

2026 USTA ALABAMA JUNIOR TOURNAMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

The [USTA JUNIOR TOURNAMENT, RANKING, AND SANCTIONING REGULATIONS](#) apply to all USTA Junior Ranking Tournaments, the process by which certain national USTA Junior Ranking Tournaments are sanctioned, and junior rankings. USTA Constitution and Bylaws, [FRIEND AT COURT](#) - The USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations applies to all matches played in USTA Junior Ranking Tournaments (unless modified by these USTA JUNIOR TOURNAMENT, RANKING, AND SANCTIONING REGULATIONS). In any match played without officials, the USTA official publication, [THE CODE](#), shall be observed. The USTA Point Penalty System and the USTA Junior Suspension Point System shall be used.

PLAYER ELIGIBILITY

A. USTA MEMBERSHIP

- All players, including non-U.S. citizens, are required to be members of the USTA in order to play in sanctioned tournaments unless this requirement is waived by the USTA or one of its Sectional Associations or District Associations for an Entry Level Tournament.
- Juniors must be in good standing with the USTA to enter ITF Tournaments and USTA International Tournaments, which includes USTA Membership.
- FREE MEMBERSHIP FOR ALL JUNIOR PLAYERS ([here](#))

B. AGE

- The beginning date of a tournament determines the player's eligibility for that tournament. Juniors may play in an age division until the month they age out of that division. This means that players who are 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, or 18 years old may continue to play in their age divisions until the month they turn 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, or 19, respectively.
- NATIONAL PLAYER ELIGIBILITY AND RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS ([here](#))

C. RESIDENCY

- Any players registering for a USTA Level 1 through Level 4 event must declare their residency.
- Declaring residency shall determine the players who may play in Closed Sectional and District Tournaments, the players who may appear on a Sectional Quota List, and the players who may be selected to represent a Sectional Association or District Association in a team competition.
- Please double check your information as your residency may only be updated once per calendar year. If you would like to change your residency more than once per calendar year for assistance call USTA Customer Care at 1-800-990-8782.

RANKINGS (per 2025 USTA National Junior Ranking System [here](#))

- Each Sectional Association shall be authorized to sanction or cause to be sanctioned by its District Associations the tournaments described below for boys and girls in the 18, 16, 14, and 12 Divisions, all of which shall count for junior ranking. All such tournaments shall be played using a yellow ball on a 78' court.
- USTA Alabama will sanction and schedule National Level 7 and National Level 6 events.
- National Level 5 events will be sanctioned and scheduled in consultation with the Southern Tennis Association (STA) Junior Competition office in accordance with the National guidelines.
- Tournament Levels 4 - Level 1 may be hosted in Alabama but will be under either the Southern Association or the National Association rules and regulations set for those respective levels of tournaments.
- Unless otherwise indicated, national junior tournaments will be "Open" to players in- and out-of-state, based on current rankings, size of draws, format of the tournament and other specific criteria.
- Events that are "Closed" will be stated within the title of the tournament.
 - Example: Jr Spring CLOSED Championships Level 5, will be allowing only Alabama residents.
 - Southern CLOSED Championships Level 4, will be allowing players residing only within the Southern section.

A. CALCULATING STANDINGS & RANKINGS

- Each player's standing and ranking is based on the accumulation of Ranking Points at National and Sectional Ranking Tournaments for:
 - Winning rounds in singles and doubles; and
 - Having wins in singles over top 500 players (Bonus Points).
- On a Standings List, the points earned during the previous 12-month period are used.
- On a Ranking List, the points earned during the previous calendar year are used.

B. POINTS PER ROUND CALCULATION (PPR)

- National Standings Lists and Ranking Lists order players based on the following PPR Calculation. This list is often called a "Combined List"
 - 100% of the singles ranking points from a players' 6 best Junior Ranking Tournaments.
 - 15% of the ranking points from a player's best 6 doubles and/or mixed doubles Junior Ranking Tournaments played.
 - Ranking Points earned in an older age division tournament count towards a player's standing in one or more younger age divisions provided that a Junior Ranking Tournament has been played in the division and they are among the player's best 6 results.
 - 20% of the Ranking Points earned in a younger age division tournament count towards a player's standing in the next-older age division if they are among the player's best 6 results, regardless of whether a Junior Ranking

C. CRITERIA FOR RECEIVING A NATIONAL RANKING

- Annually, the USTA nationally ranks players in the Boys' and Girls' 18, 16, 14, and 12 divisions. The final rankings for a junior age division shall include all players who:
 - Meet the citizenship/certain alien eligibility requirements.
 - Have been age eligible for play in the division at any time during the calendar year; and
 - Who has accumulated at least 200 points in the division.
 - Only points earned in the age division will count towards ranking in that division.
 - Players may be ranked in more than one age division if they have been age eligible in more than one division during the year and have met the minimum point requirement for each age division.
 - The order of the National Ranking List is based on Ranking Points earned in a previous calendar year.
 - If more than one player has the same number of Ranking Points, both shall have the same National Ranking.

D. CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION ON A NATIONAL STANDINGS LIST (NSL)

- An NSL for a division will include all players who:
 - Meet the age eligibility requirements of the division.
 - Meet the citizenship/certain alien eligibility requirements;
 - Have played at least one National or Sectional Ranking Tournament in the division or the next-younger division.
 - Have accumulated at least 1 Ranking Point as the result of an on-court win.
 - An on-court win is one that takes place on-court after the start of the match. Matches won by withdrawal, walkover, default, or disqualification prior to the start of the match are not considered on-court wins. Matches won by winning a match point, or if the opponent retires or is defaulted after the start of the match are considered on-court wins.

E. POINTS PER ROUND (PPR) RULES & REGULATIONS

- A player must win a round to receive any Ranking Points for the tournament. Players do not receive any points until they have won a round. Byes do not qualify as wins.
- Withdrawals and walkovers qualify as wins for the advancing player and earn Points Per Round, but do not earn Bonus Points.
- Retirements qualify as wins for the advancing player and earn Points Per Round and, if applicable, Bonus Points. A player who advances because of a default that takes place before the commencement of the first point in the match
- or because the opponent is disqualified shall receive Points Per Round for advancing but shall not receive any Bonus Points.

- A player who advances because of a default that takes place after the commencement of the first point in the match shall receive Points Per Round for advancing and, if eligible, Bonus Points.
- A player who is defaulted from a match for code violations under the Point Penalty System or misconduct forfeits Ranking Points accumulated during the entire tournament, except that a doubles player who was not responsible for a default or any of the code violations shall not be penalized as the result of the behavior of their partner.
- No Points Per Round will be earned in the qualifying rounds of tournaments when the qualifying draw and main draw are covered in a single sanction.
- The USTA Alabama will not accept any phone calls about placement on the Junior Standings List.
 - Questions and/or corrections should be made in writing to the National office at JuniorTournaments@usta.com.
- Standings are calculated for 12U through 18U age divisions.

F. **2025 USTA JUNIOR TOURNAMENTS POINTS TABLES (USTA NATIONAL)**

- For the USTA National Junior Tournament Schedule [here](#)

SUSPENSIONS

- A. USTA NATIONAL - NOTICE TO ALL PLAYERS** - USTA Regulations state the following: "*Player shall not enter two tournaments at same time*. When entries close, a player shall not be entered in two or more sanctioned tournaments, if any part of the tournaments overlap unless each Tournament Committee involved understands the situation and concurs in writing. After a player has been eliminated from a tournament whose schedule of play partially overlaps with that of a second tournament, the player may enter the second tournament."
 - (USTA REGULATIONS IV.C. (Standards of Conduct), 2025 Friend at Court, #12 through #17 apply). Penalty: (4) Suspension points to player in violation per offense, enforced by either Tournament Committee, and/or USTA Administration. 2025
- B. JUNIOR SUSPENSION VIOLATIONS AND POINTS (USTA Regulations IV.F. (USTA Jr Suspension Point System-Table 17)**
 - The USTA Junior Suspension Point System will be in effect for all sanctioned USTA Alabama, Southern Sectional, and National sanctioned junior tournaments.
 - If a player receives ten or more Junior Suspension Points during a 12-month period, the player will be suspended from competing in all sanctioned junior events for twelve (12) weeks.
 - At the time of selection for Alabama teams, training camps, or other special events, a player *MAY NOT* be considered if he/she has accumulated any points and *WILL NOT* be considered if he/she has accumulated 6 or more suspension points.
 - The Junior Competition Selection committee may exercise their judgement to determine if past suspension should be taken into consideration.
- C. THE JUNIOR SUSPENSION POINT SYSTEM PROCEDURE**
 - Junior Suspension Points will be reported in the Serve Tennis system by the Referee, TD, or Director of Junior Competition at USTA Alabama.
 - Repercussions from a suspension will be the elimination of selection for any special programs sponsored by the USTA Alabama (Southern Ozaki Junior Cup, USTA Player Development programs, USTA Area Training Center programs, TEAM AL, etc.) for up to one year after the suspension. The player will also not be selected to the Southern Junior Closed Championship if the suspension falls during that time period.

