

Mario Tennis Aces Simple Doubles Guide

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Introduction

This is a guide for Mario Tennis Aces simple doubles mode (a.k.a. doubles).

Though Mario Tennis Aces does not support an online tournament mode for simple doubles, there is a simple doubles scene in the Mario Tennis Aces Discord server in which you can arrange matches and participate in weekly tournaments: <https://discord.gg/dWBxhpy>

Unlike the standard singles mode guide, this guide assumes you are already familiar with the basic mechanics of the game.

Thanks to Derby and Pepper for providing great feedback while writing this!

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Fundamentals

Simple doubles can be confusing at first glance. With two players on each team, it's not immediately apparent what must be done to score points – or avoid being scored on.

This section looks to clarify the basics of simple doubles so you can quickly get started.

Score points by making your opponent lunge

If there's one principle to remember, it's this: Simple doubles revolves around forcing and punishing lunges.

It's uncommon to score an outright winner in simple doubles. Against an experienced team, your team will often have to score points by forcing a lunge from the opponent, which opens the court

up for a winner. In some cases, you won't be able to score a point off a single lunge. In this case, you should aim to force consecutive lunges from the opposing team to get into a scoring position, as shown in the following clip.



Most of the clips shown in this guide will show how lunge setups lead into winners. Keep this principle in mind as you read through the rest of the guide.

One baseline and one net, or side-by-side

Simple doubles teams commonly use two formations – one baseline/one net hugger (a.k.a. base/net), or both players at the service line (a.k.a. sides).

Base/net is an offensive formation. In base/net, the net player can play aggressively by hugging the net, since the baseliner can cover passing shots and lobs effectively. With good baseline defense, the net player can take risks to open up the other team. It is sometimes necessary for the net player to fall back if the baseliner cannot cover a shot.

Sides is a defensive formation. In sides, both players can comfortably cover drops and lobs on their side of the court, which can otherwise be an issue with the base/net formation. However, it is difficult for a sides team to force lunges from the service line; players may need to move closer to the net to apply pressure with their volleys, which compromises their ability to retrieve lobs on their side of the court.

These formations are fluid. A sides team can transition into base/net to push an advantage, and a base/net team can transition into sides for defense. In the following clip, Yoshi and Peach rush the net from the service line to fully cover Pauline's lunge angles. Yoshi retreats to the baseline once Peach takes control of the point.



One person covers down the line, one person covers crosscourt

This will ensure your team can cover any shot the opposing team can hit. Typically the options you need to cover are: down-the-line, middle, and cross-court, plus drop shots and lobs.

Base/net formation

The net player hugs the net and covers crosscourt shots by default, whereas the baseliner stays on the baseline and covers down-the-line shots. With this positioning, the baseliner can cover both down-the-line shots and crosscourt lobs safely.



With this playstyle, the net player should occasionally cover down the line if the opposing team is hitting down-the-line shots to avoid hitting the ball to the net player. If the net player covers down the line, the baseliner should cover crosscourt. This positioning is riskier, as your baseliner will have to cover a larger area of the court if the opposing team happens to hit a crosscourt shot or a down-the-line lob.

[This article](#) contains more details on the base/net formation.

Sides formation

One person should be on the left side of the court, and the other person should be on the right side of the court.

The characters your opponents are using and the ball position will determine how far to the left or right each of you should move. For example, if the ball is on the right side of the court, your positions might be in the middle and on the right – if your opponent can hit sharply angled shots, you might shift even wider to cover the angles. But the general principle is always the same: one partner covers one side of the court, and one partner covers the other.

Note that you and your partner aren't fixed to specific sides, and you should adjust which side you cover as needed. For example, if your partner lunges to your side, you may need to cross over to their now-open side to cover your opponent's returns.

As a baseliner, cover your partner and set them up for net offense

As the baseliner, your main goals are to

- 1) Cover shots that your partner cannot reach, and
- 2) Hit the ball hard to create setups or cause lunges that your partner can capitalize on.

Covering your partner

If your partner is hugging the net and covering crosscourt shots, you'll want to position yourself to cover down-the-line shots. This positioning will also put you at range to cover crosscourt lobs with at least a lunge, although ideally you should be able to cover these lobs without lunging.

