



Special Olympics

Football

(Soccer)



Special Olympics

A Handbook for

Training at Home



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The Key to Long-term Athlete Improvement

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For any athlete or player preparing for the Olympics *or* Special Olympics, the hours of training and free-play spent in addition to regular practice time are perhaps the most important part of becoming an accomplished athlete. Morning stretching to develop flexibility, daily runs to build up stamina, playing in the backyard or informal competition at the local playground are unstructured, personally motivated, activities that help athletes succeed in sports. For a Special Olympics athlete, however, such activities may not be a part of everyday life.

What happens to an athlete when the local basketball players do not drop by for some 1-on-1 in the driveway, when a three mile run, unsupervised, is out of the question or when the speed and intensity of the playground game is simply overwhelming? For such an athlete, learning sports becomes limited to the structured practice time organized by the coach. And the simple fact is, an athlete who practices a sport for only two or three hours a week will never master the sport.

The work that coaches do in their weekly practices is the foundation for Special Olympics athletes' skill development. A coach can establish fundamental skills, introduce basic competition ideas, motivate athletes to participate and improve their performance. However, it is unrealistic to expect a coach, in only a few hours a week, to completely prepare an athlete for success in competition.

Some coaches simply shake their heads at the physical fitness level of their athletes or at their painfully slow rate of development. However, a coach who is truly committed to improving the performance of an athlete can stimulate athletic activities outside of their regular practices. How? By utilizing a resource that goes untapped in many Special Olympics programs; the energy and commitment of an athlete's family.

Through a simple "Home Training" program for families and training partners, coaches can successfully double or triple the time an athlete spends learning a sport. In addition, family participation can have tremendous effect in many other aspects of the overall Special Olympics program, positively impacting everything from transportation to fund-raising.

Guidelines for coaches to establish a successful home training program:

- 1) Talk with parents and siblings to educate them about the goals of Special Olympics and the importance of regular training or athletic activity at home and to educate yourself about the lives of your athletes.
- 2) Run a practical session to provide families with some simple activities they can



organize at home with their athlete. A home training program can be a great way for parents to get back into shape and a way for them to appreciate what Special Olympics is trying to achieve.

- 3) Provide an easy to read weekly training plan. For example:
 - a. • Warm-up activities/stretchers (15 min.)
 - b. • Simple skill development activities (e.g. Passing drill – 5 min.)
 - c. • Competition practice (*e.g.* 1-on-1 play - **10** min.)
 - d. • Other activities (e.g. taking your athlete to see a live competition)
- 4) Recruit training partners if an athlete does not have active support from a family or group home. Contact community organizations such as a high school Partners Club®.
- 5) Monitor an athlete's activities during the season. Get them excited about training on their own. Ask them to report on training they have done at home. Suggest ways to improve their training.

Coaching excellence requires consideration of the entire athletic life of an athlete. Starting a family home training program is an exciting way of extending a training program beyond regular practices. It takes time and effort to initiate, but the long-term rewards can be remarkable for everyone involved.



Your Goals for the Season

1. What is your best score in each event at the beginning of the season? What is your goal for the end of the season.

Event	Date Tested	Beginning Score	Goal Score by season end

2. What is your best event?

3. What is your weakest event?

4. What skills do you want to learn or improve on this season?



Coach's Goals for the Season

By the end of the season, you should be able to:

- _____;
- _____;
- _____;
- _____.

During the season, you are expected to:

- _____;
- _____;
- _____;
- _____.

Special Olympics hopes that as you go through this season you will set an example for others by becoming a leader among your teammates and abiding by the Athlete Code of Conduct on the next page.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS ATHLETE'S CODE OF CONDUCT

Special Olympics is committed to the highest ideals of sport and expects all athletes to honor sports and Special Olympics. All Special Olympics athletes and Unified Partners agree to the following code:

SPORTSMANSHIP

- I will practice good sportsmanship.
- I will act in ways that bring respect to me, my coaches, my team, and Special Olympics.
- I will not use bad language.
- I will not swear or insult other persons.
- I will not fight with other athletes, coaches, volunteers, or staff.

