

Badminton England Return To Play Update - Step 1

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Introduction

On 22 February 2021, the Government set out its roadmap out of the current lockdown. Badminton England welcomes this announcement and published our own roadmap for the return of badminton, in accordance with all Government measures, shortly afterwards.

As with previous easing of restrictions, detailed Government guidance for sport will be published as we get closer to each step to clarify what is permitted. This roadmap will, therefore, be updated as the Government confirms the Country can move to the next step of its plan and publishes that detailed guidance. Whilst we appreciate that everyone will want as much information as early as possible to plan your return to play, Government guidance will only be released one week before the start of each step in line with its own clear policy of reviewing data before moving the Country to the next step of its roadmap.

This roadmap provides an outline of how badminton can return, based on current guidance, and provides the opportunity for you to consider when you can start playing again. This update also sets out detail on what is permitted as the final stage of Step 1 is implemented. Amendments from previous guidance are highlighted through the document.

We will update our return to play guidance on our website as more detail becomes available to help our clubs, counties, coaches, volunteers and players get back on court safely. Currently, we are working closely with facility providers to understand availability and to access courts as quickly as possible.

For many it will be a long time since you were last able to hit a shuttle and we are sure that you will want to get back on court as soon as possible – keep an eye on our website and social channels as we launch fitness, playing and competitive opportunities over the summer.

This has been an incredibly difficult year in some many ways, and as the roll out of the vaccination programme continues, we can begin to look forward to getting back on court once again.

As before, we remain available to provide help and support to any members or groups on your return to play – we will release updated resources and guidance documents at our return to play hub on www.badmintonengland.co.uk/returntoplay or you can contact us directly via our [contact form](#).

Let's Talk Badminton

We are also really keen to hear from you and to make sure that we are supporting the badminton community as best as possible. To do this, we are launching 'Let's Talk Badminton', our largest ever consultation exercise. This comprises a series of online consultations, player surveys and drop-in sessions that will allow everyone involved in badminton to help shape the return to play and come back stronger than ever. Keep an eye on our website for more details.

Roadmap

Step 1a
8 March



- Schools reopen
- **Curricular and extracurricular/out of school hours delivery** of badminton in schools permitted – schools have final decision on what is permitted – see Government guidance.
- **Pathway players** – socially distanced training for pathway players at recognised elite training venues.

Step 1b
29 March



- Rule of 6 or two households applies outdoors; organised outdoors sport permitted
- **Recreational (self-organised) outdoor badminton** – permitted with maximum 6 players or two households
- **Organised (by club/coach) outdoor badminton sessions** – permitted; group size of 15
- **Outdoors 1-1 coaching** - permitted

Step 2
12 April



- At least five weeks after Step 1, no earlier than 12 April
- Indoor leisure centres permitted to reopen; adult activity permitted for individuals or household only; Young people activity permitted (Under 18s – includes those 17 on 31/8/20 who have turned 18 since)
 - **Adults** – household only singles or doubles permitted
 - **Young people** – junior clubs/organised sessions/coached sessions/recreational activity – all permitted with group size of 15 (TBC)
 - **1-1 coaching** – permitted
 - **Competition**– localised junior tournaments permitted

Step 3
17 May



- At least five weeks after Step 2, no earlier than 17 May
- Rule of 6 or two households indoors; domestic travel and overnight stays permitted; gatherings of up to 30 permitted outdoors
 - **Adults** – singles and doubles (TBC) permitted under rule of 6 or two households; clubs/No Strings Badminton/organised sessions/coached sessions/recreational activity – all permitted
 - **Tournaments** – junior circuit tournaments permitted
 - **Coach education** – courses to resume under rule of 6

Step 4
21 June



- At least five weeks after Step 3, no earlier than 21 June
- No legal limits on social contact
 - **Play** – all play permitted
 - **Tournaments** – senior circuit tournaments permitted
 - **Coach education** – courses permitted with no restrictions

Step 1a – Curricular and extracurricular/out of school hours delivery – permitted from 8th March

Organised badminton for education purposes and organised badminton as part of wraparound childcare is permitted – more information is available [here](#)

Organised badminton for education purposes

Schools and colleges have the flexibility to decide how physical education, sport and physical activity is provided whilst following their system of controls. Each school has the final say on what is permitted. Schools can work with external coaches and clubs for curricular and extracurricular delivery.

