PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING
2027 ITF APPROVAL OF TENNIS BALLS

1. INTRODUCTION

This document describes the procedures for companies who are involved in the manufacturing or marketing of tennis balls and who require ITF Approval of their products.

The ITF Rules of Tennis (the "Rules") state that any ball to be used in a tournament which is played according to the Rules must be named on the list of balls which have been tested and approved as conforming to the specifications laid down in Appendix I of the Rules.

A ball which is granted ITF Approval is approved by the ITF only on the basis that it has been found to conform to the current Rules of Tennis and is therefore considered suitable for use in tournaments played according to the Rules of Tennis. ITF Approval does not imply any other form of approval or endorsement.

Important note:
From July 2026, the ITF will become 'World Tennis' and this will initiate a transition of re-branding across the ITF, including the ITF Ball Approval Programme which will become the 'World Tennis Ball Approval Programme'. 2027 Approval will be considered a transitional year to allow ball manufacturers to plan their alignment with the new branding for the Programme, while ensuring an extended validity of existing stock using the 'ITF Approved' logo. The 2027 Approval transition year will allow applicants to:

- Submit 2027 Approval samples in current packaging (i.e. with the 'ITF Approved' logo) - as long as the materials of the balls themselves, and any logos stamped on the ball, will not change.
- Decide themselves when they are ready within 2027 to begin production with updated packaging designs (i.e. with the 'World Tennis Approved' logo).
- Continue to distribute balls in packaging using the 'ITF Approved' logo.

A new version of this Procedures document will be published and distributed once the re-brand of the Programme has begun. Further information on the new artwork ('World Tennis Approved' logo) will also be shared in due course.

1.1 ITF TennisNET Portal

All 2027 ITF Approval applications, and management of ball records, will be handled through an online application, ***ITF TennisNET Portal*** (https://tennisnet.itftennis.com). To gain access to the portal, users must register with the ITF for an account. Instructions to register, manage ball records and submit approval applications in the TennisNET Portal are available to download from: www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/tennis-tech/approved-balls

1.2 Testing and Assimilation Fees

The fees for ITF Approval have been reviewed and will increase with effect from 2027 Approval (see section 8).

1.3 Ball markings and ball name

The ITF wishes to clarify that no more than two decals/stamps are permitted to be printed on a ball. In addition, the logo and/or ball name must be of a reasonable size, and deemed by the ITF to be appropriate (see section 1.4).

For the avoidance of any doubt, the ITF considers that, in order for the markings on the ball and its packaging to be appropriate for tennis or beach tennis, those markings, the packaging and any associated branding or advertising must not be detrimental to the sports of tennis or beach tennis. In particular, ITF Approval shall not be granted in respect of balls which, through their markings and/or packaging, and/or any branding or advertisement associated therewith, promote, advertise or are in any way associated with any tobacco products, hard liquor products, betting companies, political activity, terrorism or other category deemed to be detrimental to the sports of tennis or beach tennis, as reasonably determined by the ITF.

In addition, ITF Approval shall not be granted in respect of a ball which, through its markings and/or packaging, and/or any branding or advertisement associated therewith, falsely represents, misleads or is otherwise likely to mislead or deceive the public into believing, falsely, that it is the official ball of a tournament or event.

Agreement to the ITF Approval application terms and conditions is a declaration by the owner of a ball that they have entered a valid agreement for the supply of goods and services with the tournament or event organisers. Owners may be requested by the ITF to provide evidence of a valid agreement at any time.

Having regard to all other trademarks not owned by the ITF that appear on the ball or its packaging, the ITF reserves the right to deny approval of any ball that, in the reasonable opinion of the ITF, infringes or is likely to infringe intellectual property laws and may request, at any time, evidence of trademark ownership and/or consent to use by a trademark proprietor.

If a ball has obtained ITF Approval but is subsequently found to have used a logo considered to be prohibited, according to these terms in Section 1.3, or breached any other condition of ITF Approval, the ITF reserves the right to remove approval of the ball with immediate effect and delete it from the official list of approved balls on the ITF website.

1.4 Ball logo dimensions

The ITF has introduced maximum dimensions for primary and secondary logos to be printed on balls that wish to obtain ITF Approval. These are detailed as follows:

- Overall height of the logo must not exceed 32 mm.
- Overall width of the logo must not exceed 52 mm.
- Overall logo printed area must not exceed 22% of the face of the ball.