TRAINING AND COMPETITION

- I will train regularly.
- I will learn and follow the rules of my sport.
- I will listen to my coaches and the officials and ask questions when I do not understand.
- I will always try my best during training, divisioning, and competitions.
- I will not “hold back” in preliminary competition just to get into an easier finals competition division.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS

- I will not make inappropriate or unwanted physical, verbal, or sexual advances on others.
- I will not smoke in non-smoking areas.
- I will not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs at Special Olympics events.
- I will not take drugs for the purpose of improving my performance.
- I will obey all laws and Special Olympics rules, the International Federation and the National Federation/Governing Body rules for my sport (s)..

I understand that if I do not obey this Code of Conduct, I will be subject to a range of consequences by my Program or a Games Organizing Committee for a World Games up to and including not being allowed to participate.



Special Olympics

The Mission of Special Olympics:

To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympics-type sports for children and adults with mental retardation, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in the sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

The Special Olympics Oath:

***LET ME WIN,
BUT, IF I CANNOT WIN,
LET ME BE BRAVE IN THE ATTEMPT***



Facts about Special Olympics

- It is a year-round sports training and competition program.
- There are 26 sports offered globally. Check with your local director to see which sports are offered in your area.
- There are team and individual sports.
- You must be 8 years old to compete; 5 years old to train; no upper age limit.
- Special Olympics is for people with intellectual disabilities.
- Special Olympics is free.
- Special Olympics is an international/worldwide organization



Athlete Leadership Programs

YOU choose your sport!	Unified Sports	Athletes can be Volunteers
Athletes can be Officials	Athletes can be Coaches	Athletes can be on Boards or Committees
Athletes can be Global Messengers	Athlete Congress/ Leadership Workshops	Athlete can be on Input Councils

Is there a leadership role YOU would like to try out this season?

Does your team have a captain? If not, suggest that you elect one!



INTRODUCTION TO FOOTBALL (Soccer)

Football, or Soccer as it is called in some places, is generally considered to be the world's most popular team sport. Played in just about every country, the sport's success is due to the fact that it can be played by boys, girls, men, and women of just about any physical build and ability. Soccer requires little in the way of specialized equipment and is organized using simple, intuitive rules.

Soccer is a particularly appropriate sport for individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Football:

Involves all of the participants all the time;

Is easy to teach, and immediately rewarding to play;

Allows relatively rapid initial improvement in skills and basic game understanding;

Is a great conditioning activity.

Above all, SOCCER IS FUN.

Football has grown at a phenomenal rate over the past 15 years. Much of this growth has been through community club associations run by volunteer coaches (mostly parents) who have learned to coach a game in which they have little direct experience. The wonderful thing about soccer is that you don't need to be an expert to begin playing. You just need enthusiasm and a commitment to learn the basics. With some guidance, anyone with the time and interest can become a successful Special Olympics Footballer and join the worldwide Special Olympics Football family.

A PREVIEW OF THE FOOTBALL (SOCCER) EVENTS OFFERED

The Football competition offerings are based upon athletes' ability levels. A summary of those competition offerings follows.

For athletes with lower ability who do not have the readiness for direct, face-to-face offense and defense, competition is offered in individual skills competition.

For athletes with average or moderate ability, competition is offered in modified team competition. The game is played in a smaller area and with a few modified rules. The game is simpler to understand and provides the transition from individual skills to traditional team play.

For athletes with higher ability, competition is offered in traditional 11-a-side team play and Unified soccer.

For the actual soccer events offered, see the Official Special Olympics Sports Rules for Soccer.



Equipment and Clothing

At or before your first practice, your coach should cover these issues. If they forget, you should remind them and then write down the answers. It will be helpful for everyone as the season goes along!

Equipment Special Olympics will provide for practices and competitions:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Equipment you need to get or have:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

What should you wear to practice?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



Protecting Yourself Against Harmful Sunlight

Am I at Risk?

