



Covid-19 Playing Guide

Government guidelines that have permitted indoor courts to open include instructions that activities must be modified in such a way that social distancing can be maintained throughout the activity.

There should be no more than two players on court at any time. Please refer also to the Covid-19 Secure Plan.

Individuals

- Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing
- Solo practice
- Coach led/supervised activity

Two Players the Same Household or Support Bubble

- Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing
- Full match play is allowed

Two Players from approved Squash Bubble

- Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.
- Only one player touching the ball between breaks
- Squash bubble play – see details below

Two Players from Different Households

- Hand and touch point hygiene before and after playing.
- Only one player touching the ball and court door
- Social distancing between both players – see suggestions below



Squash Bubble Play

A bubble consists of a maximum of six players. Players can only be part of one bubble at a time. If a player wishes to switch bubbles, they must take a 7-day break from playing the bubble version of the game before joining a different bubble. Socially distanced formats can be played during this 7-day break.

The club will maintain a list of all players in each bubble. Players must confirm in writing that they will follow the [England Squash bubble guidance](#).

Full Court Matchplay between bubble members

(England Squash)

- Only two players on court at one time.
- Play best of three games. Play first to 11 points, sudden-death at 10-all.
- During each game, when the first player reaches five points, both players should wipe away excessive sweat, sanitise their hands and the ball.
- Repeat between games.
- The same player to serve / touch the ball during each half of a game, and at the halfway point, switch servers.

Socially Distanced Games

‘Sides’

(Suggested by England Squash)

An adapted version of the game for two players from different households. This cross-court version of squash is designed to comply with social distancing measures, with each player remaining in their own half of the court at all times. During the game, only one player should touch the ball and the court door.

The rules:

- Only two players permitted
- The aim is to hit a winner or force an error from your opponent as in regular squash



- Only one player serves during the match, the opponent cannot handle the ball (or have a ball each)
- Both players must keep to their side of the court throughout each rally, using the full length of the court whilst maintaining safe social distancing throughout
- If a player crosses into the opponent's side of the court, they immediately forfeit the rally
- If there is a danger of players breaching a safe social distance, they must call a let and replay the rally
- Once a rally is complete, players switch sides of the court (maintaining a safe social distance) and the server restarts play

[Watch a video here.](#)

Front vs back

(Suggested by Cambridgeshire Squash)

As the name suggests, one player can hit to the back only (beyond the service line on first bounce), and the other to the front only (in front of the service line on second bounce). The following scoring system is suggested: play PAR 15, but when one player reaches 8, switch round who is hitting to the front and who is hitting to the back. At the start of the next game, the winner starts off hitting to the back.



Partner drills

(Suggested by Cambridgeshire Squash)

Even while socially distancing, there are many useful and enjoyable drills to do with a partner. Here are some to get you started.

Boast drive

a classic drill that gets both players moving laterally and with many variations.

- Player A plays a boast; player B straight drives; repeat. Tips – try to come onto the volley when boasting. And between shots, try to return to the T, stop while the opponent is hitting, split step, and move off, rather than just running side to side without a pause. From the front, try varying between a hard low drive when the boast is easy, and a defensive lob when the boast is difficult.
- Two shot variation – the player at the front drops to themselves, and drives their own drop. The player at the back drives to themselves, and then boasts their own drive.
- Add a drop – the player at the back can either boast or drop, meaning the player at the front has to be ready to retrieve a ball at either side of the front of the court.
- Add a crosscourt drive – the player at the front can either straight drive or crosscourt drive, meaning the player at the back has to be ready to retrieve a ball at either side of the back of the court.
- Add a kill from the front – the player at the front can either kill or drive (straight) and that means the player at the back needs to base forward ready to pick up a kill.
- You can build this drill up to a 'front vs back' game, where the player at the front can hit anywhere in the back, and the player at the back can hit anywhere in the front.

Objective is to work on accuracy and consistency of shots, and also court movement. It's very easy just to make these static drills, but try and put the movement and shot into the context of a game.

Drop drive

A more static drill which allows players to concentrate on their hitting without worrying about their movement as much.

- Player A plays a drop; player B plays a straight drive; repeat. Tips – when dropping, try volleying the drive. When driving, aim for a firm low drive off an easy drop, and a defensive lob off a difficult drop.
- Two shot variation – the player at the front drops to themselves, and drives their own drop. The player at the back drives to themselves, and then drops their own drive.

Objective is to improve quality and consistency of shot and to work on stroke preparation and production. Aim to play the best shot possible and learn to make adjustments depending on the quality of the shot you receive.



Solo drills

(Suggested by Cambridgeshire Squash)

While solo training might not be as social as training with a partner, it can be very rewarding and is an excellent way to build racket skills. Here are some drills to try.

Drives

Standing behind the service box, aim to hit the ball deep and straight back to yourself. Depending on how hard you hit it, the ball should be bouncing somewhere behind the service box, with the second bounce bouncing around the back wall nick. Aim to get the bounce within a set number of floorboards out from the wall. 4 floorboards out from the wall would be good – 2 would be even better! Hit onto the front wall at different height and pace and learn to make appropriate adjustments to where the ball should bounce.

Objective is to work on control and consistency of width and length. Be conscious of where the second bounce is landing. Overhit, under-hit or dying near the back wall nick; don't just keep hitting in the general direction without monitoring where, in particular, the second bounce is landing.

Volleys – standing around the front of the service box, aim to hit the ball around the cut line (the middle line on the front wall) and volley your own ball. Start off with relatively gentle balls and hit it firmer as you get better. This one is surprisingly difficult! Can you do 10 in a row? What about 20?

Objective is to improve stroke preparation and racket head control. As one gets better, it is a great for strengthening one's arm!

Kills, drops, and the short game – standing towards the front of the court, feed up an easy ball to yourself, and practice a variety of short shots: straight and crosscourt kills and drops; boasts; volley kills and drops; even hitting the nick. You can experiment and have fun with your short game, trying out new things, and, of course, working on consistency and accuracy. Try changing the area of court from which you are working and repeat the range of shots. You can also integrate practicing your short game into your driving or volley practice. Occasionally feed in a looser ball and throw in a drop or kill as you might in a game.

Objective is to build confidence and consistency with one's short game, gradually increasing the difficulty of the balls from which the shots are being played.

Overall, you are aiming for consistency and accuracy. Solo is also a great time to work on those technical improvements and adjustments which you don't have time to think about when under pressure from an opponent. You don't have to do hours and hours at once to make a difference to your game; think about structuring a 30-40 minute session, with time spent on both backhand and forehand, and especially the areas where you are weaker.