



England Kabaddi Union (EKU)

Official guidance for return of Kabaddi (Rectangle) post COVID-19 - Action Plan

Introduction

Kabaddi is a team-based contact sport played on mats. It requires minimal equipment but does involve significant levels of person to person interaction. Just like other contact sports, Kabaddi has been significantly affected by the restrictions and lockdowns introduced by the government in order to tackle the COVID-19 pandemic in England and the UK. This phase-wise action plan is for clubs, societies and organisations that wish to return to organising normal (pre-COVID) indoor training for their Kabaddi players across England.

Please note that this Return-to-Play guidance post COVID-19 is only applicable to Kabaddi (Rectangle) - i.e. Rectangle Style Kabaddi. Any reference to Kabaddi, as a sport, refers to the said style of Kabaddi.

As per the recent announcements of the government, contact sports can now implement a phased return to normal training and matches. The safety and health of EKU Kabaddi players and members is the topmost priority for EKU. This action plan has been developed in line with the guidelines issued by the UK government and in consultation with universities and clubs across England and international affiliates of the England Kabaddi Union.

Detailed guidance from the UK government relating to sports and COVID-19 can be found at the following links:

- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-safe-provision-including-team-sport-contact-combat-sport-and-organised-sport-events#contact-combat-sport-framework>
- <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-grassroots-sports-guidance-for-the-public-and-sport-providers>

General government issued guidance and advice relating to COVID-19 can be found at www.gov.uk/coronavirus.

The principal aim of this phase-wise action plan is to facilitate the safe and gradual return to Kabaddi for Kabaddi clubs, societies and organisations across England - while mitigating risks of infection as much as possible. All Kabaddi organisations across England must follow these guidelines in order to ensure the same.



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Risk assessment and mitigation guidance

COVID-19 is primarily transmitted via respiratory droplets and fomite transmission on frequently touched surfaces. In indoor spaces where participants are in close proximity, airborne transmission also occurs. Therefore, the transmission risk is dependent on three variables:

1. Droplet and aerosol transmission - The risk associated with each action is based on duration and proximity to participants.
2. Fomite transmission - The risk associated with handling and transfer of equipment in the sport.
3. Population - The number of participants taking part in the proposed activity and the individual risk factors including those with underlying health conditions.

The following framework outlines the risks associated with activities that are generally undertaken during Kabaddi training sessions and matches. They have been categorised into a traffic light (green / amber / red) system on the basis of the guidance provided in Appendix 1 of the government guidance.

Table 1: Risk Assessment for Kabaddi-related Activities and Mitigation Protocols

Activity	Risk level (as per Appendix 1)	Mitigation
Pre and post session activities		
Congregation prior to training / match	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain social distancing;• Wear masks / face coverings;
Use of changing rooms	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Come changed prior to training;• Wear face coverings in toilets / changing rooms;
Warm-up and cool down	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain 2m distancing;• Allocate mats to individuals if indoors and avoid sharing mats;
Stretching	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain 2m distancing;• Allocate mats to individuals if indoors and avoid sharing mats;
Equipment sharing	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participants bring their own equipment such as kit and water bottles;
Travelling	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoid travelling in groups;• Wear face coverings / masks when travelling;