Did you know that the number of new cases of skin cancer, and the number of deaths caused by the most serious type of skin cancer are rapidly rising in the United States? This is particularly troubling since the numbers for most cancers have been declining. Sunlight is the main source of ultraviolet radiation (UV) known to damage the skin and to cause skin cancer. The amount of UV exposure depends on the strength of the light, the length of exposure, and whether the skin is protected. There are no safe UV rays or safe suntans. Sun exposure at any age can cause skin cancer. Your skin and eyes are most susceptible to sun damage. You need to be especially careful in the sun if you have numerous moles, irregular moles, or large moles; freckles or burn before tanning; fair skin, or blond, red, or light brown hair; or spend a lot of time outdoors. Melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer, and accounts for more than 75 percent of the deaths due to skin cancer. In addition to skin cancer, sun exposure can cause premature aging of the skin, wrinkles, cataracts, and other eye problems.

How Do I Protect Myself From UV Radiation?

If you work outdoors, there are **five important steps** you can take to protect against UV radiation and skin cancer:

1. Cover up. Wear clothing to protect as much of your skin as possible. Wear clothing that does not transmit visible light. To determine if the clothing will protect you, try this test: Place your hand between the fabric and a light source. If you can see your hand through the fabric, the garment offers little protection against sun exposure.

2. Use a sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher. Experts recommend products with a Sun Protection Factor, or SPF, of at least 15. The number of the SPF represents the level of sunburn protection provided by the sunscreen. An SPF 15 blocks out 93 percent of the burning UV rays; an SPF 30 blocks out 97 percent of the burning UV rays. Products labeled “broad spectrum” block both UVB and UVA radiation. Both UVA and UVB contribute to skin cancer.

Apply sunscreen liberally at least 15 minutes before going outside.

Reapply every 2 hours or more frequently if you sweat a lot or are swimming.

Warning: Do not depend on sunscreens alone. Combine sunscreen with wide-brimmed hats, UV-protective sunglasses, and tightly woven clothing to increase your protection against UV radiation.

3. Wear a hat. A wide brim hat is ideal because it protects the neck, ears, eyes, forehead, nose, and scalp. A baseball cap provides some protection for the front and top of the head, but not for the back of the neck or the ears where skin cancers commonly develop.



4. Wear sunglasses that block UV rays. UV-absorbent sunglasses can help protect your eyes from sun damage. Ideal sunglasses do not have to be expensive, but they should block 99 to 100 percent of UVA and UVB radiation. Check the label to make sure they do. Darker glasses are not necessarily the best. UV protection comes from an invisible chemical applied to the lenses, not from the color or darkness of the lenses.

5. Limit direct sun exposure. UV rays are most intense when the sun is high in the sky, between 10 AM and 4 PM. If you are unsure about the sun's intensity, take the shadow test: If your shadow is shorter than you, the sun's rays are the strongest. Seek shade whenever possible. You may also want to check the UV Index for your area. The UV Index usually can be found in the local newspaper or on TV and radio news broadcasts. It gives the expected noon-time UV radiation reaching the earth's surface on a scale of 1 to 10+. It is forecast daily for 58 cities. The higher the number, the greater the exposure to UV radiation. The Index helps determine when to avoid sun exposure and when to take extra protective measures. (See <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/uvi.htm>.)

Should I Get Checked?

Yes. Skin cancers detected early can almost always be cured.

The most important warning sign for skin cancer is a spot on the skin that is changing in size, shape, or color over a period of 1 month to 1-2 years. The most common skin cancers--basal cell and squamous cell--often take the form of a pale, wax-like, pearly nodule; a red scaly, sharply outlined patch; or a sore that does not heal; whereas melanoma often starts as a small, mole-like growth. So it's important that you examine your body, and see a health care clinician if you find an unusual skin change.

How Can I Learn More About Preventing Skin Cancer?

There are many websites with good information about preventing, detecting, and treating skin cancer, including the following:

American Cancer Society for melanoma and nonmelanoma skin cancers (scroll menu of common cancers) at <http://www.cancer.org>, or call 1- (800) ACS-2345.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for various health materials including skin cancer at <http://www.cdc.gov/ChooseYourCover>, or call 1- (888) 842-6355.

For more information on **OSHA**, visit the agency's website at <http://www.osha.gov>, call 1- (800) 321-OSHA or your nearest OSHA office. Teletypewriter (TTY) number is 1- (877) 889-5267.

