

Tennis
SCOTLAND



Guidance for Tennis Venues & Players in Scotland

COVID-19: RETURN TO RESTRICTED PLAY

22 May 2020

Current Exercise Restrictions



TENNIS
FOR BRITAIN

PLAY SAFE GUIDELINES - RETURN TO RESTRICTED PLAY

These guidelines have been developed for Scotland in partnership between the LTA and Tennis Scotland. The guidelines have been produced in line with the Scottish Government guidance on outdoor exercise, [which can be viewed here](#). These guidelines will become operational subject to the Scottish Government confirming the route map from lockdown on the 28 May 2020.

INTRODUCTION

We know how important it is for people to be active, and the particular role tennis can have in the physical and mental wellbeing of those that play it. By its very nature, tennis is an activity whereby close person to person contact can be avoided.

Based on recent Scottish Government guidance and following the adjustment of lockdown restrictions, Tennis Scotland & the LTA has developed a set of practical guidelines to follow so that tennis can be played in Scotland consistent with the new route map moving out of 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 Scottish 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.

VENUES

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.

PLAYERS

At all times, players should adhere to the Scottish Government's social distancing guidelines (staying at least 2m away from others), and practice public health advice for hygiene.

Given the length of time tennis activity has been suspended, it is advised that anyone returning to court eases themselves back in to play gently.

Please be aware that not all courts may be open, as venues will need to make an assessment based on their own individual circumstances as to whether they feel they can facilitate safe play at their venue. Where they chose to remain closed please respect this decision.

IMPORTANT: Do not leave your home to play tennis if Scottish Government advice means you should stay at home because you or someone you live with has or has had symptoms of COVID-19, or you are in the most vulnerable category and have been advised to shield from the coronavirus.

COACHES

It is important that both recreational play and coaching activity resumes. However the current easing from government concentrates on extension of exercise rather than all aspects of each sport and therefore coaching is not part of these guidelines.

However we have worked with the LTA and sportscotland on robust guidelines for one to one coaching which we feel work within the guidance surrounding the extension to exercise of physical activity in Scotland. These coaching guidelines are currently being reviewed by the Scottish Government for feedback as soon as possible.

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 Scottish 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 and these should be documented at all venues
- Guidelines will be updated as we progress through the different phases of Scottish Government measures – Tennis Scotland remains in discussions with sportscotland and 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 should also be closed (this is being reviewed with government and sportscotland)
- Clubhouses should remain closed and only be opened to allow court access where court access cannot be delivered without access via the clubhouse
- 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 Tennis Scotland at info@tennisscotland.org)
- Clean all common touchpoint surfaces (gates, door handles, handrails etc) regularly, wearing disposable gloves

TENNIS ACTIVITY

- Limit activities to court rental activity to no more than two people per court (other than where doubles pairs are from the same households) consistent with the new route map moving out of lockdown
- 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 NB Clubspark is free and can be downloaded at <https://www.lta.org.uk/about-us/in-your-area/tennis-scotland/club--venue-management/clubspark/>
- 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 contact info@tennisscotland.org

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](#)

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 and exercising
- Some formats of competition will be able to resume before others, singles box leagues/ladders can be played as long as they adhere to the guidelines in place
- All Tennis Scotland & LTA staged and approved competitions (grade 1 to 6) up to at least Sunday 28th June 2020 have been cancelled
- Tennis Scotland & LTA will be providing guidelines for the resumption of competitive tennis activity in due course

GENERAL

- Who should attend – this will include players, staff, visitors, contractors etc. Numbers of people should be minimised/controlled so that physical distancing can be maintained. People who are shielding should not attend these facilities. People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 7 days; household members for 14 days as per info on NHS Inform. No one who is self-isolating should attend an outdoor sports facility
- Physical distancing – the 2m rule applies to all these settings. Note that only household members are allowed to exercise within 2 metres in Scotland at present, so physical distancing would not be needed amongst household groups when e.g. playing tennis together. They would need to physically distance from all other people at a facility though. Facilities may need to adapt to encourage physical distancing
- Cleaning, hand and respiratory hygiene are core measures and provision should be made for these. Clear guidance and plans are needed for cleaning of facilities and equipment, and waste disposal. More detail is available in our non-healthcare guidance and we would encourage more detail to be provided/signposted to on this. <https://www.hps.scot.nhs.uk/web-resources-container/covid-19-guidance-for-non-healthcare-settings/>



- Communication with members/players/staff etc. is important and should be planned for. Players should know what to do before/during/after visits to sports facilities
- Workforce - ensure that relevant workplace guidance is also followed for staff and any existing health and safety advice is maintained and aligned

GUIDELINES FOR TENNIS PLAYERS

STAY UP TO DATE

- Scottish Government information around social distancing is available [here](#) and should be read in full
- Be aware guidance can change and restrictions may be reintroduced - ensure you have checked the latest version of the guidelines for tennis players in Scotland on the LTA website and with Tennis Scotland

BEFORE LEAVING HOME & AFTER YOU RETURN

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before leaving home to go to the court (or use an alcohol gel if washing hands is not possible)

COURT BOOKINGS

- Where the facility allows, ensure you have booked a court in advance and make payment online
- Play should only take place on outdoor courts, with indoor courts and bubble courts remaining closed
- Use your clubs bookings system, i.e. Clubspark. Alternatively the LTA's online booking platform has courts that can be booked in over 300 parks and clubs nationwide - the site www.lta.org.uk/rally.

EQUIPMENT

- Take hand sanitizer with you
- Take all your own equipment (do not share equipment such as rackets, grips, hats and towels)
- Only take the minimum amount of equipment with you that you need to play
- Clean and wipe down your equipment, including racquets and water bottles before and after use
- Bring a full water bottle, and do not share food or drink with others
- Bring your own tennis balls that are clearly marked (e.g. with your initials)
- Ensure you take all your belongings with you at the end of the session and do not leave anything on court

TRAVELLING TO AND FROM THE COURT

- Avoid using public transport
- Arrive as close as possible to when you need to be there
- Avoid touching court gates, fences, benches, etc. if you can
- Allow others to leave before you enter the court - if you need to wait then do so away from the courts and clear of the gates



- Ensure you leave the court before the end of your allotted time so that it is empty for the next players
- Arrive changed and ready to play. Shower at home, and do not use the venue's changing area
- Do not congregate after playing. No extra-curricular or social activity should take place

COURT LIMITS

- Maximum of two people per court (singles play only). Players can be from different households
- The only exception to the above is where doubles can be played between 2 household groups or 4 players from the same household

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING

- Stay at least two metres away from other players at all times (including during play, when taking breaks and before and after play)
- Do not make physical contact with other players (such as shaking hands or high five)
- Stay on your side of court and avoid changing ends, or agree to change ends at opposite sides of the net
- Avoid chasing the ball down to another court if other players are using it

EQUIPMENT & FACILITIES

- Use your own clearly marked tennis balls
- Avoid using your hands to pick up tennis balls that aren't yours - use your racquet/foot to hit/kick them to your opponent or return them to another court
- Avoid using other equipment such as courtside benches, net handles or court sweepers where possible
- When playing padel, try to avoid touching the court walls
- Be aware that onsite toilet facilities will not be open

HYGIENE

- If you need to sneeze or cough, do so into a tissue or upper sleeve
- Avoid touching your face