



2021 League Regulations and Procedures

*Approved by the USTA Intermountain Montana Board of Directors
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Welcome to Montana League Tennis!

This handbook is for you if you are playing league tennis in Montana this year. Montana offers several leagues:

- USTA Adult League 18 & Over
- USTA Adult League 40 & Over
- USTA Adult League 55 & Over
- USTA Adult League 65 & Over
- USTA Mixed Doubles 18 & Over
- USTA Mixed Doubles 40 & Over
- ITA Mixed Doubles 18 & Over
- USTA Adult Tri Level League 18 & Over

League tennis is part of the United States Tennis Association (USTA). Montana Tennis Association (MTA) is also known as USTA Intermountain Montana. USTA rules govern league tennis, with additional rules specific to Montana.

These USTA Intermountain Montana League Regulations describe how league tennis operates in Montana. The most recent version of the USTA national league regulations can be found [here](#).

For questions about league tennis, the [2021 USTA National League Regulations](#) are the first place to look for an answer. USTA also has a [Q&A section](#) on its website that explains how the USTA interprets the regulations in particular situations.

For more information about USTA Intermountain Montana generally, or tennis in Montana specifically, please visit [our website](#).

If you have an iPhone, you can download the USTA Mobile app. Once you enter your USTA number, you will be able to find all leagues and tournaments in which you are entered.

LEAGUE PLAY OVERVIEW

All league play in Montana is local league play. Montana does not have district championships. The 2021 USTA League Regulations for local leagues apply to all Montana leagues, even though Montana plays all local leagues over one weekend.

USTA defines two divisions of league tennis: Adult and Mixed. The Adult Division has three age groups: 18 & Over, 40 & Over, and 55 & Over. The Mixed Division has two age groups: 18 & Over and 40 & Over. A 65 & Over Adult League is offered in Montana as an Intermountain Tennis Association (ITA) program, not a national program. Winners of 65 & Over advance to a city to be determined, which is the final championship tournament. There is also an 18 & Over Tri Level League.

The 2021 Montana **Adult 18 & Over** tournament will be June 17-20, 2021, in Missoula. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship Aug. 13-15, 2021, in Salt Lake City.

The 2021 Montana **Adult 40 & Over** tournament will be August 5-8, 2021, in Bozeman. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship Sept. 10-12, 2021, in Denver.

The 2021 Montana **Adult 55 & Over** tournament will be June 17-20, 2021, in Missoula. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship Sept. 17-19, 2021, in Denver.

The 2021 Montana **Adult 65 & Over** tournament will be held at various locations and dates, but all matches must be played by Aug. 31, 2021. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship Oct. 1-3, 2021, in Las Vegas, NV.

The 2021 Montana **Mixed 18 & Over** tournament will be May 28-30, 2021, in Billings. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship July 9-11, 2021, in Boise.

The 2021 Montana **Mixed 40 & Over** tournament will be August 5-8, 2021, in Bozeman. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship October 8-10, 2021, in Eagle, ID.

The 2021 Montana **ITA Mixed 18 & Over** tournament will be Sept. 24 - 26, 2021, in Helena. Winners will advance to the ITA Section Championship Oct. 15 - 17, 2021, in Las Vegas, NV.

The 2021 Montana **18 & Over Tri-Level** tournament will be Sept. 24 – 26, 2021, in Helena. The location and date for the sectional championship is TBD.

ELIGIBILITY TO PLAY

Eligibility to play league tennis is determined by the 2021 USTA Intermountain Montana League Regulations. All players who compete in league tennis must be current USTA members throughout the time they are playing.

In accordance with USTA Intermountain League Regulations, Montana has enacted a residency regulation for USTA league teams:

- A “Montana team” is a team that maintains a minimum of 50% of its total number of registered players from Montana.
- To be “from Montana,” a player must have resided in Montana for a minimum of 30 consecutive days over the past year.
- Registration is open to non-Montana teams only for those divisions with two or fewer teams registered after the first registration deadline. *See Registration Deadlines, Table 3.*

Players must play a minimum of two local league matches to be eligible to play with that team at section championships. One defaulted match may count toward the minimum match requirement. All retired matches count toward the minimum match requirement.