If your partner is hugging the net and covering down-the-line shots, you'll want to position yourself to cover crosscourt shots. This positioning is riskier; you may sometimes need to guess a 50/50 between covering a crosscourt shot or covering a down-the-line lob.

Hitting the ball hard to create setups or cause lunges

Your go-to groundstroke is the double tap flat or slice, which travels quickly and lands deep within the court, giving the opposing team fewer options to attack your shot. To set up your net player for safe pressure, you should ideally hit a setup shot to the middle of the court. If the opposing team is constantly lobbing your middle shots, you can mix the opponent up with down-the-line and crosscourt shots.

The following clip shows Yoshi retrieving lobs and hitting middle flats. Yoshi switches to a crosscourt flat once he recognizes that the other team is precharging level 2 lobs in the middle of the court.



The following clip shows Para aiming a slice to the middle, allowing Peach to safely guess a side and put away the ball for the point.



If the opposing team has a net hugger, you'll usually want to avoid hitting the ball directly to their net hugger unless your [partner is in position for a counter volley](#).

If your opponent hits back a weak ball, or you get enough shot charge, the double tap topspin becomes a great option. It arcs higher into the air than a flat, so the topspin is much more likely to force a lunge from your opponents. You can mix it up with single tap crosscourt topspins if the opposing team expects a shot to the middle.

In addition, you should ensure your partner can take advantage of the lunges you force. When you force a lunge, you'll also want to aim somewhere close to your partner so they can easily follow up. In practice, this often means hitting the ball to where your partner is expecting; if you select a wide angled shot but your partner positions expecting you to hit middle, they will be out of position to hit the winner.

As a net player, predict lunges or read your opponents' shots

As the net player, you're in prime position to score winners off of lunges caused by your baseliner. If you know your baseliner will hit a strong shot, this is often a good opportunity to rush the net, as the opposing team is more likely to lunge on your baseliner's shot. In the following clip, Daisy forces a lunge with her single tap crosscourt topspin, and Peach follows up with a winner.



You can also force lunges or hit clean winners by yourself if you're hugging the net. You'll want to cover crosscourt shots from the opposing team by default, and move to cover down-the-line shots as a read once you condition your opponents to hit down the line. **It's very important to cancel your charge if you're about to lunge** – your baseliner will have to defend the entire court if you happen to lunge.

The following clip shows Diddy positioning for crosscourt shots for the entire rally. Notice that with Diddy's positioning, Toad can cover both down-the-line shots and crosscourt lobs without having to make any reads. Daisy eventually hits crosscourt as she expects Diddy to cover down the line, and Diddy gets an opportunity to score a point.



Once you make a correct read, you have several strong options at your disposal to score a point.

- Double tap slices travel the fastest without any shot charge and are useful for forcing lunges in the middle of the court.
- Double tap flats can score clean winners, can force lunges at the edges of the court, and can [sneak past an opposing net hugger positioned incorrectly for a counter volley](#).
- Lobs are useful if you cannot hit a volley past an opposing net hugger.

Other options are discussed in [Scoring Patterns](#).

The following clip shows Pauline hitting a double tap slice to force a lunge in the middle.



The following clip shows Peach hitting a double tap flat to force a lunge at the sides.



The following clip shows Shy Guy reading a down-the-line shot and hitting a double tap flat to hit a clean winner. Yoshi is too far away to return the flat volley.



The following clip shows Para hitting a lob to avoid a [counter volley](#) from the opposing net hugger.



Shot Selection

Hit the ball hard

Hitting the ball hard serves both offensive and defensive purposes. Offensively, your opponent is more likely to lunge on a fast shot. Defensively, your opponent will return slower shots off your fast shots, giving you more time to charge or pick the best shot.

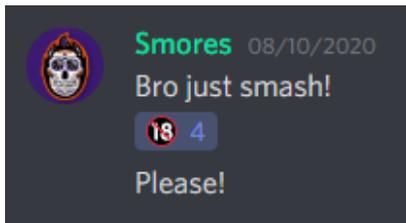
The following clip is an example of the opposing team losing a point due to hitting the ball softly. Blooper capitalizes on the slow topspin by hitting the ball hard, quickly leading to a winner.



Beginners (especially players who are used to standard mode) often make the mistake of using drop shots too liberally. Though the drop shot can be effective in certain situations, it's the epitome of a slow shot that can be punished heavily, as shown below. After the drop to Blooper, Daisy is forced to guess between a down-the-line lob or a cross-court topspin.



