

The TQOTC's Guide to the Women's Tennis In Singapore

Singapore's endless summer makes it a fantastic place for women's league tennis, and if you're interested in participating, there are a couple of options for you to choose from. Each league has carved out its niche in the community, and as you can imagine, there are some significant differences. Make sure to take note of these as you read through our guide so you can determine which is the best fit for you.

Our aim at TQOTC.com is to be a comprehensive source of information, but to also give you our honest opinion on things. So below, you'll also find our thoughts on the leagues and things we think are important to consider when joining a team in Singapore.

Let's begin!

[Women's International Tennis Singapore](#) - Single and Doubles

Women's International Tennis Singapore, commonly referred to as WITS, is a league with more than 650 women from all over the world coming together for fun and competitive tennis. It offers both singles and doubles competition, and is available for anyone from an absolute beginner to coaches. The league is split into eight divisions. From lowest to highest, the levels are D, C, Beta, B, Alpha, A, Premier B and Premier A. D level players can be beginners to tennis however, they must be able to keep score of a match. With eight divisions, you should have no issue finding the right team or level.

WITS is fully sanctioned by the Singapore Tennis Association (STA) and functions with its full guidance and support.

Overall participants: More than 650 women in both Doubles and Singles.

Seasons: WITS conducts two seasons per year. The Spring Season runs February through April, and the Fall Season runs from September through November. Teams must register for the Fall season at the beginning of June but they are able to make changes to their roster up until mid August. Teams must register for Spring season in by mid December but can make roster changes up until approximately the first week of February. (This may change in seasons to come, but we'll try and keep it updated.)

Singles -

Days played: Matches do not have to be played on a specific day. Rather, the two scheduled players set the match day and time that works for both, so long as it's within the required timeline.

Competition Structure: There are 7 divisions in Singles: D, C, Beta, B, Alpha, A, and Premier. At the beginning of the season the league will send out the ladder and players are responsible for scheduling, playing, and sending in the match results to their division coordinator.

Match Locations: Matches take place almost anywhere from public courts to condos. The player who is 'home' will be responsible for booking the court. If you need information on courts, please take a look at our court locator at www.tqotc.com/courts/ for a list of public and private courts, maps, our reviews and the court layouts. You can book public courts at www.myactivesg.com.

Cost: \$10/season (plus any court cost for your 'home' matches.)

Assessments: Like new doubles players, new singles players will also require an assessment before registering for the season.

Doubles -

Team Size: Teams must have a minimum of eight players, but no more than 12. There are no substitutes allowed in WITS.

Days Played: Matches are played once a week starting at 9am. D and C divisions play on Thursdays, Beta and B play on Wednesdays, Alpha and A play on Tuesdays and Prem B and Prem A play on Mondays.

Competition Structure: Each week on match days, all teams will field three pairs (lines) to play the best of three sets. Points are awarded per set and the winning team is awarded two bonus points.

Match Location: Host teams are responsible for booking courts for the matches. They are usually played at one of the public tennis centres, but can also be played at condo courts, or at one of the private clubs around the island.

Minimum match requirement: Each player must play at least two matches per season. If a player does not play the minimum requirement, the team loses points for the season. If for some reason you become injured during the season and are unable to play the required two matches, you can submit medical certificate to WITS confirming that you are unable to play, and your team will not lose points.

Costs: Team Registration Fee is S\$310/team. Other fees to expect are court booking expenses, coaching (there are some teams that don't train together, but a majority of them do) and uniforms. Your team will also be expected to bring drinks and snacks to the match on weeks when you're hosting.

Because of the different variables, the exact fees per season will vary depending on the team. If you've been invited to join a team, we suggest that you ask what will be expected of you and how much the team typically pays per season before accepting the invitation. Just make sure that your expectations align with the team's.

Assessments: Assessments are required for new players to this league to determine the correct level of play for the individual. You can register for a WITS assessment through the WITS website. Cost of the assessment is S\$20. Once you get your assessment level, you can proceed to find team that is in the division(s) you have been told, or you can have WITS send out your information to all the teams in the correct division(s). You can NOT play in a division lower than you've been assessed, but you can play up a level or sometimes two. Depending on the circumstances, the team might have to sign off with WITS to officially add you to their roster.

Some things to note about the assessment process:

1. The assessment itself is not long. If you require time to warm up, you are advised to arrive early to your assessment and warm up on your own time. We **highly** recommend doing this.
2. If your game is significantly affected by the other players on court, get mentally prepared. You are able to indicate your skill level when registering for the assessment, but you can still arrive to the assessment and find players with a wide range of skills. How does this happen? Not everyone is able to correctly assess their own level, or they may interpret the levels differently from the way WITS intended. Either way, WITS does it's best to make it as fair as possible, but no system is perfect. It's just better to go in aware.

