

The Badminton Return To Play Roadmap - Clubs & Competition

Version 5 published September 10th 2020



I am delighted that we are now able to move to the next phase of our Return To Play plan. This means two key developments:

1. the return of match league play is now possible
2. increasing coach to player ratios

Both of these will hopefully help more clubs, coaches and players get back on court.

We have worked with Government and lobbied for the continued evolution of our guidance in direct response to your feedback about what would help more of you to return to play. The move to Phase 3 of the plan has been possible because you have been successful in implementing the first two phases which saw players, clubs and coaches returning safely, in line with our guidance over the past six weeks. All of your hard work in making the return to play possible means that we can now amend our guidance to allow for more formats to be played.

We all know how challenging and fast-moving the public health response has had to be over recent times and this is why we have moved in a very careful and managed way, to ensure that people can get back to badminton safely. Naturally we will continue to work with the Government to ensure that we are monitoring the health situation very closely.

Although the move to Phase 3 is welcome, I very much recognise the challenges that many of you face in trying to find a venue in which you can play and in ensuring that your sessions are financially viable. Our hardship fund has allocated thousands of pounds to affiliated clubs and registered coaches and it will reopen shortly to continue to support you to get back on court. We continue to do everything we can to get more venues open and to help clubs find alternatives. I personally will be lobbying Government until all venues with badminton courts, including schools, are open for safe play.

As we have been throughout the lockdown and the return to play, we are here to answer your questions. We have taken the opportunity to condense and simplify our guidance documents to make them easier to use; we will continue to run webinars to help you understand the guidance as it changes; keep checking our websites for updates in line with any changes in government guidelines and, please, let us know if your facility is open, so that we can help more people get back on court or if it remains closed, so that we can help you find alternatives and continue to lobby Government.

I very much hope that the changes we are introducing now will help and encourage more of you to get back on court with confidence in a COVID safe and secure environment. As a sport, we have come a long way over the past few weeks and, whilst the game of badminton continues to look a little different from what you are used to, I would like to thank you all for your support, patience and hard work in continuing to bring back our sport safely.

Stay safe and best wishes

Adrian Christy
Chief Executive

Summary of updates from previous guidance

[UPDATED] Coaching

- A coach can coach on a ratio of up to 1: 15, with players being split into separate groups of no more than 6 players.
- Players can rotate within their individual smaller sub-group but social distancing must be maintained within this sub-group. They cannot move sub-groups or to another larger group within a session.
- You can have more than one group (up to 15) in a hall. This depends on the space available, your ability to maintain social distancing and maintaining sub-groups of no more than 6.
- Groups should be spread over an appropriate number of courts to allow for social distancing to be maintained within the group.
- 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.

[NEW] Coaching Children

- Coaching sessions of children should be limited to no more than 15 children per coach in line with the [Department of Education's guidance for providers of out of school settings](#).
- Within this larger group of 15, children must be grouped into smaller groups of a maximum of 6, e.g. If coaching 15 children, the group could be formed of three separate groups of 5, plus the coach.
- Parents and guardians that are not participating in sessions can attend them and do not count towards the maximum group size. They should always however maintain social distancing and be off court, limited to one per child.

[NEW] Competition - League matches

- All guidance around pre-planning, organising and running safe sessions; playing badminton and the use of equipment, including shuttles, as set out in this document, must be followed by anyone organising competition at any level.
- Players can be placed in groups of up to a maximum of 6 players; they can partner for a match with any other player in their group.
- To facilitate a match, one group of 6 (Team A) is able to play against another group of 6 (Team B). There can be no rotation between the groups, i.e., no player from Team A can partner a player from Team B, but any combination of players in Team A can play any combination of players in Team B.
- It is not possible, under current Government guidance, to reintroduce tournament play in its traditional form or even a small scale version. However, we are working to develop alternative formats that would allow competitive play through tournaments and will publish guidance and details when available

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 we are now able to move to Phase 3 of our roadmap with effect from Saturday 12 September. This updated document provides all the information coaches require to run sessions. It is supported by documents for players, clubs and facilities.

It 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 also 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 access to Re-Activate COVID awareness training, 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 to Government guidance

These guidelines have been developed in accordance with Government guidelines, are accurate at the date of publication but are subject to change in line with government guidance. 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, including Government mandated local lockdowns, 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.

