

# AskTheExperts



## Top Down, or Bottom Up?

**Q:** Yonex recently changed its instructions for installing cross strings on its badminton racquets from top down to bottom up, yet the instructions for Yonex tennis racquets are still top down. Which is the correct way?

**A:** Badminton frames and tennis frames are constructed quite differently, and as such, the stringing instructions will likely vary regardless of brand. According to Yonex Pro Tour Stringing Director Mark Gonzales, the company's badminton racquets are now strung from the bottom to top, while Yonex tennis frames should be strung from the top to the bottom, as you described.

Mark isn't certain when the change took place for badminton frames (tennis frames have always been top down) and we are still waiting for a technical explanation from Yonex Japan on this, but it is likely due to the differences in construction between tennis and badminton frames.

## Top Down, or Bottom Up—Part 2

**Q:** I've noticed that several racquets listed in the Stringer's Digest show two-piece instructions where the cross strings are installed from the top down—yet on the one-piece instructions for the same frame, the crosses are installed from the bottom up. Why are there different instructions for the same frame?

**A:** With very few exceptions, tennis frames should have the cross strings installed from top to bottom, unless specifically stated otherwise in the instructions. The examples you are referring to include frames where the main strings finish at the throat—and in order to use a one-piece method, you would have to begin the crosses at the bottom, or use a box or around-the-world pattern (we'll leave that subject for another day).

Many of these frames—from Head and Yonex, for example—eliminate one-piece stringing instructions

altogether, since stringing bottom to top would void the warranty and likely result in damage to the frame. Other manufacturers have chosen to allow bottom-to-top stringing when using one-piece, although they recommend installing crosses from top to bottom when using two-piece, as you point out.

In speaking to racquet designers about this, we've been told that while the frame will withstand stringing the crosses from bottom up for a period of time, it is much better for the frame to install from top to bottom. It will maintain the integrity of the frame for a longer period of time.

## Professional Stencil Ink?

**Q:** Is the stencil ink stringers use at Grand Slams and other professional tournaments different than what is available for the general public? It seems like the pro ink stays on the strings and doesn't get on the balls, compared to the ink I use.

**A:** It is the same product. The main difference is that the ink used in tournaments is fresh, since the stringing team at a Grand Slam event will go through dozens of bottles of each color. It does wear off, but since most players change to a freshly strung racquet every few games, the wear is not as evident on the strings and balls. ■



*We welcome your questions. Email them to [bob@racquettech.com](mailto:bob@racquettech.com).*