



Ready to Return Official Guidance (v19.7)

6th April 2021

To enable table tennis to return safely to clubs and other indoor venues, we have produced a set of recommendations that can help table tennis to start again safely. It is important to note that these will be a set of recommendations for clubs, leagues, coaches and other organisations to implement and will need to be adapted for individual environments. We have been offering one to one sessions for clubs or leagues with a Table Tennis England member of staff to discuss the implementation of these guidelines in your facility/facilities and this offer remains, please click on the following link to book a session.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1K3s6uwS699xgdElsBv8-ik0iZXSQeZmbxcwVxkwAhl0/edit>

Please be aware that guidance will continue to change and be updated in line with guidance from DCMS and Sport England but we are required to work to the same dates and guidelines as all other indoor sport and the dates that are outlined in this document are the same for all indoor sports.

Upon returning, table tennis will return to stage four of the Table Tennis England Ready to Return roadmap, which does allow local league and 1* competitions to take place (no earlier than 12th April for U18's a Disabled People and no earlier than 17th May for adults). There are a set of recommendations in place for players in returning to competitive play, which can be [found here](#), to ensure that players have considered their physical health before returning directly into competition.

Please check back to this document regularly as the information below is always subject to change.

***Recently updated areas are highlighted in grey**



Area of consideration	Current position, as from 8 th March	From 29 th March	From 12 th April	No earlier than 17 th May	No earlier than 21 st June
<p>1. Under 18's and Disabled People</p>	<p>Under-18 sport can take place at school as part of educational provision, or as part of wraparound care, but should not otherwise take place at this time</p> <p>Schools and colleges are able to use external coaches, clubs and organisations where schools and colleges are satisfied that it's safe to do so during school hours (inc. extra-curricular activity)</p>	<p>Play allowed on outdoor tables in bubbles of up to fifteen people (can be from multiple households) or between two households (which may be more than 6 people)</p> <p>Disabled People only (as per Government/DCMS guidelines) are able to train indoors in unlimited numbers, but we recommend this is in bubbles of 15. Non-Disabled players can only participate where it helps to facilitate Disabled People to train.</p>	<p>In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:</p> <p>U18's* and Disabled People able to train in bubbles of up to 15 players indoors or outdoors, as per Government guidance (please see pg 6 for further guidance on U18 bubbles).</p> <p>Multiple bubbles can be in the hall at any one time, but they must not mix when playing or socially.</p> <p>Double's play is not permitted, unless with members of your own household or support bubble</p> <p>* It has been confirmed that the exemption for under-18s includes young people who were under 18 on 31st August 2020. For U18/Junior competitions however, if running a junior event please refer to TTE Junior age group categories as normal.</p>		<p>In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:</p> <p>Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.</p>
<p>2. Over 18's</p>	<p>Play only allowed at home with own household or support bubble</p>	<p>Play allowed on outdoor tables in bubbles of six people (can be from multiple households) or between two households (which may be more than 6 people)</p>	<p>In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:</p> <p>Play can also take place indoors if with someone from your own household or support bubble</p>	<p>In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:</p> <p>Table tennis indoors to restart for adults in bubbles of up to six people (from multiple households), or</p>	<p>In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:</p> <p>Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce</p>



			One to one coaching (if for paid work/employment purposes for the coach) is permitted for adults	from two different households (that can be over six people).	the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.
3.Coaches and travel for coaches and volunteers	Play only allowed at home with own household or support bubble	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Coaches and volunteers can run outdoor sessions for the numbers outlined in rows one and two	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Coaches and volunteers can run sessions indoors for U18's and Disabled People as per the guidelines outlined in row 1. One to one coaching (if for paid work/employment purposes for the coach) is permitted for adults	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Coaches and volunteers can run sessions for adults as one to one sessions or in groups, as outlined in row 2.	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.
4.One to one coaching	One to one coaching not permitted unless with someone from own household	One to one coaching is permitted for U18's and adults outdoors only . One to one coaching is permitted for Disabled People (following Government/DCMS guidelines) indoors and outdoors.	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: One to one coaching can take place with U18's or Disabled People One to one coaching (if for paid work/employment purposes for the coach) is permitted for adults	As already listed	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.
5.Clubs	Clubs not able to operate at this time	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:	As detailed in rows one and two	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns:



