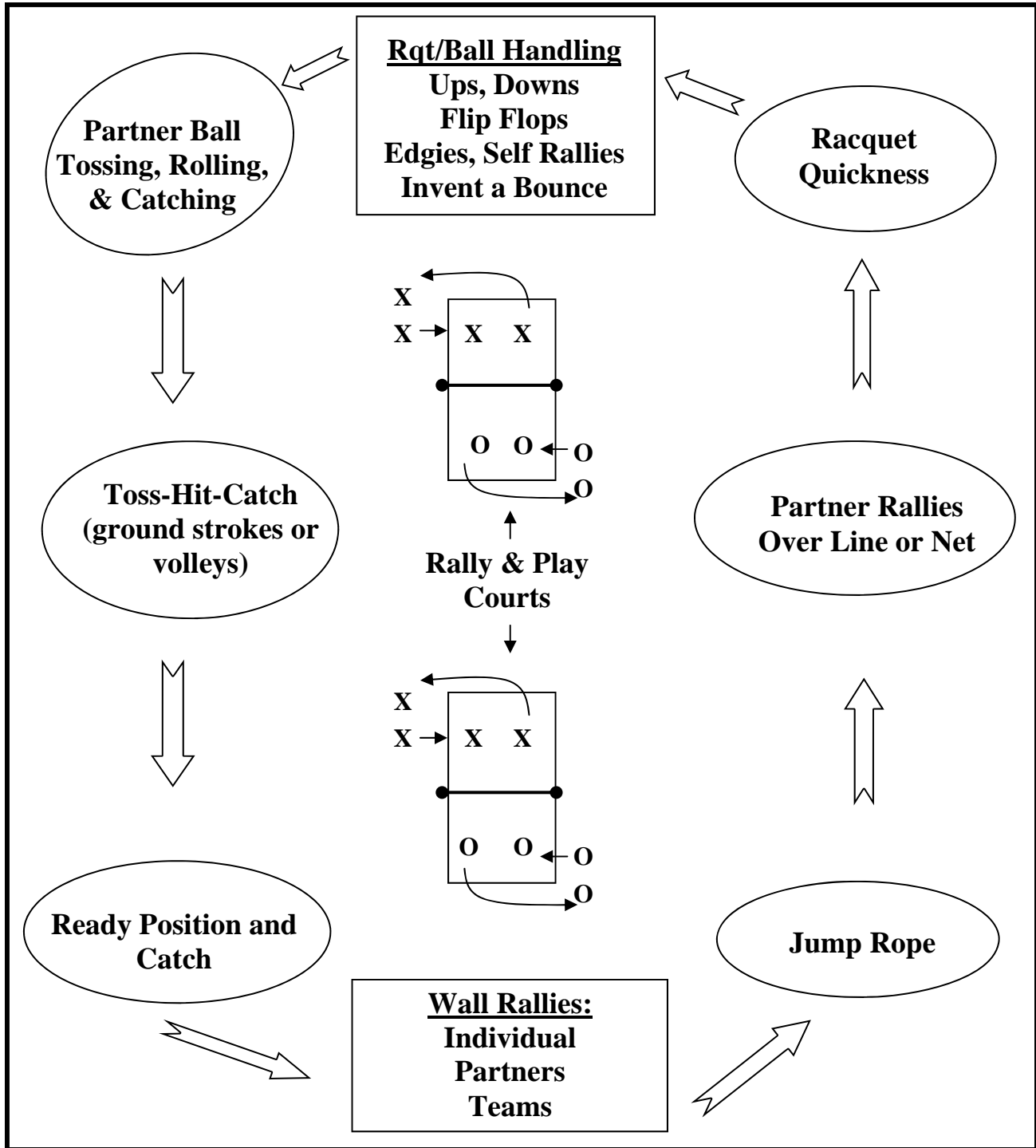


## TENNIS STATION ACTIVITIES

The following circuit of tennis stations is ideal for introducing tennis to large groups of students when there is limited equipment and limited space. Ideally, there should be no more than 6 students assigned to each station and students should rotate every 2-5 minutes on the teacher's signal. The teacher can play music to keep the students motivated and offer "turbo tips" in between rotations to ensure students practice skills properly and safely. When the music stops, students place the equipment down and prepare to rotate. By alternating fitness activities with tennis specific activities, the amount of tennis equipment needed is minimized. (Refer to the descriptions on the 2<sup>nd</sup> page for a full breakdown.)



