ITF Coaches Education Programme
Level 2 Coaching Course

Tactics and patterns for the baseline game situation
By the end of this session you should be able to:

• Understand and explain the main tactics and patterns for the:
  – Both from the baseline game situation using forehands and backhands
Baseline game
General guidelines

• Force opponent to make errors through: sustained pressure; positioning on the baseline; hitting from \( \frac{3}{4} \) court whenever possible.

• Give few “cheap” points.

• Use the whole court.

• Keep the tempo high
Baseline game
General guidelines

• The baseline is your best friend. Keep it deep.
• Don’t get pushed too far behind the baseline.
• Use cross court rallies for time and control.
• Use combination of shots deep down the line followed by angle cross court
• Be consistent: Don’t make unforced errors.
Baseline game

General guidelines

• When under pressure: Play high and deep shots and go more for control than for power
• Move diagonally to the ball.
• Attack with flat and topspin shots.
• Change rhythm of rally when under pressure
• Change the pace by hitting higher slower balls to good length followed by angles or pace
Baseline game
Groundstrokes

• **Forehand**: Use it in 3/4 of the court to attack and on all possible returns.

• **Backhand**: Play crosscourt to rally from the baseline and play down the line to approach the net and for winners.

• When nervous avoid playing drop shots.
Baseline game
Offensive situation

• Use your best shot.
• Try to move the opponent.
• Go for a winner.
• Use the drop shot for surprise and move in.
Baseline game
Neutral situation

- Play high deep and cross court shots. Move your opponent.
- Don’t become a counter-puncher.
- If the opponent hits an unforced shot to your backhand, step around and hit an attacking forehand.
Baseline game
Defensive situation

• Play recovery shot to neutralise the opponent’s advantage.
• Hit high, deep and angled shots.
• Run down anything possible.
• Move diagonally and straight to the ball.
Baseline game
Opponent opens angles

• Play to the centre of the court.
• Don’t open angles for them.
• If the opponent hits short crosscourt: hit down the line for a winner.
• Sometimes you can take a risk and play a short crosscourt especially if the opponent is behind the baseline to one side
Baseline game
Opponent has one good shot

• Direct your shots to the weak side but hit winners to the good side.
• Hit hard into the strength to open up the weak side.
Baseline game

Opponent moves badly

• Try to wrong foot by playing combinations of shots, drop-shots, lobs, etc.
• When the opponent is hitting down the line on the run or from a wide position you can hit a short crosscourt.
Baseline game
Opponent is good baseliner

- Make your opponent go to the net.
- Play serve and volley game.
- Be patient.
- Bring them in with short wide angle slice.
- Don’t overdo drop shot.
Baseline game
Opponent is all round player

• Be consistent with your groundstrokes.

• Do not make unforced errors.
Baseline game
Opponent uses radical grips

• Make sure you keep the ball as low as possible (e.g. slice short angle).

• Force the opponent to change grips.
Baseline game

Opponent is a net rusher

- Play deep and angled shots.
- Keep the opponent in the backcourt.