

Who plays who when (and on which court) at the US Open Tennis Tournament?

How “Seeding” affects the Draw, and how the Draw affects the Schedule of Play

From Roadto45Tennis.com: “A Serious Tennis Fan’s Top 10 Tips for the US Open (Tickets & More)”

- The **#1 seed and #2 seed always play on different days** (and are placed in opposite halves of the draw, a.k.a. “bottom” or “top” half). (Note: seedings are based on ATP and WTA rankings).
- **Either the #1 or the #2 seed will play on day 1 or 2** (then will have a day off before being scheduled again 2 days later). For example, if the men’s #1 seed plays Monday, he will be scheduled again for Wed.
- **Similarly, the #3 and #4 seeds always must play on different days** and are placed in opposite halves of the draw *in different quarters from the #1 and #2 seeds*. They too may play on either day 1 or 2, depending on their draw.
- Players in the top half of the draw will be scheduled for one day (through quarterfinals), and those in bottom half will be scheduled for the next day. **However, there’s no firm rule about which half of the draw will be scheduled for Day 1.** For the past 3 years (2018-2020), the men’s top half of the draw were scheduled for Day 1—but in 2017 it was the opposite; In 2019-2020, the women’s bottom half played on Day 1—but in 2018 it was the opposite.
- **As such, there is no way to predict in advance who will play on Day 1 until the US Open publishes the Day 1 “Daily Schedule of Play” (usually posted the Friday before late afternoon).**
- **Once Day 1 schedule is published, you can then predict which DAY your favorite player will be scheduled through quarterfinals** (e.g., if Federer’s is scheduled on Day 1, he’ll play again on Day 3, 5, 7, and 9 if he continues to advance; if Federer is not scheduled on Day 1, he will play first on Day 2, then again on Day 4, 6, 8, and 10).
- **However, there’s no way to predict whether they will be scheduled for a Day or Night session.** However, officials tend to alternate scheduling superstars between Day and Night sessions on Ashe; for instance, if your favorite player is playing a night session on Day 1, there’s a good chance they will be scheduled for the day session on Day 3, then a night session Day 5, and so on (never 100% certainty, but this is common).

Illustrative list of which top seeds played when/where on Days 1&2 of US Open 2013-16

2020			2019		
	Day 1 (Mon) <i>Men’s TOP ½ Draw + Women’s BOTTOM ½</i>	Day 2 (Tue) <i>Men’s BOTTOM ½ + Women’s TOP ½</i>		Day 1 (Mon) <i>Men’s TOP ½ Draw + Women’s BOTTOM ½</i>	Day 2 (Tue) <i>Men’s BOTTOM ½ + Women’s TOP ½</i>
Ashe DAY	Pliskova [1] Zverev [5]	A. Murray [Unseeded] S. Williams [3]	Ashe DAY	Barty [2] Djokovic [1]	Osaka [1] Thiem [4]
Ashe EVE	Djokovic [1] Osaka [4]	V. Williams [Unseeded] Medvedev [3]	Ashe EVE	S. Williams [8] Federer [3]	Nadal [2] Stephens [11]
Armstrong DAY	Kerber [17] Shapovalov [12] Gauff [unseeded]	Muguruza [10] Thiem [2] Kenin [2]	Armstrong DAY	Pliskova [3] Medvedev [5] V. Williams [Unseeded]	Tsitsipas [8] Halep [4] Gauff [Unseeded]
Armstrong EVE	Isner [16] Riske [13]	Keys [7] Dimitrov [14] Berretini [6]	Armstrong EVE	Wawrinka [23] Keys [10]	Sabalenka [9] Kyrgios [28]
Grandstand	N/A (no fans due to COVID)	N/A (no fans due to COVID)	Grandstand	Nishikori [7] Kerber [14] Querrey [Unseeded] Kenin [20]	Muguruza [24] Isner [14] Wozniacki [19] Auger-Aliassime [18]
2018			2017		
	Day 1 (Mon) <i>Men’s TOP ½ Draw + Women’s TOP ½</i>	Day 2 (Tue) <i>Men’s BOTTOM ½ + Women’s BOTTOM ½</i>		Day 1 (Mon) <i>Men’s BOTTOM ½ Draw + Women’s BOTTOM ½</i>	Day 2 (Tue) <i>Men’s TOP ½ Draw + Women’s TOP ½</i>
Ashe DAY	Dimitrov [8] V. Williams [16]	Wozniacki [2] Djokovic [6]	Ashe DAY	Muguruza [3] Cilic [7] V. Williams [9]	Pliskova [1] Kerber [6] Nadal [1]
Ashe EVE	S. Williams [17] Nadal [1]	Federer [2] Keys [14]	Ashe EVE	Halep [2] Zverev [4]	Keys [15] Federer [3]
Armstrong DAY	Halep [1] A. Murray [Unseeded] Stephens [3]	Ostapenko [10] Kerber [4] Zverev [4]	Armstrong DAY	Kvitova [13] Isner [10] Stephens [Unseeded] Sock [13]	Svitolina [4] del Potro [24] Vandeweghe [20] Kyrgios [14]
Armstrong EVE	Azarenka [WC] del Potro [3]	Kyrgios [30] Sharapova [22]	Grandstand	Johnson [Unseeded] Konta [7] Querrey [17] Wozniacki [5]	Thiem [6] Bouchard [Unseeded] Kuznetsova [8] Dimitrov [7]
Grandstand	Svitolina [7] Isner [11] Pliskova [8] Shapovalov [28] Thiem [9]	Osaka [20] Cilic [7] Garcia [6] Mannarino [29] (v Tiafoe)			