USTA SOUTHERN SPECIFIC RULES & REGULATIONS

- A. USTA SOUTHERN JUNIOR TOURNAMENT REGULATIONS (NATONAL LEVEL 5 OPEN & CLOSED)**
 - Refer to USTA Southern Junior Rules & Regulations [here](#)
 - Alabama has sanctioned 5 each Level 5 *Open* Events for 2025
 - Alabama has sanctioned 2each Level 5 *Closed* Events for 2025
 - For the USTA Southern Junior Tournament Schedule click [here](#)

B. MATCH SCHEDULING AND PLAYER REST REQUIREMENTS (Per Friend at Court, Tables 8 and 11)

*Closed and Open National L3, L4, L5, L6 Events Sanctioned in the Southern Section

- ***Any time of the year- Doubles followed by singles***
 - A minimum of 30 minutes is required between the completion of the first doubles match of the day prior to starting singles play.
- ***During the months from May 1st to October 1st -Singles followed by singles***
 - Players shall be given a minimum of two hours rest between the completion of the first singles match of the day and the start of the second singles match of the day
 - If player's match is longer than two hours, during the months of May 1st to October 1st, they may request (in person) more time from the Tournament referee. Time extension may not be guaranteed.
- ***During the Months of October 1st to May 1st***
 - ***Singles followed by singles-***
 - Players shall be given a minimum of 90 -minute rest between completion of the first singles match of the day and the start of the second match of the day.
 - ***Singles followed by doubles-***
 - Players shall be given a minimum of one hour rest between any singles match (First or second of the day) and a doubles match.

C. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- A player in the 12 & under and 14 & under divisions should not start a match nor resume a suspended match after 8:00 pm.
- A player in the 16 & under or 18 & under should not start a match nor resume a suspended match after 10:00 pm.
- All players should be given at least 12 hours rest between the completion of the last match & the first match the following day.

D. INCLEMENT WEATHER

- In the event of inclement weather, the tournament referee should have the right to depart from the above rules spelled out in points 1 & 2 if necessary to complete the tournament within the tournament dates.
- In the event of inclement weather and changes in scoring formats, the referee and tournament committee are not bound by the above scheduling increments and rest requirements. However, at a minimum, the rest between the end of the first singles match and the beginning of the second singles match should be equal to the time on court that day for the first singles match. This should also apply to any additional singles matches scheduled in that the subsequent match rest period should be equal to the duration of the previous match.

USTA ALABAMA (DISTRICT) SPECIFIC RULES & REGULATIONS

A. TD CONTRACT AND [ALABAMA TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR & REFEREE REQUIREMENTS](#)

- Tournament Directors in Alabama are expected to observe all National, Section and District requirements in regards to the administration of sanctioned events. In addition to these requirements, it is necessary to provide excellent customer service to all players and families while conducting yourself as a positive representative of USTA Alabama all to aid in the mission of promoting and developing the growth of tennis.
- Requirements can be found by clicking links above and on www.ustaalabama.com
- The Tournament Director and Referee are required to be different individuals and are expected to be on site throughout the duration of the event.
 - The only exception to this is that a Level 7 Tournament can have the TD and Referee be the same individual.

B. FORMATS

Per USTA JUNIOR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT, RANKING, AND SANCTIONING REGULATIONS and the USTA Southern Rules and Regulations, the Alabama Junior Competition Committee has approved the following:

NATIONAL LEVEL 7

- **Officials:** *IF the event is NOT hiring an Official, the TD MUST complete the TD/Dual Role*
- **Duration:** half day to 1-day
- **Formats:** Maximum of 16 player draws
 - TD may increase the draw limit once permission is granted by the ATA OFFICE with proof of adequate number of courts available.
 - Each draw shall have a maximum of four rounds of play; no player shall earn ranking points for playing more than four matches.
- **Events:** Singles, Doubles, Mixed
- **Selection:** non-ranked to ranked or “Bottom Up”, which means players who have no standing in the points per round ranking system will get selected first above players who have a standing
- **Seeding:** Selections are to use the most recent published National Combined Standing Lists
- **Registration Deadline:** TUESDAY @ 6pm, 3 days prior to Saturday or Sunday start date
- **Late Entries:** A player may not be added to the event IF they should affect seeding.
 - Tournament Committee discretion by tournament, late fees may be applied.
- **Singles draw type options:** (draw types must be same within a division):
 - Round robin
 - Round robin with playoff,
 - Compass draw
- **Singles score format**
 - One standard tiebreak set to 6, 7-point tiebreak at 6 games all.
 - One short set to 4, 7-point tiebreak at 4 games all (inclement weather format AFTER approval by ATA staff)
 - No-Ad scoring may be used if the Referee deems it necessary.
- **Doubles draw type**
 - Single elimination or if 5 or fewer teams round robin may be used.
- **Doubles score format**
 - One standard tiebreak set to 6, 7-point tiebreak at 6 games all
 - One short set to 4, 7-point tiebreak at 4 games all (inclement weather format AFTER approval by ATA staff)

