# Lay Set One Winner

This is a simple strategy to get started with, but there's a bit more to it than waiting for the first set to end and then laying whoever won it!

Ever since I started trading tennis back in 2008, I have been looking for a solid indicator of whether or not the first set loser will bounce back in the second set. While I haven't found that Holy Grail (yet) there are plenty of factors which help you turn the odds in your favour.



### Player Form and Stats in Set One

The way the players performed in the first set is the first thing to check when trying to assess how set two will go.

If you are going to back a player in the second set, you need to have seen them put pressure on their opponent's serve in set one. Ideally, they need to have broken the opponent's serve but having had break points is also a good indicator.

As well as being able to pressure their opponent's serve, the player you plan to back needs to have served fairly well themselves. For example, if they have only held serve once in the first set, it's going to be difficult to justify backing them in set two. It's ok if they have faced a lot of break points as long as they have saved most of them. That shows that they are fighting and not crumbling under the pressure.

If both players struggled on serve, there's a good chance that this will continue into the next set. You can lay the set winner on their serve, but it is probably wise to at least remove liability when your player gets a break of serve.

If the pre-match favourite gets broken in their first service game of the match but then holds serve fairly easily for the rest of the set and they lose the set, there is a very good chance that they will bounce back in set two. Most players can be vulnerable in their first service game of the match.

A player can make a really bad start to a set and perhaps loses their serve once or twice. However, by monitoring how the in-play stats are changing, you can see when they become more competitive. They may have left it too late to recover enough to win the set but this is a good indicator that it is worth backing them after they lose the set.

At the moment, I use [tennis24](https://www.tennis24.com/%22%20%5Ct%20%22https%3A//members.tennisprofits.com/lay-set-one-winner/_blank) for in-play stats.

### Does a Close First Set Mean a Close Second Set?

Not necessarily.

In a men's match where both players are serving well and there was just a single break or a tie break, there is a good chance that the next set will be similar. However, the bigger the difference in their ranking/ability, the more the chances are that the underdog has given everything he has to keep the first set tight and the second set will be more one sided.

In women's matches, you are likely to see a *completely* different second set to the first. It is not unknown to get one set being 6-0 and the next set being 6-0 to the *other* player! It's not common, but it does happen.

Especially in women's matches, if the first set ends 6-1 it is very likely that the losing player will at least get a break of serve - *and will often win* - the second set. Obviously, if there is a huge difference in the players ability then the turnaround is far less likely. This works especially well where the favourite is above 1.60 at the start of the match.

In both men's and women's matches, if the first set goes to a tie break then it favours the pre match favourite in set two. This is regardless of who wins the tie break.

### Pre-Match Analysis

You can also conduct pre-match analysis and draw up a shortlist of potential opportunities for the day ahead.

When I am assessing a match, one of the main things I am looking at is how much of a chance does the underdog have. If I think they have a chance of taking a set, then it really increases the chances of the match having 3 sets.

Analysing matches takes practise and experience. I will be making some videos over the coming months to show you exactly how to do it, using our exclusive Trading Stats.

### How to Trade

So you have found a suitable match to trade, but the first question is when do you open your trade? If your player is serving first, do you place the lay as soon as the set ends or do you wait for them to hold serve first?

Personally, in men's matches I lay as soon as the set ends. In women's matches I usually lay part stake as soon as the set ends and add the rest if/when they hold serve. If they get broken in the first game, I can still lay the rest at the new lower price.

If your player is not serving first, in a women's match you can lay straight after the set ends. In men's matches (if they have both served fairly well) it's best to wait for the set winner to hold before laying.

Once you have some experience of trading, you will be able to anticipate where the price will be when there are a couple of points remaining in the first set. Very often, the market overreacts a little to the set being won but it will almost immediately move up a few ticks as other traders start to enter their own lays. If you anticipate the price correctly, you will easily make a few ticks profit in just a few seconds.

In order to open your trade, lay the player who won set one.

As you will have read on the [Tennis Trading Basics](https://members.tennisprofits.com/tennis-trading-basics/) page, always use the Match Odds market on Betfair. It has the best liquidity which allows you to get in and - more importantly - get out.

As I explained on the [Bank Management](https://members.tennisprofits.com/bank-management/) page, if you're new to trading then you should use a small stake while you gain experience. There will be plenty more tennis matches tomorrow, the next day and the day after that so there's no rush. When trading, the only thing you can do quickly is blow your bank. Don't be that person!

The tricky part is knowing when to get out. If you're a beginner, it's probably best to take a profit almost as soon as it's available. If your player breaks serve, you will be able to remove all liability or even green up for a guaranteed profit. Both of these options take one click on trading software, such as Fairbot.

A more experienced trader may well decided to stay in the trade longer, which is a skill you will gain over time.

If your player's serve is broken, you have a couple of choices:

1. Accept you got this one wrong, hedge evenly with red on both sides and take the loss, or
2. Lay again at a much lower price with the leader now a set and a break ahead. The added liability won't be big and you will have a chance to recover your red if your player breaks back. If the price does start to rise, you can gradually remove liability.

The key to successful trading is to avoid big losses. By using small stakes to start with and by accepting managed losses when games go against you, you'll be protecting your bank while gaining valuable experience.

In other words, you either win or you learn.