

LINE UMPIRE GUIDE




ITF[®]
Officiating

Line Umpire Guide

This document is to be used at tournaments and officiating schools to provide guidance to you. It explains the approved ITF positions and hand signals for you working as a Line Umpire or Net Umpire as well as other areas of responsibility.

The Code of Conduct for Officials states that a high standard of professionalism is required from all Officials, this includes but is not limited to, Officials having natural or corrected vision of 20-20, normal hearing and being in satisfactory physical condition.

When entering the court and leaving the court you should walk in a professional manner.

If possible when working on crosslines you should set your chair so that you are not looking into the sun. This might mean changing the side of the chairs during the day as the sun moves. This should be done in cooperation with the Chair Umpire and preferably between matches.

You should always concentrate whenever you are on court. You need to sell your calls, look alert and keep calm under pressure especially during the first and last five minutes of your rotation.

Remain in eye contact with the Chair Umpire at change of ends and after a close call. When working on a clay court you should keep your eyes on the mark on a point ending shot.

Positions and Hand Signals

Here are some examples of the correct stance, position and hand signals for the different lines.

If any part of the ball touches the line then the ball is "in". A "safe" signal should be shown when the ball lands approximately three feet (one metre) inside the line.

When making any call on court ("out/fault", "foot fault" or "correction") the voice call should be made first, then you should briefly pause before making your hand signal.

When the Chair Umpire is on the opposite side to you, your "out" signal should be made with your arm extended straight to the side of your body in the direction the ball was out.

When the Chair Umpire is on the same side as you, your "out" signal should be made with your arm extended straight in front of your body on the same side that the ball was out and with the palm of your hand facing the Chair Umpire.

Side Line and Centre Service Line Umpires

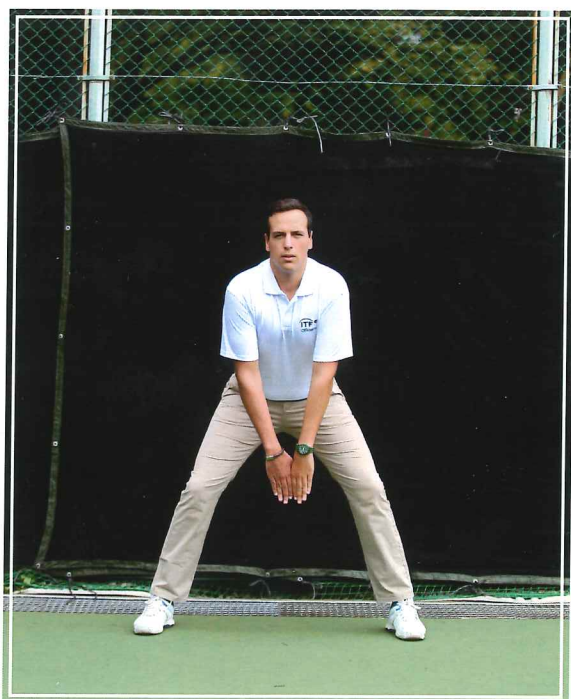
In between points you should adopt the "at ease" position:



When the player is preparing to serve and during the point, you should adopt the "ready" position:



The "safe" signal should be made as below, with the backs of your hands clearly visible to the Chair Umpire:



The "out" or "fault" signal should be made as shown below. Your arm should be used to show the direction in which the ball was "out/fault":



When moving from the Centre Service Line to the Side Line, you should move quickly but discreetly. If required you should make a "safe" signal with one hand:



Foot faults should also be signalled with your arm fully extended upwards using the opposite arm to the direction of the "out/fault" call:



When making a "correction" you should fully extend your arm upwards. The arm that should be used for the "correction" is the arm that you would have used to make the "out/fault" call.

If you need to correct a call from "out" to "in" you should shout "correction" and then extend your arm fully upwards before making a safe signal. When correcting a call from "in" to "out" you should just make the "out" call as quickly as possible, showing the correct signal:



Base Line Umpires

When working as a Base Line Umpire you should sit upright with both feet flat on the ground. Your chair should be slightly angled towards the intersection of the Service Line and Far Side Line. Below is a photo of a Base Line Umpire in the "at ease" position:



When the player is preparing to serve and during the point, you should move into the "ready" position:



When sitting opposite the Chair Umpire your signals should be made as below:

Calling the ball "in"



Calling the ball "out"

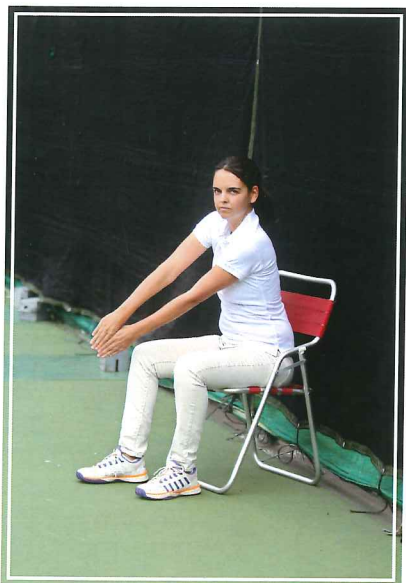


When sitting on the same side as the Chair Umpire your signals should be made as below:

Foot Fault signals should be made using your inside arm, the arm should be fully extended:

Calling the ball "in"

Calling the ball "out"



When making a "correction" you should fully extend your arm upwards. The arm that should be used for the "correction" is the arm that you would have used to make the "out" call.

