

FREE PLAYBOOK FOR SQUASH CLUBS

Keep them playing.

How to turn first-time players into regulars. The 6 moments squash players drift away, 8 habits that keep them booking, and messages you can send today.

6

moments squash players are most likely to drift away

8

habits that keep players booking week after week

6

copy-and-send messages, plus a goal bank for every level



One regular player is worth years of bookings.

Squash clubs are good at getting people to try the game. The clubs that grow are the ones that turn those first-timers into regulars, and keep them.

\$1,196

One regular, playing twice a week, for a year

2 court bookings or social nights a week at **\$13**

× **46 weeks** of play in a year

= **\$1,196 a year** from one player

\$3,580+

The same player over three years

Three years of weekly squash, before you count coaching, private lessons, box league fees, club championships or the friends they bring along. Lose them after their beginner course and all of that walks away.

Replacing a player means ads, free taster sessions and hoping they come back. Keeping one means a clear next step, opponents at the right level and a few well-timed messages.

Most dropouts are predictable. Players rarely quit out of nowhere. They drift away at a handful of moments every club will recognise, and each one is a chance to step in. The next page shows you where they are.

Where a player's value really comes from

Weekly play

The steady base: court bookings, box league matches and social nights booked week after week.

Extras

Coaching, private lessons, championships and junior squads from players who already love the game.

Word of mouth

Squash spreads through workmates and friends. Happy regulars bring their next opponent.

Figures are examples. Swap in your own prices, weeks and currency.

The 6 moments squash players are most likely to drift away

Know when players drift and you know when to step in. Watch these six closely.

AFTER THE BEGINNER COURSE

1

“Now what?”

The beginner course ends and there's no clear next step. New players don't know how to book a court, or who to play.

Do this: put them into a box league before the course ends.

CLUB NIGHT

2

The wrong opponent

A beginner gets drawn against an A-grader and loses 11-0 three times. Neither of them enjoys it.

Do this: match players by level.

MONTHS 3-9

3

Stuck in the same box

Early progress is fast, then it stalls. Without a goal to chase, players start to wonder if they're getting any better.

Do this: give every player a skill goal.

FIRST FEW WEEKS

4

No one to hit with

Squash needs an opponent. New players who don't find a regular hitting partner simply stop booking.

Do this: introduce new players and run social nights.

UNPLAYED MATCHES AND FULL COURTS

5

The routine breaks

A box match never gets played, or peak courts are always booked. Each missed week makes the next one easier to skip.

Do this: keep leagues moving and use waitlists.

WHEN SOMETHING ENDS

6

The season runs out

A box league season, a coaching term or a pack ends, and nothing asks them to carry on. They don't decide to stop. They just stop.

Do this: rebook before it runs out.

Quick exercise: think of the last five players who stopped coming. Which moment did each leave at? Most clubs find one or two moments explain most of their dropouts. Fix those first.

Habits that keep players booking week after week

1 Give every beginner a next step

The beginner course is where most players start, and where many stop. The fix is simple: never let a course end without the next booking already made.

TRY THIS

- ✓ In the last week of the course, **enter each player into a beginners' box** or a social night, there and then.
- ✓ Run a **beginners-only social night** each week, so new players have a safe place to play matches.
- ✓ Send a **welcome message before their first session**: which court, non-marking shoes, eye protection for juniors, and that loan racquets are available.

2 Match players by level

The best match is one you might win or lose. When opponents are picked at random, nobody gets that match, and the players at both ends stop coming.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Give every player a **level**: their grade or rating if they have one, or your own club levels.
- ✓ Build **box leagues by level**, with four to six players in each box.
- ✓ Keep **one social night** a week with mixed levels and handicap scoring, so friends of different levels can still play.

Ready-made goals for every level

Pick two or three per player and adjust the numbers to suit them. The levels are broad club levels, so they work alongside any grading or rating you already use. These are examples to adapt, not official standards.