Balls submitted with logos that exceed the dimensions listed above will result in failure of Approval testing, or approval by Assimilation (see Section 6).

Note: Stage 3 and Stage 3 Foam balls are excluded from the requirements above, but these ball types must have logos of a reasonable size and deemed by the ITF to be appropriate.

2. TEST METHODS AND SPECIFICATIONS

All balls submitted for ITF Approval will be tested strictly in accordance with the specifications laid down in Appendix I of the Rules (see Appendix A of this document). The test methods adopted by the ITF are described in the current edition of *ITF Approved Tennis Balls, Classified Surfaces & Recognised Courts* which is available to download from:
www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/organisation/publications-and-resources/tennis-tech

Balls will only be approved for inclusion on the list of ITF Approved balls if they fully satisfy the requirements for rebound, mass, size, deformation and durability (as appropriate) as set out in

Appendix I of the Rules. The balls must also satisfy the other visual and construction requirements including, but not limited to, the absence of:

- Cracks along the seams or felt detachment
- Seam irregularity (width and consistency)
- Mould lines (prominent ridge around the circumference of a ball)
- Non-uniform shape (sphericity)
- Excessive felt 'wrinkling' at the edges of the seams
- Excessive seam 'flash' (untrimmed adhesive)

The ITF reserves the right to fail balls which crack or break during testing, irrespective of whether they pass the other approval tests.

3. LABORATORY

Testing of balls for ITF Approval is only carried out by the ITF Technical Centre in London, UK. Note: National Associations are not authorised to give approval on behalf of the ITF.

4. NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

The ITF Technical Centre will endeavour to inform manufacturers by email that the results of testing may be downloaded from the ITF TennisNET Portal within three weeks of receiving the required number of ball samples and payment of the testing fee.

5. PUBLICATION OF THE LIST OF ITF APPROVED TENNIS BALLS

The list of 2027 ITF Approved balls will be available to view on the ITF website (www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/tennis-tech/approved-balls) from 1 January 2027. To assist tournament organisers and consumers with selecting ITF Approved balls, the published list shall show the ball name as it appears on the packaging.

6. APPROVAL OF BALL TYPES BY ASSIMILATION

Balls which are marketed under different brand names, or which have different markings on the packaging to a ball which is ITF Approved but which are otherwise identical, may also receive ITF Approval without the need for testing through the process of Assimilation. Such approval is subject to the ITF being satisfied, in its absolute discretion, that the balls comply with the *ball markings and ball names* requirements at section 1.1.3 above.

Submitting an application for approval of balls by Assimilation requires mandatory agreement to the ITF's terms and conditions, which confirms that they are of an identical construction to the ball which has passed the testing procedure during that same year. For the purposes of this requirement, the ball must be identical in all aspects to the approved ball, i.e. core construction, fabric cover construction and adhesive, type, etc. The only variations permitted are cosmetic stamping and packaging variants.

Note: Balls are only entitled to be given approval by Assimilation if they are marketed under the same company's brand name or names. Balls marketed by a company which is a separate organisation to the original manufacturer are not entitled to approval by assimilation, and must therefore apply for ITF Approval through the procedures described in this document.

Further conditions for approval of a ball by Assimilation are included in the following sections.

7. NUMBER OF BALLS TO BE SUBMITTED

All balls submitted for ITF Approval and Assimilation become the property of the ITF. Should any balls fail the laboratory testing procedure, the ITF Technical Centre will, on request, return the balls to the manufacturer. The manufacturer will bear the cost of all delivery and transport charges incurred in the return of the balls.

Standard tennis balls and Stage 1 (Green) balls

For regular Approval, seventy-two (72) balls are required from which the ITF will randomly select twenty-four (24) balls for testing.

For balls that are to be approved by Assimilation, three (3) samples of the packaging container (including balls) of each ball type to be Approved are required.

Note: If the packaging of an Approved or Assimilated ball changes during the year of Approval, the ITF shall be informed and three (3) tubes of the balls in the new containers shall be submitted to the ITF.

Stage 3 (Red) and Stage 2 (Orange) introductory tennis balls

For approval of Stage 3 (Red) and Stage 2 (Orange) introductory tennis balls, thirty-six (36) balls are required, from which the ITF will randomly select twelve (12) balls for testing.

