



Rounders England

Action Plan and guidance for the safe return of Rounders in England, after lockdown



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INTRODUCTION

The UK Government has now given approval for the return of competitive Rounders. This guidance, from Rounders England - the National Governing Body for Rounders in England – sets out the measures needed to mitigate associated risks when playing Rounders; focussing on the key requirements to incorporate Covid-19 social distancing and enhanced hygiene requirements.

It should be read in conjunction with the Government's latest [Covid-19 guidance](#) and is based on the Government's framework for a return to recreational team sport.

The guiding principles are intended to set out sufficient information for the Rounders community to discharge its duty of care in a reasonable, proportionate and confident way. The guidance is not exhaustive and has been developed with existing levels of knowledge and will signpost to existing information created by relevant authorities.

Important information to note when reviewing this guidance:

- This guidance is in line with the latest government guidance allowing for groups to gather for the purpose of playing sport. The 2m Social distancing rule is only to be breached in the circumstances required on the field of play. There are no proposed modification to the official Rounders rules.
- UK Government advice is subject to change at short or no notice. Rounders England will regularly review and update this guidance on their website (www.roundersengland.co.uk) as and when more information is received.
- The guidance provides over-arching best practice for the safe return of Rounders in England regardless of the structure of leagues, clubs, teams and events.

Who is this guidance aimed at?

The aim of this guidance is to provide a return to play framework for participants of the Rounders community including, but not limited to, event organisers, players, umpires, volunteers, coaches and spectators.

RETURN TO PLAY ROUNDERS BEST PRACTICE

Definitions	
'Activity Provider'	Refers to the organiser/s of a game(s) of Rounders. For example, but not limited to - leagues, clubs, teams, education providers and other sport and leisure providers
'Event'	Refers to any Rounders event including league games, friendlies, competitions and training events for up to 30 Participants – not including officials
'Participant'	Refers to anyone involved in the event including organisers, players, umpires, volunteers, coaches and spectators
'Fleeting'	<p>Fleeting (less than 3 seconds) is when face-to-face passing could occur irregularly at any of the posts when a batter is running towards it and a fielder goes to stump. We have provided mitigations for this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th Post.</i> These are key positions in the fielding team. Where the fielder attempts to touch the post in order to 'stump out' the batter before the live batter touches the post with their bat in order to stay in the game. The interaction is irregular and deemed a fleeting passing of less than 3 seconds - Mitigation: Once the play has happened – the fielder should be positioned a minimum of one metre away from the batter/post to await the play to be resumed

The guidance sets out the **minimum standards** for the organisation of the game of Rounders in England for all Activity Providers and events. There are **no** proposed rule modifications to the game at this time. Apart from irregular fleeting passing as outlined in the exceptions there is **no** reason why the recommended 1m+ social distancing cannot be maintained throughout a game of Rounders. The guidance will help mitigate the risk of Covid-19 infections – however they cannot eliminate it completely.

The protocols to be implemented are:

1. Rounders Specific Guidance
2. Hygiene Measures
3. Social Distancing Measures
4. Covid-19 Officer Role
5. Participant Registration
6. Adherence to Measures

1. Rounders Specific Guidance

Number of players:	Rounders England guidance is recommending that there is no change to players in a team; A team shall consist of any number of players to a maximum of 15 and a minimum of 6, of whom no more than 9 may be on the pitch at any one time.
	Players/Substitutes must not exceed 30 people at any one time. This does not include officials.
Match play:	A single match can be either a match consisting of two innings and the team with the greater number of rounders shall win the game OR one/two innings of a set number of good balls.
	Face-to-face player proximity interactions are minimal, incidental, are not expressly created within the rules governing play; where they might occur, they do not exceed three seconds.
Pitch:	The pitch is marked in a diamond shape and there will usually be 3 fielders within the diamond (bowler, backstop and 1 st Post) with the rest of the fielding team spread out beyond the posts
	The batting line up will keep 2 metres socially distant from each other whilst awaiting their turn to bat. Batters out will wait in a separate area keeping 2 metres socially distant. Substitutes will wait in a separate area, off the playing field, keeping 2 metres socially distant.
	All participants are spread out across a total playing area of approximately 6000 sq. metres. If more than one game is being played on a field then each pitch size should be increased to 15,000 sq. metres to avoid the minimal risk of the ball running into another pitch.