		Clubs could operate outdoor activity as outlined in rows one and two	Clubs to re-open indoors as outlined in rows one (U18 activity) and two (adult activity)		Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.
6.Leagues	Local leagues not able to operate at this time	Local leagues not able to operate at this time	Local Junior Leagues are able to re-start, if abiding by the guidelines set out in this document for U18 and Disabled People activity and advising players of the recommendations of returning to competitive play	Local leagues that include adults are able to re-start, if abiding by the guidelines set out in this document for adult activity and advising players of the recommendations of returning to competitive play	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.
7.Bars, cafes and restaurants situated in clubs	Sport providers and participants can use clubhouses and hospitality facilities in line with government <u>guidance on hospitality settings</u> , and there's specific advice <u>for sport facility operators</u> . People using clubhouses and hospitality facilities must adhere to legal gathering limits and wider government guidance.				
8.Local competitions and 1*'s	Local competitions and 1*'s will not be permitted at this time	Local competitions and 1*'s will not be permitted at this time	Local competition and 1*'s are able to re-start, if abiding by the guidelines set out in this document for U18** and Disabled People activity and advising players of the recommendations of returning to competitive play ** For U18/Junior competitions, if running a junior event please refer to	Local competition and 1*'s that include adults are able to re-start, if abiding by the guidelines set out this document for adult activity and advising players of the recommendations of returning to competitive play	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: We will aim to move to stage five of the Ready to Return roadmap, allowing all types of competitions to restart. Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce



		TTE Junior age group categories as normal.		the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.
9.Educational settings	Under-18 sport can take place at school as part of educational provision, or as part of wraparound care, but should not otherwise take place at this time	Under-18 sport can take place at school as part of educational provision		
10.Outdoor table tennis	No outdoor table tennis to take place at this time	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Play allowed on outdoor tables in bubbles of six people (can be from multiple households) or between two households (which may be more than 6 people)	In addition to the areas listed in previous columns: Remove all legal limits on social contact, publishing accompanying guidance on how best to reduce the risk of transmission and protect ourselves and loved ones.	
11.Travelling between areas	Stay at home wherever possible, unless for work, education, caring etc purposes	From 29 March, the government messaging around travel will be that you should minimise time spent outside your home, but you can leave your home and travel for exercise and to take part in informal and organised sport and physical activity.		
Elite sport guidance	The elite sport exemptions are only applicable for those over the age of 16 and are able to happen under strict Government guidelines, as such only a small number of England players have been through the elite sport return to play protocols and elite sport exemptions cannot apply to any type of club activity or training.			

Please find more detailed guidance in the remainder of this document below.

Pre activity

- Players to not attend any playing facility if they are having any symptoms or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for Covid-19
- Ensure club/venue risk assessment and method statement are **both** complete (please note, updated templates are available and risk assessments and method statements should be reviewed regularly)
- Implement a booking system to ensure that any required limits can be adhered to and registers of participants in the hall are kept for 21 days to support the NHS track and trace process.
- Clubs/leagues should appoint a 'hygiene' officer to help monitor the playing environments to ensure guidelines clubs/leagues have set out are being adhered to. You can find a template role description on our ready to return pages
- Clubs are advised to receive in writing confirmation from your facility that they are cleaning their facility in between different hirers (unless they have informed the club that it is the clubs' responsibility). This can be a formal letter or just confirmation in an email, which is kept by the club.
- Ensure that at the entry to your venue the NHS Track and Trace app QR code information is printed. Get all visitors to scan the QR code when they arrive, using the NHS COVID-19 app. This is to help trace and stop the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). You can find out how to do this here <https://www.gov.uk/create-coronavirus-qr-poster>

