



# SPORTS

Based on the presentation “Adaptive Sports and Recreation” by Dave Kiley

## Getting Started

There is a growing list of sports and recreation activities accessible to people with disabilities. In many cases adaptive equipment provides the vehicle to participation, allowing people with disabilities the opportunity to participate in sports and recreation activities with non-disabled peers. Let your imagination, creativity and willingness to try something new expand your options. The specific sports are too numerous to mention in detail, but the process for getting started is similar. Here are some things to keep in mind:

### Endless Options

Basketball  
Volleyball  
Water Skiing  
Snow Skiing  
Handcycling  
Tennis  
Racquetball  
Swimming  
Track and Field  
Quad Rugby  
Fencing  
Softball  
Soccer

- ? While many communities have adaptive team sports such as wheelchair basketball or softball, you can also choose to participate in sports with non-disabled peers or family members.
- ? To find out what is available in your community, contact a rehabilitation center, parks and recreation department, or an adaptive sports equipment vendor.
- ? If you aren't aware of others in your community participating in your sport of interest, contact a regional or national organization for information on different aspects of the sport, such as equipment, rules, competition, in addition to local contacts (see Resources.)
- ? If equipment is needed to participate, find a way to test different sizes and types before making a large purchase. If it is too costly, look for equipment loan programs, adaptive sports teams, rehabilitation centers, or therapeutic recreation programs to borrow or share equipment with others.
- ? Many adaptive sports organizations hold clinics and instructional seminars to provide instruction about different sports. These programs offer a great way to get started or improve your skills.

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## Adaptation Ideas

- ? For many people with mobility impairments, equipment is the primary adaptation. Specially designed wheelchairs, “handcycles, “ and skis are some more common pieces of equipment. Smaller pieces of equipment can also be used, such as a glove to grip a tennis racquet or a strap to improve balance. Many adaptations can be “home-made” from low cost materials.
- ? Many sports have rule modifications to equalize participation for people with disabilities. Rules may account for adaptive equipment and may also differ depending on the disability or level of skill.
- ? Environmental modifications, such as the use of special surfaces on a softball field, can make a sport more accessible for people with disabilities.

## Helpful Hints to Increase Success

Hint #1: When using adaptive equipment, pay special attention to proper fit and positioning.

Hint #2: Talk to other people with disabilities who participate in your sport of interest. Take advantage of their experience, as they may have a wealth of information about the sport adaptations and equipment.

## Resources

### **National Center on Physical Activity and Disability**

www.ncpad.org  
800-900-8086

### **Disabled Sports USA**

451 Hungerford Dr., #100  
Rockville, MD 20850  
301-217-0960  
www.dsusa.org

### **Special Olympics International**

1325 G Street NW #500  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-628-3630  
www.specialolympics.org

### **Wheelchair Sports USA**

3595 E. Fountain Blvd., #L-1  
Colorado Springs, CO 80910  
719-574-1150  
www.wsusa.org

### **USA Deaf Sports Federation**

3607 Washington Blvd., Suite #4  
Ogden, UT 84403  
801-393-8710 (voice)  
801-393-7916 (TTY)  
www.usadsf.org

### **United Cerebral Palsy Athletic Association**

25 West Independence Way  
Kingston, RI 02881  
401-874-7465  
www.uscpaa.org

### **United States Association of Blind Athletes**

33 North Institute Street  
Brown Hall, Suite #015  
Colorado Springs, CO 80903  
719-574-1150  
www.usaba.org