

How To...

WARM UP

At the start of their practice session I see a lot of players go straight to the baseline and hit shots at full pace right from the first ball.

It's much better for your body, and much less likely to cause injury if you start slowly – ideally by rallying in the service boxes for a few minutes. Here are three of my favourite service box exercises:

1. You and your partner both place a small target (a couple of tennis balls will do) about two metres inside your service lines. Rally to each other, attempting to hit the target on your partner's side.

2. Rally with your `wrong` hand - use your left hand if you are right handed. This is great at the start of a practice session because you really have to concentrate, watch the ball closely and be extra aware of using excellent footwork.

3. Rallying in the four boxes, you and your partner have to play a half volley on every shot. This involves a lot of forward and backward movement, so is ideal as the last service box exercise before you both move back to the baseline.

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