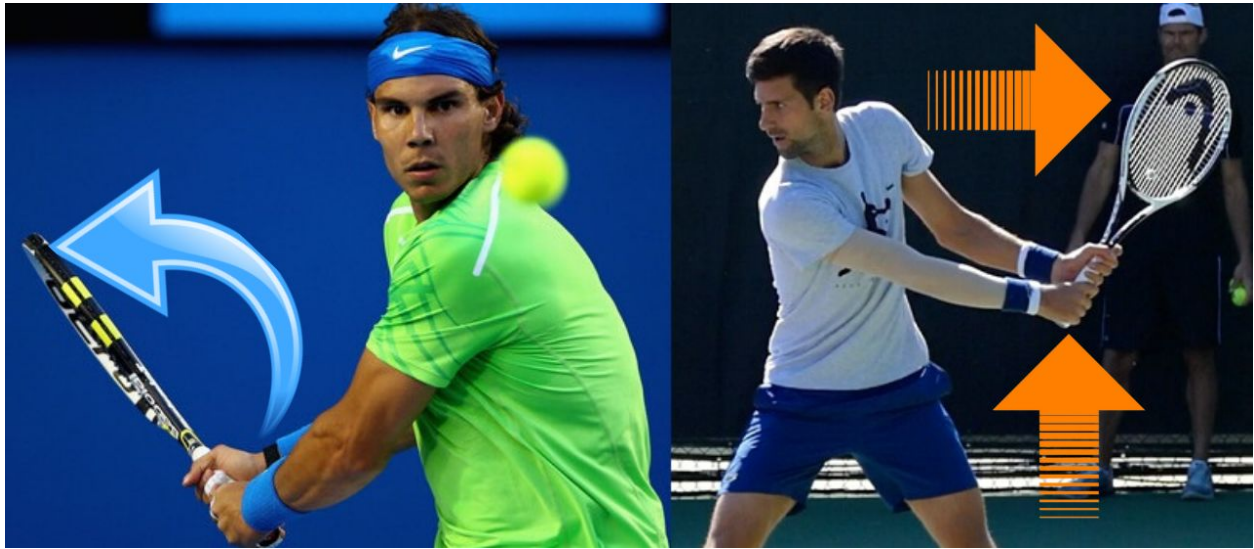


How To Hit The Perfect Two-Handed Backhand In Tennis



The Perfect Backhand In Three Steps:

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

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Grip

Your grip will greatly influence your two-handed backhand. We recommend using a combination of either:

1. Eastern forehand grip on top hand (left hand for right-handers) and continental grip on the bottom hand or
2. Semi-western on the top hand and strong continental, which is between the true continental and an eastern backhand grip, on the bottom hand

If you use an eastern backhand grip on the bottom hand, it will be very hard for you to flatten out the backhand and truly hit through the shot.

Step One - Unit Turn



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. At the same as you coil the upper body, you'll be changing grips into your backhand one.

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
- Body weight stored up mainly on the back leg, which will allow you to transfer your weight through the shot if you are using a neutral or closed stance



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. If you extend out towards your target, you might have bent elbows at contact and then extend both arms out or you might have better stability if you extend your top hand during the contact zone.

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 over your right shoulder, touching your back. This will ensure you've followed through all the way and help create a low to high swing path which will help you create topspin.

A good guide is to have both elbows finish around shoulder level, this will ensure that the top hand can complete the swing, a common error is players finishing too low with their bottom elbow which blocks the follow through and stops the top hand doing its job.

Notice Djokovic's elbows in the image above.

By Coach Simon of
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