Bro, just smash



To follow up on the “hit the ball hard” principle, smashes are incredibly fast shots that can easily force lunges or outright score a winner. You can set up lunges with smashes at baseline. The following clip shows a common lunge setup from a smash at baseline.



You can score winners with smashes at net. The following clip shows a smash winner.



Middle shots are strong

Your bread-and-butter shot for both baseline and net play is the shot aimed to the middle.

Defensively, the opposing team can't get strong angles against your middle shots.

Offensively, the middle shot, coupled with slight aiming, can make opponents lunge. If one player on the opposing team lunges, it'll open up one side of the court for an easy winner. The reduced return angles against middle shots make it easier for your net player to rush in and apply mixups safely. Middle shots can score raw winners if both opponents are expecting shots aimed to the side. Lastly, because middle shots are strong, your net player can easily predict and capitalize on your baseliner's middle shots.

Note that the predictability of this shot is a two-way street – the opposing team can capitalize on repeated middle shots by precharging strong shots like level 2 lobs and drops. Mixing in down-the-line and cross-court shots, or aiming at the opponents' lunge ranges can throw the opposing team off.



Hitting directly at a net player is risky

When your opponent has moved to the net, it is very dangerous to hit the ball directly to them. The opposing net player will have a variety of threatening shots that are difficult to react to, often causing your team to lunge or even outright lose the point. After you've recognized that your opponent has a position close to the net, you need to hit away from or lob over them. In the below clip, Peach recognizes that Daisy is in a dangerous position at net and hits the crosscourt flat to prevent further danger.



The exception to this is counter volleying. When both your partner and the opponent are at net, you can aim a shot directly at the opposing net player – if they perform a normal shot, this gives your partner a chance to counter their volley with an immediate volley of their own. In the below clip, Toadette is close enough to perform a counter volley on the shot aimed at Daisy.



Force lunges and score winners by slightly aiming

To force lunges, you'll need to aim at a spot where the opponent will lunge. To score winners, you'll often need to thread the needle between the two opposing players. These often can't be done if you aim with only the three "default" angles (fully left, fully right, and middle). However, they're much easier to accomplish if you can aim more specifically via slight aiming.

A common way to slightly aim is to tilt the stick diagonally. For example, to slightly aim to the left, you can hold the left stick at the 11 o'clock position, and to slightly aim to the right, you can hold the left stick at the 1 o'clock position. In the following clip, Dry Bones uses slight aiming to force a lunge. Dry Bones' slice is aimed slightly off middle, forcing both opponents to lunge.



In the next clip, Yoshi uses slight aiming to score a winner off a net smash. Yoshi's smash is aimed slightly off middle, allowing it to pass through both players.



Hit balls past opponents in lunge recovery

When you force a lunge from the net player, oftentimes they cannot recover in time to hit any shots aimed their way. This effectively opens up the entire court to mix up the other player, and you can easily hit a winner in this situation. In the following clip, Dry Bones cannot recover in time to return Diddy's slice volley.



One common mistake from beginners is to lob right after forcing a lunge from the net player. The opposing baseline player can most likely reach this lob and return to a neutral position.

Positioning and Defense

Avoid lunging as much as possible

Because lunges are so crucial to scoring points, you'll want to avoid lunging to avoid getting scored on. Below are multiple techniques and strategies used to prevent lunges in common situations:

Cancel your shot charge and reposition.

The best option to prevent lunging is with charge canceling (a.k.a. "L-canceling"). This allows you to reposition to return a shot that you otherwise might have to lunge at. If you're used to pre-charging in standard mode, charge canceling is your replacement for trick shots and zone speed when the ball is not within your immediate reach.

In the below clip, Peach cancels her charge, moves to the right, then cleanly hits the winner.



Cancel your shot charge to prevent a lunge.

In some cases you will not have time to reposition after canceling your charge. However, you can still use charge canceling to prevent yourself from lunging if your partner is able to cover the shot. In the first clip below, Daisy begins to charge, but recognizes the ball is out of reach and cancels to reposition for the next shot.



In the next clip, Daisy begins to lunge on a fast shot, but quickly cancels the charge to allow Dry Bones to return the ball. Canceling charge quickly is crucial to avoiding mistakes at net.



Do not automatically swing when you're at net.

