

Badminton England Return To Play Update

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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.

In line with its roadmap, the Government subsequently announced that the Country can move to Step 2 from Monday 12th April 2021. This update of our own roadmap sets out the detail on what is permitted at Step 2.

As with previous easing of restrictions, detailed Government guidance for sport is published as we get closer to each step to clarify what is permitted. This roadmap will, therefore, continue to 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.

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 so 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 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. Click [here](#) to get involved.

Roadmap

Step 1
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
- **Disabled people** – organised group play permitted indoors and outdoors
- **Pathway players** – socially distanced training for pathway players at recognised elite training venues

Step 1
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 (coach to player ratio 1:15)
- **1-1 coaching** - permitted for adults and juniors (coaches permitted to coach a household); no limit on number of clients in a day

Step 2
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– all permitted with a maximum group size of 1 coach to 15 players. More than one group permitted based on social distancing being adhered to.
- **1-1 coaching** – permitted for adults and juniors (coaches permitted to coach a household); no limit on number of clients in a day
- **Tournaments** – 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 1 – 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 on the [Badminton England Resource Hub](#)

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. Support for coaches working with schools can be found on the [Badminton England Resource Hub](#)

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 to coach helping the disabled person to play).

Delivery

Any delivery under these exemptions must conform with Badminton England guidance for safe delivery.

Badminton Activity – Covid-19 Local Restrictions Step 2 – Permitted badminton activity from 12th April

Activity Type	Outdoor	Indoor
Social Play*	✓ Permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singles & doubles Maximum group size of 6 (rule of 6) or two households 	✓ Permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults -Household/support bubble only
Organised group activity**	✓ Permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singles & doubles Maximum group size 15 Group coaching permitted (coach additional to group) 	✓ Permitted for juniors (under 18***) & disabled people only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Singles & doubles Maximum group size 15 Group coaching permitted (coach additional to group)
1:1 Coaching	✓ Permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults & juniors (coaches permitted to coach a household); no limit on number of clients in a day 	✓ Permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults & juniors (coaches permitted to coach a household); no limit on number of clients in a day
Competition	✓ Permitted <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In line with maximum group sizes 	✓ Permitted for juniors & disabled people only <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Junior & disability competition only In line with maximum group sizes
Spectating & Supervising	X Spectating not permitted	
Travel	✓ Permitted for sport and exercise (not restricted to local area) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimise journeys where possible; no overnight stays 	
Social distancing / masks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social distancing must be observed before and after play – no group socialising permitted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social distancing must be observed before and after play – no group socialising permitted Masks to be worn when not participating in badminton activity

*Social play is defined as activity that is informal and self-organised

**Organised group activity is defined as activity formally organised by a qualified instructor, club, national governing body, company, or charity

*** Under-18s includes young people who were under 18 on 31 August 2020, even if they turn 18 during the remainder of the academic year



Before playing

Ensure all participants and attendees (including players, officials, organisers, volunteers and spectators) are aware of COVID-19 symptoms and the need to self-assess before attending every sporting activity.

- Ensure all participants and attendees (including players, officials, organisers, volunteers and spectators) are aware of COVID-19 symptoms and the need to self-assess before attending every sporting activity.
- Keep up to date with Government guidance on social distancing and gathering sizes.
- Any participant or other attendee reporting symptoms does not attend and is directed to follow [NHS and PHE guidance on self-isolation](#).
- Ensure participants are aware of any increased risk associated with taking part in sporting activity.
- Participants are strongly advised to comply with public health restrictions and avoid high-risk behaviour outside the sports setting to reduce the risk to their fellow participants when they do attend.
- Participants continue to adhere to legal gathering limits before and after sporting activities, act responsibly and limit transmission risk wherever possible.
- 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.

Venue

- 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.
- **[Updated]** You do not need to wear a face covering while playing, but you should wear a face covering at all other times. Coaches are not required to wear face coverings while present in a work or volunteering capacity.
- **[Updated]** Although changing rooms are permitted to open in Step 2, we recommend that you avoid or minimise use by arriving changed and ready to play. Shower at home and do not use the venue's changing area.

Social Interaction

- **[Updated]** Social interaction before and after playing is not permitted. Ensure that participants adhere to legal gathering limits.
- Limit the time spent congregating at a venue before and after sporting activity. This could involve having strict meeting times or staggering start times, and advising participants to arrive in kit and ready to warm-up.
- Ensure that participants maintain social distancing throughout warm-ups and when not on court.
- **Social distancing must be observed before and after play – no group socialising permitted.**

Safe sessions

- 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 organised club/group session or coaching session and must be in place before delivering activity:
 - You must complete a risk assessment for each session 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. This should be the coach if delivering a coaching session.
 - All coaches, officials, 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.

[Updated] Playing badminton – all activity outdoors; organised activity for juniors and disabled people indoors

- 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 organised club or coaching session or group activity delivered 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).
 - Avoid chasing the shuttle down towards another court if other players are using it.

[Updated] Organised group activity is not permitted for adults at Step 2.

[Updated] Playing badminton – social/self organised play

- The only social/self organised play permitted at Step 2 is between players from the same household or support bubble. Guidance for playing badminton must follow the guidance for play set out above.

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

Organising your session

- 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 and around the hall must be controlled by the designated session Covid-19 Officer. You should adopt a one-way flow around the venue where possible.
- 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](#)

[Updated] Coaching

- 1-1 coaching is permitted indoors and outdoors; there is no limit on the number of clients in a single day.
- Group coaching is permitted outdoors for all players and indoors only for under 18s and disabled people. It must be conducted under the following guidance:
 - Coaching can take place in groups of people from different households in line with group sizes specified above (presently 15). No limit on number of groups coached 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.
 - Shouting increases the risk of transmission, particularly in close proximity situations or when face-to-face. Coaches should refrain from shouting, and those on the court should avoid it where possible.
- Additional guidance is available on the [Badminton England Resource Hub](#) for coaches on how to manage sessions and support their return to play. This may also be useful for other groups to help them organise sessions.

[Updated] Competition

- Competition or tournaments are permitted at Step 2 for under 18s and disabled people in line with the guidance for organising a safe session set out above. Groups of no more than 15 players may take part in a competition or tournament and there must be no mixing of players between groups.
- Organisers are encouraged to seek advice from Badminton England but must ensure that:
 - Social distancing is maintained at all times when players are not on court.
 - Travel is minimised with no overnight stays permitted.
 - Although officials to support the staging of a competition or tournament do not count towards the group size, the numbers used must be minimised and social distancing maintained at all times.
 - Spectators are not permitted other than carers for disabled people or adults needed to supervise under 18s in a safeguarding role permitted – must not mix with others from outside household and must observe social distancing)

Injuries and emergencies

- Injuries should still be treated, as participant safety is of the utmost importance. Physios and other medical personnel should take care to protect themselves and others through rigorous cleaning and personal hygiene, including increasing the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting equipment and surfaces. Wearing face coverings is recommended for both medics and patients, where this is possible and practical.
- After contact with an injured participant, physios and other medical personnel should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity. This advice is applicable to all situations, regardless of whether there was close contact or the minimum social distancing was maintained. They should also avoid touching their mouth, eyes and nose.
- Physios and medical personnel should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with, to support NHS Test and Trace. Records should be kept for 21 days and then destroyed.
- Those working at a sport event should familiarise themselves with the guidance for first responders, in case of emergency situations.

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.