A player may play on two teams within one age group (e.g., Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, etc.) **if** the teams are at different NTRP levels. A player may play up to one NTRP level above the player’s current NTRP level.

Minimum age requirements for each League Division (age group) must be met by December 31, 2021. Players must be 18 years of age prior to participating in the USTA League program. *See USTA Regulation 1.04F(1).*

If an Adult league consists of only two teams at an NTRP level, each team must maintain its roster with at least 40 percent of its players at the designated NTRP level. USTA Regulation 1.04D(5). (This does not apply to Adult 55 & Over teams that use combined NTRP levels or levels that have more than two teams registered.)

If you do not know your NTRP rating, please go to [Find my Rating](#). Tennis Link automatically removes expired ratings. You must “self-rate” if:

- You do not have an NTRP rating, or
- You have a (T) rating and want to play Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Mixed 18 & Over, or ITA Mixed, or
- You have an (M) rating and want to play Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, or Adult 65 & Over.

For information about how to self-rate, go to [Instructions for self-rate](#). A player who inappropriately self-rates at a level lower than the player’s actual skill level, as well as captains and others who condone inappropriate self-rating, may have an NTRP Grievance filed against them and be subject to possible sanctions, including disqualification and suspension. USTA Regulation 3.03E(1)a.

Table 1: USTA LEAGUE TEAM COMPOSITION

DIVISION	AGE GROUP	MINIMUM # PLAYERS	GENDER	NTRP LEVEL
Adult	18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, & 4.5	8	Same Gender	Player’s NTRP level shall not exceed team NTRP level.
	18 & Over 2.5 women & 5.0	5		
	40 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, & 4.5	7		
	55 & Over 65 & Over OR Combined levels 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0	6		Combined NTRP rating of partners shall not exceed team NTRP level AND NTRP difference between partners shall not exceed 1.0.
Mixed	18 & Over 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0 40 & Over 6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0, 10.0 ITA Mixed Doubles 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5, 9.5	3 Men 3 Women	Men & Women	Minimum NTRP level for 6.0 is 2.5; for 7.0 is 3.0; for 8.0 is 3.5, for 9.0 is 4.0, 10.0 is 4.5.

Table 2: NTRP RATING LEVELS FOR LEAGUE PLAY

NTRP RATING LEVEL FOR ENTRY INTO LEAGUE PLAY		
DIVISION	AGE GROUP	PLAYER'S NTRP RATING LEVEL
ADULT	18 & Over 40 & Over	Current NTRP level and/or up to one level higher than the player's currently NTRP level.
	55 & Over Combined NTRP Levels	Combined NTRP rating levels of partners shall not exceed the team NTRP level. NTRP rating level difference between partners shall not exceed 1.0. The minimum NTRP Level for: 6.0 is 2.5; 7.0 is 3.0; 8.0 is 3.5; 9.0 is 4.0.
MIXED	18 & Over 40 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5, 5.0	Current NTRP level and/or up to one level higher than the player's currently NTRP level.
	18 & Over 40 & Over 55 & Over	Combined NTRP rating levels of partners shall not exceed the team NTRP level. NTRP rating level difference between partners shall not exceed 1.0. The minimum NTRP Level for: 6.0 is 2.5; 7.0 is 3.0; 8.0 is 3.5; 9.0 is 4.0.

REGISTERING FOR LEAGUE

All teams and players must register through Tennis Link by 9:59 PM MST on the day of the deadline.

Team captains must register their teams and receive a team number from the District League Coordinator, Andrea Johnson, before individual players may register for the team. You may reach Andrea at 406-579-9609 or ajohnson.mta@gmail.com. Once they have a team number, players may register at www.tennislink.usta.com, or by going to the League page at www.montanatennis.org. Players may not play any league matches unless their names are on the

team roster in Tennis Link. If a non-registered player plays a team match, that player's match will be declared a default.

