



UNIVERSAL TENNIS RATING SYSTEM - 16 LEVELS OF TENNIS

OVERVIEW: Below are descriptions of play at each level. It is important to note that in order for a player to be at a certain level, the player has to reach the competitive threshold with other rated players.

QUICK START: They cannot play full court, may utilize modified games, soft balls, and various racket orientation exercises.

UNIVERSAL 1: Kids who are a novice player playing inside the baseline...A player must be able to serve from the baseline and be able to return a serve on one bounce and must be able to maintain a short rally. They often have trouble with shorts balls, and often they stand just inside the baseline and get hurt by balls, which are hit at their feet (blind spot).

UNIVERSAL 2: Kid who is starting to play behind the baseline....They do a better job of anticipating the short shot compared to lower level players. Typically they can sustain long rallies, especially off the forehand side. Backhands are typically less well developed, but they seem able to defend well enough off the backhand side. Serving is reliable, but not powerful.

UNIVERSAL 3: Entry-level female competitive tennis player...There are many different tennis skills that describe level 3 players. Some players have few skills, but make up for it with their athleticism. Others are starting to develop defined strokes.

UNIVERSAL 4: Junior who will play against adults in the near future....It is not unusual to see players with very advanced, well-rounded skills. Often these players are showing signs of being able to volley and hit overheads, though with little power or decisiveness. Older Level 4 players are often able to compete despite not having acquired a good balance of well-defined tennis skills.

UNIVERSAL 5: Entry level male competitive tennis player....The adults at this level may be vulnerable in many areas, but will usually be able to do at least one thing fairly well. This may include a good slice backhand, decent serve, or a drop shot. Young juniors at this level are very good for their age, but still may have trouble with adults whose games are not as good as theirs. Many older level 5 juniors will improve and become more consistent if they simply play more tennis. Often players at this level have problems with technical development in certain areas. They may have good groundstrokes, but an odd looking serve for example. If they do have a good overall game, consistency and shot selection can be problematic.

UNIVERSAL 6: Useful, club male club player...Court coverage and anticipation are well developed. Players are familiar with a wide variety of strokes and spins. At this stage players may be able to set points up using their serve. These players may often make tactical mistakes and throw away too many points. When they do rely on consistency, they may often underplay. While these players may have a lot variety in their games, they often do not possess the confidence to use their shots in close matches. Consistency still wins.

UNIVERSAL 7: Good US high school tennis player.... If you are an adult you may be better than this level....Players usually have some outstanding characteristic in their game. They also typically have some part of their game, which does not hold up well under pressure. For example, a player may have good overhead technique, but often has problems executing in match play situations.

UNIVERSAL 8: Typical US female collegiate player....Players are very accomplished with fully developed games. They may range in age from 14 to 60 with the players at either extreme being very good for their age. Adult Level 8 players may have reached their peak, which they may maintain for a very long time. For an Adult Level 8 to move beyond this level it often takes a tremendous commitment to fitness, practice, and play. Junior girls who have reached this level will normally have a national ranking and be preparing for Division 1 NCAA tennis. Players may have technical problems in their games, but they have usually learned how to cope with these problems and compensate successfully in some way.

UNIVERSAL 9 AND 10: Upper level female collegiate player...These players are among the best players in an area. Junior players at these levels are highly likely to play U.S. Collegiate Division 1 NCAA tennis. Junior girls will be among the top players nationally. Adults at this level may maintain this standard into his or her fifties if they are sufficiently motivated. These are very talented individuals. Females at this level will be very accomplished. These players are often motivated by the "love of the game".

UNIVERSAL 11 AND 12: Typical US male collegiate player...Prize money events will motivate these players to continue to take their tennis seriously. Most of the male players who make up this category are former or current U.S. Collegiate Division 1 NCAA players in their twenties to early thirties. Only the most motivated and talented players in their thirties will maintain this level. Females at this level will be extraordinary and often will have professional experience. Local players who can exceed this level are either current U.S. Collegiate NCAA Division 1 players or are players who are contemplating playing professional tennis as a career.

UNIVERSAL 13, 14, 15, 16: This is the upper level U.S. Collegiate Division 1 male player (13-15), male professional (15-16) and select female professionals (12-13).