

How To Hit The Perfect One Handed Backhand In Tennis



The Perfect Backhand In Three Steps:

1. Unit Turn
2. Power Position
3. Contact Point and Finish

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Step One - Unit Turn

Your grip will greatly influence your backhand. We recommend using an Eastern backhand grip as this will allow you to hit aggressive topspin but also flatten out the shot. Roger Federer, Stan Wawrinka and many other great one-handers use this grip.



When you're in your ready position, you'll most likely be holding the racket in your forehand grip, which is a good thing. However, to make sure you start off your backhand well, use your non-hitting hand to hold the throat of the racket. Having a good ready position with the racket head higher than the grip level will set you up well for the rest of the stroke.

Having a poor ready position will cost you valuable time and make the swing more complicated. By having the tip of your racket pointing up towards the sky, you'll already create some leverage in your arm and racket head.

This will make step two much easier to achieve.

As soon as possible, after you recognise the ball is coming to your backhand side, try to turn your upper body sideways to the net. This will be your right shoulder if you're a right handed player.

By rotating the upper body, you'll help kick start the racket preparation and you'll store energy in your trunk muscles, especially the obliques. If you do nothing with your arms but simply coil your upper body, the racket will go from a 12 o'clock position (facing the net) to a 9 o'clock position (facing the left side of the court).

The best players in the world are able to initiate this coil almost as soon as the ball leaves the opponents strings, way before the ball passes the net. The earlier you can do this, the better. This will allow the coil - uncoil motion to take effect later in the swing.



By turning early and pointing your right shoulder to the net, you'll be able to use normal running or sprinting steps to get to many balls, a common error players do is they move to the ball with side steps which takes too much time and also tires them out.

Side steps can and should be used when recovering, as you want to be facing the net on the way back.

Step Two - The Power Position

Reaching a good power or back position with the racket head higher than the grip level will create good leverage in the racket and arm. This position will look different from player to player but some of the common traits are:

- The racket head higher than the grip level
- Shoulders coiled fully, with right shoulder facing the net
- Chin resting above the right shoulder
- Space between the hitting hand and body
- Non-hitting hand holding the throat of the racket



The idea behind this position is simple, if you were to stop or pause in this position for a second or two, you could still generate good power from this position, from here now you want to feel like the preparation is complete, now all that is left to do is swing forward towards the ball and complete the swing.

Step Three - The Contact Point and Finish

The contact point is the most important part of the stroke. You can do everything perfectly but if you make contact late or with your strings in a bad position, your shot won't work properly.

You should aim to make contact out in front of your body, with an almost fully extended arm. By doing this on your one-hander, you'll be firm at the contact point and have your body supporting the impact. If you make contact too far to the side of you, the arm and shoulder will take the force of the shot.



During the contact zone, you want the racket to be accelerating and not slowing down, unless you're absorbing power on the shot. For the most part you want the racket travelling through the contact point with good speed and you want to finish using a complete follow through, at the very end of the maximum swing path.

A good finish will help the muscles relax in a natural way and reduce the risk of injury.

On most backhands, you'll want your racket head to finish up quite high, somewhere around shoulder or head height. This will ensure you've brushed upwards on the ball and used a low to high swing-path which will help you lift the ball but also generate good topspin to bring the ball in the court. Your non-hitting hand should stay by your left

pocket, or pull back and down to counter the right hand going up.
Federer and Dimitrov use the stretch the chest finish while Wawrinka uses a more relaxed follow through, both work well and maintain balance in the upper body at the end of the stroke.



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