

# TENNIS TIPS

By USPTA/PTR Master Professional  
Fernando Velasco



## HOW TO EXECUTE THE FOREHAND SERVICE RETURN

In previous newsletters, I offered tips on how to hit a forehand groundstroke, a two-handed backhand, one-handed backhand, forehand volley, the two handed backhand volley, the serve, the forehand half-volley, the one-handed backhand volley and the overhead “smash”.

In this issue, I will offer you instructions on how to execute the second most important shot in the game of tennis: The Service Return, since it is the response to the first most important shot of the game: The Serve.. In the illustrations, Ken Comey, player at the Grey Rock Tennis Club, shows the proper technique to execute this stroke. Photos by Charlie Palafox.

**Step 1: The Ready Position:** When Ken is getting ready to return the serve, his eyes are focused on the tennis ball held by the opponent. Knees are relaxed and the hands are holding the racket with a relaxed grip..

**Step 2: The Split Step:** When the opponent tosses the ball into the air, Ken will take a hop with both feet off the ground, trying to time the split step with the contact of the ball on the opponent’s racket

**Step 3: The Back Swing:** Once Ken realizes that the ball has been

directed to his forehand, he will turn his upper body and will take the racket back. Notice that the left hand is up in front to allow him to keep his center of gravity in the center. He has loaded his weight on his right foot and will be ready to step forward to meet the ball

**Step 4: The Point of Contact:** Ken now is ready to step into the ball. He has kept his eye on the ball and his center of gravity now is shifted to the point of contact. Notice the left knee being slightly bent and the left foot is pointing to the ball meeting the racket

**Step 5: The Extension of the Point of Contact:** Ken is now directing the ball toward the opponent’s court. His eyes have now shifted toward his target and his body weight is now fully in front of his left foot. The left hand is still helping to keep the center of gravity in the center without opening up too early.

**Step 6: The Follow Through:** Once Ken has finished his stroke, the momentum of the racket continues to move almost to a point behind his neck. His left hand is next to his body and his right elbow is pointing toward his target. His body is now ready to take the “split step” with both feet in order to prepare for the opponent’s returned shot.

# The Forum

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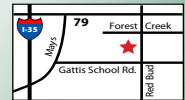


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## OLDER ADULTS EXPRESS ANXIETY IN DIFFERENT WAYS

While there are several factors that can cause anxiety in older adults, it can be difficult to identify because they express anxiety in unique ways, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine. According to Dr. Melinda Stanley, professor in the Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at BCM, common types of anxiety disorders in adults include:

- Generalized anxiety
- Specific fears and phobias
- Social phobias
- Post-traumatic stress disorder

Anxiety symptoms that older adults and their family members should watch for include:

- Shortness of breath
- Increased heart rate
- Dizziness
- Difficulty sleeping
- Muscle aches and pains

Anxiety is not a normal part of aging and can be treated. The first important step is to have a physical exam. Cognitive behavioral therapy is a treatment option that teaches learning skills to manage anxiety. Skills that can help reduce anxiety include relaxation, changing thoughts, facing fears, learning how to solve problems and learning behaviors to improve sleep.

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## RUNNER'S KNEE PAIN USUALLY LINKED TO FOOT, HIP PROBLEM

If running is turning into a pain in the knees, it might actually be the hips that need your attention, according to an expert at Baylor College of Medicine. When runners have knee pain, it's usually related to foot or hip problems, according to Dr. Joseph Chorley, associate professor of pediatrics – adolescent and sports medicine at BCM and Texas Children's Hospital. If a runner is not in control at the foot, ankle or hip, the knee is what gets twisted, has to overwork and develops irritation.

Chorley makes the following suggestions:

- Stretch properly before running
  - Don't increase mileage by more than 10 to 15 percent per week
  - Walk when knee pain begins
  - Replace shoes every six to nine months or every 500 miles
  - Know what your foot type is and be sure you have proper cushioning
  - Consider cross-training and strengthening exercises to help strengthen the core, glutes or hamstrings
- Multi-vitamins are helpful for all runners and fish oil is good for long distance runners

However, there are some symptoms that may indicate a more severe problem that should be seen by a sports medicine physician:

- Fluid accumulating in the knee
- Painful popping or a mechanical sensation



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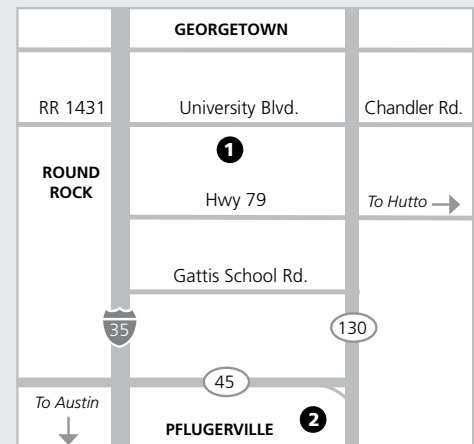
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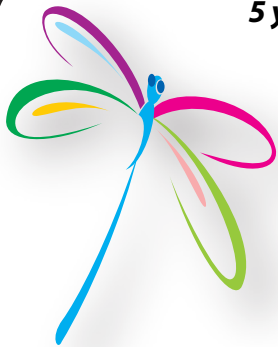
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