Your reaction time is reduced when at net, which means that you may not have time to react if you're out of position. In this case, the only way to avoid a lunge is to not swing in the first place. In the below clip, Boo lunges once while moving into position at net. He lunges a second time, as Dry Bones is not in position to cover the next shot. On the third shot, he recognizes that Dry Bones can cover and retreats instead of swinging again.



Notice that if Boo had lunged on the third shot, the entire left side of the court would have been open for Diddy to hit the easy winner.

Do not lunge directly in front of your partner.

Many times it is possible to recover after one player lunges. However, a lunge in front of your partner leaves one side of the court completely open and does not give your partner time to cover it. In the worst case, your partner finishes their swing, giving both of you recovery lag.

In the below clip, Peach lunges directly in front of Wario, and opens the court for the winner. In this situation the best move is to immediately reposition without swinging.



Do not automatically try to retrieve lobs over your head.

If you have time to run back and hit a lob cleanly, that is the best option. However, if a lob is going over your head that would force you to lunge to retrieve it, pay attention to your partner's position before lunging backwards for the ball. If they have already started moving to cover the lob, your lunge will leave the entire court open for your opponents.

In the below clip, Daisy recognizes that Bowser is in a better position to retrieve the lob, and correctly decides to retreat to a defensive position.



Cover your partner after they lunge

Unfortunately no matter how well you follow the above advice, lunges will still happen. If your partner lunges, you'll need to quickly assess the situation.

If your partner lunges close to the net, you'll likely need to cover the entire court since your partner won't recover in time to return any shots. Your goal in this situation is to keep the ball in play and let your partner reposition. In the following clip, Toadette lunges immediately for the ball after seeing Yoshi lunge at net.



If your partner lunges further away from the net, it's likely that they'll recover in time, and they'll be able to return shots in their new position. If they lunge to your side, you may need to cross over to the other side to retrieve shots that your partner can't reach. In the following clip, Daisy crosses over to the other side to return the ball after Toadette lunges.



To fully understand how to cover your partner's lunges, you'll need to know how fast your partner moves and recovers. For example, Dry Bones' lunge recovery is the worst in the game, so even if he lunges at the service line, it's likely he won't recover in time to return any shots; you'll need to cover the entire court in this case. In the following clip, Peach stays on her side after Yoshi lunges, since she recognizes that Yoshi can quickly recover and run back to his side.

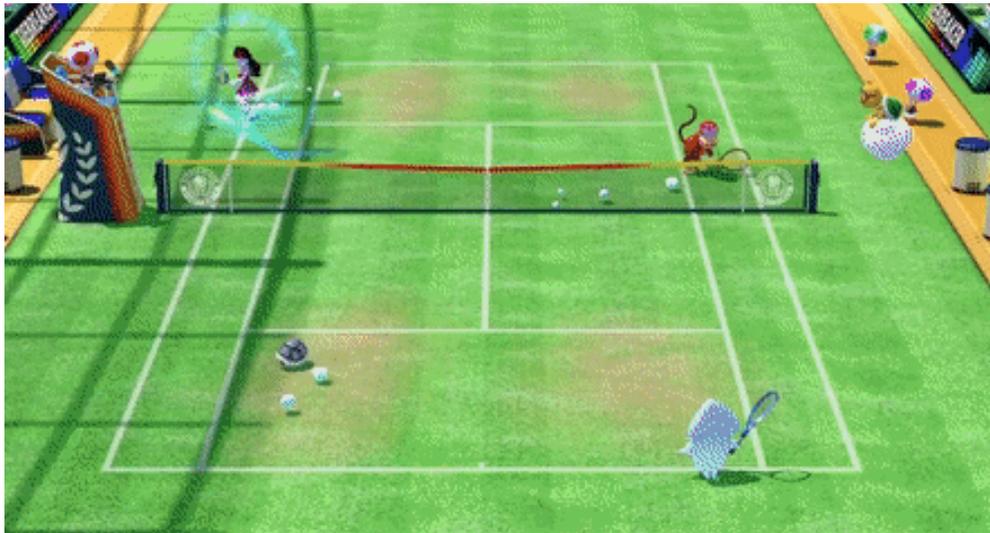


Learn the charged manual lunge

The charged manual lunge is a strong defensive last resort that can keep the ball in play, even if you're far off the court. To perform the charged manual lunge, press any shot button to start charging, and then press the manual lunge ('R') button. Usually you want to hit the lunge at the last possible frame to maximize charge – this improves your lunge reach and the trajectory of the ball after you return it.

