TAKING THE BALL EARLY

On the rise | Central baseline rally

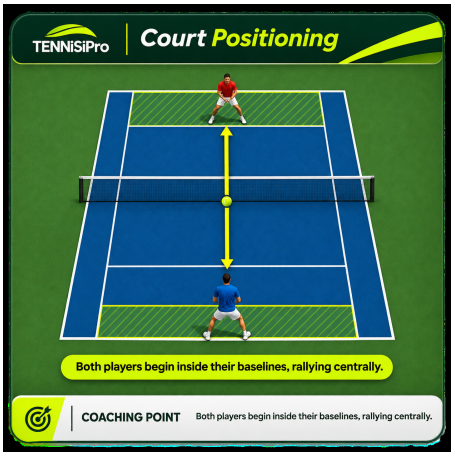
THE OBJECTIVE

Develop the ability to contact an incoming ball on the rise, reduce the opponent's reaction time, and sustain a controlled rally while remaining inside the baseline.

COURT SETUP

- Two players, one at each end of the court.
- Both remain inside their own baseline during the rally.
- Rally fairly centrally, favouring control and consistent timing.

THREE COACHING STAGES



01 Court Positioning

Stay inside the baseline; aim for a central, manageable rally.



02 Early Preparation

Read the ball early, prepare the racket and adjust your feet.



03 Contact & Recovery

Take the ball on the rise and recover for the next exchange.

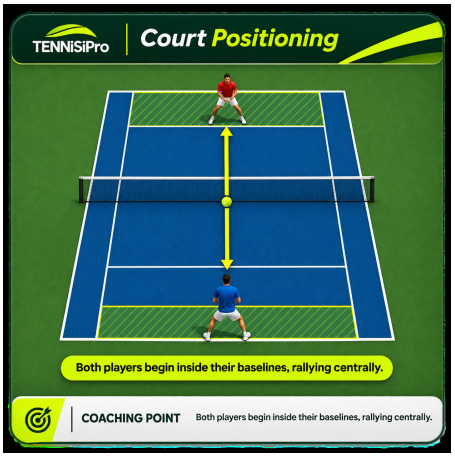
PRIMARY COACHING CUE

Meet the ball early without rushing your technique. Stay balanced, play within the court lines, and recover ready for the next central rally ball.

Print this page for a visual overview; use page 2 as a court-side lesson checklist.

COACH'S COURT-SIDE CHECKLIST

A practical lesson outline to accompany the animated demonstration.







RUN THE DRILL

1. Set positions

Place both players just inside their baselines in a balanced ready stance.

2. Establish the rally

Exchange controlled, predominantly central balls. Prioritise consistency over speed.

3. Encourage early contact

Recognise the incoming ball promptly; adjust footwork and strike as it rises after the bounce.

4. Recover and repeat

Return to a stable ready position without drifting behind the baseline.

WATCH FOR

Players retreating behind the baseline; late preparation; reaching for the ball; sacrificing control to hit too hard.

OPTIONAL PROGRESSIONS

Start with cooperative, slower feeds. Then increase pace gradually or alternate forehands and backhands while keeping the rally central.

COACH REVIEW

Ask: Did the player contact on the rise, remain balanced and recover inside the baseline?