



UNDER 9 AND UNDER 12 PLAYER EVALUATION (fundamental and developmental stages)

PLAYER'S NAME:		CLUB:	
E-MAIL:		PHONE:	
GENDER:	BIRTHDAY: MONTH	YEAR	
PLAYING HAND:	BACKHAND:	PROGRAM:	
COACH'S NAME:			
E-MAIL:		PHONE:	

How to use this evaluation

This evaluation can be used to evaluate both U-9 fundamental stage and U-12 developmental stage players. U-9 competencies are pre-requisites for the U-12. Hence when evaluating a U-12 player, the U-9 competencies should be evaluated as well. You will find the U-9 competencies in the white cells and the U-12 competencies in the light grey cells.

Psychological/Tactical/Technical components: Although some competencies can be evaluated in practice situations, the majority are best evaluated in match play, ideally tournament play over a series of matches to have a “true” evaluation of the player. If practice is used as the main source of evaluation, be sure to confirm findings in match/tournament play.

Physical components: You will find a list of priorities for the U9 and U12 Fundamental and Development Stages. For evaluation purposes, see the resource that includes the physical battery of tests.

FOR EACH COMPETENCY, RATE 1-2-3 1= not developed 2= in progress 3= developed

****Based on International Standards****

PSYCHOLOGICAL	1	2	3
Note: It is important for the players at this stage to develop the “love of tennis” – playing, practicing, competing.			
Calm and positive attitude.			
Manage mistakes in a positive manner.			
Mini-routine prior to each point (serve and return) and between points.			
Good sportsmanship including respect for coaches, officials and other players.			
Good practice habits and being committed to improvement.			
Best effort through a “getting to every ball attitude” and determination to put every ball in the court (mentality of consistency)			
Focus and engagement in training and competition.			
Developing an ability to self-manage and be responsible while away from home.			
Comments			

TACTICAL

Note: The overall emphasis for U-9 and U-12 players is on consistency (putting one more ball in the court than the opponent). Understanding that tennis is a game of errors and thus the importance of pressuring with a consistency and percentage tennis.

Playing very consistent via clear intentions: depth, moving the opponent (precision), changing rhythm while playing to big targets and looking to play more aggressive once you have opportunities.

For the benefit of the long term development of the U-9 player, it is important to use a progressive approach (red, orange, green) that is proportionate to the player's size/ability. This will help ensure that all court game is developed.

Overall	1	2	3
Competes with a high level of consistency			
Plays percentage tennis, playing the right shot at the right time (rally, attack or defend)			
Recovery position (horizontal) before ball bounces on other side based on angle of potential shots.			
Combines all aspects of their game/strengths to gain a competitive advantage.			
Aware of their opponent's strength, weaknesses and tendencies and how to neutralize and exploit them.			
Recovery position (up/back) before ball bounces on other side based on the quality of the shot hits (rally, attack, defend)			
Both Back	1	2	3
Plays with a high level of consistency and depth via the use of big targets.			
Moves the opponent via control of direction (precision)			
Plays the opponents weakness (often at this age this is the backhand)			
Takes control of the middle of the court through the use of the strength of the player (this will usually be the forehand for boys and could be either the FH or BH for girls)			
Sends an arched ball if a more defensive ball is required			
Changes rhythm and use precision in order to create errors or take control of the point through the use of angles, slice, topspin and change of speed			
Adapts to a change of rhythm and use of precision in order to respond with the desired tactical intentions (including receiving a drop shot)			
Stays in the point and neutralize with good defensive skills			
GIRLS: Consistently hit through the court with depth via a flatter ball at a higher tempo			
GIRLS: Plays early, usually at the top of the bounce with a closer position at the baseline			
Approaching or at the Net	1	2	3
Finishes the point through directing volley to open court, short or deep.			
Recognizes and takes advantage of attacking opportunities from 3/4 court forward utilizing 1-2 shot sequences.			
Use of a drop shot as a variation to an approach shot			
Uses a variety of volleys to finish points at the net (punch, drop, angle, first volley...)			
Ability to win points with swing volleys			
Serving	1	2	3
Plays with a high percentage of 1st serves and to the opponent's weakness (often at this age this is the backhand)			
BOYS: Creates attacking opportunities/errors with your first serve (first through directing serve to weakness, then through additional precision)			
GIRLS: Learn to start the point with a clear intention including: having a high percentage, placing the ball precisely and occasionally hitting the ball with power			

