

The Badminton Return To Play Roadmap - Clubs

Version 4 published July 23rd 2020



I am delighted to say that badminton is now able to start opening up again and we want you to be as prepared as possible. International badminton was suspended immediately after the YONEX All England Open Championships in Birmingham in March and grassroots badminton has not been possible since the start of the Government lockdown.

But on 8th June, the elite squad began their return to training at the National Badminton Centre in Milton Keynes in line with Government guidance, the Para-badminton squad returned to their training base in Sheffield a few weeks later and we now have five training centres open for our elite junior players. Now, I am pleased to say, it is the turn of those at grassroots level, the backbone of any sport, to return to play.

I am particularly pleased to let you know that when badminton restarts on Saturday 25th July, you will be able to play full-court singles and doubles. For several weeks, we have been working closely with Government and key agencies, on behalf of the badminton community, to ensure a safe return to courts, the length and breadth of the country. Like other areas of our society that we have all had to adjust to, we must ensure the safety of players, coaches, volunteers and staff remain the no.1 priority and our return guidance ensures that we can enjoy playing badminton again but at the same time, are adhering to all Government guidance.

We have been very aware that the inability to play doubles meant that, for many clubs, restarting activity was simply not viable and that many players would wait to return to play. As a result of extensive discussions with Government, we have been able to demonstrate that doubles badminton can return in accordance with the appropriate measures. There remain changes to the way that sessions such as club nights will need to be managed during this time. A person will need to be appointed as the 'Covid-19 Officer' to ensure your session is safely managed, players will need to pre-book their attendance, and the number of players able to play together will be restricted.

We recognise that this will place some additional burden on volunteers, but we are providing guidance and tools to minimise these. We have already run a series of well received webinars to help get clubs up and running again, and all Badminton England affiliated clubs will have free use of a session booking system. We will also provide an online tool to run ladders/box leagues for their clubs.

There are still challenges to overcome. Whilst we know 'how to play', finding somewhere 'to play' is, and will continue to be, an obstacle for the foreseeable future as operators look to reopen facilities in a viable manner and schools consider how to allow community use of their facilities safely. We continue to lobby and work with all the relevant agencies to secure access to courts. We are not able to see a full return to badminton just yet, with our traditional competitions still impacted by government regulation on gathering sizes. We continue to look at innovative ways to provide competitive badminton, but I'm sure you will agree, the ability to just get back on court again, to meet and play with friends and family, to work with a coach, to play doubles, is welcomed.

As we have been throughout the lockdown we are here to answer your questions as we return to play. Keep checking our website for updates to our roadmap which we will continue to update in line with any changes in government guidelines. We look forward to working with you to get our game back to its rightful place in our lives.

Stay safe and best wishes,
Adrian Christy

Summary of updates from previous guidance

Outdoor:

- Both singles play and doubles play can now take place in groups of people from different households, as long as you remain 2 metres apart as far as possible – meaning that four people from different households can play doubles.
- For outdoor badminton, groups are now limited to a maximum of 30.

Indoor:

Playing badminton

- Both singles play and doubles play can now take place in groups of people from different households, as long as you remain 2 metres apart as far as possible – meaning that four people from different households can play doubles.
- You can play singles and doubles using all areas of the court, within the respective court markings – if social distancing between adjacent courts cannot be maintained, you should only use the singles court markings.
- Other than where players are from the same household or part of a support bubble, follow Government advice on staying alert and safe, and:
 - Stay at least two metres away from other players (including during play) as far as possible, 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
 - For doubles, consider agreeing in advance which player will take the shot if a shuttle travels to the centre of the court

Organising a session

- You must implement a pre-booking system which will enable you to keep attendance records for a minimum of 21 days. You must be able to record who has played in each group within your session and collect all information that may be required by NHS Test and Trace.
- 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 changeovers of players. If you run back to back sessions, no players from the first session can attend the second session.

Making your sessions viable

- To help make sessions viable for coaches, it is now permissible for a coach to work with one group of players and have further groups in the hall – these additional groups can only play badminton and cannot be coached unless additional coaches are present.
- Sessions can be formed of multiple groups, each allocated their own court or two and shuttles with a maximum of 6 per group. If a group is being coached there the coach counts as one of the group.
- Individuals within each group should not change throughout the session.
- A session with a group of players cannot be split into two sessions, allowing groups to change halfway through the session. A session only becomes a new session when the players leave, and a new group of players enter.
- The different groups making up a session could be formed of coached groups, non-coached groups or a mixture of both.

Introduction

The last four months have been a hugely challenging time for all sports and community leisure activities and it's not been any different for badminton. Our clubs, coaches and members have all been impacted in many ways. However, the good news is that, with the opening of indoor facilities, we are pleased to share the updated version of Phase 2 of our roadmap. This provides specific guidance on the restart of play with updated information on outdoor badminton and details on the return to indoor badminton, including a return to full court singles and doubles. We will move to Phase 3 when unrestricted coaching is feasible and competition resumes.