Level	Drives and length	Serve and return	Movement and match play
 Beginner New to the game	Straight drive 10 in a row to yourself	Serve 7 of 10 into the back quarter	Return to the T after every shot
 Improver Box league regular	8 of 10 drives past the short line	Return 6 of 10 serves down the wall	Ghosting to all six corners, 1 minute without stopping
 Intermediate Pennant player	Cross-court drive 7 of 10 into the back corner	Lob serve 7 of 10 landing deep	Volley drop 6 of 10 into the front
 Advanced Competitive	Hold length in a 20-shot rally	Attack 6 of 10 loose returns	Win 60% of rallies from the T; follow a plan for each opponent

Before you invite a player up a level, check four things

Consistency

They hit the goals for their level on most attempts, not just once.

Confidence

They win their share of matches at their level and want more of a challenge.

Activity

They play regularly. A player who comes once a month will struggle more after the move.

The fourth check is the group. Introduce the player to the regulars at the next level, ideally through a box league promotion. A friendly first round makes the move stick.

3

Give every player a goal they can see

“Getting better” is vague. “8 of 10 drives past the short line” is something a player can chase, measure and feel proud of. Goals turn casual players into committed ones.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Set **two or three goals per player** from the goal bank, written in plain words.
- ✓ Test the **same skills the same way** every 6–8 weeks, so improvement shows up as a number.
- ✓ Share a **two-line progress note** after each test. Point them to the coaching group that helps most.

4

Make the club social

Many people come for the game and stay for the people. A player with three regular opponents is far less likely to drift away than one who knows nobody.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Run a **monthly social night** with round-robin games, and personally introduce new players.
- ✓ Help every new player find a **regular hitting partner** at their level.
- ✓ **Celebrate wins** out loud: a box promotion, a first pennant match or a club championship, shared the same day.

Keep it specific: “Priya hit 8 of 10 drives past the short line today, up from 5” means more than a long, general report. Specific beats long, every time.

5 Keep box leagues moving

A box league only works when matches get played. One unplayed match leaves two players stuck, and stuck players drift.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Set a **round deadline**, and remind everyone with unplayed matches halfway through.
- ✓ Let players **book a court and enter the score** in one step from their phone.
- ✓ Keep a **reserve list**, so a player who drops out is replaced the same week.

6 Keep peak courts fair

Peak-time courts fill fast. If the same people always get them and everyone else gives up, you lose players who wanted to play more.

TRY THIS

- ✓ **Open bookings at a set time**, for example 7 days ahead, so everyone has the same chance.
- ✓ Keep a **waitlist** and offer cancelled courts to the next player in line, automatically.
- ✓ Set a **no-show rule**, so booked courts that go unused don't block players who would have come.

Watch your waitlists: peak courts with a long waitlist every week are a sign to move coaching off-peak or add a social night. It's demand you're turning away.

7

Act on three quiet weeks

Squash players don't announce they're leaving. They just stop booking. If a regular hasn't played in three weeks, they are already drifting, and a quick message brings many back.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Check each week for **regulars with no bookings in three weeks**.
- ✓ Send a **personal message**, not a promotion: "We've missed you on court."
- ✓ Offer an **easy way back**: a spot in next round's box, or an opponent at their level.

8

Renew before the season ends

The end of a box league season, a coaching term or a membership is when players decide. Make carrying on the easy option, before the decision even comes up.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Remind players when they have **two visits left** on a pack, with a one-tap link to renew.
- ✓ Open entries for **next season 2 weeks early**, and hold places for current players.
- ✓ Ask anyone who stops **one question**: "What's the main reason?" Patterns tell you what to fix.

Make staying the default: when renewing takes one tap and leaving takes a decision, more players stay. Memberships with automatic billing do this best.

6 messages you can use today

Swap in the words in teal and send by SMS, email or your app. Short and personal works best.