Facilities

Whilst we are delighted that we are able to announce further developments in the return to play we know that there are still challenges that remain to getting all our clubs and players back on court due to the availability of courts across the country. To support the reopening of facilities Badminton England is:

- Working with Government, including the Department for Education, to lobby for the safe and efficient opening of facilities.
- Working with Sport England, ukactive and Community LeisureUK to consult commercial leisure operator partners to better understand when facilities will reopen and how we can support the opening of facilities
- Leveraging our partnerships with school facility providers to try and open doors to new and alternative venues on either an interim or permanent basis.
- Working to update our activity finder to be able to quickly and easily notify the badminton community of facilities that are open to help find alternative venues where required.

In addition to this we have developed specific [guidance](#) for facilities outlining how different types of badminton activity (clubs, coaching, No Strings and casual) can return to their facilities safely and appropriately.

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.
- 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.

Safe sessions (coaching, clubs & competition)

- The following guidelines apply to any club session, coaching session, match, No Strings session or group 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](#).

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](#).

Playing badminton

- 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.
- 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. If you adopt the club match play option 2 for your club sessions or are playing league matches, you must 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).
- 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.

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 hall. Players within that group can share shuttles but should adhere to strict hygiene rules and should not handle any shuttles allocated to other groups.
 - We recommend that shuttles should be changed after each match if changing opponents.
 - Players should 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.

Organising your session (coaching, clubs, competition)

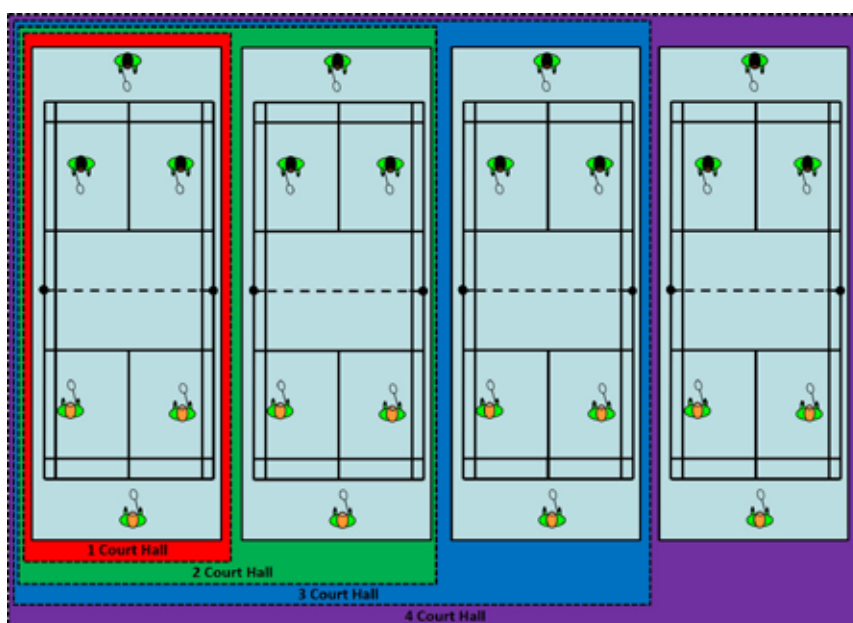
- Sessions should be managed by the identified Covid-19 Officer, who is able to take part in play providing they are able to manage the session and do not exceed playing numbers.
- All movement on and off court and around the hall must be controlled by the designated session Covid-19 Officer. You should adopt a one-way flow around the hall 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] Running a club night;

You now have two options when delivering your club night:

Option 1 – Casual club play

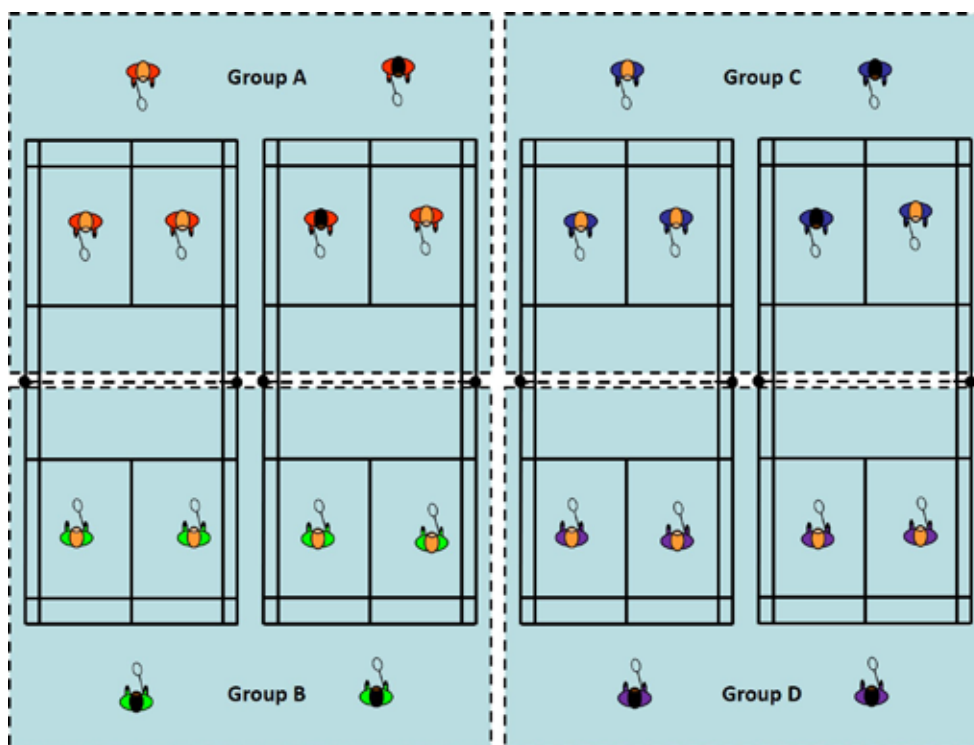
- A maximum of six players can be grouped together; depending on the total space available ensuring that social distancing is maintained.
- Players must stay within their allocated group during a session, but they can rotate within the group providing social distancing is maintained within the group.
- If you use a pegboard within your club nights then 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