8. PAYMENT FOR TESTING

The cost for ball testing by the ITF for 2027 Approval is **US$3,440** per ball type. For Stage 1 (Green) introductory balls, the fee is **US$2,120** per ball type. The fee for Stage 2 (Orange) is **$1,190** per ball type and the fee for Stage 3 (Red) balls is **US$740** per ball type. The fees are discounted for ITF Foundation members (see Section 9).

There is an additional charge for balls that are approved by Assimilation. Each product variation will be subject to an approval cost of **US$2,070**.

Example: Company X wishes to submit one standard ball for testing and Approval, plus two other brands to be approved by Assimilation, and four introductory ball types.

Cost for testing of one ball:	US$ 3,440
Cost for Assimilation of two further balls:	US$ 4,140
Cost for testing one Stage 1 introductory ball:	US$ 2,120
Cost for testing one Stage 2 introductory ball:	US$ 1,190
Cost for testing one Stage 3 introductory ball:	US$ 740
Total:	**US$ 11,630**

A ball which is submitted by a manufacturer for ITF Approval and which fails the standard testing procedure can be re-submitted for testing immediately but will be subject to a further testing fee of US$ 3,440 (or that related to its ball type), which must be paid before the ball is tested.

Payment in USD for a ball approval application can be made by bank transfer, payable to "ITF Licensing (UK) Ltd", to:

National Westminster Bank plc, 22 King's Mall, King Street, Hammersmith, London, W6 0QD, United Kingdom	Account no: 140/2/03197182 Sort code: 60-50-06 Account name: ITF Licensing (UK) Ltd IBAN: GB67 NWBK 6073 0103197182 BIC: NWBKGB2L

quoting the reference "Ball Approval" and the applicable ITF invoice number. The ITF will issue, by email, an invoice for the testing fees, either in advance (on receipt of a completed application) or on receipt of payment. Upon request, payment will be accepted by Visa or Mastercard. Bank details for payments to be made in GBP or EUR are confirmed on an issued invoice or can also be provided upon request.

Note: For UK-based companies, VAT shall be payable at the prevailing rate.

Important Notes:

a. All delivery and transport costs shall be prepaid by the manufacturer, and any additional costs incurred by the ITF will be invoiced to the manufacturer.

b. If payment of the testing fee is not received within four (4) months of the balls being received by the ITF for testing, the test shall be cancelled and the ball samples destroyed. The manufacturer shall be required to reapply for Approval and to submit new samples for testing.

9. DISCOUNT PAYMENTS FOR ITF FOUNDATION

For companies that are members of the ITF Foundation at the time of testing, payments for the testing of one ball are discounted:

2027 Approval	Testing Fee per ball brand US$	Discounted rates for ITF Foundation	
		General Member US$	Supporting Member US$
Approval testing	3,440	3,130	2,740
Approval by Assimilation	2,070	1,670	1,060
Stage 1 (green) ball	2,120	2,000	1,860
Stage 2 (orange) ball	1,190	1,100	990
Stage 3 (red) ball	740	640	540

Note: Information on membership of the ITF Foundation can be obtained from the ITF Technical Centre.

10. "APPROVED" LOGO

Details on permitted use, restrictions and visual specifications of the 'World Tennis Approved' logo and the 'ITF Approved' logo are contained within Appendix C.

11. SUSPENSION OF TESTING POLICY

If, during the approval testing process, the ITF identifies a trend in balls failing testing which have been submitted by one factory or manufacturer, the ITF may, at its sole discretion, suspend testing. The manufacturer shall be informed and asked whether they wish testing to continue or be cancelled.

12. CANCELLATION POLICY

A request to cancel a test will only apply to those balls yet to commence acclimatisation. If acclimatisation has already commenced at the time of the request, the test will proceed, and the test fee is payable.

Upon confirmation of the cancellation, the ball samples will immediately be removed from the Technical Centre test laboratory and donated to charity.

13. RANDOM MARKET AND TOURNAMENT TESTING OF BALLS

In addition to the approval testing of balls submitted by manufacturers, the ITF operates an extended testing procedure to ensure that balls which have been awarded ITF Approval continue to meet the standards specified in the Rules. Samples are randomly selected and tested from a variety of sources worldwide. This system, known as Market Testing, is operated in association with the Grand Slams, ATP and WTA, from whose tournaments balls may be tested.

The ITF, in consultation with manufacturers, has determined the actions that will be taken in the event that less than 100% of any Market Testing sample is found to conform to the Rules of Tennis.

