



Anatomy of a modern shot

It seems so simple to conceive that every shot in tennis is a sequence of components, and that a trained teaching professional should be able to point to one or more of these when diagnosing the primary problem and cure during a lesson. In fact, this is an essential skill for tennis teachers taking the USPTA Certification Exam. A good teaching professional is required to

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see each shot component, from ready position to recovery, in exceptional detail and use this information, along with a keen understanding of how each component affects the other, to form and communicate a diagnosis and cure.

Of course, it's not so simple. Try to write the shot components in sequence and it doesn't take long to realize that determining the components is much easier than explaining in strict order when and how each occurs. This is because a shot is executed so fluidly that many of the components don't occur at only one point in the sequence, but often overlap.

Footwork, for example, clearly is a major component of every shot. We can declare it begins in earnest after reaction time, since you begin moving toward a shot during movement time as shown in Exhibit I. But, obviously, it continues to play a critical role during all subsequent shot components as we circle back to responding to the next shot in the rally. Since the feet never stop moving during a point, there is no clear beginning and ending point of the footwork component. And, while we do not show the kinetic chain as a separate component in Exhibit I, it likewise is a critical factor in many shot components. It is illustrated as a chain linking the components it most affects.

Thus, there will always be room for pros to critique the order in which this information is presented and, perhaps, the information itself. This is the privilege that USPTA never has and never will attempt to usurp from its members, all of whom have significant

contributions to make to the teaching of the game. Our intention is simply to present the materials in an understandable order, explaining the shot components as information units that members may accept as they are or rearrange within the reasonable boundaries of their own expertise.

With this in mind, if we insist on simplifying the sequence of each shot, we would probably accept Exhibit I as an explanation of the primary components and their interactions with one another.

The three phases of a shot:

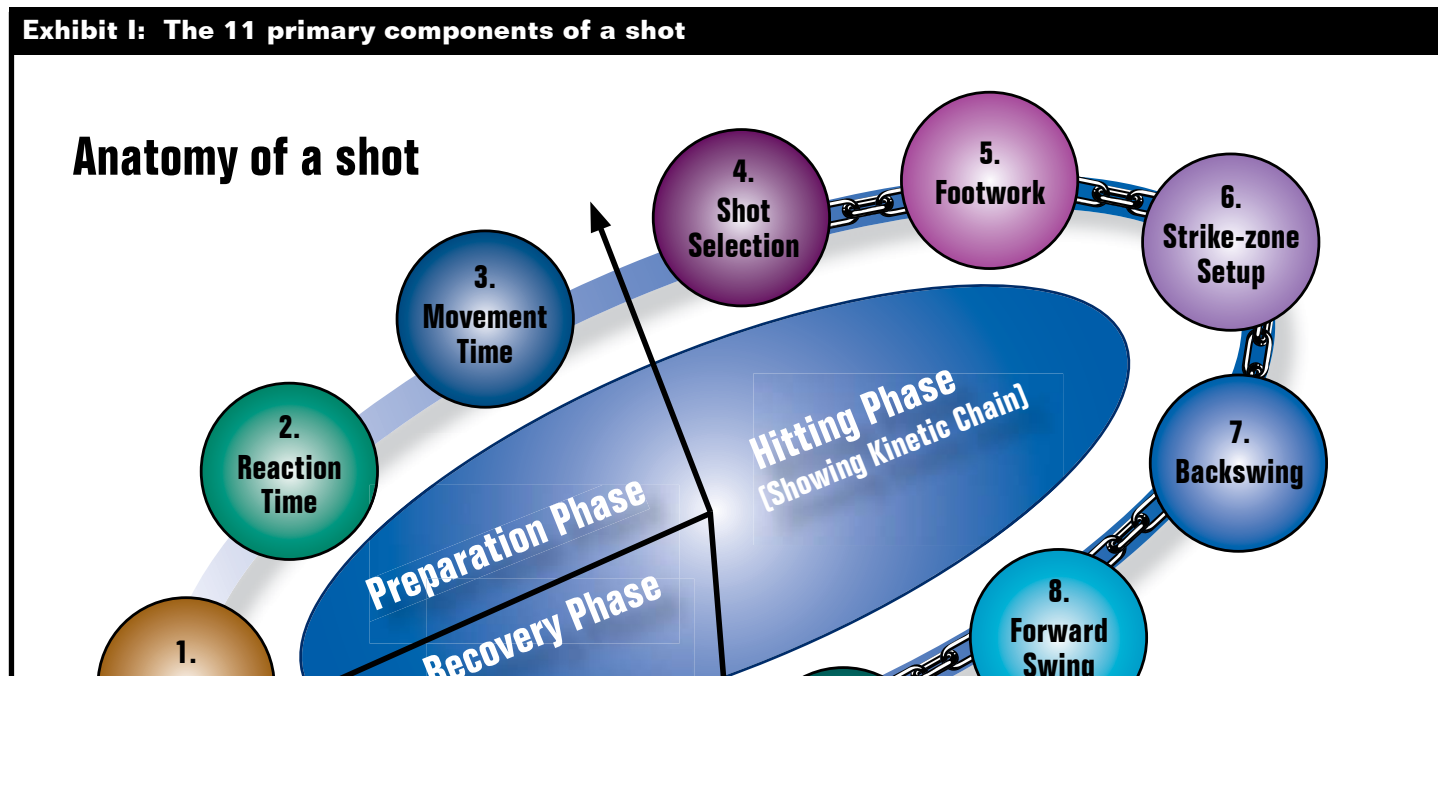
As seen in Exhibit I, the 11 primary shot components can be categorized into three distinct phases:

1. Preparation phase
2. Hitting phase
3. Recovery phase

This insert will deal only with the preparation phase including:

1. Foreperiod, 2. Reaction time and 3. Movement time. We will undertake one or more of the other phases sequentially in upcoming magazines. Again, remember that each of the components with their sub-components and respective explanations are excellent stand-alone topics that can be used in your lesson plans immediately.

Exhibit II is a more detailed look at the shot components that occur during the preparation phase:



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