Option 2 – Club match play

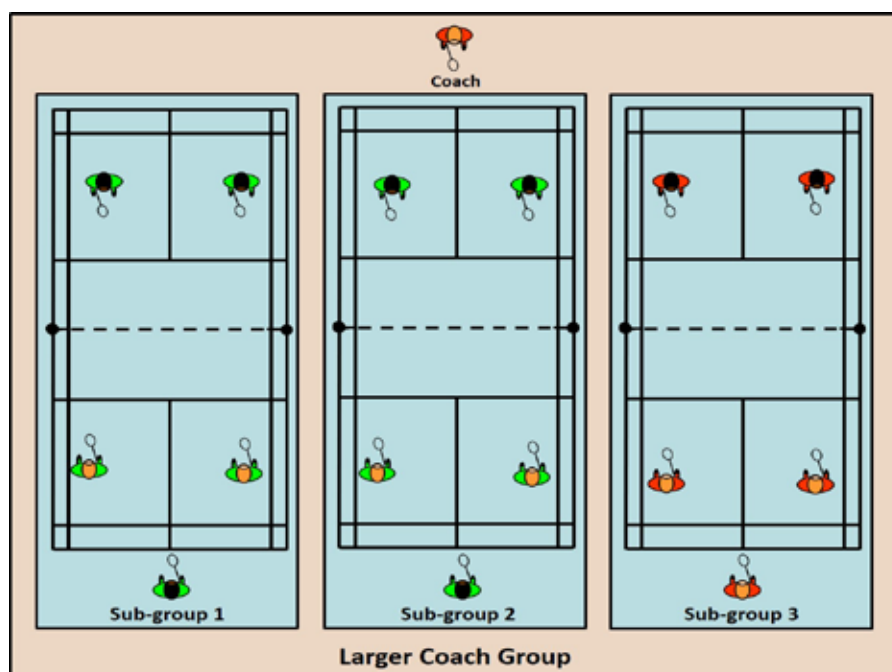
- This format mirrors that now allowed for the return of league matches and offers clubs greater flexibility in club match play whilst maintaining the required group size.
- Players can be placed in groups of up to a maximum of 6 players; they can partner for a match with any other player in their group.
- To facilitate match play, one group of 6 (Team A) is able to play against another group of 6 (Team B). There can be no rotation between the groups, i.e., no player from Team A can partner a player from Team B, but any combination of players in Team A can play any combination of players in Team B.
for example
 - Match 1: A1 & A2 vs B1 & B2
 - Match 2: A3 & A4 vs B3 & B4
 - Match 3: A5 & A6 vs B5 & B6
 - Match 4: A1 & A6 vs B1 & B6
 - Match 5: A2 & A4 vs B2 & B4
 - Match 6: A3 & A5 vs B3 & B5

The diagram below illustrates how this could be organised within a four court hall



[UPDATED] 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 can coach on a ratio of up to 1: 15, with players being split into separate sub-groups of no more than 6 players. (See figure 1).
- Players can rotate within their individual smaller sub-group but social distancing must be maintained within this sub-group. They cannot move sub-groups or to another larger group within a session.
- You can have more than one group (up to 15) in a hall. This depends on the space available, your ability to maintain social distancing and maintaining sub-groups of no more than 6.
- Groups should be spread over an appropriate number of courts to allow for social distancing to be maintained within the group.
- 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.



