

Guidance for Tennis Venues

COVID-19: RETURN TO RESTRICTED PLAY

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TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN

PLAY SAFE GUIDELINES - RETURN TO RESTRICTED PLAY

These guidelines currently apply to England only, and have been produced in line with the Government guidance on public spaces, outdoor activity and exercise published on 11 May 2020, which can be read on the [Gov.uk website](#).

Tennis courts in Scotland and Wales should remain closed.

INTRODUCTION

We know tennis venues will be keen to provide an opportunity for your members to resume tennis activity as soon as it is safe and appropriate for them to do so. By its very nature, tennis is an activity whereby close person to person contact can be avoided, with the Government saying tennis is a good example of an activity that can be undertaken in a way compliant with social distancing restrictions.

Based on our discussions with Government and following the adjustment of lockdown restrictions, the LTA has developed a set of practical guidelines for venues to follow so that tennis can be played in England during lockdown, where the local environment allows.

These guidelines apply to both tennis and padel, and outline adaptations so that tennis activity can be enjoyed in a way that is in line with Government advice and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19. They include measures to limit hand to shared surface contact and minimise unnecessary interactions with others.

Tennis venues across the country are all different and operate in different local contexts. Making an assessment of whether a safe exercise environment can be provided depends on a range of factors, which apply differently at each venue. It is the responsibility of each tennis provider, coach and facility to make that assessment based on their local environment.

These guidelines should be read in conjunction with the guidelines for players and coaches, and all elements of the guidelines should be considered to ensure activity can be delivered safely.

Should you have any questions, [please refer to the FAQs on the LTA website](#).

Alongside these guidelines, venues should read the information published by [Sport England](#), and specifically their [Q&A](#).

GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS VENUES

VENUE MANAGEMENT

- Ensure your club committee oversees and maintains the implementation of measures. Venues are advised to take time to ensure they reopen safely, rather than rushing
- All activity should be consistent with the government guidance regarding health, travel, social distancing and hygiene at all times
- Venues must consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission. A thorough risk assessment should be undertaken, and appropriate measures put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are protected. A risk assessment template is available from the COVID-19 section of the venue [Resource Library](#) on the LTA website
- Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of Government measures - the LTA remains in discussions with Government and so we recommend you check the official LTA position at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest recommendations
- Any measures venues put in place to enable tennis activity to resume need to be capable of being flexed or changed quickly if tighter movement/social distancing is reintroduced in the future or when the restrictions are further relaxed

FACILITIES

- Outdoor courts only should be open, with indoor courts and bubble courts remaining closed
- Toilet facilities can be opened if the venue wishes, but particular care should be taken by those using them and those cleaning them. Where they are open, ensure soap and water is provided
- Clubhouses can be opened in a limited way for operational reasons (e.g. to switch on floodlights) or for toilet access
- All social spaces and gyms should remain closed
- Ensure nets are maintained at the appropriate height to avoid players having to adjust them, and remove net winders
- If your courts require dragging (e.g. clay) or drying after rain, have a nominated person to do this or make disposable gloves and spray available for players to use
- Remove any other unnecessary equipment and items from courts (e.g. benches)

HEALTH, SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained (in some cases this may require limited access to the clubhouse being possible)
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the coronavirus pandemic is available on the [St John Ambulance website](#)
- Make hand sanitizers or wipes available for use at entrance/exit to venue/courts where possible (Hand sanitizer stations can be sourced from the LTA Buying Group - see <https://www.ltabuyinggroup.co.uk> or speak to your LTA regional team)
- Clean all common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) regularly, wearing disposable gloves

TENNIS ACTIVITY

- Limit activities to court rental and coaching activity to no more than two people per court (other than where players are from the same household)
- No extra-curricular or social activity should take place

COURT ACCESS

- Ensure measures are in place to minimise encounters between people, including in car parks and at entrances
- Where safe and appropriate, doors and court gates should be left open during playing hours
- Consider different entry and exit routes to the courts/venue where possible, and ensure this is clearly marked
- Consider marking two metre distances at appropriate points, such as the entry gates to courts

EQUIPMENT

- Players should bring their own equipment - it is advised to avoid use of communal rackets or tennis balls
- Use of coaching equipment (e.g. cones) should be limited, with any equipment used cleaned and wiped down afterwards

BOOKINGS & PAYMENT

- Operate online booking for courts and sessions where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings
- Implement a short buffer period (e.g. 10 minutes) between court/session booking slots to allow time for players to leave before the next players arrive
- Consider staggering the start time of court bookings so that players do not all arrive/leave at the same time
- Take any payments online, and avoid handling cash
- Online bookings can be facilitated through ClubSpark, which is free for all LTA Registered Venues, and via a free online national booking platform - LTA Rally - which makes it easy for players to find, book and pay for courts from their mobile phone. Email rally@lta.org.uk for more information on how to sign up to ClubSpark or Rally

COMMUNICATION

- Communicate with your members/customers clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place at your venue, and guidelines they are asked to follow
- Ensure signage on guidelines for playing tennis safely and promoting hygiene measures is clearly displayed (and ensure these remain up to date as restrictions change)
- Posters that can be used to aid communication will be available from the COVID-19 section of the [Resource Library](#)

COACHING

- It is important that both recreational play and coaching activity resumes. Venues should liaise with their coach(es) to ensure an approach to activity is agreed that is feasible to deliver safely, and how coaches can be supported to deliver lessons

SPECTATORS

- Spectating should be actively discouraged. Where attendance of a parent/guardian (non-participant) or a carer for a disabled player is required, it should be limited to one per player where possible, with social distancing strictly observed while watching the sessions (consider marking out specific boxes/areas for this purpose)

COMPETITIONS

- The initial focus during this phase should be on facilitating recreational and social play, and letting players spend time practicing
- Some formats of competition will be able to resume before others, and [Local Tennis Leagues](#) and singles box leagues/ladders can be played from 13 May as long as they adhere to the guidelines in place
- All LTA staged and LTA approved competitions (grade 1 to 6) up to at least Sunday 28th June 2020 have been cancelled
- The LTA will be providing guidelines for the resumption of competitive tennis activity in due course