

Optimum Technique

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No standard technique or swing path for a stroke is optimum for all players. As you will see in the clips, each player is unique with his or her own individual physiological, anthropometric, and psychological characteristics; therefore, optimal technique for one player may not be optimal for another.

Example-From the videos you will see that many professional players demonstrate different techniques during their swing and follow through, due to differences in style, age, and size. However, despite these stylistic differences, the techniques used at the instant of ball contact are all very similar.

While the optimal stroke technique may vary from player to player, all tennis strokes should have the following four characteristics (Saviano, 1999; Schonborn, 1998):

1. **It is simple.** The optimal technique uses as many segments as necessary to produce an effective shot.
2. **It is efficient.** By using the optimal technique, the player produces the shot with minimum effort relative to the desired results. In addition, use of the optimal technique minimizes stress to the body and helps to prevent injury.
3. **It is effective.** Using the optimal technique, the player can successfully execute the desired shots.
4. **It is flexible and versatile.** The player can adapt the technique to the tactical requirements of the game situation.

Players can acquire optimum technique by learning the mechanical fundamentals of stroke production, while still evolving their own individual stroke characteristics. You will find many examples of this as you watch the clips and see that all of the top players have mastered the fundamentals of technique, yet their technical styles of hitting the ball are extremely different.

Fundamentals of Technique and Style

Often people have differences of opinion on their fundamentals of technique. Styles of technique are commonly misinterpreted as fundamentals. One goal of this website is to provide you with a forum to come to a working knowledge of technique that will allow you delineate critical mechanical fundamentals from individual styles. Focus on fundamentals of technique and eliminating technical flaws that will limit a player's future, while allowing the player to evolve her or his own individual style.

Technique as Part of a Whole Process

Look at technique development as just part of a whole process of a player's ability to play the game successfully, both technically and tactically. Good technique should not be a goal unto itself, so keep the isolation of technique work to a minimum. When working on technique, try, when it is appropriate and possible, to incorporate the broad spectrum of skills required to play the game.

Finally, remember that the video-clips that you will view are clips of mature professional players. They possess skills, abilities, and strengths that younger, less mature players do not possess. The players you see here are the end product of years of practice and physical, technical, and tactical development. Just because you see the best players in the world executing a shot in a certain way, does not mean that a 10 or 12 year old player has the strength or ability to do what the top players in the world can do. Use the clips as a template to guide you with your players.