Pupils should be kept in consistent groups with equipment thoroughly cleaned between each use by different groups. Outdoor sport should be prioritised – resources to support school delivery can be found [here](#)

Organised badminton as part of wraparound childcare

Out-of- school settings and wraparound childcare providers can offer indoor and outdoor sports provision to all children, where it is being used for the purposes of supporting their parents to work, seek work, undertake education or training, attend a medical appointment or address a medical need or to attend a support group. Vulnerable children are able to access this provision under any circumstances.

Delivery

Any delivery under this exemption must conform with Badminton England guidance for safe delivery.

Step 1b – Outdoor badminton – permitted from 29th March

Recreational (self-organised) play	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Singles and doubles permitted• Maximum group size of 6 (rule of 6) or two households
Organised play	Must be formally organised by a qualified instructor, club, national governing body, company or charity and follow guidance below: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Singles and doubles permitted• Maximum group size 15• Coaching permitted – organised activity and 1-1• Competition permitted in line with maximum group size
1-1 coaching outdoors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permitted• No limit on number of clients in a day
Travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permitted for sport and exercise (not restricted to local area)• Minimise journeys where possible

Social distancing must be observed before and after play – no group socialising permitted

People with disabilities

- People with disabilities can participate in organised outdoor and indoor sport without being subject to social contact limits.
- Non-disabled people are not permitted to participate, except where necessary to enable the activity to take place (such as a carer or coach helping the disabled person to exercise).

Before playing

- Keep up to date with Government guidance on social distancing and gathering sizes.
- If you are symptomatic or living in a household with someone else who has a possible or confirmed Covid-19 infection you should remain at home.
- Good hand hygiene is essential – wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds – you should wash your hands before leaving to play and on your return to home.

Before playing

- It is the responsibility of each user (individual, coach, club, group) to understand the specific requirements of the venue you are using.
- You must follow the venue's guidance to maintain social distancing on entering and leaving the venue and whilst moving around it.
- We recommend that you arrive prior to your players, changed and ready to coach. Shower at home and do not use the venue's changing area. Changing rooms are not permitted to open in Step 1.

Social Interaction

- Social interaction before and after playing is not permitted.

Safe sessions – outdoor activity

- Clubs, coaches, and the wider badminton community should ensure that activity is run safely in line with the guidance within this document, putting in place any additional measures or sanctions required.
- The following guidelines apply to any club session, coaching session, match, No Strings session or group activity delivered outdoors and must be in place before delivering activity:
 - You must complete a risk assessment for each session or match based on the venue, the activity you plan to deliver and your players to ensure the session can be delivered safely and in line with government guidelines – you can find a template [here](#).
 - All clubs/groups must appoint a Covid-19 officer for each session including league matches. This should be the coach if delivering a coaching session.
 - All coaches, officials, No Strings coordinators and Covid-19 officers should complete the ReActivate COVID awareness [training](#).
 - To support your members to return to play you should ensure that you have communicated how sessions will be run safely and any guidelines they will need to follow.
- As a National Governing Body, it is our responsibility to ensure that coaches, clubs, leagues etc are running their activities safely and take action to address any issues. If you become aware of any activity that is not following the guidelines please report these using our [contact form](#) and selecting noncompliance.

Playing Badminton - Outdoors

- Both singles play and doubles play using all areas of the court permitted.
- We recommend that you do not change ends.
- Players are not permitted to interact with anyone outside of the group they are playing in (e.g. players in another group).
- Other than where players are from the same household or part of a support bubble, follow Government advice on staying alert and safe.
- The following guidelines apply to any club session, coaching session, match, No Strings session or group activity delivered outdoors and must be in place before delivering activity:
 - Stay at least two metres away from other players (including during play) as much as possible. This is mandatory when taking breaks and before and after play.
 - Do not make physical contact with other players (such as shaking hands or high fiving).