U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration OSHA 3166 (2000)



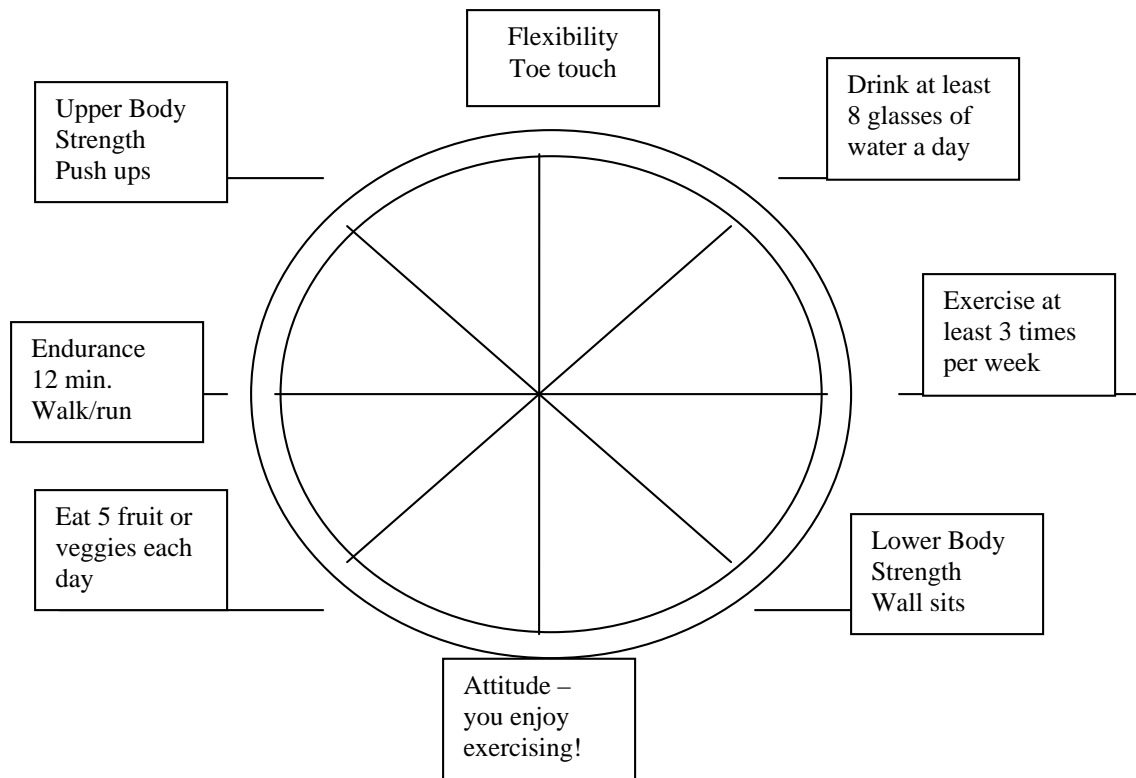
The Fitness/Nutrition Wheel!

Test yourself on the fitness items below.

Each item is a spoke on the wheel. Assume that a score of 10 on the item test is the best you can get. Put a dot on each spoke to mark your score for each skill. A score of 10 goes all the way out to the outside edge. A score of 0 is all the way in the center of the wheel.

Now connect the dots to see which fitness items you should be working on at home between practices!

Here is a sample.





Name 3 fitness items that you could work on to make your wheel roll:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Item: _____

Strategy for improving:

Item: _____

Strategy for improving:

Item: _____

Strategy for improving:

Total Fitness Score at beginning of the season:

Total Nutrition Score at beginning of the season:

Total Score at mid-point of the season: _____

Total Score at end of the season: _____



Athlete Builder Strategies!

