

COVID-19
Tennis Ireland Guidelines for Continued Play



We can all take a few steps to minimise the effects of COVID-19 while still enjoying our time on the court.

Check out our tips and guidelines for staying safe if you choose to play.

Before you play

Stay at home if you:

- 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
- Or are in a high-risk health category, for example elderly or have a pre-existing medical condition.

Attending tennis activities

- Only people core to playing should attend tennis activities such as players, coaches and operational personnel
- Arrive and leave as close as possible to when you need to be there
- Only one parent / guardian should accompany younger children where possible.

Social distancing

- Do not engage in pre or post match handshakes
- Keep 2 metres away from other people while watching or attending an outdoors tennis activity and avoid close contact by moving around indoors
- Only very limited access should be allowed to changing rooms and clubhouses.

Behaviours

To protect against infection, you should:

- Wash / sterilise your hands before and after you play and avoid touching your face while playing
- Not share water bottles and bring your own full bottle
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or hand-sanitiser when available, before and after eating, after going to the toilet
- Cover your coughs and sneezes and dispose of any used tissue immediately
- Avoid touching your face
- Keep your distance from people who are obviously sick
- Be aware of what surfaces you touch.

Organising tennis activities

Formal tennis activities should be kept to a minimum but if your club does organise an activity please ensure that you:

- Promote prevention techniques and lead by example
- Implement ways to minimise contact for both participants and staff
- Minimise the amount of people around by limiting the amount of people on court and only allowing players, officials and essential staff in the clubhouse
- Postpone any large social gatherings
- Plan for increased levels of staff/volunteer absences
- Keep your team and your participants informed of the actions you're taking
- Leave gates ajar during opening hours so players don't need to use handles to enter.

Coaching

While Tennis Ireland have suspended all coaching activities, if your club chooses to operate a coaching programme

- Where possible, limit the number of players on each court
- Position the players at well-spaced stations

- Limit the use of coaching equipment such as target cones
- Don't let students handle any coaching equipment

Tennis equipment

There is no specific evidence that balls can spread COVID-19. We do know that on hard surfaces contamination by respiratory droplets from an infected person can potentially survive up to three days.

Therefore, you should:

- Make sure you clean your hands before and after coming off the court
- Not touch your face after touching a ball, racquet or other tennis equipment
- Replace all balls if someone with / suspected to have COVID-19 comes in contact with them
- Restrict balls to a particular group, court or day of the week. One idea is to label them with a permanent marker
- Clean all tennis gear with anti-bacterial disinfectant including racquets, towels, coaching gear such as target cones
- Don't use unnecessary equipment such as drop down lines
- Use new balls and racquet grips where possible.

Clean environment

Providing a clean environment to play tennis in is important. Make sure you:

- Provide soap, hand-sanitiser or wipes at all main contact points like the desk and sinks
- Clean all surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and tables, at least once a day wearing disposable gloves
- Clean any surfaces which may have blood, body fluids and / or secretions or excretions on them
- Wear personal protection equipment including aprons, gloves and masks when handling food
- Regularly remind and encourage everyone, particularly juniors, of the need to wash hands regularly and adopt the other principles of a good hygiene strategy
- Display signage about handwashing and hygiene techniques at strategic points like all sinks, eating areas, drinking areas and on the side of court.