Returning	1	2	3
Neutralizes the opponent through the use of quality rally balls to keep the opponent back or play to the opponent's weakness (often at this age this is the backhand) or to move the opponent (outside the middle zone)			
Returns consistently with a quality ball to neutralize when receiving a 1st serve			
Dictates points on the 2nd serve return via hitting from inside the baseline, using a variety of targets (3 zones)			

Comments

TECHNICAL

The technical skills worked on at this stage must effectively support the identified tactical priorities.

The overall emphasis in the U-9 and U-12 is to ensure that the player has a very sound technical base in all stroke to create a foundation for an all around game and further development.

U-9 - The technical fundamentals will be best developed using a progressive approach (proper court size and balls).

Overall (for all strokes)	1	2	3
Energetic look and focus (search and collect information)			
Quick reaction and timing of split step			

Comments

Groundstrokes and Returns	1	2	3	1	2	3
	Forehand			Backhand		

Note: U-9 - Prioritize the technique at the beginning that emphasizes a flatter/straighter rally trajectory through the use of a "simple" preparation, an eastern grip, long hitting zone and linear body work.

U-12 - Continue to improve the long hitting zone technique for a flatter/straighter rally trajectory and add variations through change of trajectory/spins. Increase ball speed and spins with the use of legs, semi-open stance and more angular bodywork. The end result will be a simple and effortless stroke where the ball moves cleanly off the racquet.

Grips	FH - eastern to semi-western						
	2 hand BH – top hand eastern, bottom hand continental						
	1 hand BH - eastern						
	Ensure grip change from one shot to another						
Set-up	Early preparation before the ball crosses the net						
	Use of the non dominant arm and body together						
	Set-up base (feet) before the bounce with balance and proper stance (neutral, semi-close or semi-open)						
	Introduce and develop the loading and pushing off phases (ground force)						

Impact Point	Consistent impact between waist and shoulder height level, slightly in front at a comfortable distance from the body						
	Breathing out at impact						
	Adaptation of strokes for various situations						
Hitting Zone	Long hitting zone (technique required to hit through the court with depth/pace and minimal topspin)						
	Acceleration, a rhythm that increase the racquet speed prior to impact						
	Smooth and effortless stroke						
	Forward body transfer from back to front foot						
	Complete rotation of shoulders (FH and 2 handed BH)						
	Proper racquet trajectory and follow through depending on shot selection (rally, attack, defend)						
	Balance throughout shot						
	Technique required to hit topspin						
	Technique required to hit underspin						
Recovery	Initiate the proper first step of recovery (shuffle, cross or sprint) depending on the distance away from the ideal recovery position						
	Uses various recovery footwork variations depending on the distance required (shuffle, crossover forward, crossover backwards, sprint)						
Comments							
Serve					1	2	3
Note: U-9 - Prioritize the technique at the beginning that emphasizes a good throwing action without moving their feet while serving. This requires good balance and a good tossing technique as well as the proper throwing technique.							
U-12 - Once balance and a good throwing motion is established, improve rhythm and use of bodywork (torso and legs).							
Grips	Continental grip						
Set-up	Establish a balanced starting position						
	Control of the toss with a slow rhythm						
	Synchronization and coordination of the arms						
	Use of legs and ground force						
Impact Point	Consistent toss for an impact in front and to the right (1 o'clock) reaching up						
	Racquet angle facing target						
	Impact point at 12 o'clock with full extension						
Hitting Zone	Proper throwing action						
	Hammer action (will lead to pronation)						
	Follow through on the opposite side of the body						
	Balance throughout shot						
	Hitting action through proper pronation						
	Ability to hit spin serve (priority on the slice than initial introduction to the top spin)						