Note that you need to be behind the ball when you start charging. If you hit the shot button while positioned ahead of the ball, you'll swing at air instead. If you need to retrieve a ball that's behind you, you'll need to perform a raw (uncharged) manual lunge.

Charged manual lunges often spawn net stars for the opponent that they can capitalize on, so these should only be used if you have no other options to return the ball. In the below clip, Dry Bones uses a charged lunge at the last second to keep the ball in play. Note that the ball would have sailed out with an uncharged lunge.



In the next clip, Peach uses a charged manual lunge to pop the ball harmlessly out of Bowser's reach to prevent the winner.



Against lobs, time your manual lunges to hit right as the ball bounces

If you must lunge at a lob, it's best to time your manual lunge so that you hit the ball right as it bounces. This will minimize your lunge lag and distance. A mistimed lunge is especially noticeable with certain characters like Petey or Luma, who will lunge way off court if there's any height to the ball.



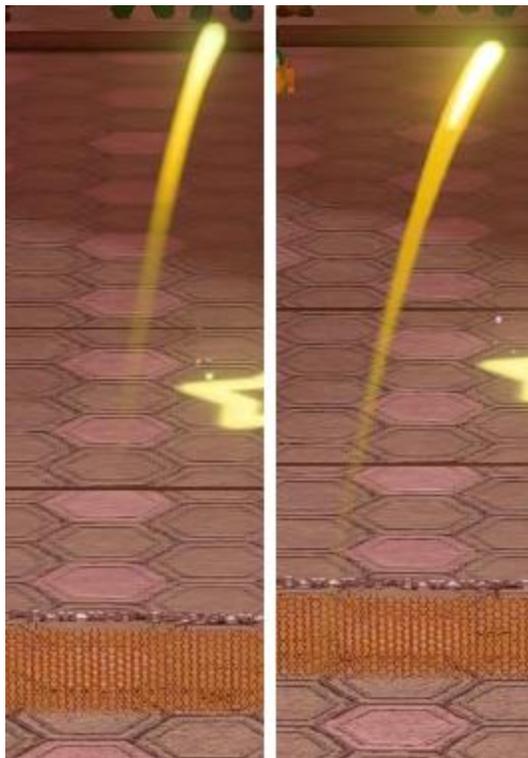
Learn to distinguish level 1 and level 2 lobs

In simple mode, there are two levels of lobs, with level 2 lobs being much stronger than level 1 lobs. To hit a level 2 lob, you'll need to charge for roughly 1/3rd of a second or longer.

Level 1 lobs travel slowly after the bounce. You can usually run to the level 1 lob and smash the star that spawns after the bounce. On the other hand, level 2 lobs travel quickly after the bounce. If you're too far away, you'll need to execute a manual lunge to return the level 2 lob before it bounces, or otherwise you'll lose the point.

If you mistake a level 1 lob for a level 2 lob, you may lunge unnecessarily for a ball that you could've smashed after the bounce. If you mistake a level 2 lob for a level 1 lob, you may lose the point outright when you could've kept the ball in play with a manual lunge. It's therefore important to distinguish level 1 and level 2 lobs.

You can use the thickness of the ball trail to read the level of the lob. Level 2 lobs (pictured below on the right) have a longer and thicker trail than level 1 lobs (pictured below on the left).



Additionally, you can read the level of the lob by looking at how long your opponent has charged. When you're applying net pressure, you should keep in mind how long your opponent can charge – it's safer to rush the net if the opposing team can't charge long enough for a level 2 lob.

If you're not sure, it's better to treat the lob like a level 2 and return it off the first bounce.

Learn how to set up and recognize counter volley situations

A counter volley is an immediate volley hit against an opposing net player's volley or half-volley. If you successfully hit a counter volley, the opposing net player can't return your volley as they're stuck in swing lag, effectively creating an open court situation for you to score on. The opposing net player must lob or back away from the net to avoid this situation. Because of this, counter volleys have huge offensive and defensive benefits.