No. of balls in sample	No. of balls failing to conform	Action
12	0-1 2-3 4+	None Letter of warning 1 point towards removal of ITF Approval
24	0-2 3-7 8+	None Letter of warning 1 point towards removal of ITF Approval

The above figures assume that ball properties are normally distributed, with action being taken when a point ± 2 standard deviations (or less) from the mean of the sample distribution exceeds the specifications in the ITF Rules.

The following procedures have been introduced with respect to removal of ITF Approval:

a. Manufacturers of balls which have failed Market Testing in the previous month in accordance with the published criteria will be sent individual reports and a warning letter stating the findings and potential consequences of continuing failure of the ball brand. Manufacturers will also be informed of balls that have passed Market Testing, but reports will not be provided. With respect to failed balls which have been provided to the ITF by tournaments, the tournament organisation and sanctioning body (e.g. Grand Slam, ATP, WTA or the National Association) shall be informed of the test result one month after the manufacturer has been advised.
b. If the total number of balls of a single brand in any samples totalling at least 72 meet the criteria for removal of ITF Approval during a rolling 12-month period[1], the manufacturer will receive a 'yellow card'. The date of notification of the 'yellow card' will trigger a 12-month notice period (the "Notice Period") to enable the manufacturer to address the cause of the failures. The ITF will continue to market-test balls during the Notice Period where possible, and notify the manufacturer of failures/passes in accordance with

[1] e.g. 6 samples of 12 balls (all with 4 or more fails), or 3 samples of 24 balls (all with 8 or more fails), or any combination of these making a total sample of at least 72 balls.

section (a) above. If, in the 12 months following the end of the Notice Period, the brand in question fails Market Testing (as described in this paragraph), i.e. obtains a second 'yellow card', the manufacturer will receive a 'red card' (at the sole discretion of the ITF), at which time ITF Approval will be removed and the ball brand will be deleted from the ITF Technical website listing. In this event, any brands which have been approved by Assimilation (see Section 6) to the ball being removed from the ITF Approved list, will also have ITF Approval withdrawn.

c. Removal of ITF Approval will remain in force for 12 months (the "Removal Period"), from the date of the 'red card'. Manufacturers will be permitted to submit balls for testing for ITF Approval, prior to the end of the Removal Period.

Note: due to the effects of ball ageing, balls manufactured more than 12 months prior to the test date will not be included in the assessment for the purposes of removal of ITF Approval, provided that their ball packaging includes ball production date codes. All balls which do not show production date codes will be considered in accordance with the above procedures.

14. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on ITF ball testing and Approval procedures, visit the ITF Technical website www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/tennis-tech/approved-balls or contact:

The Technical Centre, International Tennis Federation
c/o ITF Licensing (UK) Ltd
Bank Lane, Roehampton
London, SW15 5XZ
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 20 8878 6464
Email: technical@itftennis.com

The shipment of tennis balls for 2027 ITF Approval shall be sent to:

Nichola Chong
ITF Technical Centre
Bank Lane, Roehampton
London, SW15 5XZ
United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 20 8392 4791
Email: TennisNET@itftennis.com

APPENDIX A : THE RULES OF TENNIS
Effective from 1 January 2026

APPENDIX 1 – THE BALL

For all measurements in Appendix I, SI units shall take precedence.

a. The ball shall have a uniform outer surface consisting of a fabric cover except for the Stage 3 (Red) foam ball. If there are any seams, they shall be stitchless.

b. The ball shall conform to one of the types specified in the table immediately below or in the table under paragraph (d).

	TYPE 1 (FAST)	TYPE 2 (MEDIUM)[1]	TYPE 3 (SLOW)[2]	HIGH ALTITUDE[3]
MASS (WEIGHT)	56.0-59.4 grams (1.975-2.095 ounces)	56.0-59.4 grams (1.975-2.095 ounces)	56.0-59.4 grams (1.975-2.095 ounces)	56.0-59.4 grams (1.975-2.095 ounces)
SIZE	6.54-6.86 cm (2.57-2.70 inches)	6.54-6.86 cm (2.57-2.70 inches)	7.00-7.30 cm (2.76-2.87 inches)	6.54-6.86 cm (2.57-2.70 inches)
REBOUND	138-151 cm (53-60 inches)	135-147 cm (53-58 inches)	135-147 cm (53-58 inches)	122-135 cm (48-53 inches)
FORWARD DEFORMATION[4]	0.56-0.74 cm (0.220-0.291 inches)	0.56-0.74 cm (0.220-0.291 inches)	0.56-0.74 cm (0.220-0.291 inches)	0.56-0.74 cm (0.220-0.291 inches)
RETURN DEFORMATION[4]	0.74-1.08 cm (0.291-0.425 inches)	0.80-1.08 cm (0.315-0.425 inches)	0.80-1.08 cm (0.315-0.425 inches)	0.80-1.08 cm (0.315-0.425 inches)
COLOUR	White or yellow	White or yellow	White or yellow	White or yellow

