

Paralympic sport - Goalball

Goalball - This is a Paralympic sport for players who have vision impairments; however, goalball can be adapted for any ability.

Age Range

Any Age

What you need

- Marker discs or cones (or just lines drawn on the ground – 2 metres long)
- One ball between two players
- Suitable space appropriate to the size/nature of the group.

How to play – game basics

- This game is best suited to a flat, indoor area free from debris and obstructions. A full-size goalball court is 18 metres x 9 metres – same dimensions as a standard volleyball court – but any suitable space can be used.
- Goalball (ball with internal bells) or improvised sound ball (see Equipment).
- Eyeshades.
- Masking tape and string.

Other basic rules

- When the ball is thrown it must touch the floor before passing over the High Ball Line. This is to ensure that the ball is rolled giving the defending team an opportunity to hear it coming.
- Once a ball has been fielded, it must be thrown again within 10 seconds. With beginners, remove this time limit.
- No player can take more than 2 throws consecutively.
- If the ball is thrown directly over the side lines (OUT) or if the defending team deflect the ball over the side lines (BLOCKED OUT), the defending team takes possession.
- The defending team cannot advance outside of their defensive area to block the ball.

Something to think about

The ball must always be rolled – never thrown.

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BESO can be applied to adapt or modify the activity as in these examples.

tegeBar (Task)

- Players should develop good communication; as they improve, they can pass the goalball to each other; however, they must play an attacking shot within 10 seconds.

hEzebe (People)

- For beginners, play without eyeshades initially. For hygiene reasons clean eyeshades regularly.
- Players who are hearing impaired, or some players who have mobility impairments, can play without eyeshades and defend a specific area.
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quSaquse (Equipment)

- An official goalball is quite heavy (1.25kg); use lighter balls with beginners or younger players. As an alternative, wrap a basketball or football in a plastic bag; this makes a 'crackling' sound when rolled.
- Eyeshades, or alternatives, should block out all vision. In competition they are rigorously checked, but for practice improvised eyeshades can be used.

bOta (Space)

- If a full-sized court is unavailable, a smaller area can be used; however, in this case use a lightweight goalball or alternative.
- The lines on the court and the players' orientation marks must be tactile enabling players to feel them with their fingers or feet (see illustration). However, in practice, only the players' orientation lines and the lines defining the team area need to be tactile – the rest visual for the referee, teacher or coach.
- Players are positioned in a v-shaped formation; this prevents collisions and also creates better defence. If the front player misses the ball one of those behind might save it.

Safety

- Goalball players use elbow, knee and hip pads for protection. However, beginners should stay on their feet or kneel. Without pads it's dangerous for players to throw themselves onto the floor.

How to improve

- When defending, make a 'long barrier' with your body; keep legs slightly apart to stop the ball from flicking over your body into the goal.