



**NORTH AMERICAN
ISMAILI GAMES**

TENNIS RULEBOOK

Introduction

The North American Ismaili Games (NAIG) is a premier regional sporting event that brings together athletes from across North America in a spirit of excellence, sportsmanship, and healthy competition, aligned with international standards.

Beyond competition, NAIG serves as a platform for unity, belonging, and shared growth—fostering meaningful connections and collective pride across regions. The Games are designed to be inclusive and accessible, enabling participation across age groups, skill levels, and regions.

NAIG also promotes lifelong active living and continuous improvement, while extending its impact through complementary programming such as development clinics, leadership forums, mentorship, and community engagement

Click [here](#) for more information on the Rules of Tennis from the official governing body (ITF - [ITF RULES OF TENNIS](#)).

Highlights

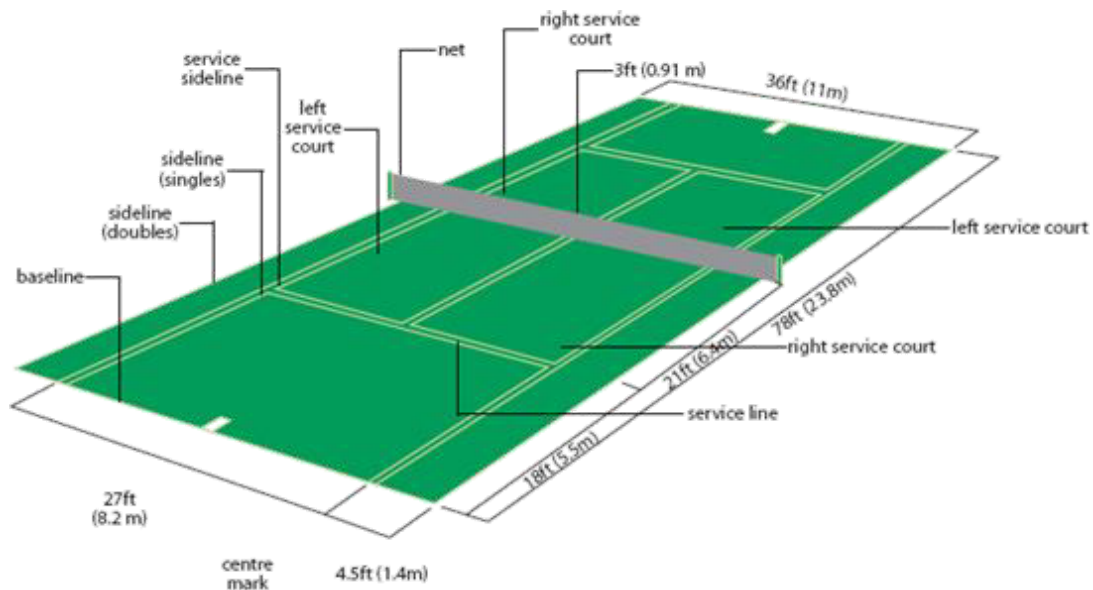
- In Preliminary Round Matches a match is won by the player or team that wins a set to six (6) games – first (1st) player/team to win six (6) games with a two (2) game margin. Preliminary Round games will be played with no advantage scoring. If the score in any set is tied six to six (6-6) games a tie-breaker will be played with the first (1st) player/team to reach seven (7) points with at least a two (2) point margin winning the tie-breaker.
- In the Playoffs a match is won by the player or team who wins two (2) out of three (3) sets to six (6) games. Playoff matches will be played with advantage scoring utilizing the “Tie-break Set” where the first (1st) player or team to win six (6) games wins that set, provided there is a margin of two (2) games over

the opponent(s). If the score reaches six (6) games all, then a tie-break game will be played, with first (1st) player/team to reach seven (7) points with at least a two (2) point margin winning the tie-breaker.

- In doubles playoff competition, if the match goes to a third (3rd) set, then the third (3rd) set will consist of a super tie-break set to ten (10) points with at least a two (2) point margin.
- For the Youth category, a set consists of four (4) games. Youth matches will be played with no-advantage scoring. A player or team wins the set by being the first to win four (4) games. If the score reaches four games all (4–4), a tie-break game shall be played. The tie-break is won by the first player/team to reach seven (7) points with a margin of at least two (2) points.
- If the ball touches any part of the facility, including but not limited to walls, court dividers, poles, umpire chair, it is whistled dead and the other player/team gets the point.
- The frame of the racket shall not exceed 73.7 centimeters (29.0 inches) in overall length, including the handle. The frame of the racket shall not exceed 31.7 centimeters (12.5 inches) in overall width. The hitting surface shall not exceed 39.4 centimeters (15.5 inches) in overall length and 29.2 centimeters (11.5 inches) in overall width.

