

WORLD TENNIS NUMBER FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why are you making changes?

The introduction of a new, more modern player ratings system is part of our work to make competitions more relevant, accessible, welcoming and enjoyable for all players of all abilities, and more widely, the LTA's vision of opening up tennis to many more people.

A new player ratings system was identified as one of the top three priorities to be improved based on an extensive consultation with players, coaches, officials and parents.

The research revealed negativity around the current ratings system that outweighed its benefits. The proposal to create a new modern rating system received strong support from those involved in the consultation, with a specific emphasis on making the system accurate, goal-orientated and reward doubles as well as singles.

The new World Tennis Number has been specifically developed through a partnership approach by the ITF, LTA, USTA and FFT to enable players of all abilities from beginners to professionals to access relevant and enjoyable playing opportunities, to determine their individual level of play, and to identify opponents and competitions of an appropriate standard.

2. What changes are you making?

The LTA has announced it is working in partnership with the ITF to launch a World Tennis Number player rating system that will replace the current British Tennis Rating system in 2020. The official launch date will be confirmed later this year. The new system is being jointly developed by the ITF, LTA, Federation of French Tennis (FFT) and United States Tennis Association (USTA), together with support from Imperial College, London - global leaders in technology and engineering innovation.

Rather than just a singles rating, players will be offered a singles and doubles World Tennis Number.

The current British Tennis Rating system will cease to exist when the World Tennis Number is launched.

3. How will the World Tennis Number work?

The primary aim of the World Tennis Number is to support players with finding appropriate matches. It will provide an accurate measure of playing level that can be used across the sport including at local club competition. The World Tennis Number will operate on the following principles:

- A mathematical calculation with a high level of accuracy to reflect the playing standard of each player irrespective of where they play and which competitions they play in, with sets rather than just wins taken into account
- A dynamic system which enables the number to change on a regular basis to give a 'real time' playing standard of each player
- Separate singles and doubles measures
- A system which is gender and age neutral and rates all players on the same scale
- A system which reflects matches played at home and abroad

4. How will the current British Tennis Ratings convert to the new ITF World Tennis Number?

Once the system is finalised previous match results over a defined period of time will be fed into the system to calculate a player's initial World Tennis Number. This will ensure your number is accurate when the World Tennis Number is adopted in 2020 and ensure a smooth transition between systems.

5. Why have you chosen to partner with the ITF rather than other ratings providers such as UTR?

The LTA investigated multiple rating systems including UTR (Universal Tennis Rating) as part of the process to find a new modern and fit for purpose system. We considered a number of factors when making our decision including financial proposition and business models.

We appreciate that UTR is a popular performance rating system for players who wish to play American Collegiate Tennis and they have a number of partnerships with High Performance Academies. The aim of the World Tennis Number is to increase participation in the sport at all levels not just High Performance, which is more consistent with the LTA's vision of opening the sport up to more people.

We also felt that partnering with the ITF, two Grand Slam Nations and many leading tennis nations was in the best interest of the sport.

6. How does the LTA know if the new rating will be accurate?

The ITF and in turn the founding nations (Great Britain, United States of America and France) have been working with some of the world's best statisticians from Imperial College London to develop the World Tennis Number calculation. Their knowledge and expertise as well as their passion for tennis has been fundamental to the results achieved to date. The algorithm behind the system has been used across multiple sports and games for many years.

The system has been tested across multiple data sets, including LTA match results, to test its accuracy. The system will be subjected to further testing with live match data in the coming months to ensure full confidence in its accuracy.

7. When will further information become available?

We plan to communicate further details about how the system will operate in due course including:

- Guiding principles behind the algorithm
- Scale
- Frequency of update
- The length of time each result will count for within the calculation

Although it won't be launched until next year, now is the right time to start promoting the new World Tennis Number to ensure we provide everyone involved in tennis competition across the country with the opportunity to engage with and understand the changes being made and how they will impact them individually.

The algorithm is currently being refined to maximise its accuracy. As the system uses a highly complex algorithm to provide an accurate World Tennis Number the exact calculation will not be published. However, we will provide guiding principles to explain how a number is calculated. Once it is available further information will be shared online, at your venue, and at tournaments across the country.

8. Will Mini Tennis Ratings be affected?

All 10U players will be assigned a World Tennis Number and therefore Mini Tennis Green Ratings will cease to exist when the World Tennis Number is implemented in 2020. Mini Tennis Red ratings no longer exist as they were removed back in September 2016 however changes are being planned for Mini Tennis Orange ratings and will be communicated in due course.

9. Will the introduction of the World Tennis Number have any impact on the LTA Ranking system?

No, the ITF World Tennis Number will only replace the LTA Rating system. The LTA Ranking system will continue to be the primary acceptance method for Grade 1 – 3 Junior Tournaments.

10. Will the acceptance & seeding criteria for tournaments be changing?

The acceptance and seeding criteria will remain unchanged but references to the LTA Rating system will be updated to the ITF World Tennis Number. LTA Ranking will continue to be the secondary acceptance criteria for Grade 4 & 5 Junior and all Adult Tournaments where two players have the same World Tennis Number.

Grade 1 – 3 Junior Tournaments will continue to use LTA Ranking as the primary measure of acceptance.

11. Will I be able to appeal my World Tennis Number?

World Tennis Numbers will be calculated using live match data to ensure every player has an accurate number when the system goes live in 2020.

As a player's World Tennis Number will be generated by an accurate, objective and complex mathematical calculation it will not be possible to appeal the result of the calculation.

Players will be able to contact the LTA Services Team, as they currently can, when results are missing or incorrect.

12. If I am a coach looking to attend a Level 3, 4 or 5 coaching qualification, either now or in the future, will I still be able to use my LTA Rating instead of attending a play test?

Candidates wishing to attend the level 3, 4 or 5 LTA Coaching Qualification must have a minimum rating or meet the entry playing criteria (known as the Play Test Grade) for the specific coaching qualification they wish to attend.

The current minimum ratings required to negate a coach having to take the play test are:

Qualification	Minimum rating	Play Test Grade Equivalent
Level 3 Coach	6.1	1
Level 4 Senior Club Coach	5.1	2
Level 5 Master Club Coach		
Level 4 Senior Performance Coach	4.1	3
Level 5 Master Performance Coach		

Should a player have held the minimum rating at any time since 2003, they will not have to attend and successfully meet the Play Test Grade requirement. A player's highest rating will be retained in the LTA database.

A similar process will continue when the World Tennis Number is launched, with Play Test Grades being matched to World Tennis Numbers. Full details will be made available at the relevant time.

A player's highest World Tennis Number will be retained in the LTA database.

13. When will the World Tennis Number go live?

It is intended the World Tennis Number will go live in 2020. We will provide a definitive launch date in due course.

14. Will I be able to arrange matches myself and upload the results?

As part of the World Tennis Number we'll be providing venues with tools to manage box leagues and club championships, this will also include the ability to submit results from matches organised by two individuals which are not part of a competition. The system will require the opponent to validate the result to ensure both parties agree before it is included within the system.

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