

FREE PLAYBOOK FOR TABLE TENNIS ACADEMIES

Keep them playing.

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

6

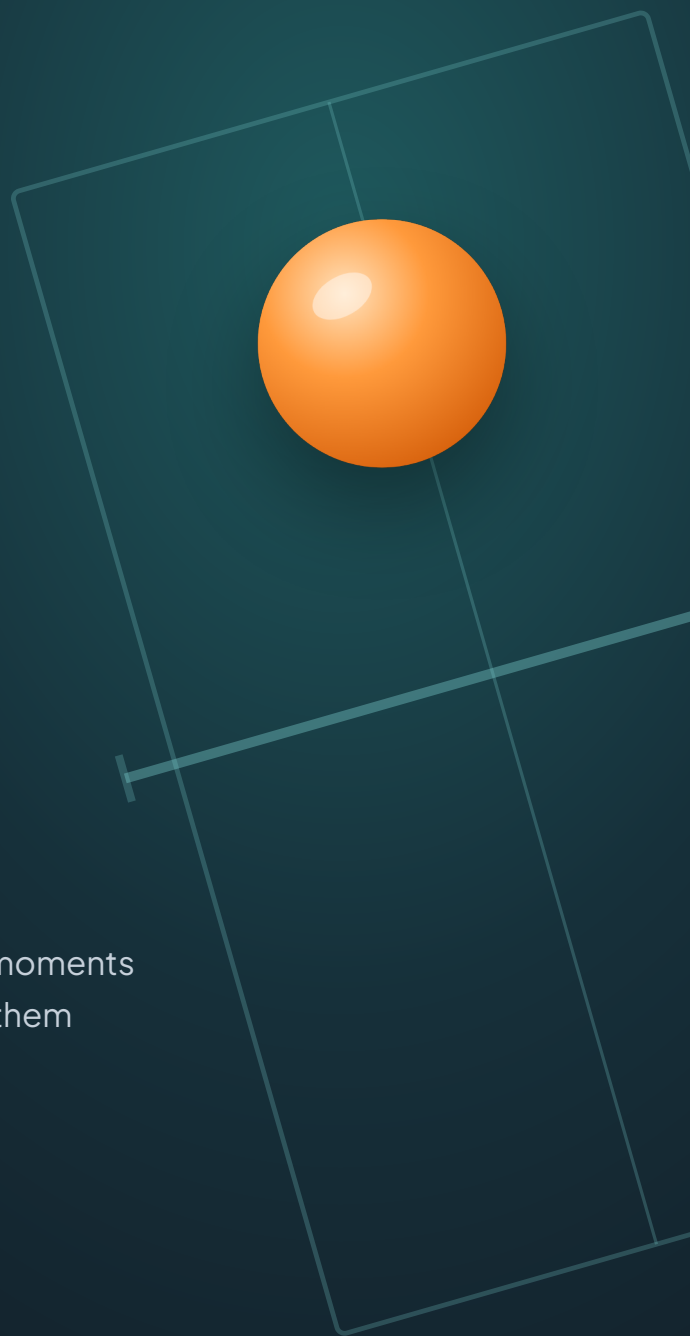
moments table tennis players are most likely to drift away

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.

Table tennis academies are good at getting people to pick up a bat. The ones that grow are the ones that turn those first-timers into regulars, and keep them.

\$1,104

One regular, two sessions a week, for a year

2 practice or coaching sessions a week at **\$12**

× **46 weeks** of play in a year

= **\$1,104 a year** from one player

\$3,310+

The same player over three years

Three years of weekly sessions, before you count private lessons, holiday camps, league fees, table hire or the friends and siblings 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, a practice partner 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: coaching groups, junior squads and club practice booked week after week.

Extras

Private lessons, holiday camps, league teams and table hire from players who already love the game.

Word of mouth

Table tennis spreads through families and schools. Happy regulars bring siblings, parents and friends.

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

The 6 moments table tennis 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 which session to join, or who to practise with.

Do this: book their next session before the course ends.

PRACTICE SESSIONS

2

The wrong partner

A beginner gets paired with a league player for an hour. One can't return a serve, the other is bored. Both go home disappointed.

Do this: pair players by level.

MONTHS 3–9

3

Stuck on the plateau

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 team, no friends

Regulars have their practice partners and league teams. New players who don't find one feel like outsiders.

Do this: introduce new players and rotate partners.

EXAMS, HOLIDAYS AND FULL SESSIONS

5

The routine breaks

School exams, holidays or a hall event break the habit. Or the sessions they want are always full. Each missed week makes the next easier to skip.

Do this: use makeup credits and waitlists.

WHEN SOMETHING ENDS

6

The term runs out

A coaching term, a pack or a league season 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, **book each player into an improvers' group** or club practice, there and then.
- ✓ Keep **beginner tables** at every practice session, so new players have a safe place to rally.
- ✓ Send a **welcome message before their first session**: which hall, what to wear, and that loan bats and balls are provided.

2 Pair players by level

Table tennis is played one-on-one, so the partner is the session. When levels are mixed at random, nobody gets a good hour, and the players at both ends stop coming.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Give every player a **level**: their rating if they have one, or your own academy levels.
- ✓ Assign **tables by level** at practice and coaching, and say so when people book.
- ✓ Keep **one social session** a week with rotating partners and doubles, so friends of different levels can still play together.

