



USTA / ITF

Wheelchair Rules Reference

Understanding the difference as it applies to the wheelchair player.

The ITF rules shall apply to Main and Second Draws (open) while USTA rules shall apply to Divisional play (A,B,C).

The Two Bounce Rule (USTA/ITF)

The wheelchair tennis player is allowed two bounces of the ball. The player must return the ball before it hits the ground a third time. The second bounce can be either in or out of the court boundaries.

The Service (USTA/ITF)

1. The service shall be delivered in the following manner. Immediately before commencing the service, the server shall be in a stationary position. The server shall then be allowed one push before striking the ball.
2. The server shall throughout the delivery of the service not touch with any wheel, any area other than that behind the baseline within the imaginary extension of the centre mark and sideline.
3. If conventional methods for the service are physically impossible for a quadriplegic player, then the player or an individual may drop the ball for such a player. However, the same method of serving must be used each time.

A Player Loses a Point if: (USTA/ITF)

1. The player fails to return the ball before it has touched the ground three times; or
2. Subject to the rule below with propelling the chair. The player uses any part of his feet or lower extremities as brakes or as stabilizers while delivering service, stroking a ball, turning or stopping against the ground or against any wheel while the ball is in play; or
3. The player fails to keep one buttock in contact with his wheelchair seat when contacting the ball.

Wheelchair/Able-bodied Tennis (USTA/ITF)

Where a wheelchair tennis player is playing with or against an able-bodied person in singles or doubles, the Rules of Wheelchair Tennis shall apply for the wheelchair player while the Rules of Tennis for able-bodied tennis shall apply for the able-bodied player. In this instance, the wheelchair player is allowed two bounces while the able-bodied player is allowed only one bounce.

Note: The definition of lower extremities is: -the lower limb, including the buttocks, hip, thigh, leg, ankle and foot.

Toilet Breaks (ITF)

Two (2) toilet breaks are permitted during a singles or doubles match, to be taken preferably at the set break. Each break may be for a reasonable time. The player must receive permission from the Chair Umpire, if there is one, or from his opponent, who cannot reasonably refuse the request. Additional breaks may only be permitted by the Chair Umpire, Roving Umpire or Referee. If a player takes a third toilet break without permission, they may be charged with "leaving the court without permission" under the Code of Conduct.

Warm-up (ITF)

The warm-up shall not exceed five (5) minutes.



USTA / ITF Wheelchair Rules Reference (cont.)

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Chair Umpire (ITF)

In a match played with a chair umpire and no lines crew, all lines are to be called by the chair umpire.

The Wheelchair

The wheelchair is considered part of the body and all applicable rules, which apply to a player's body, shall apply to the wheelchair.

Preparation of Equipment

Each player is ultimately responsible for ensuring their wheelchair and all other equipment is ready on time for their match. The Referee has the right to default any player who is not ready to go onto court for whatever reason, within fifteen (15) minutes of their match being called.

Propelling the Chair with the Foot

1. If due to lack of capacity a player is unable to propel the wheelchair via the wheel then he may propel the wheelchair using one foot.
2. Even if in accordance with the rule i. above a player is permitted to propel the chair using one foot, no part of the player's foot may be in contact with the ground:
 - a) during the forward motion of the swing, including when the racket strikes the ball;
 - b) from the initiation of the service motion until the racket strikes the ball.
3. A player in breach of this rule shall lose the point.

Time Limit Repairs, Broken Equipment

The Chair Umpire, Roving Umpire or Referee has the authority to determine suspension of play. Wheelchair repairs may not exceed twenty (20) minutes in total during one (1) match. This is regardless of any number of breakdowns. Delay beyond the allotted time limits is at the discretion of the official on duty.

Quad Rackets

Quad players are allowed to use the extra long rackets in case extra space is needed to tape the racket to the hand/arm. Any quad player may be allotted extra time during a changeover in order to reposition or adjust the racket in the hand, without being penalized, but only if prior agreement has been made with their opponent as well as the Umpire (if there is one) prior to the match. The quad player must make every effort to keep any extra time to a reasonable minimum, so as not to disrupt or interfere with the normal progression of the match.

Quad Heat Rule

Tournaments must provide shade and ice buckets on court for quad players. A player can be assisted by their coach to spray water over their face. In very hot climates it is advised that matches are scheduled in the morning and late afternoon/evening.