This document provides practical guidelines to follow so that badminton can be played where local conditions allow it. Our aim is to provide as much information as possible and to support you as best we can to make your return to play as easy as possible. To do this, we are providing the following:

- FAQs – we have already started to answer your questions and will continue to update this as more questions arise.
- Resources and tools – this includes a step by step guide to what you need to consider as a club and/or coach, risk assessment template and Covid-19 Officer details.

You will find these at our return to play hub on www.badmintonengland.co.uk; if you can't find the answer to any questions you may have, please contact us directly via our [contact form](#).

Alignment with Government guidance

Badminton England's Return to Play guidance has been developed in accordance with Government guidelines and is up to date at the time of publication. You will be aware how rapidly the situation can change but we continue to remain in close contact with the Government and, should any of the restrictions change, we will issue revised guidance to all our members, clubs, counties and leagues as soon as we are able to. You can keep up to date with the latest guidance through our [website](#) and social media channels.

A Phased Return

Badminton England will seek to return to all formats of play as soon as Government guidelines, and hence public safety, allows us to. This roadmap sets out how the return to badminton will evolve and how we will support players and clubs to return to play ensuring that we are following government advice at all stages.

We are following a 1:2:3 approach whereby all activity is governed by:

1.

Government guidelines



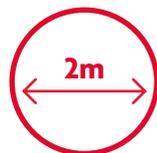
2.

Application of venue specific rules
(e.g. changing room, equipment,
travel protocols)



3.

Badminton specific adaptations required
(singles vs doubles, etc) in order to meet
measures such as social distancing



A Phased Return

Phase 1

From 13th May 2020



- Outdoor badminton
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Phase 2

Updated from 25th July 2020



- Indoor play allowed
 - Full court doubles and singles between any households allowed
 - Restricted coaching
 - No formal competitions
-

Phase 3

Date to be led by government advice



- Singles and doubles play
 - Unrestricted coaching
 - Competitions resumes
-

Phase 4

Date to be led by government advice



- No restrictions
-

Phase 1: Outdoor badminton

- Since 13th May, it has been possible to play badminton outdoors.
- **[UPDATED]** Both singles play and doubles play can take place in groups of people from different households, as long as you remain 2 metres apart as far as possible – meaning that four people from different households can play doubles.
- **[UPDATED]** For outdoor badminton, groups are limited to a maximum of 30. Whilst limits on gathering sizes remain in place, you must manage your outdoor badminton to reflect this. As the guidance changes regularly, you should check our website for the latest guidance.
- Outdoor coaching is permitted so long as social distancing guidelines and limits on gathering sizes are observed. The coach counts as one of the people within the gathering size.
- 1-1 coaching for young people under the age of 18 can take place in line with usual safeguarding guidance - the parent or guardian should be in attendance.

Phase 2: Indoor badminton restarts - 25th July 2020

- **[UPDATED]** Both singles play and doubles play can take place in groups of people from different households, as long as you remain 2 metres apart as far as possible – meaning that four people from different households can play doubles.
- **[UPDATED]** Whether playing singles or doubles, activity is restricted to groups of a maximum of six people.
- You can have more than one group of six in a hall, providing you are able to maintain social distancing within the space available. A group could, for example, be housed on one court and its surrounding run-off area or across more than one court.
- Players can rotate within the group but social distancing must be maintained within this group. You cannot move groups within a session.
- Venue specific restrictions will be in place and you will be responsible for ensuring you adhere to these.
- There will be strict equipment rules in place for rackets and guidance on the use of shuttles.

Phase 3: Return to full format badminton - Date TBC and led by Government advice

- All formats of playing, training and competition.
- League badminton to resume.
- Local and sanctioned tournaments to resume.
- Some social distancing and gathering restrictions remain in place.

Phase 4: No restrictions - Date TBC and led by Government advice

- All restrictions are lifted.

Indoor badminton

The guidance below sets out how the game can be played given the restrictions that need to remain in place. Should you have any questions, please refer to our [FAQs](#) or use our [contact form](#). You will also find support, resources and further guidance to help your return to play at our return to play [hub](#).

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.

Venue

- It is the responsibility of each user (individual, coach, club, group) to understand the specific requirements of the venue you are using. Our [step by step guide](#) takes you through what you need to consider and do before you play, together with [resources](#) to support you.
- 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 changed and ready to play. Shower at home and do not use the venue's changing area.

