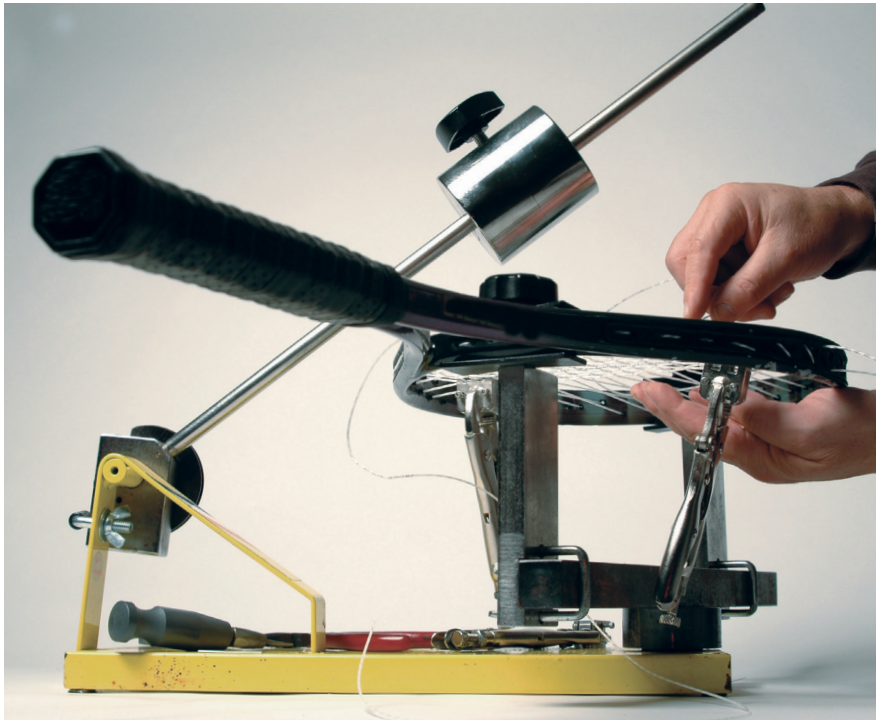


AskTheExperts



If you don't have a swingweight scale, the best option for matching your customers' racquets is to match the weight and balance.

and/or how much weight and swingweight was added by stringing?

And what string is generally used for the specs? Is it Prince Synthetic with Duraflex 16, like a lot of the string playtests? Lastly, are the specs based on one sample racquet or more than one?

A: Great questions. Although it states on our RacquetTech.com website that all measurements listed are made with a strung racquet, some people are still confused since they get specs from the manufacturer or another source that may be on an unstrung frame. When comparing racquets, strings or anything else, it is very important to make sure that all other things are equal—meaning all measurements are taken the same way.

Our specs have always been done on strung racquets. Strings generally add about 15 to 17 grams to the weight of the racquet and about 30 swingweight units, depending on the string. We don't use any specific string for the specs, just whatever the manufacturer puts in the racquet they send to us, or what string we have available to string if racquets are received unstrung. The specs are measured on one sample racquet provided to us, so keep in mind that it may differ slightly from other listings you may find even for a strung racquet.

Most manufacturers have a generous tolerance, and so the same model racquet may vary in weight by as much as 10 grams or more. This, of course, may also affect the balance and swingweight. While we might get much more accurate numbers by measuring a large number of each racquet model and then producing an average, that isn't really feasible. Our random method of measuring one racquet has proven very trustworthy for comparing one racquet to another. ■

Matching Racquets

Q: I do not have access to a swingweight machine, but I have been matching the weight and balance of my own racquets for years. Is this something I could offer as a service to my customers until I can afford a swingweight machine?

A: I must admit that my experience in customizing racquets predates commercially available swingweight scales. In the late 1980s, I customized or matched hundreds of frames, some for touring professionals, simply by weight and balance.

When swingweight scales became available, many of the pros still only requested a particular weight and balance. But as the technology became more common, including swing weight into the recipe became the preferred methodology.

Once we had the use of swingweight scales, we discovered that two frames can be matched in weight and balance but still have different swing weights.

Most racquet customizers will tell you that of the three specs—weight, balance and swing weight—it is swing weight that is the most important and can be felt by the player, especially more skilled players.

Having said that, if you don't have a swingweight scale, then matching the weight and balance is the best option. It is certainly better than nothing at all. Just be sure your customers know that swing weight is not included. If you find that there is a large enough demand for matching and customization service, you can probably justify the investment in a swingweight scale. It will certainly enhance your business offerings.

RacquetTech.Com Specs

Q: I have questions about the specs on the racquet spec search feature on RacquetTech.com. Were the specs always listed as strung, or were some originally unstrung? Is there a good way to calculate the unstrung specs

We welcome your questions. Email them to bob@racquettech.com.