Your baseliner can set up counter volley situations by hitting the ball towards where your net player is. Note that it's more difficult to set up counter volleys if your net player is a tall character like Peach or Pauline, as they are in danger of getting hit from your baseliner's setup shot. In addition, when setting up a counter volley situation, your team should not leave any gaps for the opposing net player to volley through.

The following clip shows a successful counter volley setup.



The following clip shows a failed counter volley setup. Petey hits the ball too far away from Shy Guy and leaves a gap, allowing Peach to sneak a flat volley past Shy Guy.



The following clip shows a dunk if the opposing net player lobs while they're too close to the net.



Outside of counter volley setups, there may be situations in which the opposing player is forced to hit the ball close to the net (e.g. against a starless lunge from your baseliner). You should recognize these situations and rush up for the counter volley if you have the chance. In the following clip, Peach recognizes that she can counter volley Shy Guy and runs up to the net, forcing Shy Guy to lob.



Coordinate with your partner to return serves safely

When the opposing team is serving, their net player will often rush the net to score a point. It's important to learn how to return serves so that you don't lose easy points during their service game.

Ideally, you and your partner should set up a counter volley. The returner should hit a shot towards the non-returner, and the non-returner should hug the net and block volleys from the opposing net player. If done properly, the opposing net player must lob to avoid the counter

volley; this lob is easy to retrieve and smash. Alternatively, the opposing net player can avoid the counter volley by backing away from the net or letting their baseliner hit the ball.



Though this is the safest way to return a serve, there may be times when you don't want to set up a counter volley. For example, your partner may not be aware of the counter volley setup, or you don't want your non-returned to start off the rally hugging the net (e.g. if your non-returned is Petey). There are a couple of options to consider when choosing your return.

Crosscourt vs. down the line

Use single tap shots to angle your crosscourt and down the line returns. This will ensure the opposing net player cannot cover both options at the same time, forcing them to guess 50/50 between crosscourt and down the line.

Note that if you're hitting crosscourt, you need to confirm if your partner is going for a counter volley. If they are, you should cover the lob. If they're not, then you need to cover a flat volley angled your way.

Also note that if your partner expects a crosscourt and positions themselves for a counter volley, but you return down the line and the opposing net player reads it, they get an easy lob/volley 50/50 to score a point.

Fast vs. slow

The faster your serve return, the more likely you'll make the opposing net player lunge if they guess wrong. However, if they guess correctly you have less time to reposition for their volley, which can lead to them hitting a clean winner. Single tap flats and topspins have the angles and speed to make the net player lunge.

Conversely, a slow single tap slice return won't likely make the opposing net player lunge, but it'll give you more time to reposition for the opposing net player's volley if they guess correctly. Keep in mind that while they may not be able to hit a clean winner, they can still force your team to lunge.

Lobbing to avoid the net player

Lobbing can be dangerous if the server can hit strong smashes from your lobs, as they can gain an immediate advantage in the rally. If the server is consistently out of position to smash lobs or they have a weak smash, then you can lob safely.

The clip below shows the danger of lobbing against a Spike player that can cover lobs.



Block net star smashes with double tap shots

Against a net star smash, you can get close to the net and then hit XY for an instant flat volley. This will often lead to a point as the opposing smasher is stuck in swing lag.

It's possible for a character with technical angles to sneak either the crosscourt or middle smash option past you, or even mix in options like a single tap crosscourt volley or crosscourt drop shot, but you can still reposition yourself accordingly and force the smasher into a risky 50/50. Alternatively, the opposing net player can lob, but this is a looping situation as your baseliner can lunge for the ball again. (Note that if your baseliner cannot retrieve the lob, the flat volley block becomes a risky option.)

The following clip shows Peach hitting an instant flat volley and scoring a point.



The opposing baseliner may anticipate this flat volley and approach the net to hit a counter volley in return, but you can hit a level 1 lob instead of the flat volley. However, if the opposing baseliner anticipates the level 1 lob, they can retreat to smash the lob.

If the net smasher builds enough charge on their smash, they can smash down the line to avoid dealing with the flat volley block. This will knock the baseliner back and can set up a drop shot winner. The following clip illustrates this scenario.



Courts

The court you're playing on will highly dictate your team's shot selection and positioning.

On slow courts, like Marina Stadium (Clay) or Bask Ruins, lobs are less effective; even level 2 lobs can be retrieved easily after the bounce. The following clip shows Yoshi effortlessly retrieving a level 2 lob after the bounce, which would not have been possible on faster courts.