Medically High Risk groups as defined by the NHS [here](#) are discouraged from putting themselves at risk in line with [Government guidelines](#). We do not recommend participants who self-identify as High Risk participate in Rounders.

2. Hygiene Measures

Each team is required to provide:	Hand sanitiser – must be used before, during (after each innings) and after play and warm up
	Equipment disinfectant/wipes for personal and team equipment – must be used before, during and after play and warm up Bin bags for safe disposal of rubbish
	First aiders should be equipped with the appropriate PPE. After contact with an injured participant, the person who has administered first aid should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity
Equipment:	Competitors must avoid sharing equipment if possible
	It is recommended that players do not share bats. If bats have to be shared, they should be disinfected between each use and numbered so that the same two people use them
	Balls - Each team must bring / be provided with two game balls for use. Ideally, they should be new and unopened
	Balls must be disinfected before and after each innings

Self-Assessment health checks prior to leaving home for all. Restricting participation of high risk groups, as defined by the NHS.

3. Social distancing measures

Social distancing should be maintained at all times. Apart from irregular fleeting passing there is no reason why the recommended 1m+ social distancing cannot be maintained throughout a game of Rounders.

Social distancing measures:	Implementation of a 'no touch rule' for all participants. No high fives, hand-shaking or any other physical contact with others
	Only one team should warm up on the pitch at any given time
	Teams must wait for all members of the opposing team to leave the field before taking up fielding positions at each changeover
	The batting line up should, whilst waiting for their turn to bat, remain at least 2 metres apart from each other and also away from where the backstop or batting umpire may approach during in play situations
	The backstop will be positioned as per Rounders rules – a minimum of one metre behind the batting box
	Venues will not be able to re-open their facilities before April 12.
	Do not spit and avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with other participants
	Players / Coaches / Umpires / Substitutes should familiarise themselves with government guidance on the safe use of face coverings and their role in reducing the transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19).
	<p>Travel</p> <p>All participants and other attendees should follow best practice for travel, including minimising use of public transport. Participants should walk or cycle if possible. People from a household or support bubble can travel together in a vehicle. Travelling outside of the above is not recommended, but if it has to happen please consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share transport with the same person each time. - Keep to a small group at any one time - don't put maximum capacity within the car. - Keep the windows open. - Face away from each other. <p>Make sure that the driver and passenger(s) wear face coverings. If you're sharing a car, make sure you sanitise/wash your hands before getting in the car and then once out of the car straight away.</p> <p><u>COMPLETE GOVERNMENT ADVICE</u></p>

4. Covid-19 Officer Role

Each Activity Provider should appoint a dedicated 'Covid-19 Officer' who takes responsibility for implementing the Return to Play Rounders guidance.

Covid-19 Officer responsibilities:	Being the designated contact for the Activity Provider to receive updates of this guidance and support from Rounders England
	Ensuring compliance of the Return to Play Rounders guidance within their league, club, team or independent event
	Developing an event and venue specific Covid-19 Risk Assessment and Health & Safety Plan as needed
	Documenting that all event participants have received appropriate education in personal safety and risk mitigation measures
	Oversee the participant registration process (see participant registration section)
	Ensuring appropriate equipment is in First Aid kits: face mask, face shield, disposable gloves, disposable apron
	<p>Communication – Covid-19 Response Plan: acting as the point person to coordinate with the local health authorities, especially with the identification, isolation and transportation, if necessary, of symptomatic participants</p> <p>Create awareness of the protocols to all participants to aid adoption and compliance. Consider developing printed and digital notices for all event participants and spectators and deploy relevant communication channels such as email, social media, websites, noticeboards, public announcements, text messaging, etc</p>
	<p>Free Training – Industry recognised ReActivate COVID-19 Awareness Award. Funded by Sport England and CIMSPA this award is made up of different modules, including 1) What is Covid? 2) Look after your participants 3) Front line delivery, designed to build your knowledge around COVID and how to keep yourself and others safe when you all come together again.</p> <p>Three easy steps to access the FREE award:</p> <p>1) Go to https://prozone.futurefit.co.uk/roundersengland/login 2) Click 'Not registered? Select a plan' 3) Select the group that best fits your main role (choices are: Club/League, Covid-19 Officer, Coaches & Leaders, Players)</p> <p>Free until 31st August 2021.</p>