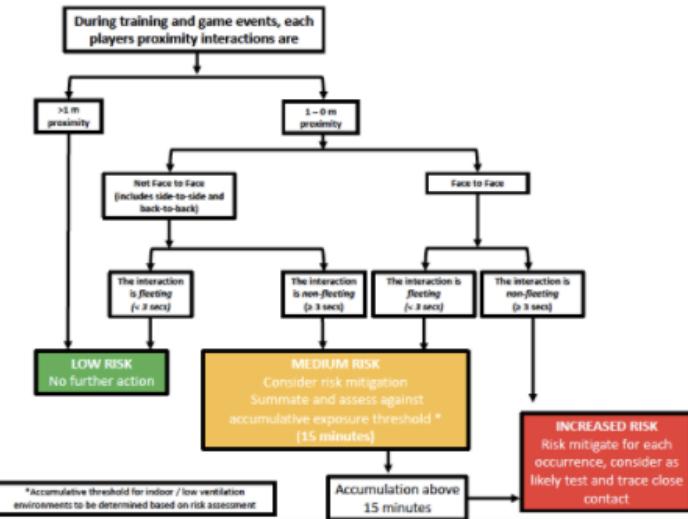


		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Follow social distancing protocols where applicable;• Avoid car sharing outside of social bubbles;
During training activities		
Chanting "Kabaddi" for raiders	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chant as quietly as possible;• Chanting should not be mandatory during Phase 1 and 2;
Whistling and Shouting	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Referees, trainers and coaches should use hand signals instead of whistles or shouting;• Whistling and shouting should be avoided until Phase 3;• Electronic sound makers may be used as alternatives.
Non-contact raiding drills such as <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bonus line;• Raiding movement;• Stretch and reach;• Toe touch simulation;• Running hand touch simulation;	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain 2m distancing;
Non-contact defensive drills such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defensive movement practice;• Ankle hold simulation;• Block simulation;• Dash simulation;	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintain 2m distancing.
Fleeting interaction drills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grabs (ankle, thigh etc.);• Point taking touch drill;• Escape drills;• Block drills;	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organisers / Coaches to ensure that contact is fleeting and not prolonged (<3s);• Cumulative time spent during these drills <15 minutes;• Sanitisation breaks between these drills;
Hand-holding for defenders	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibited until Phase 3;• Follow updated guidelines as and when announced by the government and EKU;
Prolonged contact drills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dash drills;	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prohibited until Phase 3;• Follow updated guidelines as and



• Throw tackle drills; • Chain tackle drills; • Support tackle drills;		when announced by the government and EKU;
Competitive Kabaddi matches (during training sessions or otherwise)	High	• Prohibited until Phase 4; • Follow updated guidelines as and when announced by the government and EKU;
Facility usage		
Movement on site	Low	• Maintain adequate social distancing; • Use signage to navigate through facilities;
Venue capacity and ventilation	Low	• Venue capacity restrictions should be followed; • Open doors and windows to allow good air flow where possible;

Appendix 1



A team sports risk exposure framework to inform risk mitigation strategies and support test and trace

Figure 1: Appendix 1 from the government guidance



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Key principles for mitigation of risks of transmission of COVID-19

1. Limiting the time spent congregating at a venue before and after sporting activity.
2. Minimising use of changing rooms and shower facilities
3. Ensuring social distancing between participants when not on the field of play.
4. Limit activities that forcefully expel droplets like chanting and shouting to a minimum.
5. Adhere to social gathering limits as per government guidelines.
6. Advise participants and players to bring their own separate equipment, water bottles, towels, sanitisers etc.
7. Advise participants to take their kits and equipment home and clean / wash it themselves.
8. Avoid sharing of any equipment or kits.



Phase-wise action plan and guidelines

The phase-wise action plan and guidelines laid out below are in line with the different steps outlined in the roadmap to recovery published by the UK government, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021>.

Each phase in this action plan is closely linked with the ease in restrictions at each step laid out by the UK government in the above mentioned roadmap. As per the government, decisions on easing restrictions will be led by data rather than dates.

For the avoidance of doubt, any dates provided are indications only, unless stated otherwise and any changes specified below will not take place before that date; and could be later depending on what the government confirms and announces.

Transitions between phases will be announced by the EKU on its official website and through social media in line with the announcements made by the government, as and when required. This should enable Kabaddi clubs, societies and organisations across England to safely and gradually return to normal Kabaddi training. This will also enable the Kabaddi clubs and organisations access resources such as risk assessments, toolkits and guidance for conducting training sessions safely.



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Phase 0

No training and remote home workouts + online emotional and well-being support

Phase 0 has already been successfully implemented by the EKU and other Kabaddi clubs and organisations across England - whilst lockdown regulations were in place. Phase 0 involved the following:

- Regular online social sessions and meetings for members of different Kabaddi clubs.
- Online workout videos and sessions for members to keep healthy while at home during lockdown.



Phase 1

Outdoor trainings with limited contact

During Phase 1, restricted outdoor sports facilities will be allowed to open with a limited number of people. Training can be conducted with minimal contact between players. The guidance and framework provided below with respect to pre-session preparation, population limitation, social distancing and other measures will assist organisers with mitigating the risks of spreading COVID-19.