NATIONAL LEVEL 6

- **Officials:** 1 USTA Certified Referee required
- **1 roving official per 8 courts**
- **Duration:** 2-days; (If doubles is offered, Friday night play after 5pm may be accommodated)
- **Formats:** Maximum of 16 player draws
 - TD may increase the draw limit once permission is granted by the ATA OFFICE with proof of adequate number of courts available; will then split draws when registrations are more than 17, using the waterfall method.
 - Each draw shall have a maximum of four rounds of play; no player shall earn ranking points for playing more than four matches.
- **Events:** Singles, Doubles, Mixed
- **Selection:** Top-down by ranking
- **Seeding:** Selections are to use the most recent published National Combined Standing Lists
- **Registration Deadline:** TUESDAYS @ 6pm, 4 days prior to Saturday start date
- **Late Entries:** A player may not be added to the event IF they should affect seeding.
 - Tournament Committee discretion by tournament, late fees may be applied.
- **Singles draw type options:** (draw types must be same within a division):
 - Round robin
 - Round robin with playoff,
 - Compass draw
 - Feed-in championship to quarterfinals
- **Singles score format**
 - Two tiebreak sets regular ad scoring, 10-point match tiebreak at one set all.
 - Two short sets to 4, 7-point match tiebreak at one set all (inclement weather format AFTER approval by ATA staff)
 - No-Ad scoring may be used if the Referee deems it necessary.
- **Doubles draw type**
 - Single elimination; or if 5 or fewer teams, round robin (with/without playoff) may be used.
- **Doubles score format**
 - 8 game pro-set, no-ad scoring, with 7-point tiebreak at 8 games all
 - Two short sets to 4, 7-point match tiebreak at one set all (inclement weather format AFTER approval by ATA staff)

***WATERFALL METHOD: In order to create two balanced draws:**

Ex. Red=1,4,5,8,9,12,13,16,17,20,21,24,25,28,29,32 and WHITE=2,3,6,7,10,11,14,15,18,19,22,23,26,27,30,31

C. ENTRY FEES

- Entry fees for each tournament are determined by that Tournament's Director/Committee. Any fees associated with the processing system are automatically deducted once processed and will not be subject to refund under any circumstances. The current processing fees are 3.5% +\$.50 per transaction.
 - See the Sanctioning & Scheduling parameters for entry fee pricing per level of event.

D. LATE ENTRY

- A player may **NOT** be accepted to any event after the registration deadline **IF** they should affect seeding.
- Acceptance of any other late entries (other than those who would affect seeding) and a possible late entry fee are up to the tournament director, referee and/or the tournament committee of the individual tournament.
- Decisions surrounding late entries and late entry fee rules should be placed on tournament home pages prior to the opening of registration.
- No late entry may be accepted that would move an on-time entry from the main draw to the alternate list.
- If a draw is not full late entries can fill the draw in the order received by the tournament director regardless of ranking and/or rating.
- If a draw is full, late entries would be placed at the bottom of the alternates list in the order in which they are received by the tournament director regardless of ranking and/or rating.

E. WITHDRAWALS

- Prior to tournament registration deadline: All players may and should withdraw themselves from a tournament prior to the registration deadline without any charge or penalty, click [here](#) for instructions.
- After the tournament registration deadline: All players must request a withdrawal in writing via email to the tournament director and tournament referee.
- It is the prerogative of the tournament director and tournament referee to determine if there will be any refunds issued.