[Ladies Tennis Singapore](#) - Doubles Only

The Ladies Tennis Singapore league is commonly called LTS, and it's goal is to offer competitive inter-team tennis match play to the ladies of the Singapore tennis community. LTS also aims to foster good sportsmanship and camaraderie among teams.

LTS is sanctioned by the Singapore Tennis Association and operates with their full support.

Overall participants: The league numbers are not disclosed, however in the Fall 2018 season, there were 23 teams across three Divisions, so we're estimating that there were just under 200 players.

Seasons: LTS conducts two seasons within the year. The Spring season starts in January and ends in May. The Fall season runs from September to December. For the Spring season, teams must register by mid December and can make roster changes up until mid January. Teams must register for the Fall Season by the first week or so of June, and they can make roster changes until mid August.

Team Size: Teams must have a minimum of six players but no more than eight. Official team substitutes are allowed in the lowest division, and the upper divisions can use players from other teams in their division (and below) as substitutes. No matter the level, a team can only use a substitute three times per season.

Days Played: Matches are played once a week starting at 9am: Premier A matches are scheduled on Thursdays and Premier B and Division 1 matches are scheduled on Fridays. If Division 2 is reinstated, it also plays on Fridays.

Competition Structure: Matches are played weekly and on match days, each participating team fields two doubles pairs, a Line 1 pair and a Line 2 pair. Each pair plays two sets against the opposing pair. Thus, each pair plays four sets.

Match Location: Host teams are responsible for booking courts for the matches. They are usually played at one of the public tennis centres, but can also be played at condo courts, or at one of the private clubs around the island.

Minimum Match Requirement: Each player must play at least two matches per season. Teams are penalised if they're players do not play the minimum, however if you are injured you can submit a medical certificate confirming your inability to continue the season. If a team loses a player due to injury or extenuating circumstances, they can replace the player, subject to the discretion of the LTS Committee.

Costs: Team registration fee is S\$280/team. Expect to also help pay court booking expenses for matches. Many teams do not formally train together, so there may be no coaching fees. Each team varies though, so if you are considering joining a team, you should ask what is their specific set up.

Assessments: Assessments are not required for LTS, however a team's division will be determined by it's overall level of play (basis is usually set by what WITS level most of the players do or would play in.)

[AWA Team Tennis](#) - Doubles only

AWA Tennis welcomes women of all tennis abilities and nationalities to a friendly, fun-filled community that prioritises good sportsmanship, fair play and mutual respect. The AWA offers several different tennis programs throughout the year, including Doubles Match Play (Intermediate & Advanced levels), social tennis opportunities, and their very popular **Team Tennis**

In order to register for most AWA events, including Team Tennis, you must first be a member of the AWA. Please go to their website for more information on how to register and check out the hundreds of other opportunities available to AWA members. www.awasingapore.org

Team Tennis

Overall Participants: Official numbers are not posted but we estimate around 100 players. There are two divisions, Intermediate and Advanced and your placement in a division is based on your AWA assessment level.

Season: Team Tennis is available during the WITS and LTS off-season from November through early February. Registration for Team Tennis usually opens up at the end of October or Early November on the AWA website. You register as an individual.

Team Size: Teams are made by blind draw by the AWA Tennis Committee, and the size varies from season to season based on registration numbers. Typically, teams are made up of approximately six players. Substitutes are allowed in AWA Team Tennis. There is usually an official sub list available to team captains, but in an emergency, any AWA member with a tennis assessment is allowed to sub. They do not have to have previously registered for Team Tennis.

Days Played: Matches are played once a week with the advanced level playing on Wednesdays and intermediate level playing on Thursday mornings. All matches start at 9am.

Competition Structure: On match days, all teams field two pairs (lines) to play the best of three sets.

Match Location: For the past several years, MITS has graciously donated the use of the tennis courts at NUS for the matches.

Minimum Match Requirement: Players should play at least two matches. There are no penalties for not playing the minimum, but the organisers highly stress fair play for this fun mini-league.

Costs: S\$70/player. There are typically no other required expenses other than bringing snacks and drinks when your team “hosts.”

Assessments: In order to participate in most of the AWA's tennis activities, you need an AWA assessment. You can register for an assessment online at www.awasingapore.org and they almost always take place at the Singapore American Club. The cost is \$12 and is payable online at the time of registration. This is NOT the same as the WITS assessment.

