



ITF RETURN TO INTERNATIONAL TENNIS PROTOCOLS PRACTICE AND MATCH PROTOCOLS, INCLUDING TOWEL POLICY

Note: this protocol is subject to change, without notice. Last updated – January 2023.

Practice and match protocols are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19, by ~~ensuring that all~~ requiring and recommending relevant precautions ~~are taken~~.

Note: On-court personnel are not required under these protocols to wear masks, face coverings or gloves (unless required by tournament organisers or local authorities). Hygiene requirements are ~~mandatory~~ recommended at all times. For the avoidance of doubt, ball persons are permitted on-court. Players should not use tennis balls to cover their mouths when talking to their doubles partner.

COMMON PROTOCOLS	COMMENT
General	
Players are recommended to arrive at the venue as close to their allotted starting time as is reasonable, except where the locker rooms are in use and physical distancing can be maintained.	
Players are recommended to depart as soon as reasonably possible after their match, except where: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Locker rooms are in use and physical distancing can be maintained;- The player is competing in another match on the same day;- The player is part of a team.	
All on-court personnel (particularly players) are recommended to avoid raising their voices when facing each other.	<i>Infection via the propulsion of droplets is more likely when voices are raised.</i>
All personal items must be removed from the court, following use.	

Where a tournament provides disposable (e.g. drinks) or single-use (e.g. towels) items, designated locations to discard these following use must be provided.

The demand for disposable items and towels is likely to be increased.

No shared-use items should be provided.

This includes drinks coolers, unless hands-free access is provided.

Physical distancing

Maintain physical distancing is recommended.

Personal hygiene

Players should not share any equipment.

Sanitiser, disinfecting wipes and tissues should be available for all on-court personnel.

Court hygiene

Hygiene notices for players, officials and spectators should be provided.

Where on-court supplies (drinks, ice, towels, etc.) are provided, these should be replaced or disinfected before and after matches.

All on-court food and drink is recommended to be removed and replenished after every match.

PRACTICE PROTOCOLS	COMMENT
General	
Remote bookings (online or telephone) are recommended <u>should be made available</u> .	<u><i>Voice mails should not be left.</i></u>

MATCH PROTOCOLS	COMMENT
General	
Adjoining courts may be used simultaneously for practice and match play, during which it is recommended that physical distancing requirements are met.	<i>Entry and exit points should permit physical distancing. Court equipment and seating on adjacent courts should not be placed directly back-to-back.</i>
Ball numbers and changes shall be maintained as set out in the relevant regulations.	<i>One person should be responsible for ball changes and should wash or sanitise their hands before and after doing so.</i>
All on-court and post-match activities (including opening and closing ceremonies, trophy presentations and interviews) should provide adequate physical distancing.	
On-court officials must <u>should</u> maintain personal hygiene at all times.	

Physical distancing

Physical distancing should be maintained during the following pre-match activities

- Players escorting ball persons or other individuals onto court;
- Pre-match coin toss;
- Pre-match handshake;

The fewest number of on-court officials (including ball persons) required to provide the appropriate level of officiating is recommended to be used (as per ITF Officiating Requirements).

Any request to depart from the ITF Officiating Requirements must be approved in advance by the ITF. Accommodation that permits physical distancing must be provided for the use of officials between assignments.

For Davis Cup (DC) and Billie Jean King Cup (BJKC), the required number of on-court officials, unless agreed otherwise by the ITF, is:

- *Qualifier ties, DC & BJKC Play-Offs and DC Group I: 7;*
- *DC Group II ties: 5*
- *BJKC Regional Group Events: 5*
- *DC Regional Group Events: 3*

The number of ball persons to be used in DC and BJKC events will depend on the court size and the level of the tie or event. The number that the NA is asked to provide will be advised by the ITF no later than ten weeks ahead of the ties / events.

During the match, maintain physical distancing:

- During changeovers, and while crossing the net;
 - By ball persons while holding umbrellas and providing other services for players during changeovers;
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- Between players' chairs and the Chair Umpire;
 - Between the coach and player(s);
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Maintain physical distancing after the match, during:

- Post-match handshake with other players or the Chair Umpire;
 - Selfies with spectators, autographs or giving personal items to spectators.
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Personal hygiene

The ITF Towel policy shall be implemented.

ITF TOWEL POLICY

1. Players must handle their own towels exclusively, i.e. do not request towels from, or give their towels to, ball persons at any point during the match.
 2. Ball persons (and officials) are instructed to not handle players' towels at any time during a match.
 3. Players are solely responsible for their towels during changeover (to be enforced by the Chair Umpire).
 4. Designated locations for towels should be identified on each court, making certain that each player is using a different location for their towel at each end of the court.
 5. Following every match, the towel area must be disinfected.
 6. Where tournaments provide towels, a central location in which used towels can be discarded must be provided. Do not shake towels.
 7. All towels provided by the tournament must be laundered after each match/practice at the highest appropriate temperature and dry thoroughly before further use.
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