



# COVID-19 Guidance for Tennis Coaches

during Step 2 of The Northern Ireland Executive  
Approach to Removing the Covid-19 Restrictions





## Step 2

### Return to Restricted Coaching Always follow the Government Guidelines of Good Hand Hygiene – Respiratory Etiquette – Social Distancing

The guidelines in this document relate to Step 2 of the Northern Ireland Executive Approach to Removing the Covid-19 Restrictions.

These measures are part of the second phase of lifting the public health restrictions that were put in place to protect us all from COVID-19. They come into effect on top of the measures in Step 1.

#### **This phase:**

- Permits people to engage in outdoor sporting and fitness activities, involving small group team sports training (but not matches) where social distancing can be maintained and where there is no contact.

This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with international norms and medical experts, outlines the robust measures Tennis Ireland would like clubs to implement and coaches and players maintain to help safeguard staff and members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our measures and procedures are under constant review and updated as advice from government, health authorities and governing bodies evolves in line with the gradual lifting of social restrictions.

### Before you Coach

#### **Size of Lessons**

- Subject to the agreement of the club, coaches can utilise up to 2 courts with a maximum of 2 players on each court subject to social distancing measures being in place.
- For Red Ball activities, 4 players can play on one court provided that two red courts are marked out, one on either side of the net, subject to social distancing.
- Extra care must be taken with regards to the handling of tennis balls
- Drills should allow for social distancing to remain.

- Develop and prepare a risk assessment and consult with your club how lessons can be delivered safely. This risk assessment should be updated and presented as the size of your sessions grow
- Ensure that you get permission from the club to carry out lessons

You or your student must stay at home if you or they:

- Have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have been overseas or exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- Have flu-like symptoms



- If you are in a high-risk health category, a GP should be consulted prior to playing
- Lessons should only take place outdoors during this phase of the reopening.
- Coaching should take place only where full physical distancing is possible.
- Pre book your court online or via phone and advise who will be in attendance
- Let your student know, preferably in writing, before the lesson how you expect them to act to help ensure a safe environment for themselves and others, and what precautions you have put in place. Advise parents in the case of younger students. Parents should be asked to reiterate the advice to their children pre-lesson.
- Only people core to your session should be in attendance
- Players should arrive and leave as close as possible to when they need to be there
- Only one parent/guardian should accompany younger children where possible.
- Players should arrive ready to play as changing room access will not be possible
- Players and coaches should wash their hands with soap and water or hand-sanitiser when available, before and as soon as possible after the lesson

### During the Lesson

- Live ball drills and game-based play is recommended rather than using baskets.
- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as target cones and drop down lines.
- Don't let the players handle any coaching equipment or balls
- The coach should pick up the balls.
- Encourage players to use their racquet/foot to push balls back and/or hit them to avoid using hands and touching the balls.
- Be aware of what surfaces you or your student touch and if you touch the on court equipment such as net, net handle, hoses you must clean these before you leave. Coaches should have access to disposable disinfectant wipes at all times
- Maintain physical distancing at all times including when giving feedback and while players are resting

- Payments should be made online – avoid handling cash.
- When play finishes players should leave the club promptly
- If coaches witness poor practice it should be addressed immediately in a polite fashion and ongoing disregard for protocols should be reported to the club as soon as possible
- Once the lesson has finished players should leave the premises promptly, sanitising their hands on the way out using a courtside dispenser.

### Tennis Balls

- Practice caution with the tennis balls and avoid letting the participants touch them.
- Although there is no specific evidence that tennis balls can spread COVID-19, we know that contamination by respiratory droplets from an infected person can potentially survive on hard surfaces for up to three days.
- Try to restrict balls to a particular group, court or day of the week. One idea is to label them with a permanent marker.
- Replace all balls if someone suspected of having COVID-19 comes in contact with them.
- Consider spraying tennis balls with a disinfectant spray at the conclusion of play. Using new balls on a very regular basis is highly encouraged.
- For private lessons that feature serving, have students bring cans of balls that only they handle for serving.



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