Tennis Court

The diagram below is an illustration of a tennis court:



Equipment

- The frame of the racket shall not exceed 73.7 centimeters (29.0 inches) in overall length, including the handle. The frame of the racket shall not exceed 31.7 centimeters (12.5 inches) in overall width. The hitting surface shall not exceed 39.4 centimeters (15.5 inches) in overall length and 29.2 centimeters (11.5 inches) in overall width.
- Dampening devices can only be placed outside the pattern of the crossed strings on a racket

Method of Scoring

- A standard game is scored as follows with the server's score being called first:
 - No point – "Love"
 - First (1st) point – "fifteen (15)"
 - Second (2nd) point – "thirty (30)"

- Third (3rd) point – “forty (40)”
 - Fourth (4th) point – “Game”
- Except that if each player/team has won three (3) points in the preliminary round matches, the score is “Deuce” and a deciding point shall be played. In doubles, the receiving team shall choose which player receives the deciding point. The receiving player must receive on their current side of the court and players may not change positions for the purpose of receiving this point. The player/team who wins the deciding point wins the “Game”.
- Except that if each player/team has won three (3) points in the playoff matches, the score is “Deuce” and a player/team will win the “Game” if they win two (2) points in a row.
- Standard “Tie-break Set” play method will be used for all matches. If any of the sets go to six (6) games all then the players play out a tie-break game to seven (7) points provided there is a margin of two (2) points over the opponent(s). If necessary, the tie-break game shall continue until this margin is achieved.
- A match in the playoffs will be played to the best of three (3) tie-break sets, with the exception of doubles playoff matches when both teams have won one (1) set apiece, the third (3rd) set will be played as a super tie-breaker to ten (10) points with the first (1st) team reaching a score of ten (10) points with at least a two (2) point margin winning the match.
- In Preliminary Round Matches, a match is won by the player or team that wins a set to six (6) games – first (1st) player/team to win six (6) games with a two (2) game margin. Preliminary Round games will be played with no advantage scoring. If the score in any set is tied six to six (6-6) games a tie-breaker will be played with first (1st) player/team to reach seven (7) points with at least a two (2) point margin winning the tie-breaker.
- For the Youth category, a set consists of four (4) games. Youth matches will be played with no-advantage scoring. A player or team wins the set by being the

first to win four (4) games. If the score reaches four games all (4–4), a tie-break game shall be played. The tie-break is won by the first player/team to reach seven (7) points with a margin of at least two (2) points.

Tie Breaks

- In Preliminary Round Matches a match is won by the player or team that wins a set to six (6) games – first (1st) player/team to win six (6) games with a two (2) game margin. Preliminary Round games will be played with no advantage scoring. If the score in any set is tied six to six (6-6) games a tie-breaker will be played with first (1st) player/team to reach seven (7) points with at least a two (2) point margin winning the tie-breaker.
- During the playoffs tie-break points are scored “Zero (0)”, “One (1)”, “Two (2)”, “Three (3)”, etc. The first (1st) player/team to win seven (7) points wins the “Game” and “Set”, provided there is a margin of two (2) points over the opponent(s). If necessary, the tie-break game shall continue until this margin is achieved.
- Exception being for doubles playoff competition where the third (3rd) set will consist of a super tie-break set to ten (10) points. During first two (2) sets, tie-break points are scored “Zero (0)”, “One (1)”, “Two (2)”, “Three (3)”, etc. The first (1st) team to win seven (7) points wins the “Game” and “Set”, provided there is a margin of two (2) points over the opponent(s). If necessary, the tie-break game shall continue until this margin is achieved. If the set is tied one to one (1-1) the match will be won by the first (1st) team to reach ten (10) points with at least a two (2) point margin.
- The player whose turn it is to serve shall serve the first (1st) point of the tie-break game. The following two (2) points shall be served by the opponent(s) (in doubles, the player of the opposing team due to serve next). After this, each player/team shall serve alternately for two (2) consecutive

points until the end of the tie-break game (in doubles, the rotation of serve within each team shall continue in the same order as during that set).

- The player/team whose turn it was to serve first (1st) in the tie-break game shall be the receiver in the first (1st) game of the following set

Official Rules

Start of Game

- Players must be ready to play at their scheduled match time.
- A player/team that is more than fifteen (15) minutes late may be defaulted at the discretion of the tournament referee/tournament planning team.
- The choice of ends and the choice to be server or receiver in the first (1st) game shall be decided by toss before the warm-up starts. The player/team who wins the toss may choose:
 - To be server or receiver in the first (1st) game of the match, in the which case the opponent(s) shall choose the end of the court for the first (1st) game of the match;
 - The end of the court for the first (1st) game of the match, in which case the opponent(s) shall choose to be server or receiver for the first (1st) game of the match, or;
 - To require the opponent(s) to make one (1) of the above choices
- The tournament referee and the Regional and National planning team reserves the right to modify match formats due to weather, scheduling constraints, or other operational considerations.
- Any changes will be communicated to players prior to the start of the match.