Before the first session

HABIT 1

Hi **name**, welcome to **club**! Your first session is **day, time** on **court**. Wear non-marking shoes and bring water. Loan racquets are at the front desk. Ask for **coach** when you arrive.

After the beginner course

HABIT 1

Great work on the course, **name**! Your next step is the beginners' box league starting **date**. Four players at your level, one match a week. I've saved you a place. Confirm here: **link**.

Unplayed match

HABIT 5

Hi **name**, you and **opponent** still need to play your **box** match, and the round ends **day**. Book a court and enter the score here: **link**.

Ready for the next level

HABIT 3

Hi **name**, you've hit your goals for **level**, so we're moving you up to **next box** for next round. You'll meet some new opponents. See your fixtures: **link**.

After three quiet weeks

HABIT 7

Hi **name**, we've missed you on court! Hope all is well. There's a place in next round's **box** if you fancy some matches. Just reply and I'll put you in.

Pack running low

HABIT 8

Hi **name**, you've got 2 visits left on your **pack**. Renew in one tap here so you don't miss a game: **link**. Thanks for playing with us!

Send them from one place. When messages live in one app instead of your personal phone, any coach or staff member can pick up a conversation and nothing gets lost.

Know your retention rate

Most squash clubs run all year, so measure it monthly. It takes two minutes and tells you whether your new habits are working.

$$\frac{\text{Players who played last month and this month}}{\text{Players who played last month}} \times 100 = \text{Retention rate}$$

Example: 160 players booked at least once in September. 134 of them booked again in October. That's $134 \div 160 \times 100 = 84\%$ retention. You kept 134 of last month's 160 players.

Your monthly scorecard

Fill it in at the start of each month. Splitting by level shows you exactly where players are leaking out.

Measure	How to work it out	Month 1	Month 2
Retention rate	Use the formula above		
New players who stuck	New players who played 3+ times in their first month		
Bookings per player	Total bookings ÷ active players		
Court use	Court hours booked ÷ court hours available		
Box matches played	Matches played ÷ matches scheduled		
Quiet regulars	Regulars with no booking in 3 weeks		
Top reason for leaving	From your one-question exit check		

Watch the trend, not one number. If most of your losses are new players after their beginner course, that's where to put your effort next month.

A simple plan to get started

You don't need to do everything at once. Pick up one or two habits a week and they'll soon be part of how you run your club.

WEEK 1

See where you stand

- ☐ Work out last month's retention rate
- ☐ List the last five players who stopped, and at which moment
- ☐ Give every regular a level

WEEK 2

Fix the first month

- ☐ Start a beginners' box league
- ☐ Enter every course player into their next session
- ☐ Send the welcome message to every new player

WEEK 3

Level up the play

- ☐ Rebuild your boxes by level
- ☐ Set two or three goals for your regulars
- ☐ Message every regular with three quiet weeks

WEEK 4

Lock in next month

- ☐ Write your booking, no-show and box league rules
- ☐ Set up renewal reminders for packs and memberships
- ☐ Plan a social night and add your exit question

Tip: put a recurring reminder in your calendar for the first day of every month to fill in the scorecard on page 10. Small, steady improvements add up fast.

Run all 8 habits without the extra admin

Every habit here works with a spreadsheet and a phone. They're far easier to keep up when your software does the remembering. That's why we built Outcoach.

Players grouped by level

Record grades or ratings, and group players in one click.

Goals for every player

Goals and skill tests, with progress players can see in their app.

Quiet players flagged

See who hasn't booked in weeks, or whose pack ran out, and follow up.

Box leagues that run themselves

Fixtures, results and promotions, with reminders for unplayed matches.

Waitlists that fill courts

Cancelled courts go to the next player in line.

Easy renewals

Packs and memberships with automatic billing and reminders.

Turn new players into regulars

Outcoach brings court bookings, box leagues, coaching groups, junior squads, lessons and payments into one app, with AI that does the admin for you.

Start your free trial at outcoach.io

Questions? Email support@outcoach.io and a real person will get back to you.