



HERTS LEAGUE RULES OF COMPETITION 2026 (HERTFORDSHIRE SUMMER DOUBLES)

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Useful References:

<https://www.lta.org.uk/roles-and-venues/officials/competition-organiser-resources/competition-regulations/>

<https://hertstennis.co.uk/county-leagues>

<https://www.lta.org.uk/4afbd8/siteassets/roles/officials/files/team-captain---user-manual-updated-december24-v2.pdf>

<https://www.lta.org.uk/what-we-do/ltaawards>

1. Governing Regulations

1.1 All matches shall be played in accordance with:

- a. ITF Rules of Tennis
- b. LTA and Team Tennis Competition Regulations (which shall prevail in the event of conflict)
- c. These Rules; which may only be changed by the Herts Tennis Management Committee
- d. LTA and Herts Tennis policies and procedures to include Safeguarding and Transgender
- e. Herts Values: Honesty, Excellence, Resilience, Teamwork, Sportsmanship

1.2 Any complaints or disputes must be raised by the team captain to the League Organiser:

- a. Within 48 hours of the matter arising
- b. In writing

1.3 The League Organiser reserves the right to interpret the competition rules:

- a. Their decision is final
- b. Any decisions reached shall not set a precedent

2. Entry Requirements

2.1 Entry is open to:

- a. All LTA registered venues
- b. Venues affiliated to the Hertfordshire Lawn Tennis Association 'Herts LTA members'

2.2 Entry from venues is accepted on the basis that there will be:

- a. No general restriction placed upon the playing of matches on Saturdays and Sundays
- b. No charge to visiting teams for matches played indoors or refreshments

2.3 Entries are made online using the LTA Online 'League Planner'

2.4 Entry Fees must be settled prior to starting the competition using the LTA online entry process:

- a. Inter-Club League Fee of £25 per team entered in 2026
- b. Non Herts LTA members supplement of £10 per team

3. Competition Structure

3.1 The competition will:

- a. Open for entry (usually in March) under advice to venues by the League Organiser
- b. Run from 1st April and end on 30th September each year
- c. Not allow extension beyond these deadlines without agreement from the League Organiser

3.2 There are 2 events: a Ladies competition and a Men's competition each consisting of 6 players

3.3 A venue may:

- a. Enter any number of teams in each event
- b. Combine with another venue to form a team if insufficient resources of its own

3.4 The competition will be played on a league basis, with divisions formed from entries received

3.5 Divisions shall be formed of up to 7 teams

3.6 Teams will be placed into appropriate divisions by the League Organiser based upon:

- a. The final standings of teams competing in the previous season
- b. New teams entering will usually be placed in the lowest division(s)
- c. Exceptional team performance
- d. Their discretion

3.7 Each team will play one match against each of the other teams in their division

3.8 Teams will be given an equal number of home and away matches wherever possible

4. Eligibility of Players

- 4.1 Venues are encouraged to play juniors but ensuring:
- Players are aged over 10 years and mature enough to behave in accordance with Herts values
 - Compliance with LTA travel guidelines
- 4.2 A player may only represent one venue in the competition in any given season other than in exceptional circumstances and with permission from the League Organiser.
- 4.3 All players of the venue they are competing for must be (prior to the match):
- LTA Advantage Members and linked to that venue
 - A bona-fide playing member of that venue
- 4.4 Players may only play:
- Up to 8 matches for a maximum of 2 teams in any given season
 - For one team in any group (plus another of the venues teams) that season
- 4.5 Any breeches of the above criteria will result in offending rubbers awarded to the opposition

5. Fixture Arrangements

- 5.1 Matches may be played at any time on any surface of satisfactory standard:
- Indoors or outdoors, but on 3 courts of the same surface
 - If necessary by exception to use more than one surface, the away team chooses allocation
- 5.2 Venues to arrange dates for matches with opponents within 14 days of draw being published
- 5.3 The home venue is responsible for adding arranged fixtures to the League Planner
- 5.4 The away venue is responsible for checking fixtures added/following up any omissions/errors
- 5.5 In the event of postponement, venue competition organisers both update the League Planner
- 5.6 Team captains to contact their opposite number before each fixture to confirm arrangements
- 5.7 The home team to welcome the away team and organise some light refreshments (as agreed)
- 5.8 It is the responsibility of the home team to supply a minimum of 12 new LTA approved balls
- 5.9 Teams to be on court and ready to play at the scheduled and/or mutually agreed start time:
- The captain of the team that is ready to play may claim as follows:

15 to 29 minutes late:	The first rubber the player(s) are concerned in
30 to 59 minutes late:	The first two rubbers they are concerned in
One hour or more late:	All of the rubbers they are concerned in
 - Some flexibility should be afforded the away team by request in extenuating circumstances
 - Teams may send a reduced number of pairs by mutual agreement rather than concede a match