On fast courts, like Marina Stadium (Grass) or Savage Sea, lobs are more effective. It's riskier to rush the net since it's more difficult for your baseliner to intercept all passing shots and level 2 lobs. The following clip shows Yoshi losing the point from a mistimed net push against a level 2 lob, which would not have happened on slower courts.



The court's bounce will also affect your strategy. On high bounce courts, your groundstrokes are faster since you're hitting the ball from higher up, and your topspins can force lunges more easily due to their increased height after the bounce. Drop shots are less viable as scoring options since they die less quickly. High bounce courts can be especially harmful for shorter characters, like Toad, given how prone they are to lunging at high balls.

Characters

Characters for simple doubles can be broadly grouped into three categories:

Net characters are characters who are best used with a default position around the service line or up at net. They can use fast volleys (especially slice) and/or good angles (especially on smashes) to force and then punish opponents' lunges.

Examples of strong net characters include Peach, Luigi, Toadette.

Baseline characters are characters who are best used with a default position near the baseline. These characters have strong defensive options against opponents trying to hit around their net player. They also have strong offensive options from the baseline, often using powerful flats, topspins and smashes to set up their partner for scoring opportunities.

Examples of strong baseline characters include Spike, Petey, Yoshi.

Flex characters are characters that have elements of both baseline and net characters. They typically have balanced offense from both baseline and net, and also have solid defensive options such as fast movement or quick lunge recovery.

Examples of strong flex characters include Daisy, Blooper, Koopa.

Building a good team

What makes a good team? In order to succeed in simple doubles, a team must be able to do two things at a high level:

- 1) Consistently force lunges, and then convert those lunges into winners (offense).
- 2) Cover the opponents' scoring options (defense).

This means that balanced teams tend to have a higher ceiling, where one partner's strengths cover the other partner's weaknesses and vice versa. Two defensive-minded characters will have trouble applying enough pressure to a balanced opponent to reliably score; similarly, two characters with poor defensive traits will struggle to avoid lunging.

With that in mind, good teams for simple doubles generally follow a few defined archetypes:

Sword and Shield: The easiest option to learn, these teams have a strong baseliner and a strong net player. The net player will score the majority of the points by capitalizing on lunges that the baseliner forces, or by reading where the opposing team will hit. The baseliner covers the areas of the court left open by their partner and focuses on setting their partner up or forcing lunges.

Examples: Spike + Peach, Petey + Shy Guy

Rotating Roles: These teams are composed of two flexible characters with both good offense and defense. They can form a defensive wall with no obvious weaknesses to angles or lobs, and both characters can take on baseline or net roles at any time. While these teams are more flexible and less predictable to play against than traditional base/net teams, they can be difficult

to play if you are unfamiliar with your partner's tendencies, and the lack of overwhelming strengths may make it difficult for these teams to score.

Examples: Koopa + Para, Luma + Daisy, Diddy + Pauline

Build a Wall: The safest option, these are defensive-minded teams who count on their ability to apply pressure from baseline without compromising their defensive formation. Typically one partner has excellent reach or ability to cover the court, while the other partner has the ability to force lunges using strong shots from the service line or behind the service line. These teams are designed to grind out matches by waiting for mistakes from the other team and capitalizing on them.

Examples: Blooper + Boom Boom, Boo + Peach

The strongest teams

Though there are many viable teams, these teams are currently considered to be the strongest in both the Japanese community and the MSSR Discord server.

Spike + Peach: This team pairs the strongest baseliner with the strongest net player. Peach has the volleys, angles, and reach to be an incredible threat at net. Spike can easily negate or punish attempts to hit shots around Peach with his amazing lunge and groundstrokes.

Koopa + Para: This team is designed to counter base/net teams. Opposing baseliners are forced to move closer to the net under the threat of Koopa's drop shot, leaving their team more vulnerable to lobs. Para offers technical smash angles, a curved lob that's difficult for the baseliner to lunge perfectly against, and a jump volley that can punish manual lunges against Koopa's drop. This team also excels against sides teams, as Para's lob makes it risky for opponents to start any pressure.

Scoring Patterns

This section illustrates common ways to set up scoring opportunities.

There are obviously many simple scoring setups that aren't depicted here; like cleanly hitting a ball around an opponent or lobbing over them for a winner. If you have an easy chance to score, you should always take it.