When correcting a call from "in" to "out" you should just make the "out" call as quickly as possible showing the correct signal. If you need to correct a call from "out" to "in" you should shout "correction" and extend your arm fully upwards before making a safe signal:



Service Line Umpires

When working as a Service Line Umpire you should watch the player start their service motion and then quickly move your eyes and concentrate on the Service Line:



When sitting opposite the Chair Umpire your signals should be made as below:

Calling the ball "in"



Calling the ball "fault"



When sitting on the same side as the Chair Umpire your signals should be made as below:

Calling the ball "in"



Calling the ball "fault"



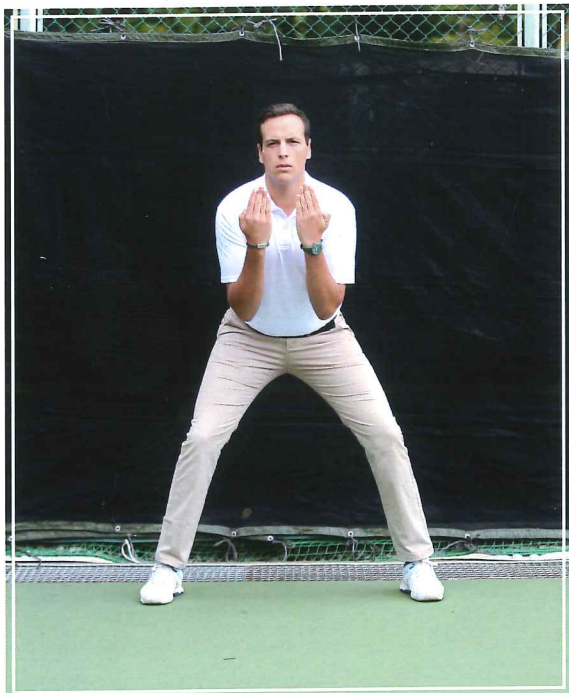
In doubles you should adopt a position which allows you not to be "blocked" by the player, which may involve moving out of your chair and crouching next to it. If you adopt this position you should not move back to your seat until the point is completed:



Examples of unsighted signals

If the player "blocks" you and you are unsighted you should indicate this immediately to the Chair Umpire with the signal as shown below. Note this signal should not cover the eyes!

"Unsighted" on the long line:



"Unsighted" on base/service line:



Examples of bad signals

Below are the most common examples of bad Line Umpire techniques.

Bent arms:



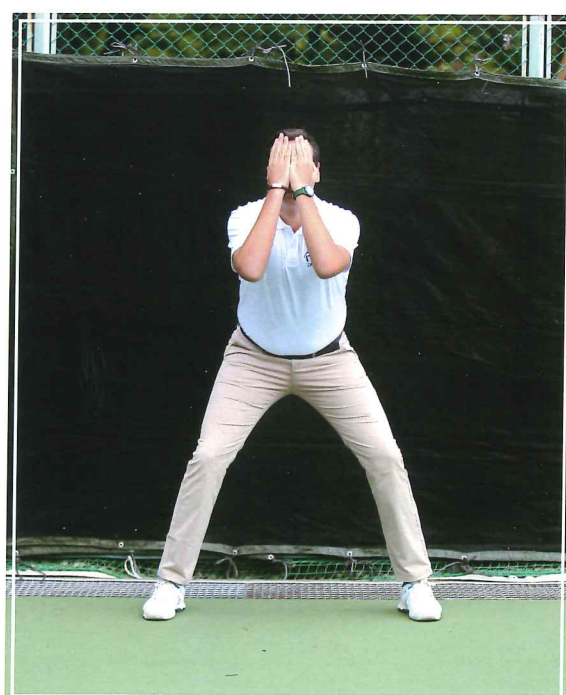
Arm too high, fingers spread out:



Position too low:



Signal covering eyes:



Net Umpires

At most events nowadays Net Umpires are no longer required because of net devices, or because the Chair Umpires are making net calls from the chair. However, there might be cases when a Net Umpire is needed.

If you are assigned as a Net Umpire you should use three techniques when calling nets. "Touch" (whether the ball has touched the net), "sound" (if the ball makes a noise when hitting the top of the net) and "sight" (seeing the ball touch the net as it passes over).

When using a doubles net with singles sticks you should use the arm furthest away from the net and place two of your fingers on top of the net inside the singles stick, your head should be next to the net and looking along the net:

To signal a "net" or "through" call, your arm that was touching the net should be fully extended upwards after calling "net":

When singles sticks are not used (for a doubles match) you should position yourself with the net post between your legs, your fingers placed on top of the net and your head should be placed on the side of the server:



Other Line Umpire Responsibilities

When working on a clay court the Chair Umpire can request you to help in locating the ball mark (I). If this is requested you should go to the mark and point at it (II). If necessary, wait for the Chair Umpire to get to the mark. You do not touch or read the mark. The Chair Umpire will then point at the mark and make a decision (III, IV).

I



II



III



IV



When working as a Service Line Umpire (or Net Umpire if one is being used) you are responsible for measuring (and adjusting if necessary) the net before the players and Chair Umpire arrive to the court. You should also measure the net at every set break:



The balls should be opened and checked at the change of ends before each ball change is due:



When a player takes a toilet break you should be aware that the Chair Umpire might ask you to escort the player, this is to ensure that the player does not use the toilet break for any other purpose. If you see that the player is violating this procedure you must tell the player that they are breaking the rules and immediately tell them to stop. You must report exactly what happened to the Chair Umpire immediately upon returning to the court.

When working on any line you must report anything unusual as well as Code of Conduct violations carried out by a player that are not witnessed by the Chair Umpire. This covers any situations that appear in the Code of Conduct. You must report this to the Chair Umpire immediately, even if it is between points. When reporting a violation you must walk quickly to the Chair Umpire and explain clearly what happened.

Remember your next call is the most important call!



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