F. COACHING

- During a match in a ranked junior tournament, coaching is permitted **ONLY** during an authorized intermission. The one and one-half minute period between changes of court ends is **NOT** an authorized intermission.
- The mandatory 10-minute rest between the second and third sets when playing a full 3rd set is specified under USTA regulations and any authorized suspension of play is an authorized intermission.
- There will be a rest period of 3 minutes between the 2nd set & a third set match tiebreaker with coaching allowed.
 - a. The 3-minute rest period begins immediately after the end of the set.
 - b. A junior player who needs a toilet/change of attire break should take it after this 3-minute rest period.
 - c. A player who chooses to take a toilet/change of attire break during the 3-minute rest period waives the right to further coaching and may not receive coaching during the player's toilet/change of attire break.
 - d. Any player who does not take a toilet/change of attire break shall remain on court or in an area near the court designated by an official and may receive coaching only during the 3-minute rest period.
- Coaching is **ONLY** allowed on the court or in a designated area near the court where an official may easily time the rest period.
- Coaching is **NOT** allowed in the following situations:
 - A toilet/change of attire break;
 - A 2-minute set break;
 - A Medical timeout;
 - Bleeding timeout;
 - A wheelchair repair timeout;
 - When a Quad wheelchair player is given additional time to re-strap their racket;
 - When players remain on court for a short stoppage of play such as during slight rain or repair of the net or net strap;
 - When a player leaves the court seeking the assistance of the Referee; or
 - When equipment or clothing is being adjusted

G. HEAD TAX

- All tournaments sanctioned by the USTA Alabama are required to pay a Head Tax on each selected registrant in the tournament.
- Junior tournaments incur a charge of \$1 for each singles player and \$1 for each doubles team.
- Head tax will be calculated and paid automatically from Stripe/ClubSpark systems within the tournament set-up at sanctioning.
- If a platform fails to collect the head tax, the USTA Alabama office may bill the member organization for those dues.

G. REFUNDS

- **POLICY**
 - Once the online registration deadline has closed, a tournament director is not required to return entry fees.
 - Players must withdraw, and/or correct division entry online before the close of registrations to receive entry fee credit.
 - Fees may always be returned at the TD's discretion.
 - If at a TD selection process tournament, the player would not be selected, therefore no fee would be charged to the credit card used for online registration.
- **REFUNDS DUE TO RAIN/INCLEMENT WEATHER**
 - Tournaments that are canceled due to weather are to follow this inclement weather policy:
 - Players who have played at least one point — no refund required
 - Players who have not played a point — a custom refund after deduction for actual tournament expenses. These tournament expense deductions must be approved by the Director of Junior Play. No credits for future tournaments may be given in lieu of a custom refund.
 - No tournament may be rescheduled without the approval of the Junior Sanction & Schedule Committee

J. RAIN/INCLEMENT WEATHER

- **POLICY**
 - The Tournament Committee may NOT cancel the event before 12:00pm each day UNLESS they have received approval from the USTA Alabama office.
- **ORDER OF PLAY IF MATCHES HAVE BEGUN**
 - Resume matches which had begun play (in the format they started)
 - Any round that has begun with a particular scoring format must finish all matches in that round of that draw with that same scoring format.
 - Short-Scoring
 - No-Ad
 - The tournament referee may determine to use this method only *after* weather has occurred.
 - The tournament referee must get approval from the USTA Alabama office to use this method *before* weather occurs.
 - Short sets, per level guidelines

K. GRIEVANCE POLICY

- Grievances at any level of tournament should be rare. There are not many issues that occur during a tournament that cannot be handled at the time of occurrence. By reading the [Friend at Court](#) (particularly the Tournament Regulations beginning on p.104 of the 2025 Friend at Court with Regulation IV.Player Responsibilities and Conduct. This section goes through the Suspension Point System, how you are to handle yourself if receiving an on-court default and so many other issues that arise. Read this and be armed with the correct remedy.

- Please also know that those who are “associated with the player” (coach, parents etc) can cause the player to be penalized if they do not handle themselves within the suspension point system.
- The Player should know who the Tournament Committee is and if feels unjustly penalized appeal to that committee at the time of penalty. It is very difficult to handle that once the incident has passed.
- In case the player does need to file a Grievance, here is the process:
 - For Level 1 and 2 Tournaments, please reach out to USTA National for guidance.
 - For Level 3 and 4 Tournaments please contact the USTA Southern Section office by emailing [Maria Cercone](#).
 - For Level 5, 6 or 7 Tournaments please contact the USTA Alabama office by emailing [Sean Merchant](#).
 - Any grievance shall be filed in writing within thirty (30) days following the date on which the alleged violation occurred, except that if the alleged violation is based on falsification of any information, such written grievance shall be filed within thirty (30) days after discovery.
 - Again, the player should do all he/she can at the time of incident at the tournament.

For any questions regarding these 2025 USTA Alabama Rules and Regulations, contact USTA Alabama Director of Junior Play, Merchant@alabamata.com, phone: 205-995-2280, address: 1108 Herington St, Meadowbrook, AL 35242.