The following guidance should be followed by organisers (includes coaches) and participants, in order to safely conduct Kabaddi training sessions during Phase 1:

Preparation:

1. A full risk assessment must be undertaken by the organising Kabaddi club / organisation, which is made available to the members of the club / organisation prior to the session.
2. A limit should be set for the number of players allowed to attend for each training session.
 - a. It is recommended that sessions conducted during Phase 1 have a limit of 10 participants. Any changes to this will be notified from time to time by EKU.
3. Sessions should be pre-booked with organisers confirming attendance in advance.
 - a. Attendees should be informed of the risks undertaken, with respect to COVID-19, prior to attending the training.
4. Participants should be advised to carry sanitisation equipment for personal use. Organisers or facility managers should arrange any additional health and sanitisation equipment for the training, as required (for example, for use on mats).
5. A mandatory verbal health check should be conducted by the organisers prior to arrival regarding symptoms. If any member or attendee exhibits symptoms of COVID-19¹, they should not be allowed to train and must immediately go home and follow government guidance. Organisers must make a note of such an occurrence. When hiring facilities, members and attendees may have to scan a 'track and trace' QR code when attending Kabaddi sessions.
 - a. Organisers should keep a track of attendees with contact details for up to 21 days (bearing in mind GDPR regulations) to assist with 'track and trace' if required.
6. A distance of 2 metres should be maintained between all players during the warm-up and stretching prior to the training.

¹ NHS - COVID-19 symptoms <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/>



7. Attendees should arrive changed in sports gear, ready to play, as venues may not provide access to changing facilities which pose an infection risk. Please take note of local facility policies.
8. Masks should be worn by anyone using the toilets.
9. Payments for Kabaddi sessions (if applicable) should be contactless / online as much as possible, with minimal use of cash.
10. Spectators are not allowed.

During the session:

1. Full Kabaddi matches including any matches during training or competitive matches shall be prohibited.
2. Training will only take place outdoors, such as on grass.
3. Only low and medium risk Kabaddi drills (as listed in Table 1) are allowed to be conducted during Phase 1. Medium risk activities should be restricted to a cumulative time period of 15 minutes. Mitigating steps provided in Table 1 should be followed as well.
 - a. **Any tackling training conducted should try and include simulated tackles as much as possible.** Organisers should focus the training on positioning and timing of tackles and avoid drills involving contact during tackles. This will reduce contact between players.
 - b. High risk activities such as throws and dashes are forbidden.
4. Limited contact maintains aspects of the sport without a significant increase in risk.
5. Players should frequently sanitise their hands between drill sets in order to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. It is recommended that organisers take breaks in between drills to allow players to sanitise their hands regularly.
6. The raiders shall be allowed to breathe during their raids and local organisers can determine whether the kabaddi chant should be used. The chant should be barely audible.
7. Face masks are not compulsory but should be worn as and when possible in between drills and activities. Face masks should also be worn in changing areas and other places outside the pitch, where reasonably practicable.
8. Handshakes and hugs should be completely avoided by the players, either during, before or after the session.
9. In case of injuries, appropriate action in line with first aid training and guidance should be taken. See section referring to "Injury Treatment and Management".



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Post session:

1. Members should not gather or congregate together after the session.
2. It is strongly recommended that members shower at home after the session and wash their sports clothes and equipment after each use.
3. Players and attendees should refrain from touching or hugging each other after the session.
4. Organisers should clean and sanitise equipment that has been shared between players, if any.



Phase 2

Indoor trainings with limited contact (not before 17th May 2021)

Phase 2 will begin when restrictions are eased on organised sporting activities taking place indoors (in line with Step 3 of the UK government's roadmap - which will be implemented no earlier than 17th May 2021).

We will issue notifications on our website and social media when Phase 2 begins, upon receiving appropriate directions and permissions from the UK government.

The guidance laid out for Phase 1, with respect to pre and post training, shall still be in place and enforced during Phase 2. The general principles of sanitisation, separate equipment and minimised contact, as laid out for Phase 1 for training sessions, shall also be in place during training. However, training may be permitted to take place in indoor facilities with the following criteria in place:

1. The drills and activities allowed / not-allowed during these sessions shall be in line with the ones that are laid out for Phase 1.
2. Any conditions laid down by the facility managers shall be duly followed by the attendees and organisers.

