When Both Players Are at the Baseline

Objective

Rehearse a pattern of play used by Novak Djokovic. Develop the forehand return and the attacking backhand down the line after the opponent's inside-out forehand. Focus on footwork, racket-head acceleration and accuracy.

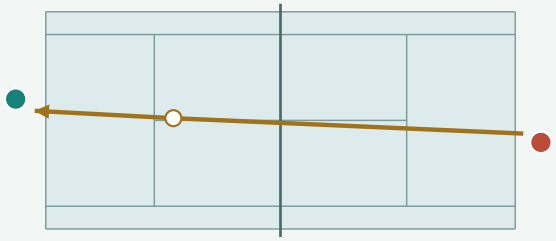
Warm-up

Dynamic plyometrics, then rallying, serving and returning.

The four-shot pattern

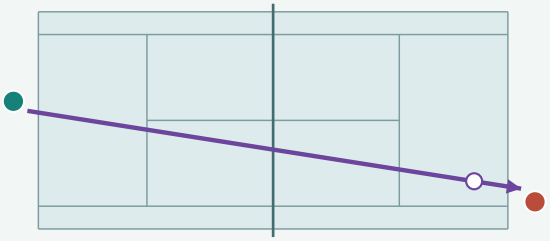
Right-handed example ● Returner ● Server ○ Bounce

1 Serve down the T



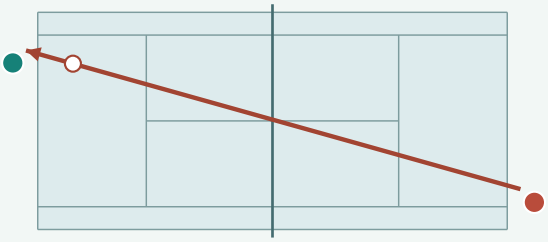
Serve from the ad court. Aim close to the T.

2 Cross-court forehand return



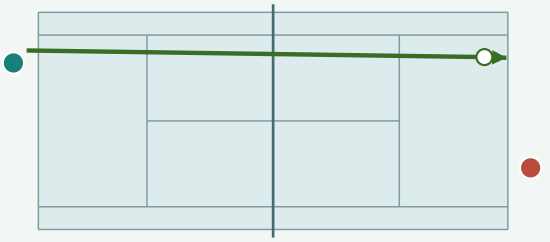
Return on the forehand and aim deep into the cross-court corner.

3 Inside-out forehand



The server runs around the backhand and plays an inside-out forehand.

4 Backhand down the line



The returner attacks with a backhand down the line, aiming for a winner.

Progressions and variations

1. For a left-handed returner, mirror the pattern and return from the deuce court.
2. Ask the server to try to get the final backhand back into play.
3. Play full points and look for opportunities to use the pattern.

Cool-down and review

During the cool-down, review the depth of the return, the footwork into the backhand and the accuracy of the down-the-line shot.