

2026 Alachua County Middle School Tennis Program

Who is running the program?

The Gainesville Area Community Tennis Association (GACTA) is sponsoring its 14th season of a tennis program for middle school students in Alachua County. The Gainesville Area Community Tennis Association Inc. (GACTA) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization, incorporated in the State of Florida, that promotes health, character development and academic achievement through tennis. Although the Alachua County School Board does not sponsor or endorse the program, the administration has been very supportive of our program. Several of our local tennis teaching professionals are hosting the middle school teams at their tennis court facilities and will be supervising the practices.

What are the dates of the program and how will the program run?

The online registration portal will open for *returning* players on Friday, February 6th at 9 a.m., and for *new* players on Monday, February 9th at 9 a.m. Team practices may start on Sunday, February 15th; Practice schedules will be determined by the individual school team's coach, team parent-coordinator, and facility director. Matches will be held primarily on Friday afternoons, and as the need arises, on Sunday afternoons. The first matches will be played on Friday March 6th and will continue through April 24th. A tournament and/or play days may be scheduled for the first three Fridays in May, depending on the weather, school conflicts, and other factors. During Spring Break week, March 16-20st, no matches will be scheduled; matches on Friday March 13th are TBD. The Middle School Tennis season will end **no later** than Friday May 15th. A team may or may not have a "bye" week. Thus, each team should participate in a minimum of 5-6 matches and one tournament or play day. Participants will receive clinics from local tennis teaching professionals at local tennis facilities at least once per week, and parents will volunteer to captain each school's team, coordinating line ups, etc. Practice schedules will be determined by the individual school team's coach, team parent-coordinator, and facility director.

This is a no-cut program, as it is aimed at players of all levels, including beginners, but team sizes are capped at 24 players, due to logistics. **It is best for a team to have a mix of beginner, intermediate, and advanced players.** Since this is a team-oriented tennis league, primarily doubles will be played. Every effort will be made to match up players so that competitive matches will be played, so we hope that the more advanced players at each school will sign up. Volunteer court monitors may supervise the matches of beginning players, especially early in the season. Snacks for the matches will be provided by parent volunteers. Transportation to the practices and matches is the responsibility of the parents or guardians.

What is the cost of the program?

The registration fee is \$100 for the season and includes a team T-shirt, match balls and the end of season tournament/party, in addition to the weekly practices and matches. Transportation to and from the tennis facilities will be the responsibility of the parents. Loaner racquets are available at each facility, but players are encouraged to bring their own racquet. Payment and registration for the program will be online at www.gainesvilletennis.org **Scholarships are available for students qualifying for free or reduced lunch (total price \$25).**

How do I sign up for the program?

An online registration link can be found at www.gainesvilletennis.org, once registration opens. For additional information, please call Anne Koterba, GACTA Board Past-President at 352-665-9544 or e-mail akoterba@aol.com.