FITNESS BUILDERS

Trait to be improved	Potential Strategies
Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write down everything you eat – you’ll think about it more! • Before you snack, drink a glass of water. • Try fruit as a snack instead of candy
Endurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk around your neighborhood instead on watching TV at least once a day. • Write down how long you exercise each day and try to add 10% each week • Learn how to measure your heart rate, then record it after each workout
Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a record of how many strength activities you can do from the list below. • Try an exercise until you are tired, rest for one minute then try it again.. • Find a workout partner to help you and who you can encourage too.
Have a plan/goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know what you want to have happen because you exercise – write down what you want to be able to do – and tell someone. • Write down all the smaller things that you hope will happen as you get more fit and mark them off as they happen. • Always start by telling people your goal and see if they have ideas on how to help.
Flexibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without straining, try to touch your toes, use that as your measure.. • Do at least two of the stretching exercises below • Never stretch without warming up a little first
Hydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure you drink at least 8 glasses of water each day • When you get bored or think you want a snack, have a glass of water! • Drink water when you are thirsty – flavored drinks as a treat or snack.



ATHLETE ACTION!

ATHLETE ACTION is a Special Olympics athlete's home training program that encourages family involvement in a structured format consistent with the coaches training plan (see ATHLETE ACTION on the following page). This program is simple to implement and is fun for family members, group home staff, or friends and neighbors to become involved with.

There are four major sections to the ATHLETE ACTION PROGRAM.

- 1. COACHES COMMENTS:**
Coaches briefly describe what has been covered in practice on that day. This information is important since you are asking families to practice previously taught skills, warm-ups, stretching, strength and conditioning exercises.
- 2. GAME PLAN:**
This section briefly describes the responsibilities of the athletes, coaches and families as part of the athlete home training plan. Coaches can determine the types of incentives that would be appropriate for athletes to strive for. At the same time training becomes fun and athletes are better prepared for participation in sport.
- 3. ACTION:**
This section provides the person working with the athlete at home with some structure, while also allowing for some flexibility in the training program. The Coach has the option to list some activities under the Coaches Comments section, but primarily allows the home trainers to follow general training outlines similar to those provided by the Special Olympics Coaches Guide.
- 4. ATHLETE'S SCORECARD:**
The scoreboard provides the family with a simple and clear means to chart and display athlete scores.

Will family involvement in athlete training programs work? Yes! The coaches' best support comes from family members and friends of the special athlete. With proper direction from the coach, at-home training programs may offer the athlete the complete training required to adequately prepare for competition.



A Special Olympics Athlete's Home Training Chart

ATHLETE ACTION

Name:
Week of:

Coaches Comments: (Briefly describe today's practice and what skills will be covered at the next practice.)

GAME PLAN

Athletes: Record your daily point *score* by adding each action you complete. Remember each action is worth 1 point (maximum 3 points per day) and each Special Olympics practice attended with your team is worth 3 points.

Coaches: It's fun to compile a team score each week. You can set a weekly score for your team to beat as an incentive to practice at home and score points for the team. Set individual point total goals for the athletes. (*i.e.* 100 points = patch; 200 points = t-shirt).

Families: It's great to join in the home practice session. Encourage brothers, sisters, friends and neighbors to assist. Make these practices part of your family leisure time.

ACTION

(1) Warm-ups/Stretching (1 point)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

(2) Skill Work (1 point)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

(3) Strength and Conditioning (1 point)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5



Here are some weekly scoreboards to get you started. Keep track of your points at home and see if you can get better over time. Make copies of this page so you can keep going all year long!

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL



ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL

ATHLETE SCOREBOARD	M	T	W	TH	F	SA	SU	TOTAL



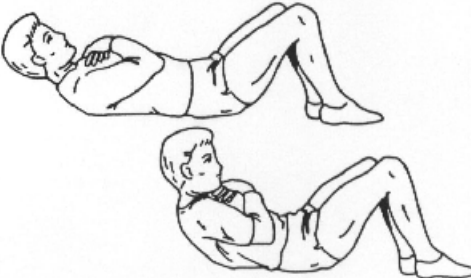

Sample Warm-up/Stretching Activities

Stretching exercises must be performed by all athletes, before they train or compete in sports, to avoid injury and to enhance their performances. Coach the athletes to perform stretching exercises slowly and with good technique. The stretching exercises included in the athlete's warm-up routine should reach all of the body's major muscle groups. The exercises described below are acceptable for warming up prior to an athletics practice or meet.

		
Arm Circles	Hold arms out to sides at shoulder height; make 15 small circles rotating arms forward. Rest. Repeat arm circles by rotating backward 15 times.	
		
Walking/Jogging	Walk around a room or outside for 2 minutes, then jog outside or in place for 3 minutes.	


