



Youth Tennis Progression 10 & Under Guide

USTA Southern will implement the 10U Youth Tennis Progression on January 1, 2017.

How It Works

For children ages 7-10, a system has been developed to track the progress of junior players from the orange level to the green level and from the green level to the yellow level of competition.

A child can advance a level by earning the required amount of stars and trophies. A Mississippi player's mission is to clear each level by collecting a combination of **twenty (20) stars and/or trophies to advance**. The more they play, the more they improve their skills, the more stars and trophies they accumulate enabling them to advance to the next level.

Players can track their progress on Tennis Link's "My Player" page. On their page players can see how many virtual stars and trophies they need to acquire in order to reach the next level. Each player's page will track their progress and accumulation of stars and trophies as opposed to ranking/standing points.

A player's mission is to collect 20 stars and /or trophies to advance to the next level:

- Players collect stars for participation in Progression tournaments and Junior Team Tennis.
- Players collect trophies for winning or being a finalist in a Progression tournament (There will be a minimum number of players required in draws before trophies are awarded).

USTA Southern 10 & Under Grandfathering

To enable current 10 & Under players to continue playing at the same level after the Youth Tennis Progression is activated, Grandfathering criteria have been established. Players have been placed in an initial Mission Level based on results from tournaments completed by September 30, 2016.

If a player is “grandfathered” into a level it means that they are permitted to register for events at **that level and one level below it.**

Example: If Suzy is age 9 and she is grandfathered into Green Level 1, then she can participate in Green Level 1 and Orange Level 1 tournaments. Suzy may not register for Orange Level 2 tournaments and, before registering for Yellow Ball (12U) tournaments, Suzy must clear Green Level 1 or wait until the month of her 11th birthday.

Appealing a Player’s “Grandfathered” Level

On occasion, a player may disagree with the initial Mission Level assignment. An appeal process has been provided for the player to request reconsideration of their initially assigned level within the Youth Tennis Progression. This appeal process is only available to those players affected by the grandfathering from 2016 and prior at the 10U and 12U divisions.

The appeals process will be in place from October 15th – November 15th, 2016.

Please refer to the Youth Tennis Progression information found on the USTA Arkansas website, www.mstennis.com, for instructions regarding the options for appealing your player’s assigned level.

How to Access the Player Page

To access the player page, go to <https://tennislink.usta.com> and click on the “My Tennis” tab. Enter the player’s USTA number and password to be directed to the player’s “Welcome” screen.

Match Information is updated nightly, but players will not see their updated stars and trophy progress until after automated publish dates which are every Tuesday night.

Players 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.

Junior Team Tennis and Youth Progression

Junior Team Tennis is part of the Youth Tennis Progression. Players will receive participation stars when they play a minimum of two matches in a Junior Team Tennis season/Championship. Only two JTT season may be counted toward the Youth Progression in a calendar year. Below is more info on JTT and Youth Progression:

- 10s Advanced will use the green ball.
- JTT will continue to offer Advanced, Intermediate and Beginner Divisions and placement will be determined by JNTRP (12s-18s) and the Southern Tennis Association (STA) benchmark for 10s.
- 10U players will receive Stars for JTT regardless of which division or level is played.

In order for 10s playing in a higher age division of JTT (12s, 14s, 18s) to receive Youth Progression credit, players should contact the Mississippi Junior Team Tennis Director, Russell Dendy, russelld@mstennis.com.

Player Email Notifications

In order to receive status updates and other email notifications, the contact information on file with USTA must be accurate and current. To update your email address, login to Tennis Link and click “manage Account” directly under the players USTA account number in the top right corner of the “Welcome” screen. The information can also be update by contacting USTA Member Services at 1-800-990-8782.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is there a Youth Tennis Progression System?

The USTA has launched the Youth Tennis Progression which was designed to create a greater experience for children beginning and developing in competitive tennis. The goal is to ensure that young players, ages 7-10 years of age, are competing at appropriate levels of play as they progress through competitive stages based on age, participation and achievement. The best-in-class system will track the progress of junior players as they advance from the orange level, to the green level, and then to the yellow level competition. (Levels are determined by the type of ball the player is using.) The 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.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

What are the stars and trophies you receive as part of USTA Youth Tennis Progression? And how does a player earn them?

A child can advance to another level (i.e., from orange to green or green to yellow) by earning the required amount of virtual participation 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 may collect trophies for winning a tournament and reaching the finals of a tournament.

What is a Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournament?

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

Which events count toward progression?

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

- 10U Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournaments
- Junior Team Tennis

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

- Winning a 10U Youth Tennis Progression Tagged Tournament (only if minimum draw size requirement is met)
- Reaching the finals (only if minimum draw size requirement is met)

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

Check to see if the tournament was a tagged progression event (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 had a default or retired match, he/she will not receive credit.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

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

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

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 receive participation stars for only one JTT team in a season.

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

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

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

How a child progresses through the pathway is entirely up to them. We've made the pathway 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. Decisions of how fast or slow a child will move through the pathway 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.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

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 pathway at ages 6 and under. The minimum age to start playing an Orange Ball Youth Tennis Progression 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.

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

Players can start playing 12U yellow ball events as soon as they have fulfilled the orange and green pathway requirements. They don't have to wait until age 11. A player could possibly play yellow ball in the 12U divisions as young as age 7 if they advance through the pathway 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 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 advance. However, this system does ensure 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.

Frequently Asked Questions, continued

How do I access the Player Page?

To access the player page, go to <https://tennislink.usta.com> 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 does the Player Email Notification work?

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, login to Tennis Link 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.

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 le. 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.

Youth Tennis Progression Contact for Mississippi:

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