13 Basic Badminton Tips & Strategy

by Guy Chadwick, AZBC Club Pro

01 There is no such thing as an easy shot.

Far too many errors are made when players relax because a shot appears easy, especially near the net. Every shot requires concentration all the way through its completed execution.

02 Keep your eye on the bird at all times.

Do not be distracted by off-court or on-court movement. Keep your eye on the bird through the rally; with experience you can still read open spaces, shot targets, and opponent position.

03 Get the bird over the net.

A shot into the net has 0% chance of winning the rally. Once the bird goes over, you immediately improve your chances. Avoid trying to hit too perfect a shot under pressure.

04 Learn to let out birds land out.

Many points are lost by hitting birds that would have landed out, then losing the rally. Practice judging close shots so you can learn to let out birds land out.

05 Serve consistency matters.

Every rally has a serve, so consistency matters. A good serve is critical; for beginner singles, a high deep serve can push the opponent back and open the court.

06 Return of serve matters too.

Many rallies immediately favor the player with the better serve or return. For singles, use the default return is shown on the diagram: straight deep clear to the back court.

07 In singles, establish deep clears early.

Use deep clears early to force the opponent back. This opens up the fore court and sets up the demanding back-to-front movement pattern that creates fatigue and mistakes.

08 Be the last one to hit in.

Badminton is a game of hundreds of shots. The player who hits more shots in the court than the opponent - especially the last shot of each rally - wins more points.

09 Don't let mistakes get you down.

Even Olympic-level players make mistakes. The player who can forget the mistake, reset, and start the next rally with a clear head usually has more success.

10 Play your game.

There are many styles: attacking, defending, counterattacking, and 4-corner shot-making. Some players blend styles. Find the game that fits you best.

11 Get ready.

Rallies can average one second or less between shots. Always be ready with feet, racket, and court position; poor ready position leads to weaker shots and more mistakes.

12 Work hard.

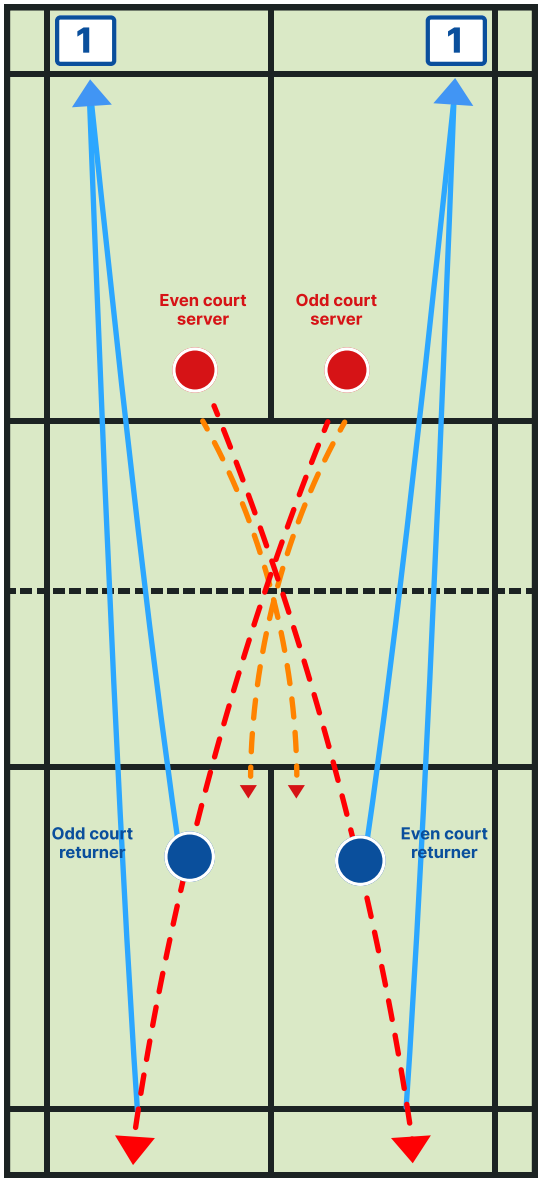
Top players train thousands of hours in shot-making, footwork, and conditioning. Use practice to improve weak areas, strengthen your best skills, and build real success.

13 Relax and have fun.

Different players have different demeanors, but relaxed concentration usually works best. You can be serious and have fun; players who love badminton make it a lifetime sport.

Singles Serve Return Map

Default return: straight deep clear



Best default
Most often hit a straight deep clear (1) against short or deep serves from either side.

Mix it up
Occasionally use straight or cross-court drops. If a high serve lands short, smash for an immediate winner.

Avoid cross-court clears
Avoid cross-court clears unless advanced; they often go right to the opponent.