Notes:

[1] This ball may be pressurised or pressureless. The pressureless ball shall have an internal pressure that is no greater than 7 kPa (1 psi) and may be used for high altitude play above 1,219 m (4,000 feet) above sea level, and shall have been acclimatised for 60 days or more at the altitude of the specific tournament.

[2] This ball is also recommended for high altitude play on any court surface type above 1,219 m (4,000 feet) above sea level.

[3] This ball is pressurised and is specified for high altitude play above 1,219 m (4,000 feet) above sea level only.

[4] The deformation shall be the average of a single reading along each of three perpendicular axes. No two individual readings shall differ by more than .08 cm (.031 inches).

c. In addition, all ball types specified under paragraph (b) shall conform to the requirements for durability as shown in the following table:

	MASS (WEIGHT)	REBOUND	FORWARD DEFORMATION	RETURN DEFORMATION
MAXIMUM CHANGE[1]	0.4 grams (0.014 ounces)	4.0 cm (1.6 inches)	0.08 cm (0.031 inches)	0.10 cm (0.039 inches)

Notes:

[1] The largest permissible change in the specified properties resulting from the durability test described in the current edition of *ITF Approved Tennis Balls, Classified Surfaces & Recognised Courts*. The durability test uses laboratory equipment to simulate the effects of nine games of play.

d. Only the ball types specified in the table below can be used in 10 and under tennis competition.

	STAGE 3 (RED) FOAM	STAGE 3 (RED) STANDARD	STAGE 2 (ORANGE) STANDARD	STAGE 1 (GREEN) STANDARD
MASS (WEIGHT)	25.0-43.0 (0.882-1.517 ounces)	36.0-49.0 grams (1.270-1.728 ounces)	36.0-46.9 grams (1.270-1.654 ounces)	47.0-51.5 grams (1.658-1.817 ounces)
SIZE	8.00-9.00 cm (3.15-3.54 inches)	7.00-8.00 cm (2.76-3.15 inches)	6.00-6.86 cm (2.36-2.70 inches)	6.30-6.86 cm (2.48-2.70 inches)
REBOUND	85-105 cm (33-41 inches)	90-105 cm (35-41 inches)	105-120cm (41-47 inches)	120-135 cm (47-53 inches)
FORWARD DEFORMATION[1]	-------	-------	1.40-1.65 cm (0.551-0.650 inches)	0.80-1.05 cm (0.315-0.413 inches)
COLOUR[2]	Any	Red and yellow, or yellow with a red dot	Orange and yellow, or yellow with an orange dot	Yellow with a green dot

Notes:
[1] The deformation shall be the average of a single reading along each of three perpendicular axes. There is no limit on the difference between individual forward deformation readings. There is no specification for return deformation.
[2] All coloured dots shall be reasonable in size and placement.

e. All tests for rebound, mass, size, deformation and durability shall be made in accordance with the Regulations described in the current edition of *ITF Approved Tennis Balls, Classified Surfaces & Recognised Courts*.

Note:
In addition to the ball types specified under paragraph (b) above, the Stage 1 (Green) ball may be used for all levels of competitive play except for world ranking professional tennis events, Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup, the Olympic and Paralympic Tennis Events, World Tennis Tour Men's, Women's and Junior Tournaments and Team events sanctioned by the ITF and affiliated Regional Associations, ITF Senior Circuit and Team events and ITF Wheelchair Tennis Tour Circuit and Team events.

Each National Association shall have the right to decide which national competitive events should use the Stage 1 (Green) ball.

APPENDIX B : INTRODUCTORY TENNIS BALLS

Packaging for introductory tennis balls

Any introductory tennis ball which is a pressurised ball (i.e. has an internal pressure ≥ 7 kPa or 1 psi) should be packaged in a pressurised can.

Note: The ITF recommends that balls used for 10 and under competition are new at the start of the event. Therefore, manufacturers should give consideration to packaging balls in sealed cans or cardboard boxes, rather than polybags or nets.