All players must pay the league fee regardless of whether they intend to go to the Section Championship. Players who withdraw by the player deadline will receive a refund, minus a processing fee. *See* Table 3. After the refund deadline, no refunds will be given unless the District League Coordinator and Executive Director determine a refund is warranted due to exceptional circumstances. Examples of exceptional circumstances include injuries that make it impossible to play, a death in the player's family, or cancellation of the event.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES

Players must register their teams and players by the deadlines announced below for each age group (Adult 18 & Over, Mixed, etc.). *See* Table 3.

USTA Intermountain Montana has **three registration deadlines** for leagues. The first two deadlines are for teams, and the third deadline is for individual players:

First registration period – open to Montana teams only; ends 30 days before a league tournament begins.

- A “Montana team” is a team that maintains a minimum of 50% of its total number of registered players from Montana. To be from Montana, a player must have resided in Montana for a minimum of 30 consecutive days over the past year.
- To register a team, at least half the minimum number of players for a full team must register. To register as a Montana team by the first deadline, the minimum number of players must be from Montana.
 - For example, the minimum number of players for a full team in Adult 18 & Over is 8. Therefore, a minimum of 4 players must register by the team deadline for the team to be registered. To register as a Montana team in Adult 18 & Over by the first deadline, at least 4 of the registered players must be from Montana.
- **If 3 or more Montana teams register for an NTRP division by the first team registration deadline, no out-of-state teams may register for that division.**
 - For example, if 3 Montana teams register for Women's 4.0 by the first registration deadline, no out-of-state teams may register for Women's 4.0. If two Montana teams register for Men's 3.5 by the first registration deadline, then out-of-state teams (as well as additional Montana teams) may register for Men's 3.5 by the second registration deadline.
- If the number of Montana teams falls below the minimum required to maintain Montana-only teams after the initial deadline and before the tournament begins, the District League Coordinator, in consultation with the League Committee, may allow out-of-state teams to register and play.

Second registration deadline – 2.5 weeks before the tournament; the final deadline for all teams, including permitted out-of-state teams as well as Montana teams.

Final registration deadline – for individual players, who may register to play on a registered team until the night before the tournament begins.

The District League Coordinator may change or extend registration deadlines. If she does so, she shall extend the deadline for all players in the division.

Table 3: REGISTRATION DEADLINES

DIVISION & AGE GROUP (tournament date)	FIRST TEAM DEADLINE (Montana teams only)	SECOND TEAM DEADLINE (permitted out-of-state teams & Montana teams)	FINAL PLAYER DEADLINE (players playing on more than one team must register by 2 nd deadline)	REFUND DEADLINE
Adult 18 & Over June 17- 20, 2021	May 18, 2021	May 30, 2021	June 16, 2021	June 16, 2021
Adult 40 & Over Aug. 5 – 8, 2021	July 6, 2021	July 18, 2021	Aug. 4, 2021	Aug. 4, 2021
Adult 55 & Over June 17 - 20, 2021	May 18, 2021	May 30, 2021	June 16, 2021	June 16, 2021
Adult 65 & Over completed by Aug. 31, 2021	June 30, 2021	Matches to be completed by Aug. 31, 2021	Matches to be completed by Aug. 31, 2021	Aug. 31, 2021
Mixed 18 & Over May 28 – 30, 2021	April 27, 2021	May 10, 2021	May 27, 2021	May 27, 2021
Mixed 40 & Over Aug. 5 - 8, 2021	July 6, 2021	July 18, 2021	Aug. 4, 2021	Aug. 4, 2021
ITA Mixed Sept. 24 – 26, 2021	Aug. 24, 2021	Sept. 6, 2021	Sept. 23 2021	Sept. 23, 2021
Tri-Level Adult 18 & Over Sept. 24– 26, 2021	Aug. 24, 2021	Sept. 6, 2021	Sept. 23, 2021	Sept. 23, 2021

TEAM CAPTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- Captains must find players and create a team.
- Captains are the primary liaisons between the District League Coordinator and the players.
- Captains ensure that players are kept informed of news and updates from the District; the District does not communicate directly with players.
- Captains must attend mandatory captains' meetings prior to league season.
- The District League Coordinator will contact existing captains via email.