[NEW] Coaching Children

- Coaching sessions of children should be limited to no more than 15 children per coach in line with the [Department of Education's guidance for providers of out of school settings](#).
- Within this larger group of 15, children must be grouped into smaller groups of a maximum of 6, e.g. If coaching 15 children, the group could be formed of three separate groups of 5, plus the coach.
- Parents and guardians that are not participating in sessions can attend them and do not count towards the maximum group size. They should always however maintain social distancing and be off court, limited to one per child.

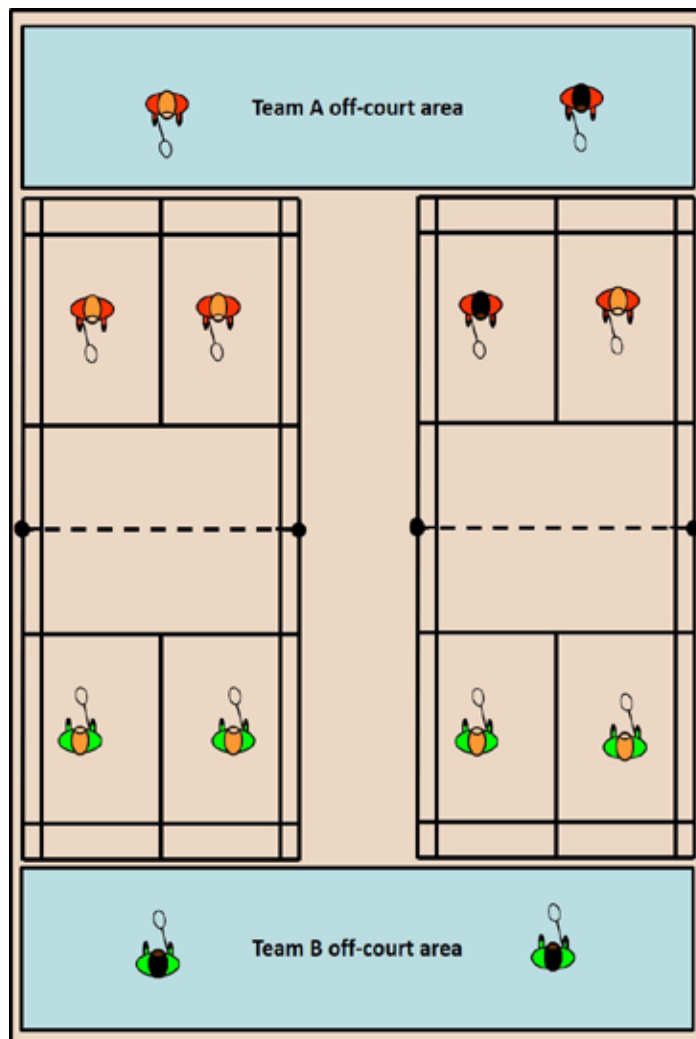
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 - Match 1: A1 & A2 vs B1 & B2
 - Match 2: A3 & A4 vs B3 & B4
 - Match 3: A5 & A6 vs B5 & B6
 - Match 4: A1 & A6 vs B1 & B6
 - Match 5: A2 & A4 vs B2 & B4
 - Match 6: A3 & A5 vs B3 & B5

Team Matches (e.g. local leagues):

- League matches can take place between two teams of up to six players. Players in each team can partner with any other player from their team and play against any combination of players from the opposition – see above for example.
- Matches should be managed by the identified Covid-19 Officer, who is able to take part in play providing they are able to manage the match and do not exceed playing numbers. The role of Covid-19 officer can be shared amongst players in the same team and it is the responsibility of the home team to fill this role.
- The home team shall be responsible for ensuring that visiting teams are aware in advance of any venue specific guidance and match arrangements.
- Each team in the match should be allocated one side of the court/hall and play from that side for the duration of the match, i.e., teams pick an 'end' and there is no changing of end between games/sets/rubbers.
 - Match/league organisers may want to introduce a ruling to direct how sides are allocated, such as 'away team chooses end'.
 - Players from different groups should not share the same the side of the net at the same time, even during warm-ups. It may be necessary to warm-up with the opposition, unless you can allocate different courts or times to warm-up.
- It is recommended to allocate teams separate areas when off court, ideally the side of the courts they are playing on.
- Players may not play more than one match over a day.

- The diagram shows a typical league match between two teams of 6 players - teams are allocated sides of the court for play and off-court seating, with off-court seating placed at 2m intervals. NB: There may be play on adjacent courts that is not linked to the match in any way



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.

