

LESSON 7: PUNCH SERVE

Grade-Level Outcomes

Primary Outcome

Lifetime activities: Demonstrates competency and/or refines activity-specific movement skills in 2 or more lifetime activities (outdoor pursuits, individual-performance activities, aquatics, net/wall games or target games). (S1.H1.L1)

Embedded Outcome

Movement concepts, principles & knowledge: Uses movement concepts and principles (e.g., force, motion, rotation) to analyze and improve performance of self and/or others in a selected skill. (S2.H2.L1)

Lesson Objectives

The learner will:

- perform the continental grip.
- successfully perform three out of five punch serves from the baseline.

Equipment and Materials

- Tennis rackets: 1 per student
- Tennis balls (various densities): at least 5 per student pair

Introduction

Today, you will be learning the punch serve. The serve is a very important shot to have in your repertoire as it starts every point in a tennis match. The punch serve is a simplified version of the full-swing serve, which you will learn next class.

Instructional Task: Continental Grip

■ PRACTICE TASK

Demonstrate the continental grip. Students shadow along.

Extension

Have students place their rackets on the ground, and when you say go, students pick up their rackets with the continental grip.

Refinement

Students refine skill by reviewing pictures of the grip; instructional videos of the grip can also be posted to the school's physical education website.

What to Look For

Base knuckle (index finger) of the dominant hand is on the second bevel of the handle.

Instructional Task: Service Stance and Toss

■ PRACTICE TASK

Demonstrate the service stance and toss. Students shadow along.

Guiding questions for students:

- For singles, where should you stand on the baseline?
- How high should the toss be?
- Where should the toss be positioned and why?

Extensions

- Students pair up and stand on the baseline on the same side of the court (four students per court). One stands to serve in the deuce service box, and the other stands to serve in the ad service box. Students place their rackets on the ground to the dominant side, with the racket head below the baseline. The racket head serves as a target for the toss. Students perform a service toss so that the ball lands on the racket face on the ground. Students switch service positions after 10 tosses.
- Students set a goal for the number of successful tosses.

Refinement

If the toss goes behind the server, have the server focus on lifting the ball (rather than tossing) and keeping her arm fully extended (no bent elbow) as she brings her arm up.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may choose what goal to set and modify it as needed.

What to Look For

- Toss should be just in front of the server.
- Students lift the ball rather than throw it (the ball rotates).

Instructional Task: Punch Serve Swing Pattern

■ PRACTICE TASK

Demonstrate the punch serve swing pattern. Students shadow along.

Guiding questions for students:

- Does the swing path resemble another type of skill? (Answer: overhand throw)
- How can you get more power on the ball?

Extensions

- Students pair up and stand on the service line on the same side of the court (four students per court). One pair is positioned to serve: One stands to serve in the deuce service box, and the other stands to serve in the ad service box. The other pair are positioned on the other side of the court to receive the serves. The servers overhand-throw balls to land in the correct service box. The receivers use proper footwork to get to the ball to catch it. Students change roles after every five balls and switch service positions after each full rotation.
- Students perform the same task but move back to the baseline.

Refinement

Reinforce the importance of the weight shift so the server “falls” into the court after releasing with the ball.

Student Choices/Differentiation

Students may choose to switch partners.

What to Look For

- Students are using the correct throwing pattern.
- Students are following through toward the correct service box.
- Students are positioning their feet appropriately.

Instructional Task: Full Punch Serve

■ PRACTICE TASK

Students pair up and stand on the service line on the same side of the court (four students per court). One pair is positioned to serve: One stands to serve in the deuce service box, and the other stands to serve in the ad service box. The other pair are positioned to receive the serves. The servers perform the full punch serve to land in the correct service box. The receivers use proper footwork to get to the ball to catch it. Students change roles after every five balls and switch service positions after each full rotation.

Extensions

- Students perform the same task but move back to the baseline.
- Students perform the same task but the receivers return the ball with a groundstroke.

Refinement

When students are at the service line, they will often truncate the movement pattern in order to reduce force on the ball (serve is long). If this is the case, encourage them to use a lower-density ball.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students may choose to change partners.
- Students may decide what type of ball they want to use.
- Students may practice hitting into the fence so they can focus on the motion and not worry about hitting the net.
- Drop the net to allow students to focus on form.

What to Look For

- Students are able to coordinate the toss and swing together.
- Students are following through toward the target.
- Students are hitting down on the ball.

Instructional Task: Peer Assessment

■ PRACTICE TASK

Repeat the full punch serve practice task, but place six students on each court. The extra two students record the servers (using a device with a skill analysis app such as Coach's Eye). After rotating to all positions, students evaluate their serve motion using a rubric or checklist.

EMBEDDED OUTCOME: S2.H2.1.1 Students should use the assessment to apply movement concepts to their motion to generate more power on their serves.

Extension

After reviewing their videos, students practice the full punch serve, attempting to integrate corrections.

Student Choices/Differentiation

- Students choose their tennis balls.
- Drop the height of the net to increase success.

What to Look For

- Students are able to use the technology effectively.
 - Students are applying the rubric correctly to their video clips.
 - Students are able to apply movement concepts to improve their performance.
-

Formal and Informal Assessments

- Informal assessment
- Peer assessment of serve motion

Closure

- What grip did you learn today? Can someone demonstrate it for me?
- Can you name three critical features of the punch serve?
- What are the most important elements of a good toss?
- Keep practicing the skills at home if you can, and the next lesson you will build on the punch serve to a full-swing serve.

Reflection

- Were students consistently using the proper grip?
- Were students able to consistently serve the ball into the correct service box?
- Were students placing the toss appropriately?
- Did students get enough practice with the punch serve?

Homework

- Practice the punch serve toss and swing pattern at home. Use a mirror, if possible.
- Provide students with a handout that shows pictures of the continental grip and videos of the punch serve on the school's physical education website, in both real time and slow motion.

Resources

United States Tennis Association: www.usta.com

Fuzzy Yellow Balls: www.fuzzyyellowballs.com

Internet search terms: "tennis serve," "punch serve," "serving grip"