Captains, please notify the District if your email address changes after you register your team. Meeting times and dates will be published on www.montanatennis.org.

Captains shall inform their players that league play is governed by the 2021 USTA League Regulations.

Please send an email to your players with a link to the USTA regulations at https://www.usta.com/content/dam/usta/pdfs/20180813_USTA_League_2021_Regulations.pdf and/or give them a printed copy of these regulations.

Local leagues are organized into the following formats:

Table 4: USTA INTERMOUNTAIN MONTANA LEAGUE FORMAT

DIVISION & AGE GROUP	LEAGUE MATCH FORMAT	NTRP LEVELS
Adult 18 & Over 2.5 & 5.0	1 – Singles 2 – Doubles	2.5 women 5.0
Adult 18 & Over	2 – Singles 3 – Doubles	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5
Adult 40 & Over	1 – Singles 3 - Doubles	3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5
Adult 55 & Over Adult 65 & Over	3 - Doubles	6.0, 7.0, 8.0, 9.0

Note: a player may play only one individual match in each team match.

LOCAL LEAGUE TOURNAMENTS

Montana's local leagues are all played in one weekend tournament. Montana does not have a separate league championship. The winners of the local league advance to the sectional championship.

The tournament dates for Adult 18 & Over, Adult 40 & Over, Adult 55 & Over, Adult 65 & Over, Mixed Doubles 18 & Over, Mixed Doubles 40 & Over, ITA Mixed Doubles, and Tri-Level are in Table 3 and on the MTA website, www.montanatennis.org.

All Montana local league play is a round robin competition. If there are 10 or more teams in an NTRP level, the teams will be divided into flights, with a playoff between the top two teams from each flight. If there are 7 or fewer teams, the teams will all play one another, with a minimum of three team matches. If there are 8-9 teams within an NTRP level, the District League Coordinator will consult with the USTA-MT League Committee, which will decide whether to create flights or play a full round robin. The committee's decision is final.

When an NTRP level consists of only two teams, each team must play a minimum of three team matches (a triple round robin). USTA National Regulation 2.01C(1). When an NTRP level consists of only three teams, each team must play a minimum of four team matches (a double round robin). *Id.*

Further tournament details will be discussed at the captains' meeting prior to local league tournaments.

The District League Coordinator will schedule all team matches and notify team captains of the tournament schedule. Captains may find the opposing teams' rosters online.

If a player is not present when the player's match is called, the USTA Point Penalty system will be applied.

A default may be called in accordance with Table 6 if a player is not present 15 minutes after the match is called. If a match is defaulted because of lateness, the match shall not be played.

Warm-up is limited to 10 minutes.

CAPTAINS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ensuring players are at the site 30 minutes before each team match.
- Turning in lineups to the site coordinator 30 minutes before each team match
- Checking with players after their matches to ensure the reported match scores are correct.
- Signing the match scorecard at the completion of the team match, indicating agreement with the lineup and scores
- Contacting the site coordinator or District League Coordinator immediately to dispute any reported score.

- Acting as the liaison between the team and the site coordinator and District League Coordinator.

DEFAULTING AN ENTIRE TEAM MATCH

A team that defaults a team match during a local league tournament may disrupt play for all other players at their NTRP level. If an entire team defaults a team match during a local league tournament, the defaulted team may be disqualified from further play, and all previous and future scheduled matches may be removed from the standings. The final decision will be made by the District League Coordinator and the League Committee.

IN CASE OF RAIN

All matches shall proceed even if rain is imminent. If a captain notifies the site coordinator that his/her team is defaulting any individual matches, and the team match is later rained out, the defaults stand.

The roving umpire shall stop play upon determining that the conditions may make play dangerous. If there is no roving umpire, the site coordinator shall stop play after determining that conditions may make play dangerous.

Players may ask the umpire or site coordinator to stop play if they believe footing is compromised by rain. The umpire or site coordinator shall check the courts and determine whether to stop play. If no umpire or site coordinator is available, players may agree to stop play because of rainy conditions if they believe the conditions are making play dangerous.

When a local league tournament is halted because of weather, players should stop play, agree on the score, note the server and the sides, and report immediately to the site coordinator.

