

# Guidance for Tennis

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 coaches will be keen to offer sessions for customers as soon as it is safe and appropriate 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 coaches 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.

Coaches and coaching providers 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 venues, 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, coaches should read the information published by [Sport England](#), and specifically their [Q&A](#).

# GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS COACHING

## COACHING ACTIVITY

- All activity should be consistent with the government guidance regarding health, travel, social distancing and hygiene at all times
- Coaches and coaching organisations 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 - you are advised to liaise with your venue when doing this. 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](http://www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus) on a regular basis to stay abreast of the latest recommendations
- Any measures coaches 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

## COURT LIMITS

- Coached sessions should be limited to one to one coaching activity only

## MAINTAINING SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Coaches should position themselves on the other side of net, and maintain social distancing from the player at all times
- Adaptations to drills and how you provide feedback/instruction may be needed to ensure social distancing guidelines can be safely adhered to

## EQUIPMENT

- Use new or fresh tennis balls where possible for each lesson. To facilitate this, consider using less balls per lesson (e.g. one or two cans). Use 'live ball' exercises over basket feeding so less balls are needed. Balls that are stored for 72 hours, can then be re-used
- If 'live ball' drills over the net are difficult for your players based on their level, adapt the drill to make it easier, or consider the use lower compression balls to facilitate rallying (e.g. green ball with adults)
- It is advised the coach should be the only person to touch the tennis balls and players use their feet/racket to return them. Where players need to handle tennis balls (e.g. serving toss), it is advised they should bring their own, clearly marked tennis balls that only they touch
- Players should bring their own equipment – it is advised not to allow racket sharing or use of communal rackets
- Use of coaching equipment (e.g. cones) should be limited, with any equipment used cleaned and wiped down afterwards
- Ensure all equipment is removed from the court at the end of the session

## 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 arranged)
- Guidance on delivering first aid during the coronavirus pandemic is available on the [St John Ambulance website](#)
- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve
- Avoid touching your face

## BOOKINGS & PAYMENT

- Operate online booking for coaching sessions where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings
- Implement a short buffer period (e.g. 10 minutes) between session booking slots or finish sessions slightly early to allow time for players to leave before the next players arrive
- Take any payments online, and avoid handling cash

## COACHING YOUNG CHILDREN

- The same guidance applies for coaching children as for adults, with only one to one coaching permitted
- Red court guidance: The same guidance applies for coaching 'red stage' children as for adults, with only one to one coaching permitted. If more than one coach wishes to run one to one 'red stage' sessions at the same time, then a maximum of two red courts should be set up per full sized adult court. Adequate space and care should be provided around these smaller courts to maintain social distancing
- Guardian (non-participant) attendance should be limited to one per child where possible, with social distancing strictly observed while watching the session

## COMMUNICATION & VENUE LIAISON

- Coaches should liaise with the venue to ensure an agreed approach to activity that is feasible to deliver safely, and explore how coaches can be supported to deliver sessions
- Communicate with your customers clearly and regularly, making them aware in advance of the measures you are putting in place for your sessions, and guidelines they should follow when attending