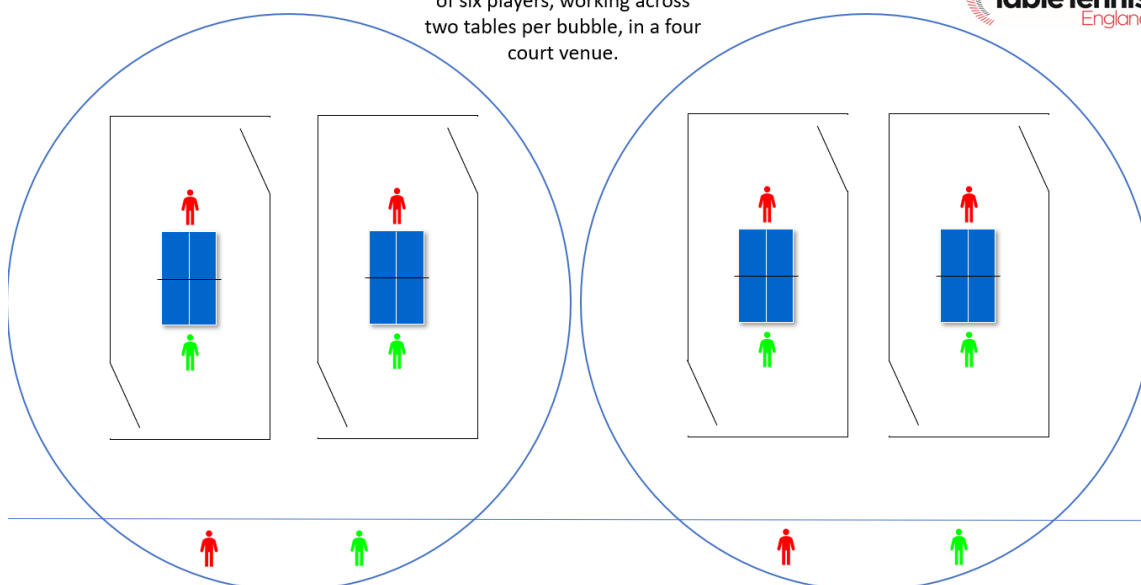
Hygiene recommendations

- Players use their own bats and equipment
- Balls should be washed regularly to minimise risk (this has been adjusted from the previous advice about using different balls for each player)
- No handshaking/slapping hands
- No breathing on the ball or bat to clean
- No hand wiping on the table
- Hand hygiene (hand sanitisers, with a minimum of 60% alcohol level) on entry and exit to venues, as well as pre, post and during training. Emphasis should however be on each individual taking responsibility for their own hygiene and encouraged at all times to bring their own hand sanitisers.
- Washing of hands regularly and before the start of any activity
- Tables should be cleaned and wiped dry using 2-3 sprays of a diluted soapy water solution. Avoid using alcohol-based products, astringent cleaners such as floor cleaners or wipes that may contain other substances that can leave a residue and alter the matt finish on tables.
- Face masks to be worn when not playing and by anyone else that enters the facility that is not playing, i.e. parent/carer. There is no guidance from Government about wearing face coverings in between exercise but Government guidance states that face masks do not have to be worn when to avoid harm or injury, or the risk of harm or injury, to yourself or others - including if it would negatively impact on your ability to exercise or participate in a strenuous activity. Players would be expected to wear a face covering if they believe after exercising that wearing a face covering would not unduly affect their recovery and not put you at risk of harm or injury.

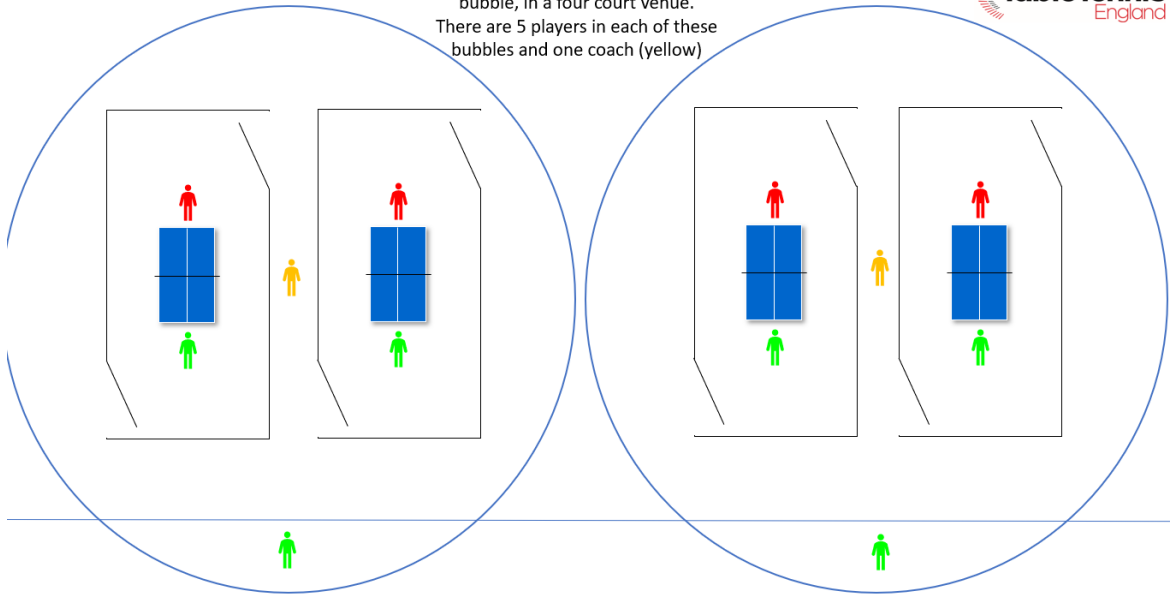
Bubbles – adults (over 18's) and mixed groups (U18 bubbles guidance provided further down)