5. Participant Registration

Participant details must be gathered and kept for 21 days for every event. This should include full name, telephone number and email address. Keeping a record of all participants attending an event follows Sport England's best practice and in the context of a Return to Play, it is a useful way of:

- Capturing data related to assist NHS Test & Trace efforts and help contain clusters or outbreaks
- Providing guidance to participants on their roles and responsibilities
- Ensuring participants are aware they are assuming a risk

Please note: The participant registration process does not discharge an Activity Provider's liability or duty of care. Any data collected must be GDPR compliant and stored safely for 21 days only. Activity providers will need to remain aware of the ICO's data protection steps for organisations as provided [here](#). This section should also be read in conjunction with Sport England's legal guidance provided [here](#).

Rounders England will provide support and template documentation where appropriate. These will be provided in a Return to Play Rounders guidance pack on the Rounders England website.

6. Adherence to measures

All participants must adhere to strict social distancing and hygiene measures before a game, during a game and after a game. If an individual is symptomatic and/or living in a household with a possible COVID-19 infection they should remain at home and follow UK Government guidance. In addition, any participants who have been asked to isolate by NHS Test and Trace because they are a contact of a known COVID-19 case, must not exercise outside their home or garden and must not exercise with others.

Covid-19 is a highly infectious and dangerous disease. A return to playing Rounders is only achievable if those involved create and maintain a controlled environment that minimises the threat of infection. Risk in sport cannot be completely eradicated but with caution and care these risks can be reduced.

Each player will need to decide when to return to playing Rounders, based on their own circumstances and the arrangements that have been put in place for a safe return.

<p>All those returning to play Rounders must adopt the following code of behaviour:</p>	<p>Be aware of your own personal health. If you show any of the Covid-19 symptoms you must stay at home, inform NHS Test and Trace and seek medical advice.</p>
	<p>Be responsible. Read the guidance provided by Rounders England, your league, club or team so that you are aware of the changes to the game and what is expected of you.</p>
	<p>Practise good hygiene. Wash/sanitise your hands regularly and before, during and after a game.</p>
	<p>Where possible maintain social distancing. This won't always be possible during match play but please note the mitigations that have been put in place. Before, and after a game you should maintain social distancing.</p>
	<p>Support NHS Test and Trace. You're likely to be asked to provide your details so that in the event of a Covid-19 outbreak those potentially infected can be traced. This is to everyone's benefit so please cooperate.</p>
	<p>Do not spit and avoid shouting or raising your voice if face to face with other participants.</p>
	<p>After the game, be aware that other users may be waiting to use the facilities. Changing rooms and showers are likely to be closed. In all instances you should follow the Government's guidance on social distancing.</p>



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OUR RETURN TO PLAY ROUNDERS APPROACH

Process and consultation

Following the publication of the 'Return to Recreational Team Sport Guidance' produced by Sport England and DCMS, Rounders England has undertaken an assessment based on key criteria outlined in the framework. The Return to Play Rounders has been created following research and discussion/consultation with various stakeholders as outlined below:

- Rounders England Covid-19 Medical Advisory Group
- South Yorkshire Mixed Rounders League
- Somerset Activity Sports Partnership
- BaseballSoftball UK

We want to take this opportunity to thank our partners and stakeholders for their support to date that has ensured we are in the best place possible to return to Rounders. This guidance will be reviewed accordingly and can be subject to change in line with the latest government advice.



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FURTHER INFORMATION

Rounders England

All up to date guidance:

<https://www.roundersengland.co.uk/>

Sport England

Return to Play hub:

<https://www.sportengland.org/how-we-can-help/coronavirus/return-play>

Return to Play legal guidance:

<https://sportengland-production-files.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/2020-06/Legal%20risks%20and%20duties%20of%20care%20when%20returning%20to%20play.pdf?M6px4v48lm3EijYOQBae8mkOMcBDBPfh>

Club Matters toolkit to help sports clubs prepare for reopening:

<https://learn.sportenglandclubmatters.com/course/view.php?id=71>

Club Matters social distancing general guidance:

https://learn.sportenglandclubmatters.com/pluginfile.php/31277/mod_resource/content/4/Club%20Matters%20Social%20Distancing%20tips%20SO.pdf

UK Government

Coronavirus (Covid-19) Guidance on the Phased Return of Sport and Recreation:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-phased-return-of-sport-and-recreation>