Safe sessions

- You must complete a risk assessment – you can find a template [here](#).
- All clubs/groups must appoint a [Covid-19 officer](#) for each session.
- A coach running a coaching session should act as the Covid-19 officer.
- All coaches, No Strings coordinators and Covid-19 officers must be aware of Covid-19 related safety, hygiene and social distancing protocols – basic training, developed by [CIMSPA](#), the sector's professional body, will be available for free from Friday 24 July and can be found [here](#).
- Anyone attending a session will want to know that they can do so safely. As well as providing them with all the relevant information required to attend you should:
 - Communicate how the session will be managed safely for those looking to attend so they know what to expect.
 - Share clear guidelines they need to follow before they attend including facility specific guidance (car parking, access, arriving and leaving), player guidelines, and session information.

Organising your session

- Your sessions must be managed by the designated session Covid-19 Officer. This person may be able to take part in play depending on numbers but must be able to manage the session. The ability to maintain social distancing will determine the total number of people in your sessions.
- A maximum of six players must be grouped together; the number will be determined by the space you have in order to maintain social distancing. If space allows, you may group players on one court and its surrounding run-off area; you may group them over more courts if necessary. You can have more than one group in a hall within a session as long as social distancing is maintained.
- **[UPDATED]** Players cannot change groups within a session– they must stay within their allocated group but can play in a different group at the next session (as long as this is not on the same day).
- **[NEW]** You must implement a pre-booking system which will enable you to keep attendance records for a minimum of 21 days. This will enable you to manage the number of players attending each session and their allocation into groups for play, allowing for you to maintain social distancing measures. You cannot allow members to play without them having pre-booked their attendance. You must be able to record who has played in each group within your session and collect all information that may be required by NHS Test and Trace.
- **[UPDATED]** Badminton England has made a booking system available to affiliated clubs at no cost which enables you to manage your session and groups in line with social distancing requirements and information that may be required by NHS Test and Trace.
- **[UPDATED]** If collecting monies from players, you should use online or contactless payment wherever possible.
- **[UPDATED]** 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 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](#).

Playing badminton

- **[UPDATED]** Both singles play and doubles play can take place in groups of people from different households, as long as you remain 2 metres apart as far as possible – meaning that four people from different households can play doubles.
- **[UPDATED]** You can play singles and doubles using all areas of the court, within the respective court markings – if social distancing between adjacent courts cannot be maintained, you should only use the singles court markings.
- We recommend that you do not change ends.
- Players are advised to limit their interactions with anyone outside of the group they are playing in (e.g. players in another group).
- **[UPDATED]** Other than where players are from the same household or part of a support bubble, follow Government advice on staying alert and safe, and:
 - Stay at least two metres away from other players (including during play) as much as possible, 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.
 - For doubles, consider agreeing in advance which player will take the shot if a shuttle travels to the centre of the court.

Social Distancing

- Wherever possible, the whole court area (including the side/back tramlines) can be used, e.g., where there are empty courts adjacent or large run-off areas between courts well in excess of social distancing requirements.
 - However, if social distancing between players on adjacent courts cannot be maintained, play should only take place within the singles court markings.
 - To meet social distancing guidelines, anyone not playing on court must remain at least 2 metres from those playing and each other.
- Activity can take place in groups of people from different households. As the guidance on group (gathering) sizes changes regularly, please check our [website](#) for the latest advice.
- Players can rotate within the group but social distancing must be maintained within this group. You cannot move groups within a session.
- You can have more than one group in a hall providing you are able to maintain social distancing within the space available. A group could, for example, be housed on one court and its surrounding run-off area or across more than one court.
- 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 hall where possible.
- Many clubs use pegboards or ladder boards to manage their sessions. If you use this method, you must have one for each group of players where someone is designated to run the pegboard or the session Covid-19 Officer must manage a pegboard for each group in the session.

Equipment

- As a club or coach organising a session, 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 cannot share equipment.
- Clean and wipe down your equipment before and after use.
- You must only use your own racket(s).
 - The sharing of shuttles is permitted. Please ensure you have thoroughly washed your hands (in accordance with Government guidance) or used hand sanitiser immediately before and after play. You should avoid touching your face.
 - Players must avoid using their hands to pick up shuttles from other courts; where possible - use your own racket to return them.
- 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, court mops 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.