Japanese League

More information coming soon.

THE QOTC REVIEW

Many players actually play both WITS and LTS (and Team Tennis in the off season.) It's not something we would recommend to a newer player, but if you're already a die-hard player looking to be on court as much as possible, don't worry, you'll be in good company with the other 'enthusiasts.'

Which one do we recommend if you're planning on playing in just one league? Well that depends on a few things.

How physically fit are you?

In LTS, you play four sets each week and some of those matches can go on for four+ hours. Speaking from experience, they can be brutal and take the rest of the afternoon to recover from. If you are managing an injury, or you're already having issue adjusting to the Singapore heat and humidity, we would suggest playing in WITS. WITS is only the best of three sets each week, so you can finish a match much quicker.

If you're in good health and know how to protect yourself from the heat and sun, LTS' four sets are great! OK, great is exaggerating. I don't know anyone who actually loves that last set, but you do build up stamina and it takes away the third set jitters (if you ever got them) when playing a normal match.

AWA Team Tennis is formatted just like WITS, so you'll only play best of three sets. There's no concern that you'll be on court in the heat and humidity for four or more hours .

How much do you want to be challenged?

If you are a player wanting to play with others at basically the same level as yourself, WITS would be a better fit. There are more players in WITS and breaking them into eight divisions means that you are more likely to find yourself playing against others at a similar skill level. LTS, with currently only three division, has women with a much wider range of abilities in each division. You could be playing someone far more (or less) experienced than yourself.

Having said that, if playing a variety of levels actually excites and challenges you, then LTS is a great option.

AWA Team Tennis is basically a mini league. It only runs in the off season, but it's format is similar to WITS. This makes it very popular with players who are trying to stay in shape over the break. It's also a great way to play with and against women you wouldn't normally see in a regular season match. Because Team Tennis only has two divisions, you get to see a wider variety of skill levels. Again, you'll have to decide if that's a good thing or not.

Are you on a budget?

We are not taking into account any of the basic costs that are incurred when simply playing tennis (ie., cost of shoes, restringing, grips, etc.)

Singapore is an expensive city, and tennis in Singapore can really add up. This is especially true if your are training with a coach, booking courts, and playing in a league. If costs aren't an issue, then disregard the rest of this section. However, if budget is something you need to keep an eye on, and you definitely wouldn't be alone in that, LTS is probably a better choice for you.

The league registration fees split between their typical team sizes (LTS fee of S\$280 divided by eight players and WITS' fee of S\$310 divided by the average ten players) comes out to be almost the same. The issue basically comes down to training costs and uniforms.

We're generalizing, but most WITS teams require team training, which means hiring a coach. This adds coaching fees (easily S\$100/hour) and, depending on where they train, another set of court fees. It can really add up over a season, ie. a person can pay anywhere from S\$500-S\$800 a season just for coaching. However, there are quite a few LTS teams that have been formed from WITS players wanting more play time, so they don't add another coaching session strictly for LTS. Also, some teams just get together for friendly matches amongst themselves and don't worry about official team training. Either way, if you take coaching out of the equation, the overall costs drops significantly.

Team uniforms is the other major cost issue. Again, we're going to generalize, but most WITS teams have an official uniform of some kind, and some go as far as having them custom made. This can get quite pricey depending on what the team has chosen. Even if it's just matching skirts, you can be looking at upwards of S\$50-S\$100 depending on the brand - and that's just for a skirt.

There are some LTS teams that have an official uniform, but more often than not, it's a color scheme that they've chosen, so you are free to wear anything that fits the chosen colors. This allows you to shop sales or pull things out of your tennis wardrobe you might already have.

No matter if you've decided to play WITS or LTS, we highly recommend asking the team you want to join what they typically pay each season for coaching, uniforms and extras so you really have a good sense of what you are committing to if you join.

Other expenses you might incur: coaches gift, league awards lunches/dinners, captains gift, court fees, parking fees, etc.

The finer details...

There is a general feeling that WITS is a more serious and competitive league than LTS. That's not to say that you don't have fun in WITS or that LTS isn't competitive, but there is definitely a different vibe in WITS. It might stem from the fact that many LTS teams originally form out of WITS players who want more play time and to use LTS for more practice. The league isn't *as* focused on winning as it is on camaraderie and sportsmanship. And on that note, it's a good time to point out that LTS is also the only league in which teams give each other scores for sportsmanship at the end of each match that go towards the Sportsmanship Award at the end of the season.