

Why become an umpire?



The experience of most table tennis players with regard to umpiring is probably in local league matches where the primary function is to merely call out the score. But is this really what being an umpire is all about? Can umpiring really be a fulfilling and enjoyable experience? Firstly, let's take a look at the role of an umpire.

The role of an umpire is:-

- to prepare the playing area for the match
- to ensure players are correctly equipped for the match
- to ensure the correct observance of the service laws
- to ensure compliance with the regulations concerning behaviour
- to ensure correct order of service for each player or pair of players
- to decide each rally as a point or a let
- to call and display the score, and indicate service changes
- to be alert to changes in the playing conditions and to react appropriately
- to observe net cord services and edge balls and adjudicate appropriately
- to ensure continuity of play
- to know, understand and apply the rules and regulations of table tennis

This list of the duties of an umpire is not exhaustive but it does demonstrate that the umpire has a very important role to play in the successful staging of a match.

Secondly, how would you like to have the best seat in the house? Just imagine what it would feel like to be the umpire for a final at a National Championships or better still, to umpire the top world players and on television too! Yes, this really could be you!! So, how do you become an umpire?

How to become an umpire

The career progression for an umpire is:-

COUNTY UMPIRE → NATIONAL UMPIRE → INTERNATIONAL UMPIRE

To qualify as a County Umpire you will need to pass a written test and successfully complete practical assessments.

The **test papers** can be obtained from your County Umpire Secretary, or you can obtain one by contacting the NURC Secretary (see the Umpires and Referees Home Page). The written test can be taken in the comfort of your own home, and you are able to refer to any reference materials to help you to answer the questions.

Once you have qualified you have the opportunity to officiate at various tournaments around the country, and having gained good experience you can be nominated to sit for the National Umpire (NU) qualification. To qualify as an NU you will need to pass a written examination, an oral test and practical assessment.

Progression to International Umpire (IU) is possible once you have gained good experience and demonstrated consistently high standards as an NU. The IU examination is conducted annually and is administered by the International Table Tennis Federation (ITTF).

Table tennis requires officials to make it function properly. Your involvement as an umpire will be fulfilling and rewarding, not just for yourself, but also for the players and spectators.

As a first step, why not try the '**So you think you know the rules of table tennis Quiz**'.