

The badminton return to play roadmap

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On Sunday 10 May, the Prime Minister announced that lockdown restrictions would be eased in relation to physical activity and some outdoor activity areas has be allowed to re-open from Wednesday 13 May. Badminton England continues to work with Government and our key stakeholders, including Sport England, the Sport & Recreation Alliance, UK Active and others to understand how these changes will take effect and to keep the badminton community informed.

The response to Covid-19 remains a fast moving situation and we recognise this roadmap is still in its early stages, however, we are keen to start to share our thinking as to the possible stages of the return to play. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) has issued the following update which guides the decisions we are taking. Our roadmap aims to be adaptable to follow Government guidelines on social distancing e.g. strengthening or relaxing measures at short notice:

DCMS key messages

- Government is increasing people's access to local, outdoor physical activity for the purpose of wellbeing. This includes outdoors sports courts and facilities.
- People will only be able to use these facilities with people from their own households or by themselves or, as long as they stay 2 metres apart, with one other person from outside their household.
- You can only exercise in groups of no more than two, unless you are exclusively with members of your household.
- This means that you cannot have five people from one household plus one person from outside the household playing sport together. But you can have two people, from two different households, as long as they are staying two metres apart.
- It is for individual facilities and organisations to develop their own guidance on reopening, to best fit their own situation, in line with the government's advice.

The Badminton Return to Play Roadmap

Badminton England is looking 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 it will likely affect players and clubs, but it must be noted that more specific activity and timelines will be led by further revisions to government advice.

We are preparing more detailed and specific guidance to supplement this document and will publish those in the coming weeks as we know more and have greater clarity from bodies like Public Health England and a likely return date to indoor badminton is known. These will cover all aspects of the game and especially hygiene and how to play safely.

Separate to this roadmap, is specific guidance for the return to training of elite athletes; this guidance has been developed by Government and UK Sport and aims to allow athletes to start developing the 'match fitness' they need to resume competition at the earliest opportunity when it is safe and appropriate to do so, led by public health guidance.

We will follow a **1:2:3** approach whereby all activity is governed by:

1.

Follow Government guidelines



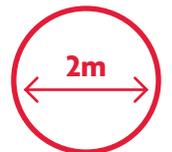
2.

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



Our Assumptions

At this stage, it is impossible to produce a roadmap for the return to badminton without making a number of assumptions.

The roadmap is likely to be subject to changes in line with any updates to Government guidelines but is designed to begin to inform the badminton community of the movement to a full return to badminton.

What we expect:

- Social distancing will remain in place for some time, but restrictions will gradually be eased
- There will be no mass gatherings, however, these restrictions will gradually be eased
- Further industry-wide guidance will become available to govern the use of leisure facilities where badminton is played including schools and leisure centres. Any organised activity would adhere to facility opening restrictions, capacity and hygiene requirements. Again, Badminton England would apply those requirements to individual activity
- Public Health England to issue guidance on equipment sharing such as rackets, handling of shuttles
- Restrictions may apply to participants such as age, demographic and geography. Badminton England would apply those restrictions to activity, not define them.
- Badminton England will define the requirements once players have 'crossed the line' onto courts, i.e. how social distancing and hygiene requirements are applied specifically to the game and any impacts that this has on the way the sport is played.

A Phased Return

Phase 1

From 13th May 2020



- Outdoor badminton

Phase 2

Date to be led by government advice



- Singles play only
- 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 only

- You can play outdoors, without time limit, with members of your household
- You can also meet one person outside of your household to play badminton outdoors, but you must stay two metres apart
- There is a limit on gatherings - no more than two people, unless members of the same household

Phase 2: Indoor badminton restarts

The restart of more organised indoor badminton is dependent on the opening of indoor leisure facilities. Please note: Some venues which are, by design, crowded and where it may prove difficult to enact distancing may still not be able to re-open safely at this point, or may be able to open safely only in part.

Revisions to badminton play will likely include:

- Play restricted to singles only to observe social distancing
- One to one coaching within restrictions - maximum of two people on one court at any time
- Club nights, training squads and other organised groups limited by government guidelines on gathering sizes
- No formal, organised competition until full format play single and doubles is possible
- All players shall use their own equipment, such as rackets, shoes, drinking bottles etc. (please note that Badminton England is seeking clear advice with Public Health England on the sharing of equipment and handling of shuttles)
- Minimise the sharing of shuttles by allocating a quantity, in a box, to a maximum 8 players. These players should rotate by playing each other and only use the allocated shuttles
- Persons not on the court, or any equipment, should be at least 2 metres away from the court - each court must have a clearly marked area behind or next to it. No more than two people are to be on a court at any time

Phase 3: Return to full format badminton

- 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

- All restrictions are lifted

Answers to some key questions you may have

A brief Q&A in response to the latest announcement has been created, further guidance will be published once it becomes available.

What has been announced?

- The Government has announced that people can go outside more than once a day for exercise as long as they are following social distancing guidelines, alone, with members of their household, or with one person from outside of their household. You must still only exercise in groups of no more than two people, unless you are exercising with your household.
- Any facilities associated with outdoor sports and physical activities are permitted to reopen from Wednesday 13 May 2020, if those responsible for them feel ready to do so and if they can do so safely, and in line with this and related public health guidance.
- Outdoor gyms, playgrounds, or outdoor swimming pools will remain closed.

What can I do?

- Phase 1 allows for the playing of badminton outdoors, without time limit, only. All other forms of badminton remain closed.
- Outdoor badminton must be done with members of your household or providing you are following social distancing guidelines with one person from outside your household.

When can I start playing outdoors?

- They will be allowed to open from Wednesday 13 May.
- The Government will be publishing high level guidance for sports to help us think about preparations shortly.

What are the expected timelines for Phases 2, 3 and 4?

- These timelines are unknown at this stage as they will be determined by Government. As soon as these timelines, and any further changes to restrictions, become known, the Badminton Return to Play Roadmap will be updated accordingly and re-published on the Badminton England website www.badmintonengland.co.uk.

Can I share equipment?

- No, there should be no sharing of equipment.
- In respect of shuttles, individuals should only handle their own (marked/initialled) shuttles, with the exception of when you are playing with a person/people from your household.
- Individuals should follow all guidance on hygiene, for example by using antibacterial spray and washing hands thoroughly before and after use and ensure they clean and wipe down equipment, including rackets and water bottles before and after use
- Please also ensure that you wash your hands thoroughly before and after play

Where and when will further updates to the Return to Badminton Roadmap be shared?

- All updates are posted to www.badmintonengland.co.uk and we endeavour to provide regular and timely information as Government guidelines evolve
- The content hub on our website also includes details of the Covid-19 support available from Badminton England

Why are elite athletes going to be allowed to train indoors when no-one else can?

- The guidance for elite training is about allowing athletes to start developing the 'match fitness' they need to resume competition at the earliest opportunity when it is safe and appropriate to do so, led by public health guidance.
- This work is supported by a group of medical experts and the publication of specific medical guidance and is needed because these groups of athletes and staff are operating beyond the general public grassroots restrictions of exercise with own household only or one other person at 2m distance.

Why am I allowed to coach a player in a park, but not in my/their garden?

- You can now see one other person from a different household in an open public space. This has to be one-on-one, outdoors in an open public space and obeying strict social distancing. You cannot visit friends and family in their homes, including in private gardens.