Any updates to the above mentioned guidelines or additional guidelines introduced shall be announced on our website <https://www.englandkabaddi.com/covid>. Official government guidance will be updated on www.gov.uk.



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Phase 3

Return to normal indoor training sessions

In Phase 3, all training sessions will return to normal and all restrictions on contact and gathering limits shall be lifted. Organised matches and competitions shall still be prohibited, subject to permission and review from EKU and approval of Kabaddi activities as an organised sport. It is also recommended that basic social distancing and face covering practices are followed when not engaging in sporting activities. This should be in line with governmental guidance that is in place at the time.

Any updates to the above mentioned guidelines introduced shall be announced on our website <https://www.englandkabaddi.com/covid>. Official government guidance will be available on www.gov.uk.



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Phase 4

Complete return to normal Kabaddi activities including competitions and matches

Phase 4 of this action plan shall signal the complete return to normal Kabaddi activities, including training sessions, matches and competitions. All restrictions with respect to these will be lifted.

It is advisable to follow general social distancing and face covering protocols wherever possible.

It is pertinent to note that the circumstances may change and that this may not be applicable in the future. Please make sure you follow the updated guidance as issued by the government (www.gov.uk) and by the EKU (<https://www.englandkabaddi.com/covid>).



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Updates and changes

England Kabaddi Union (EKU) will update the above guidance to meet the requirements of the Authorities and in line with the guidelines laid out by the government. Members and affiliates will be advised through all social media and normal communication channels on all and any developments pertaining to the return to training and matches to pre-COVID levels. Members and affiliates are also advised to keep up with the updated government guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>.

The following are links to the official website and social media handles of the EKU:

- Website: <https://www.englandkabaddi.com>
 - Announcements related to COVID: <https://www.englandkabaddi.com/covid>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/kabaddiengland/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kabaddiengland>



Injury Treatment and Management

Physical safety of participants is of utmost importance and injuries should still be treated.

- Medical personnel should wear face coverings when interacting with participants.
- Medical personnel should sanitise their equipment regularly.
- After contact with an injured participant, the person treating the injury should clean their hands thoroughly with soap and water or alcohol hand sanitiser at the earliest opportunity.
- Face coverings should be worn by anyone treating an injury.
- Touching the face, mouth, eyes or nose of the injured participant should be avoided when treating the injury. If unavoidable, gloves should be worn when doing so and/or with adequate sanitisation.
- If the injury has led to bleeding, gloves should be worn by the person tending to the injured player in order to reduce the risk of transmission of blood borne diseases.
- Physios and medical personnel should keep a record of each participant they have come into contact with, to support NHS Test and Trace. You can find more detail in the guidance on NHS Test and Trace².

General guidance

1. After such a long period of minimal physical activity, players may find it difficult to reach pre-COVID fitness levels initially. It is recommended that organisers and coaches customise their approach to different players and their individual fitness levels.
2. It is understood that the above mentioned guidelines and associated restrictions will make it harder for organisers to organise Kabaddi training sessions. However, given the increased risk of transmission of COVID-19 through contact sports like Kabaddi, it is imperative that precautionary steps and actions are taken to protect the health of the participants and players.
3. Members should also prepare for the possibility of going back a Phase or increase in restriction levels should the COVID-19 pandemic become worse. Government directions, rules and guidelines will determine whether this would be necessary.
4. It is recommended that all affiliates and clubs appoint a COVID officer that the EKU or any participating member can reach out to, in order to discuss any COVID related matters or issues.

² NHS Test and Trace: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/nhs-test-and-trace-how-it-works>



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Enforcement and applicability

It is imperative that all Kabaddi clubs, societies and organisations in England adhere to the above laid out action plan and guidelines. Failure to do so may cause a delay in Kabaddi returning to normalcy and may also invite other penalties for the organising club / organisation. Sanctions could lead to suspension, barring from competitions and other punishments available to the EKU and government.

It's imperative that these guidelines are followed by us all in order to ensure that the sport of Kabaddi can return as quickly and safely as possible, otherwise it will be delayed and any return will be out of England Kabaddi Union's control.

In case any member, club, organisation or affiliate has any questions, please reach out to us at contact@englandkabaddi.com.