If play moves indoors and all matches cannot be completed, the District League Coordinator shall make it a priority to put on those teams that are in contention for first place. Play shall begin where it left off after a 10-minute warm-up.

If it is not possible to finish all matches by a reasonable time on the last day of the tournament, the District League Coordinator may require that matches be completed in an expeditious manner. Options for completion include changing the scoring or using a coin toss.

DYNAMIC NTRP RATINGS

Adult Division players' NTRP ratings are dynamically calculated, which means they are calculated after each match they play during the local league tournament. Players subject to NTRP Dynamic Disqualification, as described in the NTRP Dynamic Disqualification Table on the inside back cover of the 2021 USTA Regulations (*see table 5 on the next page*), will be dynamically disqualified if they reach the disqualification level three times based on all matches except retirements. Players who are NTRP dynamically disqualified will be notified and have a right to a review in accordance with the procedures in USTA Reg. 204C.

ANNOUNCING WINNERS

For all Adult Division tournaments, dynamic NTRP rating system reports are not issued until 24-48 hours after the last local league matches. Therefore, local league winners will be announced as soon as possible, within 48 hours of the last day of the tournament.

Mixed Doubles tournaments do not use the dynamic NTRP rating system; therefore, winners will be announced at the end of the tournament weekend.

Table 5: NTRP DYNAMIC DISQUALIFICATION TABLE

NTRP DYNAMIC DISQUALIFICATION	
Each NTRP level is followed by a letter indicating the type of rating. The following identifies who can and cannot be NTRP dynamically disqualified.	
Who <i>cannot</i> be dynamically disqualified?	
NTRP level followed by the letter below:	
C	Computer Rated Players *
M	Mixed Exclusive Players
T	Tournament Players
Exception: * Any player who entered an Early Start League at an NTRP level lower than (NOTE: Montana does not have an Early Start League, so C-rated players are safe from dynamic disqualification unless their rating was generated in another state as part of an Early Start League.) ** Year-end (M) and (T) players who are required to self-rate to enter the Adult Division automatically become (S) rated players and therefore become subject to NTRP dynamic disqualification.	
Who <i>can</i> be NTRP dynamically disqualified?	
Participants in the Adult Division:	
NTRP level followed by the letter below:	
A	Appealed – all granted appeals including Medical and Promoted Players 60 or over
S	Self-rated Players
D	Dynamic or NTRP Grievance Disqualified Players
C	Exceptions to C year-end ratings as noted above *
Players participating in the Adult Division who are promoted as a result of NTRP dynamic disqualification will be immediately required to participate at their new NTRP level in all USTA League Programs.	

Table 6: LEAGUE MATCH AND SCORING

DIVISION & AGE GROUP	TEAM MATCH	TEAM POINT AWARDED FOR
Adult 18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5	2 – Singles 3 - Doubles	3 individual matches won
Adult 18 & Over 2.5 women & 5.0	1 – Singles 2 – Doubles	2 individual matches won
Mixed Doubles (all levels) Adult 55 & Over Adult 65 &Over (all levels)	3 - Doubles	2 individual matches won
Adult 40 & Over	1 – Singles 3 – Doubles	3 individual matches won. If tied 2-2, the tie shall be broken by the first of the following methods that breaks the tie: A. Sets. Loser of the fewest sets B Games. Loser of the fewest games C. Game Winning Percentage: Total games won divided by the total games played. D. Winner of the #1 Doubles position

DEFAULTS

Table 7 outlines the maximum number of individual matches that can be defaulted without defaulting the team match. Defaults must occur in the order provided in Table 7.