This section instead focuses on common patterns that require sequences of shots, coordination between partners, or early recognition to pull off. Seeing these patterns as they happen is key to effectively finishing points in simple doubles, especially against experienced defenses.

Down-the-middle smash into flat volley



As the baseline player, it's best to use a star flat in this situation as a slower shot can throw off the net player's timing. It's also important to hit down the middle – a wide shot may not force a lunge, or may not allow the net player to get into the proper position.

As the net player, note that Pauline moves wide to avoid the body shot before running back in with proper timing to hit the winner. A double tap slice or flat away from the non-lunging player is the best option for the winner.

Down-the-middle slice volley into flat volley



When no star is available, a down the middle slice is a good alternative to a smash. In the best case it causes a lunge. However, even without a lunge it can still provide an opportunity for the net player to run in and hit a winner.

Note how Pauline moves over sharply to the middle right as Dry Bones hits the shot to generate the best angle for the finish and avoid lunging. Repositioning at the last instant at net is useful for tricking the baseline player into thinking their shot is safe or will generate a lunge.

Two-shot combo at net

Wide to middle variant (often works even without the star):



Middle to wide variant:



Note that the net player both forces the lunge and hits the winner. Another variation of the middle to wide sequence using a drop shot instead of a slice for the first shot can be a potent mixup, as well, if the opponents are both at the baseline.

Counter volleying



Note that Pauline creates a difficult situation for Blooper by running to the net after Diddy lunges. If Blooper hits it into Pauline, she can hit it immediately back through him before Blooper can recover (counter volley). If Blooper lobs, it gives Diddy time to recover and reset the point.

However, Dry Bones recognizes the situation immediately and runs to the net to counter Pauline's counter volley. Because Diddy is not in position to counter Dry Bones' shot, this leads to an easy winner. As a baseline player, you must be able to get into position for these shots – if you are too far back or behind baseline, the window for the shot can close before you arrive.

Net lob



If the opponent recognizes your net rush and moves to the net for a counter volley, lobbing them can often lead to a winner. Note that for the winner you must have enough charge to get the level 2 lob. In the above example, this means Pauline has to read Blooper's position and begin charging the lob as soon as Dry Bones hits the ball.

Angled drop shot from the baseline or the service line



When your opponent is pressing you at net, an angled drop shot can pass them without being recoverable by the baseline player due to the short bounce. Note that if the baseline player is in

position for the drop shot, unlike in the clip above, they will have strong mixup opportunities off the drop shot. Use this option with discretion.

Charged topspin after a lunge at net

Crosscourt variant:



Down the line variant:



Daisy hits a charged topspin away from the baseline player after the opposing net player lunges. The positioning for Daisy in both cases is critical: close enough to the net that the opponent doesn't have time to recover after the lunge, but far enough back to get a powerful topspin off the bounce. A common mistake from newer players is to lob instead of using topspin.

Drop shot after lunge at net



This is a combination of the two patterns above. The angled drop shot after a lunge at net is used to prevent the baseline partner from covering, and sets up the easy winner.

Single tap volley to the middle

You can take advantage of your opponents' movement or charge cancel tendencies with a single tap volley. In the following clip, Shy Guy hits a single tap volley to the middle and catches Koopa and Daisy moving away from the middle.



Drop shot cannon

Certain characters like Shy Guy or Diddy have fast, sharply angled drop shots. Drop shots can be executed with a single button press (using the X button), making them easy to buffer in a scramble situation.



Score on your opponent's serve return

Serve returns are the most predictable pattern in all of simple doubles, since they always have to be returned from the same position on the court. In addition, serve returns have reduced angles. As long as your partner is ready to cover a lob (easy to anticipate), net rushing on serve returns can be a reliable method of scoring.



In the above clip, Birdo uses a double tap flat to hit the angled winner. The net player has many other options though – in fact, many of the scoring patterns listed above work perfectly well off of serve returns, depending on the positions of the opponents and which return shot is used. The most common shots to hit off of serve returns are angled flats, middle slices, middle drop shots, and lobs (if the returner’s partner rushes you).

Note that this strategy can be countered by the opposing team if they [set up a counter volley situation against you](#), which forces you to lob.

Additional Reading

[More on base/net play](#)

[A list of common doodoobles](#)

[Boo counterplay](#)