

THE BACKHAND SLICE Peter Farrell.



Here comes the ball to your backhand. Should you hit it with topspin or slice?

As a general rule (and these type of rules can only ever be general), if you are in a comfortable situation hit the shot with topspin. **If you are in an uncomfortable situation, go for slice.**

It is usually the type of shot that your opponent has hit to you which dictates whether you are feeling comfortable or uncomfortable at the thought of your next shot.

Take a situation where the incoming ball is to your backhand and

- Very high (above shoulder height)
- Very low (below knee height)
- Has a lot of pace (e.g. first serve, smash)
- Straight at you (“into the body”)
- Far away (causing you to stretch).

For most players, these are all situations that are `uncomfortable`, so slice is a good shot selection. Slice is the “*percentage shot*” which will be successful more often than not.

Of course there are times in a match when you will choose with good reason to hit slice when you could have used topspin – for example on the approach shot. But a lot of points, and ultimately matches, are lost by players who choose to try for topspin on their backhand when slice would be the more effective and wise option.