

Unit  
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## Nimble nets

## Lesson 1

## Year 5 • Champions

**Learning objectives:** • To identify and apply techniques for hitting a tennis ball.

**Learning outcomes:** • Know the correct technique for forehand, backhand and volley.

**Prior learning:** • Techniques for forehand, backhand, drop serve and volley (Year 4).

**Vocabulary:** • Forehand, backhand, drop serve, volley.

**Equipment:** • Tennis rackets of various sizes, tennis and foam balls, short tennis rackets, cones and nets.

**Champions resources:** • Champions movies: *tennis grip*, Champions movies: *tennis rally building*.

**Warm-up:**

The children follow the leader along the lines of the playground, court or between cones. The leader performs different actions, e.g. side steps, jogging, walking and skipping along the lines.

**Skills learning and development:**

The children spend five minutes getting used to the ball and equipment of their choice e.g. bouncing the ball up and down, balancing it, hitting it in the air, turning around and catching it, travelling while bouncing it. Ask: *What differences do you notice in changing from short tennis to full tennis?*

Collaboratively with a partner, the children spend ten minutes rallying aiming to practise all shots covered in Year 4 (forehand, backhand, drop serve and volley).

The children model good techniques for forehand, backhand and volley.

They hand-feed ten forehand, ten backhand and ten volleys, then swap over. They should work on ensuring the correct technique.

**Application and practice:**

The children work in fours, with two acting as judges. They serve underarm and aim to get four balls over the net, keeping a rally going. Every time they get a rally of four, they get a cone. Then the pairs swap over. See which pair can win the most cones.

The judges ensure that the game is being played correctly.

**Reflect and review:**

Walk around your playing area and think of something you have learned today, a question and how you feel about the lesson. Discuss it with your classmates.

**Support**

Do not use a net and use short tennis rackets and foam balls.

**Extend**

Increase the target number in the game.



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## Nimble nets

## Lesson 2

## Year 5 • Champions

**Learning objective:** • To develop the techniques for ground strokes and volleys.

**Learning outcome:** • Improve forehand accuracy.

**Prior learning:** • Techniques for forehand, backhand, drop serve and volley (Year 4 and Lesson 1).

**Vocabulary:** • Forehand, backhand, drop serve and volley.

**Equipment:** • Tennis rackets of various sizes, tennis and foam balls, short tennis rackets, cones and nets.

**Champions resources:** • Champions movies: *tennis grip*, Champions movies: *tennis rally building*.

**Warm-up:****Active Simon says**

The children carry out a specified activity if the command begins 'Simon says...'. If it doesn't start with 'Simon says...', they don't do the activity. If they get it wrong, they are out until someone touches their shoulder. Combine aerobic and stretching activities, encouraging the children to change directions and levels quickly. Possible activities include high knees, running on the spot, tuck jumps, sitting on the floor and touching toes.

**Skills learning and development:**

The children spend five to ten minutes practising their rally skills with a partner, using the correct techniques.

Recap on forehand technique - in pairs, Player A stands at the net and feeds the ball to Player B, who aims to hit a forehand shot to an area marked with a spot. Player A has two balls. Then change roles.

**Rally and run**

Organise the children into groups of six, with three children lined up one behind the other on each side of the court. The players drop serve and return the ball, maintaining a rally. When they have hit the ball, they run around to the other side of the court and join the back of the other line. The aim is to be as accurate as possible so that the rally can be maintained. If they need to run in to keep the rally going, they can do so. All types of shot can be played.

Players count their highest rally and then compare scores.

**Application and practice:**

Using the same teams, the children play against each other. Instead of running to the other side of the net when a shot is played, they run to the back of their own team. This time, the aim is to try to beat the opposition by playing a ball that they cannot return. They score a point each time the opposition cannot return the ball.

**Reflect and review:**

Walk around the tennis court area, holding your racket in the correct grip.

Think of one thing you have learned in this lesson that you would like to improve and one thing that you thought you did really well.