Table 7: ALLOWABLE DEFAULTS

DIVISION & AGE GROUP	MINIMUM # ELIGIBLE PLAYERS AVAILABLE PER MATCH	MAXIMUM # POSITIONS THAT CAN BE DEFAULTED	REQUIRED ORDER OF MATCH DEFAULTS
Adult 18 & Over 2.5 women & 5.0	3	1	No. 1 Singles or No. 2 Doubles
Adult 18 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 Adult 40 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 (using 5-court format)	4	2	<u>Singles</u> : No. 2 Singles before No. 1 Singles <u>Doubles</u> : No. 3 Doubles before No. 2 Doubles. and No. 2 Doubles before No. 1 Doubles
40 & Over 3.0, 3.5, 4.0, 4.5 (using 4-court format)	5	1	Singles: No. 1 Singles Doubles: No. 3 Doubles before No. 2 Doubles and No. 2 Doubles before No. 1 Doubles
Adult 55 & Over Adult 65 & Over Mixed 18 & Over Mixed 40 & Over	4 players who are eligible and able to combine	1	No. 3 Doubles

A retirement occurs when an individual match has started and a player or doubles team is unable to continue due to injury, loss of conditioning, emergency, or refusal to play. In case of a retirement, the non-retiring doubles team or player shall be credited with the number of additional games it would have won if the match was completed and the non-retiring doubles team or player won every subsequent game. *See* Reg. 2.03M, N.

GRIEVANCES

All grievances arising from league play are governed by USTA National regulations. See generally USTA Regulations section 3.00 of the 2021 USTA Regulations.

https://www.usta.com/content/dam/usta/2021-pdfs/2021_League_Regulations%20FINAL.pdf

- Montana has a Local League Grievance Committee, appointed by the USTA-Montana Board President and approved by the ITA Section League Coordinator.
- Montana also has a Local League Grievance Appeal Committee, also appointed by the USTA-Montana Board President and approved by the ITA Section League Coordinator.
- Members of the Local League Grievance Committee may not be members of the Local League Grievance Appeal Committee.

The USTA regulations define five types of league grievances – general, administrative, national league, eligibility, and NTRP. These grievances are defined in detail in the 2021 USTA National Regulations. Each type of grievance has its own procedure.

3.02A General Grievance. Any grievance that is not covered by 3.02B, C, D, or E, and alleges a violation of any of the following is a General Grievance:

1. the USTA Constitution and Bylaws,
2. the USTA League Regulations,
3. the Friend At
4. Court, USTA Handbook of Tennis Rules and Regulations, including The Code and Wheelchair Rules of Tennis (unless modified by the USTA League Regulations), *or*
5. the standards of good conduct, fair play, and good sportsmanship.

3.02B Administrative Grievance. Any complaint pertaining to administration of the League Program at any level shall constitute an Administrative Grievance. Captains and committee members are not subject to Administrative Grievance.

3.02C National League Grievance. The only National League Grievance that can be filed is an Administrative Grievance against the National League Administrator.

3.02D Eligibility Grievance. Any complaint, other than an NTRP Grievance, contending that a player has failed to meet eligibility requirements to participate in USTA League shall constitute an Eligibility Grievance.

3.03A(5) Any grievance with regard to any aspect of the USTA League, except those governed by Regs. 3.03A(3) or 3.03A(4) regarding a grievance against a Sectional League Coordinator or the National League Administrator or in Reg. 3.03B(3)a regarding eligibility, shall be processed through the USTA League Grievance and Grievance Appeal Committees at the appropriate level (i.e., Local, District/Area, Sectional or National). Decisions of Grievance Appeal Committees shall be final and binding except with regard to suspensions of individuals or teams for a period of 12 months or more. *See* Reg. 3.04B(4).

3.03B(3) Any grievance regarding failure to meet eligibility requirements may be filed by a team captain, league coordinator or member of a Championship Committee at any time.

3.03B(3)a for eligibility matters of simple fact (e.g., age, USTA membership, Tennis Link registration) a USTA league coordinator may declare a player ineligible and disqualify that player without filing a grievance. *See* Regs. 1.04C(1) Official League Registration, 1.04E(2) Membership, 1.04E(3) Age, and 1.04F Official League Rating Program.

3.03B(3)b All other grievances must go to the appropriate League Grievance Committee or other Committee as designated in these USTA League Regulations.

3.02E NTRP Grievance. A grievance contending that a player's NTRP level is lower than the actual skill level shall constitute an NTRP Grievance. *See* Reg. 3.03E(1)a, 3.03E(1)b and 3.03E(1)c.