



Scottish  
Swimming

# Pool Users

# Back to the Water COVID-19 Guidance

## Phase 3

Updated 15 December 2020

# Guidance for Pool Users

## Introduction

This document has been developed in co-operation with industry partners. It aims to support pool users in returning to swimming facilities following the period of closure, due to COVID-19, and provides guidance on reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission within the swimming pool environment.

It will highlight the continued requirements for safe physical distancing and enhanced hygiene regimes, along with guidance on how this will impact on the different experience the pool user will have. The guide will include details on booking your swim, what to do before leaving home, on arrival at the pool and in the water itself.

Other sections will provide guidance for pool operators and practical advice relating to the control of COVID-19 in swimming facilities and during various activities. Links to best practice and other industry standard guidance will be provided where appropriate.

As with all environments there is still a level of risk of COVID-19 transmission in aquatic settings that requires control measures to be implemented.

Stay up to date the latest Scottish Government information is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland](#).

## Pool user guidance

### Booking and timetable

- Check the facility website for timetable, user guidance and booking instructions.

### Before leaving home and on your return

- Do not come to the facility if you are showing any symptoms of COVID-19 (temperature, cough, difficulty breathing, or anosmia e.g. loss of taste or smell), you can find the latest guidance on [NHS Inform](#)
- People who are symptomatic should self-isolate for 10 days and household members for 10 days as per info on NHS guidance. No one who is self-isolating should attend a sports facility or activity.
- To reduce time spent in changing areas, please consider the following guidance:
  - Arrive ready to swim. Once you have finished your swim, leave the venue as soon as you can.
  - Shower at home, pre and post swimming (showers may be available at the facility but by arriving wearing your swimwear under your clothing and showering at home pre and post swimming you will help minimise time spent in the changing rooms and help maintain the water quality).
- Check the operator's instructions on arrival time, parking, travel arrangements and plan your journey accordingly.

- Take hand sanitiser with you.
- Take any equipment with you (floats, kick boards etc.) ensuring it is clean before you arrive.
- Ensure you have any booking confirmation required as part of the facility guidance.

### **Test and Protect**

- [Test and Protect](#), is Scotland's way of putting into practice NHS Scotland's test, trace, isolate and support strategy.
- The gathering of contact information from anyone attending sport/leisure activities or facilities in a secure and safe manner, will assist NHS Scotland's Test and Protect service to identify any clusters of cases, contact those who may have been exposed to the virus, and request them to take appropriate steps to prevent potential onward spread.
- It is important that sport facility operators and customers cooperate, as it will be crucial to national efforts to suppress the virus.
- Sports facility operators will store information for 21 days and share it with public health officers when requested.
- A leaflet providing information on the Test and Protect service from NHS Scotland is also available [here](#).

### **At the facility**

- Participants and visitors to indoor sports facilities should wear face coverings before and after activity or when in non-playing areas of the facility (e.g. reception, changing rooms and corridors).
- Please follow the operator's guidance on pre swim arrival, duration of swim and post swim arrangements.
- Whilst in the building and the pool, follow the operator's guidance on physical distancing, direction of travel and other risk control measures that are put in place.
- Use hand sanitiser/wash stations wherever made available.
- Spend as little time as possible in the changing rooms, whilst following the operator's guidance on maintaining safe levels of distance.

### **In the pool**

- Follow the operator's directions for entry and exit to the pool.

### **Respect**

- People of different standards and abilities will use the pool. Please respect their right to enjoy their swim.

- Do not make physical contact with other participants.

### **Speed and overtaking**

- Choose your lane using the fast, medium and slow signs and by watching those already swimming. Please do not overtake whilst swimming. Before pushing off at each turn, check to see if anyone faster is approaching.

### **Direction**

- Please follow the directional signs and move across to the appropriate side of the lane for each length.

### **Space**

- Try and leave at least 5 metres between yourself and another swimmer and if it's possible to see a pace clock, then a five second gap is just as good.

### **Equipment**

- Follow the operator's guidance on use of any equipment.

### **Resting**

- Whether stopping for a rest or catching your breath after completing your swim, please be mindful that others using the lane will want to keep on swimming without stopping; so keep yourself to the edge of the lane allowing others to turn at the wall, turning head away and allowing others to maintain physical distancing measures.
- Stay hydrated by bringing your own 'pre-filled' water bottle on to poolside during your swim.

### **Physical Distancing**

- Children aged 11 years and younger are not required to physically distance at any time, as set out in Scottish Government guidance.
- For those 12 years of age and over taking part in sport or leisure activity, normal Scottish Government physical distancing and household number guidelines should be followed unless otherwise advised by your club or facility operator, as certain activities have exemptions.
- Normal physical distancing and household number guidelines will however be applicable before and after the sporting activity or when taking breaks.
- Coaches, officials, parents and guardians should continue to observe physical distancing when involved in children's activity as a coach, official or spectator. Please refer to specific club or facility guidelines.
- Further information on physical distancing guidance is available at [Staying Safe and Protecting Others](#).