**Support**

Use a smaller court, no net and smaller rackets and foam balls.

**Extend**

Use a larger court.



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## Nimble nets

## Lesson 3

## Year 5 • Champions

**Learning objective:** • To develop a backhand technique and use it in a game.

**Learning outcomes:** • Explore tactics for beating an opponent.  
• Consolidate backhand technique.  
• Use all strokes appropriately.

**Prior learning:** • Forehand, backhand, drop serve and volley (Lessons 1 and 2).

**Vocabulary:** • Forehand, backhand, drop serve, rally, volley.

**Equipment:** • Tennis rackets of various sizes, tennis and foam balls, short tennis rackets, cones and nets.

**Champions resources:** • Champions movies: *tennis grip*, Champions movies: *tennis rally building*.

**Warm-up:****Spot find**

Each child stands by a marker (e.g. a cone on the floor). Give active instructions, e.g. side steps, hop, crab-walk and jog. When they hear 'Spot!', the children go back to their marker.

**Skills learning and development:**

The children spend five to ten minutes practising their rally skills with a partner, using the correct techniques.

Recap on backhand technique and choose a child to model it. In pairs, one player stands at the net and feeds the ball to their partner, who aims to hit a

backhand to an area marked with a spot. The feeder has two balls and then they change roles. This could also be done in fours with two players, one feeder and one fielder.

**Application and practice:****Circle tennis**

The children are in teams of four, with two players on court and the other two standing off-court beside the net. One player on court drop serves to their partner and the pair play out the rally, aiming to beat their opponent. If they win the rally they score a point. When the rally is finished, they all rotate round one place. The two players at the side can ensure fair play and sporting behaviour.

**Reflect and review:**

Ask:

- *What sort of tactics do you need to use to beat your opponent?*

**Support**

Play on a smaller court, do not use a net and use smaller rackets and foam balls.

**Extend**

Play on a larger court.



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## Nimble nets

## Lesson 4

## Year 5 • Champions

- Learning objectives:**
- To practise techniques for all strokes.
  - To use the scoring system and court for singles tennis.

- Learning outcomes:**
- Accurately play shots on the move.
  - Run towards the net to play a volley (approach shot).
  - Play a game of singles tennis.

- Prior learning:**
- Forehand, backhand, drop serve, and volley (Lessons 1 to 3).

- Vocabulary:**
- Forehand, backhand, drop serve, rally, volley.

- Equipment:**
- Tennis rackets of various sizes, tennis and foam balls, short tennis rackets, cones and nets.

- Champions resources:**
- Champions movies: *tennis grip*, Champions movies: *tennis rally building*.

**Warm-up:**

The children stand in a ready position, holding their racket in a shake-hands grip. They all start facing a net and run in the shape of a letter M or W, always facing the net. The children will therefore be running forwards, sidestepping, and jogging backwards. Repeat each letter twice. They need to face the net as this is the position they should be in when playing a tennis-related game.

**Skills learning and development:**

The children spend five to ten minutes practising their rally skills with a partner, using the correct techniques.

In pairs, the feeder stands at the net with two balls, with the player on the other side an appropriate distance away (or play without a net if it is easier).

The feeder feeds a ball to the player on either their forehand or backhand side. When that shot has been played, they feed a ball for the player to run into the net and volley over. This is known as an approach shot. The player needs to stand in the ready position in the centre of the court so that they can move either to the forehand or backhand side to return the ball. Swap roles after a set time.

**Application and practice:**

Introduce the scoring system used for singles tennis. Show the children a singles tennis court and the lines played to.

Play best of three games and then swap partners. If there are children not playing, they can be used as umpires or scorers.

**Reflect and review:**

Discuss with a partner your strengths and weaknesses.

**Support**

Play on a smaller court, with no net and smaller rackets and foam balls. Score simply by counting up to three.

**Extend**

Play on a larger court.



