ESSENTIAL TENNIS TERMS TO KNOW

Tennis, like any sport, has its own lingo, and tennis uses perhaps the most well-known sports term — *love,* which means zero. The following list offers definitions of basic tennis terms:

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| **ace:** A serve that the returner doesn’t even touch withher racquet. An ace wins the point immediately for the server. | **lob:** A shot that you hit with any stroke high and deepinto your opponent’s court. You typically use a lob to get the ballpast an opponent when she stands at the net. |
| **backhand:** The side of your body that you usually don’tdo business on. For example, if you’re right-handed, your backhandside is the left side of your body. | **netpost:** The two very hard metal posts that hold up thenet. (You’ll find out exactly how hard they are if you ever runinto one.) If your shot hits one of the netposts during play andbounces in your opponent’s court, the shot is good. |
| **baseline:** The line, parallel to the net, which definesthe outer-most edge of the court. | **overhead:** A shot you hit over your head duringplay, either on the fly, or after the ball bounces. The overhead isalso known as a *smash.* |
| **center line:** The line in the direct center of thebaseline. You must stand to either side of the baseline when youserve. | **passing shot:** A forehand or backhand you hit past anopponent when she stands at the net. |
| **drop shot:** A very soft shot hit just barely over thenet. You hit drop shots to get your opponent up to the net. | **seed:** A player’s rank in a tournament. |
| **foot fault:** You commit a foot fault when your foot (orany other part of your body, for that matter) touches the baselineor center line during your serve. You automatically lose theservice attempt when you foot fault. | **serve:** A stroke, made from over your head, which you useto start each point. |
| **forehand:** The side of your body that you perform mosttasks on. For example, if you’re right-handed, the right side ofyour body is your forehand side. | **sideline:** The lines on the court, perpendicular to thenet, which define the widest margins of the court. |
| **Grand Slam:** Winning the U.S. Open, Australian Open,French Open, and Wimbledon all in one year. | **spin:** Hitting the ball in such a way that when itbounces, it does some funny things that your opponent doesn’texpect. |
| **grip:** The way you hold your racquet. You can choose fromthree standard grips in tennis: the eastern, continental, andwestern grips. | **volley:** A shot that you hit before the ball bounces,usually at the net. |
| **groundstrokes:** Your basic forehand and backhandstrokes. |  |