Change of End (A.K.A. Changeover)

- The players/teams shall change ends at the end of the first (1st), third (3rd) and every subsequent odd game of each set.
- In the playoffs, the players shall also change ends at the end of each set unless the total number of games in that set is even, in which case the players change ends at the end of the first (1st) game of the next set .
- The players/teams shall have a maximum of ninety (90) seconds break at the change of ends.
- During a tie-break game, players/teams shall change ends after every six (6) points.
- After each set there shall be a set break of maximum of one hundred and twenty (120) seconds.
- Players have a maximum of twenty five (25) seconds between points.

Order of Service

- At the end of each standard game, the receiver shall become the server and the server shall become the receiver for the next game.
- In doubles, the team due to serve in the first (1st) game of each set shall decide which player shall serve for that game. Similarly, before the second (2nd) game starts, their opponents shall decide which player shall serve for that game. The partner of the player who served in the first (1st) game shall serve in the third (3rd) game and the partner of the player who served in the second (2nd) game shall serve in the fourth (4th) game. This rotation shall continue until the end of the set.

Order of Receiving in Doubles

- The team which is due to receive in the first (1st) game of a set shall decide which player shall receive the first (1st) point in the game. Similarly, before the second (2nd) game starts, their opponents shall decide which player shall receive the first (1st) point of that game. The player who was the receiver's partner for the first (1st) point of the game shall receive the second (2nd) point and this rotation shall continue until the end of the game and the set.
- After the receiver has returned the ball, either player in a team can hit the ball.

Foot Fault

- During the service motion, and before the ball has been hit, the server shall not:
 - Change position by walking or running, although slight movements of the feet are permitted;
 - Touch the baseline or the court with either foot;
 - Touch the area outside the imaginary extension of the side-line with either foot, or;
 - Touch the imaginary extension of the centre mark with either foot.
- If the server breaks this rule it is a "Foot Fault".

Service Fault

- The service is a fault if any of the following occurs:
 - The server misses the ball when trying to hit it;
 - The ball bounces outside of the service box;
 - The ball served touches a permanent fixture, singles stick or net post before it hits the ground, or
 - The ball served touches the server or server's partner or anything the server or server's partner is wearing or carrying before a bounce,

although the server is allowed to catch the ball if the toss of the ball is poorly done.

Second Service

- If the first (1st) service is a fault, server shall serve again without delay from behind the same half of the court from which that fault was served, unless the service was from the wrong half.

Let Service

- The service is a let if:
 - The ball served touches the net, strap or band, and is otherwise good;
 - After touching the net, strap or band, touches the receiver;
 - The receiver's partner or anything they wear or carry before hitting the ground; or
 - The ball is served when the receiver is not ready.
- In the case of a service let, that particular service shall not count, and the server shall serve again, but a service let does not cancel a previous fault.

Player Loses Point

- The point is lost if:
 - The player serves two (2) consecutive faults.
 - The player does not return the ball in play before it bounces twice consecutively.
 - The player returns the ball in play so that it bounces outside the correct court.
 - The player returns the ball in play so that, before it bounces, it hits a permanent fixture.

- The player returns the service before it bounces.
- The player deliberately carries or catches the ball in play on the racket or deliberately touches it with the racket more than once.
- The player or the racket, whether in the player's hand or not, or anything which the player is wearing or carrying touches the net, net posts/singles sticks, cord or metal cable, strap or band, or the opponent's court at any time while the ball is in play; however, the player may continue their swinging motion over the net and without touching it only after striking the ball in one (1) constant motion.
- The player hits the ball before it has passed the net.
- The ball in play touches the player or anything that the player is wearing or carrying, except the racket.
- The ball in play touches the racket when the player is not holding it.
- The player deliberately and materially changes the shape of the racket when the ball is in play, or;
- In doubles, both players touch the ball when returning it.

Warm-Up

- Players will be allowed a warm-up time of five (5) minutes prior to each match.

Coaching

- Coaching is considered to be communication, advice or instruction of any kind to a player.
- Coaching can only be provided to the player(s) during the changeover and set break for a maximum of one hundred and twenty (120) seconds.
- In the above regulation breaks during a match, the coach must return to their designated chairs/seating area as soon as the umpire announces that there are twenty (20) seconds remaining.

- The coach must remain seated in the designated chairs/seating area provided except at the approved intervals mentioned above.
- Under no circumstances can coaching be provided when the ball is in play or in any manner distracting the opposing player(s) or disrupt play.
- A player may also be allowed to receive coaching when play is suspended by the umpire.
- Where a head coach is not present or available, an assistant coach, team manager, or "team" captain may assume the role of a coach.