Recovery	Recover to home before opponent hits			
	Adjust recovery based on whether it is a first or second serve.			
Comments				
Volleys		1	2	3
<p>Note: U-9 - Prioritize the technique at the beginning that emphasizes a simple catching action using a continental grip, and slightly open face. Emphasize the development of feel via various juggling and coordination exercises.</p> <p>U-12 - Increase the variety of volleys and related skills, to include: punch volley, drop volley, swing volley, angle, first volley... (doubles training is recommended to assist with this)</p>				
Grips	Continental			
Set-up	Elbows in front and away of body			
	Racquet head above the wrist			
	Use of non-dominant hand to keep balance (hand to support the throat on the backhand)			
	Step out on the first step			
Impact Point	Slightly in front			
	Adjust of impact based on the type of volley hit			
Hitting Zone	Catching action, high to low racquet trajectory, slightly open racquet face			
	Steps in at the same time of impact with opposite leg			
	Balance throughout shot			
	Feel (sensation) and various racquet work to achieve the specific volley mention above			
Recovery	Before opponent's hit			
	Use of small step after impact to gain balance and face the court			
Comments				
Overhead		1	2	3
<p>Note: U-9 - At the beginning, prioritize receiving an easy ball with the proper set-up and timing of the hit.</p> <p>U-12 - Increase the challenge of the movement while maintaining fundamentals and variation of targets</p>				
Grips	Continental grip			
Set-up	Sideways body position			
	Use of the non-dominant arm to point at the ball			
	Racquet in a throwing position and elbow at 90 degrees			
	Use of shuffle and cross-over steps			
	Use of jump-smash running backward			
	Ability to adapt to increased reception challenges			
Impact Point	Slightly in front and reaching upward			
Hitting Zone	Proper throwing action (hammer action leading with the edge of the racquet)			
	Moves forward with body weight at impact			
	Balance throughout shot			
Recovery	Before opponent's hit			
Comments				

PHYSICAL

Note: At the Fundamental (U-9) and Developing Stages (U-12), it is essential to develop the overall physical literacy including fundamental movement skills (running, jumping, throwing and catching) and fundamental motor skills (balance, speed/agility and coordination). Playing other sports will greatly contribute and is highly recommended. Also, at these early stages, good physical training habits are important to develop. It is important that physical training be fun and include games and competition when possible.

The following will provide a list of priorities for the U-9 Fundamental and U-12 Developing Stages. **FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES, SEE THE RESOURCE THAT INCLUDES THE PHYSICAL BATTERY OF TESTS.**

Priority 1a - COORDINATION: Develop tennis coordination 7 motor skills (adaptation skills)

Set up quickly to respond to a specific situation (reaction time, differentiation, orientation)

Perform many different movements at the same time (differentiation, dissociation, dexterity)

Balanced during movement. (differentiation, dissociation, balance)

Maintain an efficient rhythm (differentiation, rhythm, dexterity)

Continue to develop coordination (adaptation skills) by progressively increasing challenge of the activities while ensuring quality form.

Priority 1b - SPEED AND AGILITY

Proper running technique (to create and reduce speed)

Proper multi directional running technique (changing direction)

Continue to develop speed/agility by progressively increasing challenge of the activities while ensuring quality form.

Priority 2 - FLEXIBILITY

Basic flexibility routine including proper posture

Continue to develop flexibility (as per above) and progress to being able to implement a full body stretching routine on their own.

Priority 3a - STRENGTH-ENDURANCE exercises using body weight (introduction)

Exercises using body weight (introduction)

Continue strength-endurance exercises introducing: body weight, light med balls, elastic band, light weights and core stability.

Priority 3b - AEROBIC ENDURANCE (introduction)

Run 10-15 min.

Skip rope from 1 to 2 min. (non-stop)

Run 15-20 min.

Skip rope from 2 to 3 min. (non-stop)

Priority 4 – PREVENTION

Introduction to prevention injuries (S.A.M. principle – stability, alignment, movement) to strengthen deep muscles.

Introduction of the importance of pre-post match physical routine

Introduction to the importance of sleeping, drinking and eating properly

Note: the physical warm-up is a great opportunity to develop coordination and speed/agility.

Comments