Managing Shuttles and Equipment

- As a club or coach organising a session or match, you should ensure that you provide hand sanitiser for your players.
- Players and coaches must take all their own equipment they need for the session keeping to essential items. You should only use your own racket.
- You should not share equipment, and should clean and wipe down your equipment before and after use.
- Shuttles should be allocated to a group of players in line with how you are organising the session in the location. Players within that group can share shuttles but should adhere to strict hygiene rules and should not handle any shuttles allocated to other groups.
- Bring a full water bottle, clearly marked and do not share food or drink with others.
- Equipment bags should be stored behind the court you are playing on and at least 2 metres from the back of the court and any other players.
- Ensure you take all your belongings with you at the end of the session and do not leave anything on court.
- Avoid using/touching other equipment such as nets, posts, where possible. If you have to set up or take down nets, for example, ensure you wash your hands immediately afterwards in line with Government guidance.

Organising your session – outdoor activity

- A maximum of 15 players can be grouped together; depending on the total space available ensuring that social distancing is maintained – you do not need to sub-divide them into smaller groups
- Players must stay within their allocated group during a session, but they can rotate within the group providing social distancing is maintained.
- You can have more than one group in a location and groups should be spread over an appropriate number of courts to allow for social distancing to be maintained.
- Sessions should be managed by the identified Covid-19 Officer, who is able to take part in play providing they are able to manage the session and do not exceed playing numbers.
- All movement on and off court must be controlled by the designated session Covid-19 Officer.

- You must implement a pre-booking system which will enable you to keep attendance records for all sessions and matches, including who played in what groups for a minimum of 21 days in order to comply with the NHS Test and Trace. Badminton England has made a booking system available to affiliated clubs to manage your sessions and groups.
- If collecting monies from players, you should use online or contactless payment wherever possible.
- If delivering back to back sessions, end the first session early and start the next session late in order to reduce the risk and provide safe change overs of players. If you run back to back club sessions, no players from the first session can attend the second session.
- More advice and tools to help you run and organise sessions can be found [here](#).

Coaching - outdoor activity

- Coaching can take place in groups of people from different households in line with group sizes specified above. No limit on number of groups coached in a single day.
- 1-1 coaching is permitted; there is no limit on the number of clients in a single day.
- A coach can coach on a ratio of up to 1: 15 – you do not need to sub-divide them into smaller groups.
- Players must stay within their allocated group during a session, but they can rotate within the group providing social distancing is maintained.
- You can have more than one group in a location and groups should be spread over an appropriate number of courts to allow for social distancing to be maintained.
- A coach (or assistant coach) is needed for each group (up to 15) if any coaching is to take place. Players cannot move between groups during a session.
- Coaches are permitted to coach another group after the conclusion of the first session.
- Additional [guidance](#) has been provided for coaches on how to manage sessions. This may also be useful for other groups to help them organise sessions.

Spectators

- Spectators are not permitted in any indoor or outdoor sport facility.
- This does not apply to carers for people with disabilities, or adults needed to supervise under-18s in a safeguarding role. Where it is necessary for them to be present, supervising adults should not mix with others from outside their household or support bubble.

Disclaimer

Please note that the subject matter covered in this guidance is in no way exhaustive and the material does not stand on its own nor is intended to be relied upon as a substitute for obtaining specific legal advice. Individual circumstances will differ. The information contained in this guidance is given in good faith but any liability of Badminton England or its professional advisors (including their respective members or employees) to you or any third party which may arise out of the reliance by you or any other party on the contents of this guidance is hereby excluded to the fullest extent permitted by law. Badminton England and its professional advisors accept no duty of care or liability for any loss occasioned, whether caused by negligence or otherwise, to any person acting or refraining from actions as a result of any material in this guidance. We would strongly recommend that you consult professional advisors on specific issues before acting or refraining from action on any of the contents of this guidance.