Medical Evaluation

- During the warm-up or the match, the player may request through the chair umpire for the medical personnel to evaluate them during the next change over or set break.
- The purpose of the medical evaluation is to determine if the player has developed a treatable medical condition and, if so, to determine when medical treatment is warranted.
- Such evaluation shall be performed within a reasonable length of time, balancing player safety on the one hand, and continuous play on the other.

Medical Time-Out

- A medical time-out is allowed by the tournament supervisor/referee or chair umpire when the medical personnel have evaluated the player and have determined that additional time for medical treatment is required.
- The medical time-out takes place during a changeover or set break, unless the medical personnel determine that the player has developed an acute medical condition that requires immediate medical treatment.
- The medical time-out is limited to five (5) minutes of treatment and starts when the medical personnel are ready to start treatment.

- A player is allowed one (1) medical time-out for each distinct treatable medical condition.
- All clinical manifestations of heat illness shall be considered as one (1) treatable medical condition.
- All treatable musculoskeletal injuries that manifest as part of a kinetic chain continuum shall be considered as one (1) treatable medical condition.
- Muscle cramping: A player may receive treatment for muscle cramping only during the time allotted for change of ends and/or set breaks. Players may not receive a medical time-out for muscle cramping.
- A player may receive medical treatment during any changeover or set break, and such medical treatment shall be limited to two (2) changeover/set breaks for each treatable medical treatment.
- Players may not receive medical treatment for non-treatable medical conditions.

Injury and Bleeding

Illness and Injury

- A medical condition is a medical illness or musculoskeletal injury that warrants medical evaluation and/or medical treatment during the warm-up or the match
- Treatable Medical Conditions:
 - Acute medical condition: the sudden development of a medical illness or musculoskeletal injury during the warm-up or match that requires immediate medical attention.
 - Non-acute medical condition: a medical illness or musculoskeletal injury that develops or is aggravated during the warm-up or the match and requires medical attention at the changeover or set break.

- Non-Treatable Medical Conditions:
 - Any medical condition that cannot be treated appropriately, or that will not be improved by available medical treatment within the time allowed.
 - Any medical condition (inclusive of symptoms) that has not developed or has not been aggravated during the warm-up or the match.
 - General player fatigue.
 - Any medical condition requiring injections, intravenous infusions, inhalers or oxygen, except for diabetes, for which prior medical certification has been obtained, and for which subcutaneous injections of insulin may be administered.
- In cases where there is doubt about whether the player suffers from an acute medical condition, non-acute medical condition inclusive of muscle cramping, or non-treatable medical condition, the decision of the medical personnel in conjunction with the tournament supervisor/referee or chair umpire shall be final.
- If the player cannot continue playing due for example to severe muscle cramping as determined by the medical personnel, they may forfeit the point(s)/game(s) needed to get to a change of ends or set break in order to receive treatment. There may be a total of two (2) full change ends of treatments in a match, not necessarily consecutive.
- If a player vomits on the playing surface, the chair umpire shall stop play, or if the player requests medical evaluation. The medical personnel must determine if the player has a treatable medical condition, and if so, whether the medical condition is acute or non-acute.
- The player must then resume play, or concede the match.
- A player or team that concedes a match retains any games/sets already won.

Physical Incapacity

- During a match, if there is an emergency medical condition and player involved is unable to make a request for medical assistance, the chair umpire shall immediately summon medical personnel to the court.
- Either before or during a match, if a player is considered unable physically to compete, the medical personnel shall inform the tournament supervisor/referee or chair umpire and recommend that the player is ruled unable to compete in the match to be played, or retired from the match in progress.
- The player may subsequently compete in their next match or event that they qualified for at the same tournament if the medical personnel determine that the player's condition has improved to the extent that the player may safely physically perform at an appropriate level of play, whether the same day or on a later day and shall advise the tournament supervisor/referee of this recommendation.
- A player or team that concedes a match retains any games/sets already won.

Bleeding

- Whenever bleeding occurs, the bleeding must be stopped before the player can continue.
- Play shall be suspended immediately by the chair umpire and medical personnel shall be called for evaluation and treatment.
- If warranted medical personnel shall request a medical time-out for treatment lasting not more than five (5) minutes and the player shall receive medical treatment.
- Play shall not resume until all traces of blood have been removed from the playing surface.

- If the bleeding recurs the player may concede the points/game/set using the rest period between games/sets to attend to the wound and stop the bleeding. If unable to stop the bleeding, the player or team must concede the match.
- A player or team that concedes a match retains any games/set already won.
- Bloodstained clothing shall be replaced.