

Online Safeguarding and Wellbeing Guide

Practical advice for players, coaches, officials and Members

Badminton World Federation (BWF) has partnered with leading online threat mitigation company Signify Group and its Threat Matrix service to strengthen the protection of key stakeholders (players, coaches, officials, staff) from online abuse through specialist education, risk assessment, and investigative support.

Why this guidance matters?

Most online interactions within the badminton community are positive and supportive. However, athletes in sport may sometimes receive unwanted messages, abuse or suspicious contact. This guide explains simple steps to help you stay safe online and what to do if something feels wrong.

What should you report?

Please report any message or behaviour that feels manipulative, intrusive, or unsafe.

This includes:

- Abuse, hate speech, or harassment
- Threats of violence or self-harm
- Stalking or repeated unwanted contact
- Blackmail, sextortion, or scams
- Attempts to hack, impersonate, or access your accounts
- Someone sharing or threatening to share your personal information
- Grooming or inappropriate sexual messages
- Messages stating they will come to find you
- Claims of a personal or romantic relationship that does not exist
- Claims that the sender knows your location or personal details
- Large numbers of messages from one person
- Increasingly intense, persistent, or obsessive contact
- Suicidal or highly distressed language

If you are unsure, report it. It is always better to check.

What to do if you receive abuse or threats?

Unwanted contact can include persistent messages, attempts to meet you, or contact with your friends or family. You don't have to manage these situations alone.

1. Trust your instincts. If something feels wrong, take it seriously.
2. Keep evidence. Take screenshots showing usernames, dates and message content.
3. Do not respond. Replying often encourages further contact and can escalate the situation.
4. Do not share evidence on your personal social media. Doing so alerts offenders, who may quickly hide or lock their accounts, making investigations more difficult.
5. Tell someone you trust. This could be your Member Association, a coach, team staff member, a friend or family member.

6. Report it to the BWF. Use the official reporting channel listed below. The message(s) will then be risk assessed and investigated by the BWF and Signify Group's Threat Matrix team.
7. Stay alert at training venues, hotels and home.
8. Review your privacy settings. Increase security if needed. Restrict or mute accounts where possible.

Many situations stop when there is no response, but persistent or escalating behaviour should always be reported.

How to report?

You can report incidents affecting yourself or others by emailing the BWF Integrity Unit: integrity@bwf.sport

Everyday online safety tips

You can also protect your own accounts by:

- Using strong and unique passwords.
- [Enabling two factor authentication](#).
- Keep devices and apps updated.
- Consider using a password manager (and updating your password at least every six months).
- Be cautious with links and attachments.

Protect your personal information

- Do not share phone numbers, email addresses or home addresses publicly.
- Turn off location sharing on devices and apps.
- Post about specific locations only after you have left.
- Check privacy settings regularly.
- Be aware of identifying details in photos.

Think before you share

We remind all members of the badminton community—including players, officials, coaches, administrators, and fans—the shared responsibility for promoting respect and integrity online.

- Oversharing can increase risk.
- Deleted content may still exist elsewhere.
- Public posts can be viewed by anyone.

Please be mindful of what you post, avoid sharing or engaging with abusive or inflammatory content, and refrain from contributing to public controversy. As representatives of the badminton community, our behaviour sets an example for others.

Positive online behaviour helps protect our athletes, officials, and the reputation of our sport.

Using social media safety tools

Most platforms offer features that can reduce abuse and unwanted contact. These include:

- Filtering offensive comments.
- Limiting who can message or comment.
- Restricting interaction to approved followers.

- Muting accounts without alerting them.
- Blocking and reporting serious offenders.
- Turning off activity status.
- Controlling tagging and mentions.

Use these tools during periods of increased attention, such as major competitions or media coverage.

Phishing, scams and impersonation

Be cautious if someone:

- Claims to represent an organisation but seems suspicious.
- Asks for passwords, codes or personal details.
- Sends unexpected links or attachments.
- Offers prizes, sponsorship or opportunities unexpectedly.
- Requests financial information.

Always verify requests through official channels before responding.

Look after your wellbeing

Online abuse can be upsetting, even if it appears minor.

- Talk to someone about how you feel.
- Seek professional support if needed.
- Take breaks from social media.
- Remember that abuse reflects on the sender, not you.

Key reminder

You are not expected to handle threats or harassment on your own. Report concerns as early as possible so that appropriate support can be provided. If you need assistance, contact the BWF Integrity Unit at integrity@bwf.sport.

Members of the badminton community may also use this reporting channel as a whistleblowing mechanism to raise concerns about inappropriate online behaviour involving others.

