



COVID-19 Guidance for Tennis Coaches

during Step 3 of The Northern Ireland Executive
Approach to Removing the Covid-19 Restrictions





Phase 3

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 3 of the Northern Ireland Executive Approach to Removing the Covid-19 Restrictions.

These measures are part of the Third Step 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 phase 1 and 2.

The Stage 3 measures come into effect when the Northern Ireland Executive announce that it is safe to do so.

This Stage allows:

- Outdoor activities with groups of 30 people. In all cases, maintain social distancing as far as possible and any contacts should be brief.

This practical guide, prepared by our team in consultation with Government advice, 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

- Lessons remain subject to social distancing measures and good safeguarding practices as laid down in Tennis Ireland's Safeguarding Guidance for Children and Young People which can be downloaded here.
- Coaches can have up to 6 players on each court subject to social distancing measures being in place.
- For Red Ball activities up to 8 children can participate on one court.
- All activity should be consistent with the government guidance regarding health, travel, social distancing and hygiene at all times.
- Coaches and coaching organisations must consider safety first, particularly minimising the risk of infection/transmission.
- 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.
- If you are implementing a Youth Tennis Camp, guidelines for their safe implementation can be found here.

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.
- Are unwell or have flu-like symptoms.
- If you are in a high-risk health category, a GP should be consulted prior to playing.



- 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.
- Players should continue to arrive and leave as close as possible to when they need to be there.
- 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.
- Parents or Guardians watching the lessons should be encouraged to social distance.
- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as target cones and drop down lines.
- Don't let the players handle any coaching equipment
- 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 should 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 now have the option to leave the club promptly or, if open, access the clubhouse.
- 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.

Tennis Balls

- 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.
- Practice caution with the tennis balls. As the balls are likely to be utilised across a number of lessons, coaches are encouraged to try to avoid letting the participants touch them.
- Encourage players to use their racquet/foot to push balls back and/or hit them to avoid using hands and touching the balls.
- 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.



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Sport For Life

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