- Individuals to train in bubbles of 2-6 people across 1-3 tables with no more than two people on each table at any time. It is important that a record of the players in each bubble are kept to help inform any track and trace procedures.
- Players in a bubble of six can play with any other player in that bubble, but not from players outside of their bubble in that session.
- There can be multiple bubbles in a hall at any one time, as long as the following conditions are met;
 - To accommodate up to four players, you must have a space that is a minimum of 40.5 sqm. For multi-purpose venues the court size (playing area) should be 9m X 4.5m, for one table rooms the dimensions of the space may vary, as long as the space is a minimum of 40.5sqm and the venue can meet all social distancing and hygiene guidance set out by the Government and Table Tennis England.
 - To accommodate up to six players, you must have a space that is a minimum of 55 sqm (this 'space' includes the playing area and any surrounding areas around the playing area where people may sit), for example 10m X 5.5m or 9m X 6.5m. For multi-purpose venues the court size (playing area) should be at least 9m X 4.5m, as long as the whole space for the match meets the 55 sqm guidance. For one table venues the dimensions of the space may vary, as long as the space is a minimum of 55 sqm and the venue can meet all social distancing and hygiene guidance set out by the Government and Table Tennis England.
- A coach does no longer need to form part of a bubble of 6 and can operate outside of that bubble, providing they remain socially distanced from the participants; therefore, six players and one coach would be manageable
- Currently a coach cannot oversee multiple bubbles
- Players cannot change bubbles within the same session – they must stay within their allocated bubble but can play in a different group at the next session (as long as this is not on the same day).
- Examples of bubbles and how they work are below, please bear in mind these are to depict the types of bubbles that can exist and are not to scale

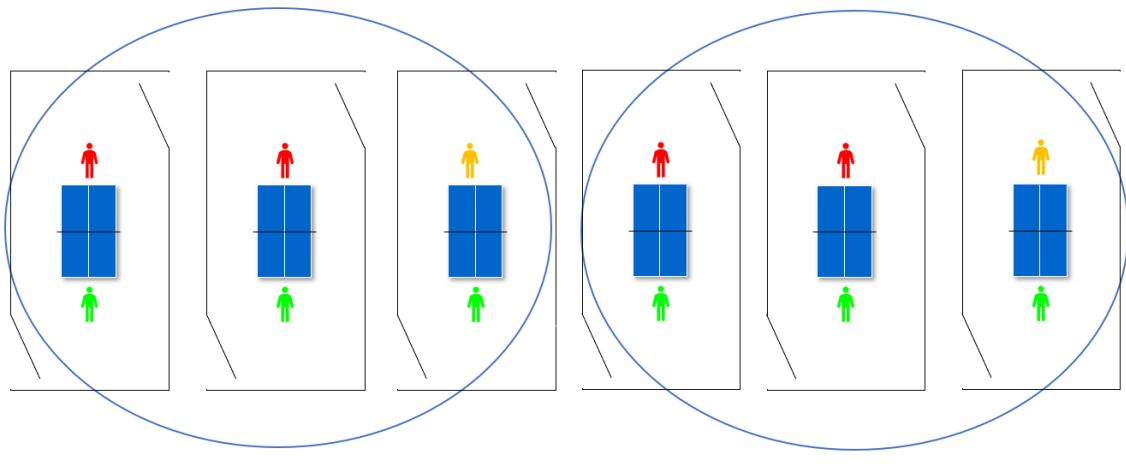
This image depicts two bubbles of six players, working across two tables per bubble, in a four court venue.



This image depicts two bubbles of six, working across two tables per bubble, in a four court venue. There are 5 players in each of these bubbles and one coach (yellow)



This image depicts two bubbles of six, working across three tables per bubble, in a six court venue. There are 5 players (red and green) in each of the bubbles and one coach (yellow)



Bubbles – U18's

Clubs can run sessions for young people under the age of 18 in bubbles of up to 15 participants, with at least one coach, provided that they follow the protective measures set out by Government and Table Tennis England.

