



Guidance for Tennis Venues in England

COVID-19: RETURN TO MANAGED PLAY

Version 3 – Published 1 July 2020



TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN

PLAY SAFE GUIDELINES - RETURN TO MANAGED PLAY

These guidelines apply to England only. They have been produced in line with Government announcements on the easing of lockdown restrictions, and the subsequent Government guidance on [gatherings, public spaces, and outdoor activities](#) and the [phased return of outdoor sport and recreation](#) published on the Gov.uk website.

Alongside these guidelines, venues should read any updated information published by [Sport England](#) and on [Government guidance for providers of outdoor facilities](#).

Guidelines for playing tennis in Scotland can be read [here](#) and for Wales, [here](#).

INTRODUCTION

We know tennis venues will be keen to provide a full range of opportunities for your members 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 continued discussions with Government and following the further easing of restrictions, the LTA has developed this updated set of practical guidelines for venues to follow so that tennis can be played in England, where the local environment allows.

We have indicated the key additions and updates to these guidelines for Version 3 of this document with **[NEW]** and **[UPDATED]** on the following pages.

These guidelines apply to both tennis and padel, and outline adaptations and considerations 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 maintain hygiene 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](#).

[NEW] IMPORTANT: Where a local lockdown is in place alternative measures and guidelines may be in place – venues in these areas are advised to check our main coronavirus information page at www.lta.org.uk/coronavirus before playing.

GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS VENUES

VENUE MANAGEMENT

- Ensure your club committee oversees and maintains the implementation of measures and any updates to them. Venues are advised to take time in implementing these updated guidelines
- 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 (or updated if one previously done), 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 social distancing is reintroduced in the future or when the restrictions are further relaxed

SOCIAL DISTANCING

- **[NEW]** Venues should be fully aware of the latest Government advice on staying alert and safe (social distancing). **What this means from 4 July can be read [here](#)**, while the information in place up to 4 July can be read [here](#).

FACILITIES

- **[UPDATED]** Outdoor courts only should be open, with indoor courts and bubble courts remaining closed (it has been indicated that subject to public health, it is the Government's aspiration to reopen indoor gyms and leisure facilities in mid-July – the LTA will provide further details around this as and when we receive information from Government)
- **[NEW]** From 4 July, clubhouses and pavilions can be opened for the public to access outdoor courts, use the toilet, or purchase food and drink
- **[NEW]** Venues providing such indoor access should consider ensuring clear signage is in place so people can find their destination quickly, putting in place queue management or one-way flow measures, and limiting the number of customers in the building, overall and in any particular congestion areas
- Where toilet facilities are opened, particular care should be taken by those using them and those cleaning them. Where they are open, ensure soap and water is provided
- Indoor facilities such changing rooms (other than toilets) and gyms should remain closed
- **[NEW]** Further guidance for the reopening of clubhouses and pavilions is [provided on the Government website](#)
- 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, venues are advised to 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)

SERVING FOOD & DRINK **[NEW]**

- Bars, cafes and restaurants, including any food or drink facilities inside a clubhouse, can open from 4 July – consumption is permitted on site (indoors and out)
- Make customers aware of, and encourage compliance with, limits on gatherings (for example, on arrival or at booking)
- Hot and cold food and drink may also be served on a takeaway basis (prior to 4 July this should be for consumption outside the building)
- At till points, consider mandating contactless or at least card payment, to avoid handling cash
- **IMPORTANT: Opening of bars and restaurants, and the serving of food and drink, should only be done in accordance with the [latest guidance on the Government website](#) for this, which should read in full**
- Further information is also provided on the [Food Standards Agency website](#)

HEALTH, SAFETY & HYGIENE

- Ensure usual access to first aid and emergency equipment is maintained
- 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 and buildings where possible (Hand sanitizer stations can be sourced from the LTA Buying Group - see <https://www.ltabuyinggroup.co.uk>)
- Clean all common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) regularly, wearing disposable gloves
- Further guidance on maintaining hygiene at your venue is [available on the Government website](#)
- If someone who has played at your venue develops symptoms of COVID-19, they should be directed to follow the Government's 'test and trace' guidelines, which can be read on the [Gov.uk](#) website

TENNIS ACTIVITY

- Limit activities to court rental and coaching activity for groups of no more than six people
- Encourage players not to congregate on or around the court before and after play
- **[NEW]** Any individual groups should not interact with anyone outside of the group they are attending the venue with (e.g. players on another court or in a different coaching group)
- **[NEW]** While multiple group activity can take place side by side, larger group activity such as Club Nights, club mix-in sessions or Open Days that involve people interacting with others outside their group should not yet be held

COURT ACCESS

- Ensure measures are in place to minimise encounters between people, including in car parks and at entrances
- Court users should be advised to clean their hands with hand sanitiser after touching shared surfaces such as gates. Where safe and appropriate, doors and court gates could 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 are advised to bring their own equipment - however, use of communal rackets can be done subject to thorough cleaning measures between use
- Any coaching equipment used (e.g. cones) should be cleaned and wiped down afterwards

BOOKINGS & PAYMENT

- Operate online booking for courts and sessions where at all possible, or alternatively phone bookings
- **[UPDATED]** The previous precautionary measures of a short buffer period between court/session booking slots and staggering start times have been relaxed and are no longer advised, however, venues should ensure appropriate signage is in place to guide entrance and exit to courts, with markings to facilitate social distancing around pinch points (e.g. court gates) and an area for people to wait safely while previous users leave the court
- 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 takes place. Venues should continue to 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 and group sessions

SUPERVISION

- Where attendance of a parent/guardian (non-participant) is required, or a carer for a disabled player, it is permitted and is not counted as part of the maximum group size of six, but should be off court and 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 [UPDATED]

- Some formats of competition will be able to resume before others, and [Local Tennis Leagues](#) LTA Youth Box Leagues and internal singles and doubles box leagues/ladders can be played as long as they adhere to the guidelines in place
- All LTA staged and LTA approved competitions (grade 1 to 5) up to at least Monday 31 August 2020 have been cancelled
- LTA approved competitions (Grade 6) such as Matchplays and County & District Leagues may be able to resume earlier than 31 August based on Government advice - we will provide an update on these competitions in due course