



ENGLAND
FOOTBALL

THUNDERSTORM GUIDANCE

With most of the football in the county being outdoor, contingency or cancellation procedures should be in place in case the weather is unsuitable.

Thunderstorms can occur at any time of the year.

One of the most significant aspects of thunderstorms can be the localised nature of the impacts they could bring. This includes heavy rainfall, hail, sudden gusty winds, standing water and of course lightning.

While your odds of being struck by lightning are low, it's wise to make sure you know how to protect yourself when a storm strikes.

Here are some top tips for staying safe:

PRE-PLANNING

- Regularly check weather forecasts in the days and hours leading up to an event.
- Establish what contingency arrangements could be planned and implemented in the event of bad weather. For example, could all or some activities be moved indoors.
- Prior to the event identify an area where people can shelter safely.
- Be clear who, in the worst-case scenario, has the final decision as to whether a specific activity (or the entire event) goes ahead or is abandoned (coach, CWO, referee etc.)

CANCELLING

Bearing in mind that people could be travelling some distance, incurring transport costs, and may have cancelled childcare arrangements, the earlier an event is cancelled (or at least a warning is given about potential cancellation) the better.

However, this is balanced with the potential of cancelling too early and the weather turning out to be fine.

Ultimately, the safety and welfare of those involved in the event is the priority.



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DURING A THUNDERSTORM

- Be aware. When you hear thunder, you may already be within range of where the next ground flash may occur.
- As a storm approaches, its distance can be estimated by measuring the time between lightning flashes and the rumble of thunder. Lightning appears almost simultaneously, while thunder travels at 1 km per 3 seconds. So, a three-second delay between lightning and thunder means that the storm is about 1 km away; a six-second delay means that the storm is about 2 km away.
- Count the seconds between seeing lightning and hearing thunder
- if it is less than 30 seconds, there is a threat.
- If possible - Get inside as quickly as possible. Or cover inside a car (not a convertible) with the windows up.
- Avoid water and find a low-lying open place that is a safe distance from trees, poles, or metal objects
- Be aware of metal objects that can conduct or attract lightning e.g., umbrellas, wire, or metal perimeter fencing
- If you find yourself in an exposed location it may be advisable to squat close to the ground, keep your heels together, with your hands over your ears/head and with your head tucked down towards your knees. Basically, try to touch as little of the ground with your body as possible. Do not lie down on the ground.
- If you feel your hair stand on end, drop to the above position immediately.
- Help others. It is safe to touch someone who has been struck by lightning and provide them with CPR and First Aid. Anyone struck by lightning should always seek medical advice.
- Because electrical charges can linger in clouds after a thunderstorm has seemingly passed, experts agree that people should wait at least 30 minutes after the last thunder before resuming outdoor activities.

If the weather makes activity unsafe, the activity should be abandoned.

Ultimately, the safety and welfare of those involved in the event is the priority.

Further guidance can be found here, from the NSPCC Child Protection in Sport & The Met office:



Safe events weather considerations /
CPSU (thecpsu.org.uk)



Stay safe in thunder and lightning
- Met Office