Rules for ball colour and identification

The 2026 Rules of Tennis require that introductory balls are identified as follows:

- Stage 1 (Green) – all yellow with a solid green dot. The diameter of the green dot should be between 15 mm and 25 mm. Excessively small or large dots will result in failure of Approval testing.
- Stage 2 (Orange) – yellow and orange, or all yellow with a solid orange dot.
- Stage 3 (Red) – yellow and red, or all yellow with a solid red dot. Stage 3 (Red) foam balls may be any colour.

Note: the 'dot' must be solid in colour and not contain any branding.

ITF APPROVED logos for use on Ball Packaging and Marketing Material

Two options have been designed for each Stage. Whilst the ITF would prefer manufacturers to use the logo incorporating the *Play+Stay* logo, an alternative option has been provided for companies who do not wish to participate in the ITF *Tennis...Play+Stay* programme, further details of which can be found on: www.tennisplayandstay.com

The logos shall only be printed in the colours specified below.

ITF Approved Stage 1	*1-colour*: • black • white • green 369
ITF Approved Stage 1 PLAY+STAY SERVE·RALLY·SCORE	*1-colour*: • black • white *2-colour*: • black and green 369 • white and green 369
ITF Approved Stage 2	*1-colour*: • black • white • orange 144

	*1-colour*: • black • white *2-colour*: • black and orange 144 • white and orange 144
	*1-colour*: • black • white • red 485
	*1-colour*: • black • white *2-colour*: • black and red 485 • white and red 485

WORLD TENNIS APPROVED logos for use on Ball Packaging and Marketing Material

Information on the "World Tennis Approved" logos for introductory balls will be confirmed in due course. Artwork will be provided from the ITF Technical Centre, once available for distribution.

APPENDIX C : USE OF "APPROVED" LOGOS

"WORLD TENNIS APPROVED" LOGO

Information on use of the "World Tennis Approved" logo will be confirmed in due course. Artwork will be provided from the ITF Technical Centre, once available for distribution.

"ITF APPROVED" LOGO

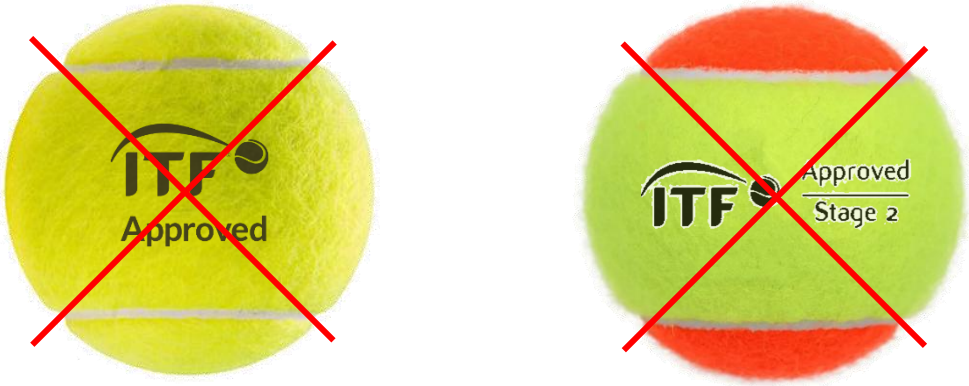
The manufacturer is entitled to use the words "ITF Approved" on the product packaging of all balls that have been tested and approved, including those by Assimilation. Note: the ITF shall not permit the use of the ITF logo without the word "Approved". The word "Approved" must be shown either underneath the ITF logo or to the right of the logo, as indicated below.



When used as a single colour, the logo shall be printed in black, white, green PMS 340 or dark grey PMS Cool Grey 11c. When printed in two colours, the Pantone colours green PMS 340 and yellow PMS 109 shall be used. The logo shall not be more than 2 cm in height or 4 cm in width. The artwork is available from the ITF Technical Centre upon request.

Whilst the inclusion of the ITF Approved logo on ball packaging is not mandatory, the ITF encourages its use.

Note: The ITF shall not permit the "ITF Approved" logo, or ITF Approved logos for Stage 3 (Red), Stage 2 (Orange) and Stage 1 (Green) balls (see Appendix B), to be printed anywhere on the ball (prohibited examples shown below).



For Stage 3 (Red), Stage 2 (Orange) and Stage 1 (Green) balls, a different logo has been designed. Further information can be found in Appendix B.