



Avon Tennis

A Guide to Competing and Competitions

Playing tennis competitively can be a fun way to test and improve your skills on court. For players (and parents) who are new to the game it can seem a daunting prospect understanding the LTA tournament structure and then finding a competition that is right for you. Incidentally, the LTA (Lawn Tennis Association) is the governing body of tennis in Great Britain.

This guide will help you through that process.

Lawn Tennis Association – Membership and ITF World Tennis Number

Before you can compete in tennis competitions run by the LTA you will firstly need to sign up to the LTA Membership scheme, known as “*Advantage*”. If you are a member of an LTA registered club, then join the “*Advantage – Play+*” option as this will give you free membership. When joining you will be allocated a membership number which is also your unique ITF World Tennis Number.

What is the ITF World Tennis Number? It’s a real-time skill rating based on your previous match results to help competition organisers match you with players across Britain and the world of a similar standard. It can be a big help in also deciding what competition to enter to find the right level for you. Your rating is calculated both as a singles player and also as a doubles player. For example: Janet Brown has an ITF World Tennis Number of 27.3 in singles and 31.4 in doubles.

Once you have your Number you can enter competitions – it’s that simple.

For more information on the ITF World Tennis Number please go to: <https://www.lta.org.uk/compete/wtn-rankings/world-tennis-number/>

Choosing the Right Tennis Competition

Once you have received your ITF World Tennis Number you can now enter Competitions. These are graded from 7 to 1 to help you find the right tournaments for your playing standard starting with local tournaments going all the way to a national level.

Grade 7

If you are just starting to compete, Grade 7 competitions offer a great opportunity to gain some competitive experience in a local environment. These include local competitions such as club or squad box leagues and ladders. This grade of competition counts towards your ITF World Tennis Number but you’re your ranking (“ranking” is explained later in this guide).

Grade 6

Competitions in this grade are usually match-plays which are open to all players to enter. They are run throughout the year and across the country and offer players in all age groups the chance to develop their competitive tennis. This grade of competition counts towards your ITF World Tennis Number.

Grade 5

These competitions take place at local club or county level and are open to players of all ages and abilities. They might be for specific age groups or cater for different age groups within one tournament. These competitions count towards both your ITF World Tennis Number and ranking.



Grade 4

These are county level competitions giving players the opportunity to gain competition experience at the next level and count towards your ITF World Tennis Number for your ranking.

Grade 3

These are regional level competitions that count towards your ITF World Tennis Number and your ranking. There are opportunities for players of all ages to compete in grade 3 competitions throughout the year.

Grade 2 & Grade 1

These are national and top national level competitions and count for towards both your ITF World Tennis Number ratings and ranking.

Find and Enter a Competition

Once you have decided on the grade of tournament that you wish to enter you now need to find a competition near you. A full calendar of events in Avon, surrounding counties and nationally can be found on the LTA website. To find a competition near you simply click on the following link:

<https://competitions.lta.org.uk/>

Once you have located a suitable competition you can enter online by clicking on the competition link.

If you are unsure of which competition(s) may be best for you then please speak to your coach in the first instance or contact the County office on 07479 260615.

County Organised Tournaments

Avon Tennis organises two Grade 3 tournaments annually for Juniors aged 8U to 18U.

The Bristol and Bath Junior Spring Tournament takes place at Easter and is an “open” event so players from both Avon and other Counties are eligible to enter.

The Avon Tennis County Championships takes place during the summer holidays and is a “closed” event for Avon players only.

Posters and information are circulated around clubs, coaches and players in advance of the entry dates and details can also be found on the LTA “Find a Competition” section of the website.

Ranking

An LTA tennis ranking is a measure of where you stand within your county, region and nationwide. Players are positioned according to ranking points acquired in domestic and international tournaments from both singles and doubles events. Rankings lists are available from 12U to Open age groups. Further information can be found here: <https://www.lta.org.uk/compete/wtn-rankings/rankings/>

Although the ITF World Tennis Number and rankings are an important part of the LTA tournament structure it should be emphasised that equally important is the fun and enjoyment of playing competitive tennis, making new friends, and developing your skills and techniques in this wonderful sport.