For a complete set of animated tennis and fitness station signs, refer to the  
**USTA's Physical Educator's Guide for Teaching Tennis in Schools.**  
**TENNIS STATION DESCRIPTIONS**

Note: The activities below can be adapted for younger children or students with special needs by incorporating additional equipment modifications (e.g. bean bags, koosh balls, yarn balls, balloons, beach balls, hand paddles, etc.)

1. **Racquet and Ball Handling** (one racquet and one ball per child)
  - a. Tap Downs—try and bounce the ball down at waist level
  - b. Bump Ups—try and bounce the ball up eye level without letting the ball touch the ground
  - c. Edgies—try and dribble the ball down at waist level using the edge of the tennis racquet
  - d. Self-Rallies—Alternate bumping the ball off the racquet and off the ground
  - e. Invent a Bounce— Players attempt different ways to dribble or bump the ball (can be choreographed to music).
2. **Partner Ball Tossing, Rolling, and Catching** (one ball per every two children)

Balls can be tossed, rolled, or bounced between partners. Players should keep their fingers up when attempting to catch. For an additional challenge, players can toss balls one at a time or two at a time, while stationary or moving. To make it easier, have players attempt to catch balls with cones or buckets.
3. **Toss, Hit, and Catch** (one racquet and one ball per every two children)

One player tosses a ball to the forehand or backhand side of their partner. The ball can either be bumped or volleyed out of the air back to the tosser. Begin with partners three steps apart and have players attempt to make five successful hits and catches before switching.
4. **Ready Position and Catch** (one racquet and one bean bag or ball per every two children)

One player is the tosser and the other player is in ready position with a racquet. The beanbag (or foam ball) is tossed to either the forehand or backhand side of the player in ready position. Their goal is to catch it on the racquet strings and learn to move into position rather than reaching for the ball. Switch positions after five tosses.
5. **Wall Rallies:** (one racquet and one ball per child)

Standing 10-15 feet away, players attempt to rally the ball consecutively against a wall. Rallies can be done individually, or in pairs or teams, with players alternating hits.
6. **Jump Rope** (one small jump rope per child or one larger jump rope per every two-four children)

Players can practice jumping rope individually or with partners turning the ropes. For an extra challenge, players can attempt to juggle a ball in the air, do 360 degree turns, or jump with two ropes at once (“double dutch”).
7. **Partner Rallies over Line or Net** (one racquet per child and one ball per two children)

Partners work together with a line or jump rope between them to serve as an imaginary net. They bump the ball back and forth using forehands and backhands. To start the rally, players should start close, match up the racquet faces, and take two steps back. Have players try and set the “world record” for longest rally. To make it easier, have players attempt rallies by throwing and catching the ball (i.e. “Throwball Tennis”).
8. **Racquet Quickness** (one racquet per child)

Partners are about 3 feet apart while balancing their racquets. On signal, they release their racquet and try to catch their partner’s racquet before it falls to the ground. If both partners catch their racquet, they each step back one step and repeat the challenge. If equipment is limited, have players take turns with just one racquet.

**Center Court: Rally and Play Games** (four racquets and one ball per court)

Additional space in the center of the activity area can be reserved for players to play games of Team Doubles or other self-directed tennis games (e.g. Champ of the Court, Challenge Court, etc.).

**Note:** Rally and Play Games such as Champ of the Court can be substituted for tennis skills and fitness activities at the various stations around the activity area. Refer to the handout, *QuickStart Tennis Games for Schools* for a list of ideal schoolyard games.