Managing Shuttles

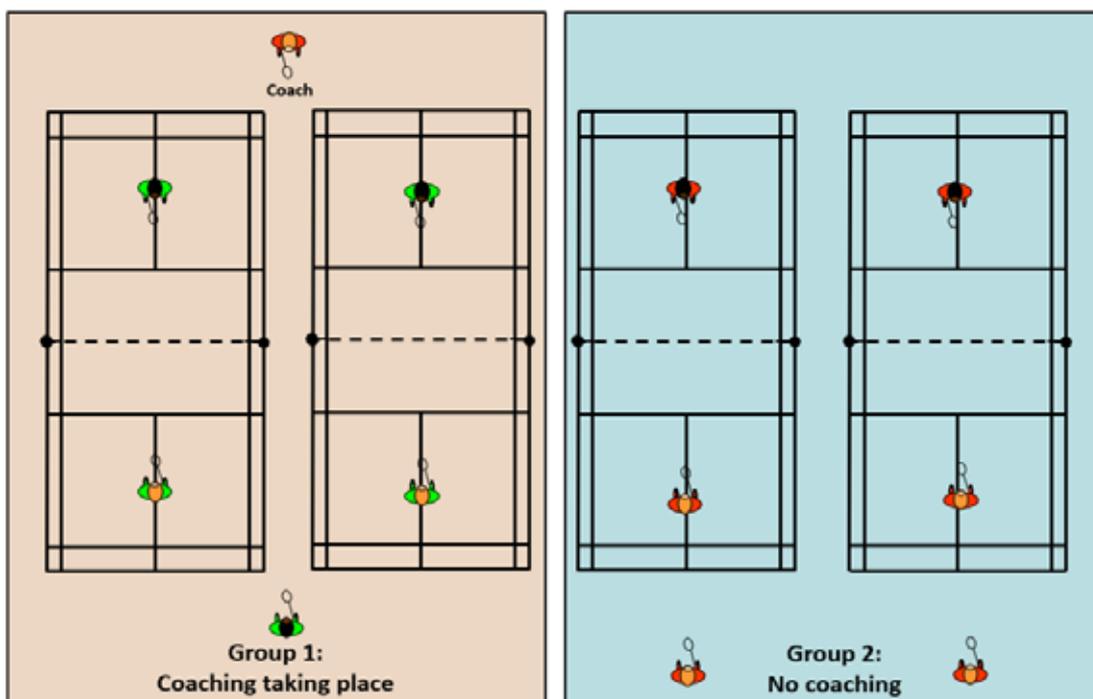
- In addition to the advice above, you should allocate shuttles to each group of players in line with how you are organising the session in the hall.
- As long as strict hygiene rules are applied, each player within a group is able to handle the shuttles allocated to that group and should not handle any shuttles allocated to other groups.

Coaching

- Coaching can take place in groups of people from different households. As the guidance on group (gathering) sizes changes regularly, please check our [website](#) for the latest advice.
- A coach cannot run a group of more than six people – the coach counts as one of the group, e.g., if the permitted group size is six, that equates to one coach and five players.
- Players can rotate within the group but social distancing must be maintained within this group. You cannot move groups within a session.
- You can have more than one group in a hall. This depends on the space available and your ability to maintain social distancing. A group could, for example, be housed on one court and its surrounding run-off area or across more than one court.
- A coach (or assistant coach) is needed for each group 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.

[NEW] Making sessions viable

- To help make sessions viable for coaches and clubs, it is permissible for a coach to work with one group of players and have further groups in the hall – these additional groups can only play badminton and cannot be coached unless additional coaches are present.
- Sessions can be formed of multiple groups, each allocated their own court or two and shuttles with a maximum of 6 per group. If a group is being coached there the coach counts as one of the group.
- Individuals within each group should not change throughout the session.
- A session with a group of players cannot be split into two sessions, allowing groups to change halfway through the session. A session only becomes a new session when the players leave, and a new group of players enter.
- The different groups making up a session could be formed of coached groups, non-coached groups or a mixture of both. Below is an example of how a session could be formed to make it more viable for a coach or club:



This session is formed of 11 players and one coach in two groups, with one group being coached and one group not being coached. In this example:

- The coach cannot coach or interact with players in group 2 once the session has started.
- The coach could set up group 2 with an activity or activities prior to the session or allow them to have a games-based session. Another helper or young leader could be used as part of group 2 to oversee this.
- This example allows a coach to run a session for 11 players and they could rotate the players being coached each week, with one week half the players are being coached and half playing games or activities and then the next week they swap over.

Spectators/Parents

- Spectators are not permitted unless a child is playing in which case, one parent/carer may be permitted per child to supervise their child while following social distancing guidelines.
- As long as social distancing guidelines are met, parents/carers do not count towards the group size.

Safeguarding

- Clubs must ensure that all safeguarding requirements are in place prior to any junior activity commencing. This means there is a designated Welfare Officer to manage all concerns from parents and young people.
- It is very important to be aware of, and to focus on, mental health and well-being at times of uncertainty. Remember that many of your players may have been through a difficult period and need reassuring on their return to play.

Inclusion

Remember, some players may need additional support or adaptations to support their participation. Further guidance is available [here](#).

Further support and guidance

These guidelines are accurate at the date of publication but are subject to change in line with government guidance. Keep checking www.badmintonengland.co.uk for the latest version and supporting tools and information.

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 of 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.