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## Nimble nets

## Lesson 5

## Year 5 • Champions

**Learning objective:** • To play a tennis game using an overhead serve and the correct selections of shots.

**Learning outcomes:** • Learn the correct techniques for an overhead serve.  
• Practise all the shots needed to beat an opponent.

**Prior learning:** • Forehand and backhand, rally building, drop serve (Lessons 1 to 4).

**Vocabulary:** • Forehand and backhand, rally building, drop serve.

**Equipment:** • Tennis rackets of various sizes, tennis and foam balls, short tennis rackets, cones, flat markers and nets.

**Champions resources:** • Champions movies: *tennis grip*, Champions movies: *tennis rally building*.

**Warm-up:****Tennis rounds**

Each child is given a tennis racket and places it on the floor in a space. Invite the children to travel in their preferred way around the room. Call 'Tennis!' and they choose a tennis racket to stand next to. After a few practise rounds, remove two tennis rackets each round. The children who cannot find a racket to stand next to must lead an independent warm-up stretch session at the side of the game.

**Skills learning and development:**

The children spend five to ten minutes practising their rally skills with a partner, using the correct techniques.

Introduce the overhead serve and model the correct technique. Practise tossing the ball first – it needs to be thrown with the non-racket hand from an underarm position to above the head. The ball needs ideally to be in front so that the body can lean in to the serve and generate more power. The children can practise this in pairs, taking it in turns to aim for a spot on the floor.

After the toss, look at the racket action. The racket should start from between the shoulders and then brought up to a full-stretch position with racket strings flat. Follow through down and across the body.

Put the two actions together, aiming to make contact with the ball at the front. In pairs, the children practise serving. One player serves two balls and the other collects them and then serves them back. Players can work with no net or start at an appropriate distance from the net if they wish.

They practise the serve and return and then play the rally out.

**Application and practice:****Singles tennis**

The children play a singles game as in Lesson 4, using a serve that they are comfortable with to start the game. They play best of three, using the correct scoring system.

**Reflect and review:**

Discuss with the other players on your court which parts of the tennis game you find difficult and need to improve on, and the parts that you enjoy and do well.

**Support**

Serve underarm. Play without a net or use short tennis equipment.

**Extend**

Use only the overhead serve.



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## Nimble nets

## Lesson 6

## Year 5 • Champions

**Learning objective:** • To understand and use doubles scoring in a tennis game.

**Learning outcomes:** • Apply all the tennis skills learned to a game.  
• Choose the correct shot to play when trying to beat an opponent.

**Prior learning:** • Forehand and backhand, rally building, drop serve, overhead serve, scoring (Lessons 1 to 5).

**Vocabulary:** • Forehand and backhand, rally building, drop serve, overhead serve, scoring.

**Equipment:** • Tennis rackets of various sizes, tennis and foam balls, short tennis rackets, cones, flat markers and nets.

**Champions resources:** • *Champions* movies: *tennis grip*, *Champions* movies: *tennis rally building*.

**Warm-up:****Follow the leader**

Divide the children into groups of four to six. Elect one leader per group, who stands at the front of the line with the other children behind. The leader chooses a travelling movement and the remainder of the group follow and copy their movement. Once the leader has shared three movements, they should move to the back of the line and the child now at the front of the line becomes the leader. Ideally, continue to play until every child in the group has had an opportunity to be the leader.

**Skills learning and development:**

Show the children a doubles court and its markings and lines. Explain the scoring and serving. Ask: *How is it different from singles play?*

**Application and practice:**

Organise a doubles tournament. The players take it in turns to play and an umpire ensures fair play. The children use all the tennis skills they have learned and must show an understanding of the court in order to win.

Pairs play so that each person serves and they keep a note of the number of games won in the whole session. An adult could collect the game scores to ensure accuracy.

**Reflect and review:**

Discuss the differences between a singles and doubles game. *Do you prefer one more than the other? Why?*

**Support**

Use short tennis equipment, serve underarm and do not use nets.

**Extend**

Use a full court and enforce the overhead serve.