For any clubs looking to run sessions for U18's in bubbles of up to 15 participants, will need to abide by the Table Tennis England and Government guidelines, paying particular attention to the below areas:

- Sessions can occur in many kinds of venue, from a person's home to much larger and more formal places such as community and youth centres, sports clubs, and places of worship. Fees may or may not be charged, and some settings may operate on a commercial basis.
- It is absolutely imperative that a risk assessment is put in place and is refreshed regularly
- Individuals to train in bubbles of 2-15 people, with no more than two people on each table at any time. It is important that a record of the players in each bubble are kept to help inform any track and trace procedures.
- Decisions on group sizes for your setting should be based on the below, ensuring you also do not exceed the maximum numbers for the size of your facility laid out in this document:
 - the current government guidance on social distancing
 - the ability of the children in attendance to maintain social distancing and practise hand hygiene
 - the age of the children in attendance
 - nature of your activity or provision (for example, static, classroom set-up rather than an activity that requires a range of movement)
 - the size or layout of your premises
- Players in each bubble of fifteen can play with any other player in that bubble, but not from players outside of their bubble in that session
- Providers should also ensure that where they have multiple groups of children in their setting, that these groups are not mixing within the setting itself.
- There can be multiple bubbles in a hall at any one time, as long as the following conditions are met, the below are both examples that can be used to work out spaces required for larger groups;
 - To accommodate up to four players, you must have a space that is a minimum of 40.5 sqm. For multi-purpose venues the court size (playing area) should be 9m X 4.5m, for one table rooms the dimensions of the space may vary, as long as the space is a minimum of 40.5sqm and the venue can meet all social distancing and hygiene guidance set out by the Government and Table Tennis England.
 - To accommodate up to six players, you must have a space that is a minimum of 55 sqm (this 'space' includes the playing area and any surrounding areas around the playing area where people may sit), for example 10m X 5.5m or 9m X 6.5m. For multi-purpose venues the court size (playing area) should be at least 9m X 4.5m, as long as the whole space for the match meets the 55 sqm guidance. For one table venues the dimensions of the space may vary, as long as the space is a minimum of 55 sqm and the venue can meet all social distancing and hygiene guidance set out by the Government and Table Tennis England.
- Currently a coach cannot oversee multiple bubbles of 15 children at the same time but can run more than one bubble of 15 children on the same day
- Players cannot change bubbles within the same session – they must stay within their allocated bubble
- The guidance above does not apply to mixed sessions where adults and U18 participants are participating together, in these circumstances, you must keep to a bubble size of six.

Spatial and facility usage recommendations

- Training partners are separated by at least 2 meters (length of the table) at any time
- Implement a booking system to ensure that any required limits can be adhered to and registers of participants in the hall are kept for 21 days to support the NHS track and trace process.

- All tables used are separated by partitions/barriers/nets **wherever possible**, unless in a one table venue and no-one else is present in the playing hall
- Venue to be kept well ventilated, with any ventilation system kept on and/or windows/doors remaining open wherever possible. Venues should aim to turn any ventilation on and open any windows or doors at least 15 minutes before player arrival. If a venue has no ventilation system or windows and doors that can be left open, this would be difficult to maintain air flow and air quality. Time spent in that indoor space in that instance should be restricted to no more than 30 minutes according to the latest government advice.
- Fixing doors open that can be safely left open where feasible
- Table areas are ideally a minimum of 9 metres by 4.5 metres
- If possible, put in place a one-way system around your venue and playing space
- Minimum of 10-minute break is used in between sessions, players must wipe down their side of the playing surface upon finishing. A 10-minute break is not required when players in the same bubble, in the same session are swapping over, however it is advised to clean down any equipment that the players may have come into contact with
- Doubles play is currently not permitted, unless with members of your own household
- Individuals can change ends with players that they are in the same bubble of, it is recommended that surfaces that a player may come into contact with are wiped down, this does not include the whole surface of the table, but would include the edges/sides of the table.
- Changing rooms and showers are not to be used for showering or changing, this should be done at home and players to arrive ready to play
- Avoid music in sessions, to avoid players or volunteers/coaches having to shout and increasing the risk of transmission of the virus

Injury and illness

- Players are encouraged to **not** take part in match play and more vigorous exercise straight away, it is important to build up to match play and higher intensity play to prevent ill health and injury
- You should feel you are in the correct physical condition before considering a return to training and match play

Support available to support a return to play:

As outlined earlier, please continue to check back to the Table Tennis England website to get the most up to date guidance and advice. We will continue to build on the information and templates provided for clubs and leagues over the coming weeks.

<https://tabletennisengland.co.uk/our-sport/major-events/ready-to-return/>