Ready-made goals for every level

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

Level	Strokes	Serve and receive	Footwork and match play
● Beginner First bat in hand	Forehand drive 20 in a row cross-table	Legal serve 8 of 10; push back 6 of 10 short serves	Ready position between shots; keep score correctly
● Improver Club practice regular	Backhand push 15 in a row; forehand topspin vs block 10 in a row	Short backspin serve 7 of 10 that bounces twice	Falkenberg footwork 1 minute without a miss
● Intermediate League player	Topspin vs backspin 8 of 10 on the table	Flick 6 of 10 short serves	Third-ball attack 7 of 10 after your own serve
● Advanced Competitive	Counter-topspin rally of 10 from mid-distance	Serve with a plan: 3 serve variations, one motion	Track points won on serve; 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 in a round robin with rotating partners. A friendly first session makes the move stick.

3

Give every player a goal they can see

“Getting better” is vague. “20 forehand topspins in a row against block” 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 group or private lesson that helps most.

4

Make the academy social

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

TRY THIS

- ✓ **Rotate practice partners** each session, so new players meet the regulars at their level.
- ✓ Run a **monthly round robin or handicap tournament**, and personally introduce new players to a group.
- ✓ **Celebrate wins** out loud: a level-up, a first league match or a rating jump, shared the same day.

Keep it specific: “Leo hit 18 forehand topspins in a row today, up from 9” means more than a long, general report. Specific beats long, every time.

5

Turn breaks into a makeup, not a missed week

Halls get booked for events, and juniors have exams and holidays. What matters is whether players feel they lost their money or just moved a session.

TRY THIS

- ✓ Write a clear **venue change policy**: who decides, by what time, and how players hear.
- ✓ **Move to another hall or day** when you can. When you can't, give a makeup credit.
- ✓ Plan **holiday camps** for the school breaks, so juniors keep playing instead of stopping.

6

Keep full sessions fair

Popular sessions fill fast, and every table only takes two to four players. If the same people always get in and everyone else gives up, you lose players who wanted to play more.

TRY THIS

- ✓ **Open bookings at a set time** each week, so everyone has the same chance.
- ✓ Keep a **waitlist** and offer opened spots to the next player in line, automatically.
- ✓ Set a **no-show rule**, so a booked spot that goes unused doesn't leave a partner without a game.

Watch your waitlists: a session with a long waitlist every week is a sign to add tables, a coach or another session. It's demand you're turning away.

7

Act on three quiet weeks

Table tennis 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 at Wednesday practice."
- ✓ Offer an **easy way back**: a table at their level, or a practice partner to play with.

8

Renew before the term or league ends

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

TRY THIS

- ✓ Remind players when they have **two sessions left** on a pack, with a one-tap link to renew.
- ✓ Open enrolments for **next term 2 weeks early**, and hold spots 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 **academy**! Your first session is **day, time** at **hall**. Wear indoor shoes and bring water. Loan bats and balls are provided. Ask for **coach** when you arrive.

After the beginner course

HABIT 1

Great work on the course, **name**! Your next step is the improvers' group on **day, time**. Same level, friendly practice. I've held a spot for you. Confirm here: **link**.

Venue change

HABIT 5

Hi all, **hall** is booked for an event on **day**, so this week's session has moved to **new hall or day**. Same coaches, tables set up. Can't make it? You'll get a makeup credit.

Ready for the next level

HABIT 3

Hi **name**, you've hit your goals for **level**, so we'd love you to join the **next level** group on **day**. Rotating partners, so you'll meet everyone. Book here: **link**.

After three quiet weeks

HABIT 7

Hi **name**, we've missed you at **session**! Hope all is well. There's a table free at **day, time** practice at your level if you fancy a game. Just reply and I'll book you in.

Pack running low

HABIT 8

Hi **name**, you've got 2 sessions left on your **pack**. Renew in one tap here so you don't miss a session: **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 academies run by term or all year round, 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: 140 players booked at least once in September. 119 of them booked again in October. That's $119 \div 140 \times 100 = 85\%$ retention. You kept 119 of last month's 140 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		
Sessions per player	Total bookings ÷ active players		
Table use	Table hours booked ÷ table hours you pay for		
Quiet regulars	Regulars with no booking in 3 weeks		
Packs renewed	Packs and terms renewed ÷ those that ran out		
Top reason for leaving	From your one-question exit check		

Watch the trend, not one number. If most of your losses are juniors after their first term, 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 or rating

WEEK 2

Fix the first month

- ☐ Keep beginner tables at every session
- ☐ Book every course player into their next session
- ☐ Send the welcome message to every new player

WEEK 3

Level up the play

- ☐ Assign tables by level, with one social session
- ☐ Set two or three goals for your regulars
- ☐ Message every regular with three quiet weeks

WEEK 4

Lock in next month

- ☐ Write your venue change, waitlist and no-show policies
- ☐ Set up renewal reminders for packs and terms
- ☐ Plan a round robin 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 ratings or your own levels, and group players in one click.

Goals for every player

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

Quiet players flagged

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

Venue changes handled

Move sessions or issue makeup credits, and tell everyone at once.

Waitlists that fill spots

Full sessions keep a waitlist, so opened tables get used.

Easy renewals

Packs, terms and memberships with automatic billing and reminders.

Turn new players into regulars

Outcoach brings coaching groups, junior squads, club practice, leagues, private lessons, table hire 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.