

Forehand

“Over the last 25 years the forehand is the shot that has evolved the most in the men’s game. Today, the forehand is played with huge power and vicious topspin and is regarded as the biggest of the groundstrokes.”

Bob Brett

Big Forehands

Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal have two of the biggest forehands in the game. Roger moves around the ball so well and often dominates opponents with his inside-out forehand while Rafa’s is so tough to deal with because of the massive topspin he generates. He achieves incredible racket head speed which creates vicious spin. The ball literally jumps off the court surface which means his opponents are playing balls around their ears!

Mark Petchey

TRY THIS AT HOME!

Top players use the ‘inside-out’ forehand to dominate baseline rallies and you should try to do the same. Rather than getting stuck in the corner playing backhand after backhand, use anticipation, early preparation and quick footwork to run around your backhand and play aggressive forehands ‘inside-out’ and cross-court to your opponent’s backhand. It’s a great way of taking control of a point.



1. Mark begins to move around the ball by bringing his right leg behind his left. Early preparation is critical.



2. He uses his left hand to help guide the racket back and continues to prepare by turning his shoulders and hips.



3. He brings his racket back high, anticipating a high-bouncing ball, and loads his weight on his back foot.



4. What a great position! His arms have separated with the left arm helping him to balance, his shoulders are rotated and his racket face is closed to help create topspin.



5. His racket is halfway through its path which will mirror the letter C. It starts high then drops below the height of the ball so he can brush upwards to create topspin.



6. The ball is on its way – notice how Mark's racket has gone ‘through’ the ball, pushing it forward through the contact point and towards his target area.



7. His hips and shoulders have now fully rotated as he has attacked the ball, which has helped him generate big power.



8. As he finishes the stroke with a full follow-through, notice that his weight has transferred from his back foot (picture 2) to his front foot as he has executed the shot.