advancement decisions?**

Ultimately, the decision-maker in the child-parent-coach relationship will make the final decision on advancing to the next level. Youth Tennis Progression is providing a system for parents, coaches and children to track their participation and results as well as rules for when they can move to a different ball color. We are not forcing players to advance if they choose not to. We are, however, ensuring through this system that children gain experience at each ball color and level. We believe that this will help ensure a positive experience in these early years of competitive play. The goal is to create more American players with a solid foundation and all-court skills. It has been proven that spending more time on orange and green will help develop those skills.

## **How do I access the player page?**

To access the player page, [click here](#) and click on the "My Tennis" tab. Enter in the player's USTA number and password to be directed to the player's "Welcome" screen. The match information is updated nightly, but players will not see their updated stars and trophy progress until after the automated publish dates (every Tuesday night). If desired, the player can upload a photo to his/her player page by clicking "Manage Account" directly under the player's USTA account number in the top right corner of the "Welcome" screen.

If a player continues to play in the division, once he/she accumulates 20 stars and/or trophies, additional stars and/or trophies earned in that division will NOT appear on the player page.

## **How do I opt in for the player email notification?**

In order to receive inspiring status updates and aging-up notification emails, the contact information on file with USTA Member Services must be accurate and current. To update the email address, [click here](#) to login and click "Manage Account" directly under the player's USTA account number in the top right corner of the "Welcome" screen. The information can also be updated by contacting USTA Member Services at 1-800-990-8782.



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## USTA Southern State Contacts for Youth Tennis Progression

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