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30 Games to Play Tennis with Your Child

The keys to practicing and having fun with your child on the tennis court:

- Don't be the coach
 - Be a parent at all times
 - Let your child be a child
1. It's a Game!! So Play
 2. Make All Games Fun!
 3. Tennis is a Game in a Court, with a net and a ball (the racket serves only to make your hand work better)
 4. A net is just something to play over! Anything!
 5. It's more than just strokes!
 6. If you can't see it you can't hit it! If you can't move to it you can't hit it!
 7. Little Child = Little Court
 8. Children are not mini adults
 9. Be positive! Encourage, Praise
 10. Patience! Patience! Patience! It's not about you!

The key skills that you can help with:

Reception Skills -

Why? A player can't hit unless they can work out where the ball is going to be!

Throwing and Catching

Using Different balls

Game Ideas:

1. Goal Keepers – move left and right
2. Soccer Star – kicking helps with footwork
3. Frisbee – helps with backhand
4. Big Bellies – catch the ball slightly to the side (more realistic)
5. Head Shoulders Knees and Toes – align the body up and down
6. Kangaroo Catches – catch level with the waist
7. Bounce 1,2 3, - move back and forward
8. Splat – trap the ball on the racket

Athletic Skills & Coordination -

Why? A player can't hit unless they can get into a relative position!

Running, Jumping, Balancing, Hopping, Skipping, Throwing

Game Ideas:

1. Dodge Dad – get past and across the line
2. Mirror Mum – mirror someone else's movement
3. Slam Dunk – bounce down jump and catch in the air
4. Doing Double – bounce and throw two balls at once
5. Body Tennis – hit with different parts of your body
6. How High – overarm throw as high as you can

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Racket Skills –

Control the ball. Tennis is about making the ball do what you want it to, using both sides of the racket and in different areas of the both. (Left side, right side, above the head!)

Game Ideas:

1. Castle Attack – hit along the ground to knock down the castle
2. Texas Twos – as long as the ball doesn't roll keep hitting
3. Tap Ups - both sides with a bounce
4. Save Freddie – play taps ups with a partner
5. Swapsies – get a rhythm and swap with your partner
6. Battle Cones – hit the cones to win the game in a rally (align to the side)
7. Patterns (Forehand and Backhand) – hit the pattern called out
8. Knock It Off – aim to knock the ball off the cone over the net
9. Two tap tennis – play a little game but you can tap then hit
10. Handcuffs – hold on and rally over your arms

Tactics -

Tennis isn't easy but it is simple!

Simple tactics are over and in, move your opponent, get back in position

Game Ideas:

1. Peg Rally (Measurable Drill) – rally to ten then move back
2. Magnet Rally – control the ball to move in towards each other
3. Big Ball Tennis Match – make your partner move without using rackets
4. TipTactics – hit in away in the square
5. Mr Freeze – hit but then stand still till your partner hits
6. Ultimate Touch tennis – start the ball on the top of the net (no volleys allowed)
7. Central Station – touch the cone after each shot

Other ideas -

Play lots of sports and remember that tennis is not just about the stroke! The physical, emotional, tactical and reaction / vision are all important factors.

Other information:

A child's potential is based upon five factors!

- Genetics - what you gave them
- Health – nutrition and active lifestyle
- Environment – the opportunity that the environment provides
- Opportunity – how much they use these
- Task – having reasonable tasks that are appropriate

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