6. Order of Play

- 6.1 Team captains to arrange their players into three pairs in order of relative playing strength
- 6.2 A team captain with a player arriving late may reorganise their pairings, still complying with 5.1
- 6.3 A match consists of 9 rubbers, with each pair playing each of the opposing pairs over 3 rounds
- 6.4 The order of rubbers:
- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Round 1 (R1): | Home team's 1st pair (H1) v Away team's 3rd pair (A3) |
| | Home team's 2nd pair (H2) v Away team's 1st pair (A1) |
| | Home team's 3rd pair (H3) v Away team's 2nd pair (A2) |
| Round 2 (R2): | H1 v A2, H2 v A3, H3 v A1 |
| Round 3 (R3): | H1 v A1, H2 v H2, H3 v H3 |
- 6.5 R1 and R2: 1 set matches with a 7 point tie-break at 6-6 (set tie-break)
- 6.6 R3: best of 3 sets with set tie-break/deciding championship (10 point) tie-break set as required
- 6.7 If a venue has 2 teams in the same division, this match must be played before any other
- 6.8 The Scorecard rotating court allocation by rubber may only be varied by mutual agreement

7. Results

- 7.1 A match result is obtained when a team has won at least 5 of the 9 rubbers (see 8.2)
- 7.2 A rubber win counts as one point in the match. A match win will count as two points in the table
- 7.3 Both team captains to complete a match scorecard and retain their copy
- 7.4 The winning team captain to add the result to League Planner within 48 hours of the match

8. Postponed or Abandoned Matches

- 8.1 Fixtures to be postponed in extenuating circumstances by mutual agreement where possible;
- If a revised date cannot be agreed, the team ready/able to play are awarded a walkover (Receiver)
 - A walkover counts as if the match had been played and is scored as a match win
 - At the end of the season, the team receiving the walkover is awarded an average of Rubbers gained from their played matches (rounded to nearest whole number)
 - The team giving the walkover receives no Rubbers, Sets or Games, will have one point deducted and will concede the number of rubbers awarded to the winning team
- 8.2 If a match is abandoned for any reason whatsoever, such as bad light or bad weather:
- Before completion of R1 and R2: Rule 7.1 applies
 - If no team has won at least 5 rubbers: the match to be replayed on a mutually agreed date
 - After completion of R1 and R2 but before completion of R3: Rule 7.1 applies
 - If no team has won at least 5 rubbers: the match score stands at the completion of R2
 - If the score is 3 rubbers all upon completion of R2: match to be replayed on a mutually agreed date
 - Such agreements to be made within 21 days of the abandoned match
 - The home captain to update the League Planner within 48 hours of agreement

9. Conceded Matches

- 9.1 Unless exceptional circumstances, a team conceding a match by default may invoke further match losses, demotion to a lower division and where two or more conceded, all of its results may be discounted
- 9.2 If a player retires during a rubber, the opposition shall be deemed to have won all remaining games and sets necessary to win that rubber. The retiring player is eligible to compete in any remaining rubbers
- 9.3 Team captains may concede rubbers, sets and/or games to the opposing team to complete any round
- 9.4 If insufficient court time provided, the home team to concede all uncompleted games, sets and rubbers

10. Promotion and Relegation

- 10.1 The League Organiser determines final standings in order as follows:
- Number of points won
 - Percentage of rubbers won to rubbers played
 - Percentage of sets won to sets played
 - Percentage of games won to games played
- 10.2 Grouping arrangements for the top teams in the competition will operate as follows:
- Mens Competition:
 - Last in 'Championship' Division is relegated to Division 1 Group 1
 - Last but one in Championship is relegated to Division 1 Group 2
 - First in Division 1 Group 1 and Group 2 are promoted to Championship
 - Ladies Competition:
 - Last and last but one in Championship are relegated to the 'Premier' Division
 - First and second in Premier are promoted to Championship
 - Last and last but one in Premier are relegated to the 'Intermediate' Division
 - First and second in Intermediate are promoted to Premier
 - Last in Intermediate is relegated to Division 1 Group 1.
 - Last but one in Intermediate is relegated to Division 1 Group 2
 - First in Division 1 Group 1 and Group 2 are promoted to Intermediate
- 10.3 Grouping arrangements for all other divisions, except the lowest:
- Last is relegated to second in the same group below
 - Last but one in Group 2 is relegated to first place in Group 1 below
 - Last but one in Group 1 is relegated to first place in Group 2 below
 - First in Group 1 is promoted to last but one in Group 2 of next higher group
 - First in Group 2 is promoted to last but one in Group 1 of next higher group
 - Second in Group 1 or Group 2 promoted to last place in same sub-division of next higher group
- 10.4 The League Organiser may swap teams at the same Division level to avoid more than one team from the same venue being placed in the same group.

Championship Division Winners will be awarded Trophies & Certificates