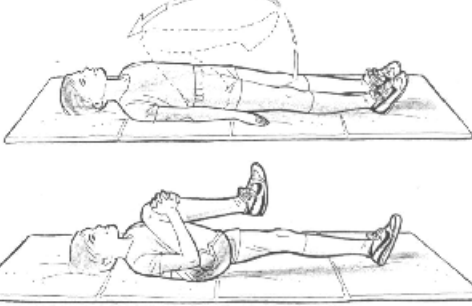
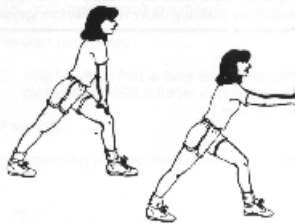


Sample Warm-up and Stretching Exercises

Jumping Jacks	Stand with arms to side and feet together. Jump to position of legs apart and clap hands overhead. Jump to position of legs together and arms at sides. Repeat without stopping for 15 overhead claps.	
Sit-ups/Crunches (20-30) 1 minute	Start in a prone position with arms folded on chest. Lift head and shoulders off the floor by pointing your chin up and in front of you. Return shoulders to the floor (but not your head!) The up motion has chin leading while the down motion has the top of your head stretching to keep your body tall.	
Quads Stretch	Face a wall; bend and lift one leg behind your back; grab and hold that ankle behind your body with the opposite hand; slowly pull to stretch the top of the thigh. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat with other leg. Do both legs twice.	



Sample Warm-up and Stretching Exercises

		
Hamstring Stretch	With legs slightly apart and knees slightly bent, bend over and try to touch knees, then shins, then ground. Hold each position for 10 seconds. Repeat 3 times.	
		
Knee Lift	While lying down face up with feet together. Bring one knee straight up toward the shoulder. Clasp the knee with both hands and pull it in toward the body. Hold stretch for 6 seconds. Repeat with the other knee.	
		
Calf Stretch	Stand facing a wall with feet together and 60cm away from wall. Lean forward placing hands against the wall. Keep legs straight. Do not bend at hips. Bend elbows slowly, bringing the chest to the wall; leave feet flat on floor and arch the back. Hold stretch for 6 seconds.	




Sample Football (Soccer) Skills Activities

Skill Activities to enhance and maintain learning process away from the practice and play field. **Remember SAFETY is critical. It is imperative that you do not swing or throw any object or ball in the direction or close to any person, people or breakable objects.**

Sample Football Skill Development Activities

Be sure to warm-up and then do some stretching exercises before you start these activities! The Football Skill Development exercises included here are designed to be done on your own or with a friend or family member to help you stay in shape and improve your SPORT skills between practices or seasons.





<p>Dribbling</p>	<p>Dribbling is the skill of running with the ball at your feet: speeding forward through open space, maneuvering out of tight situations, and faking to beat opponents . It is perhaps the most expressive and exciting part of the game.</p> <p><u>Teaching the skill</u> To help develop touch and control of the ball, the player should dribble forward using the top of the foot along the outside of the laces, pointing the toe down towards the ground . Keep the ball close - within one yard (meter) from the body.</p> <p>Key Words: KEEP IT CLOSE + LIGHT TOUCHES + TOE DOWN</p> <p>Encourage the player to use the inside of the foot to quickly change direction and beat an opponent.</p> <p>Key Words: INSIDE OF THE FOOT + CHANGE DIRECTION + CHOP ACROSS THE BALL</p>	 <p>The image contains two line drawings. The top drawing shows a player in a white jersey and shorts running to the right, dribbling a soccer ball with the top of their foot. The bottom drawing shows two players in a 1v1 situation. The player on the left is using the inside of their foot to touch the ball, and the player on the right is attempting to steal it. A large arrow points from the ball towards the player on the right, indicating the direction of play.</p>
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	<p>For lower energy players who will not dribble very much, it is important to work 1-on-1 and use gentle physical prompting (e.g., hand on the middle of the back) to create some forward motion . For higher energy players who dribble out of control and kick the ball 10 yards or more ahead, start off by walking with the player and concentrating on dribbling under control before speeding up.</p>	
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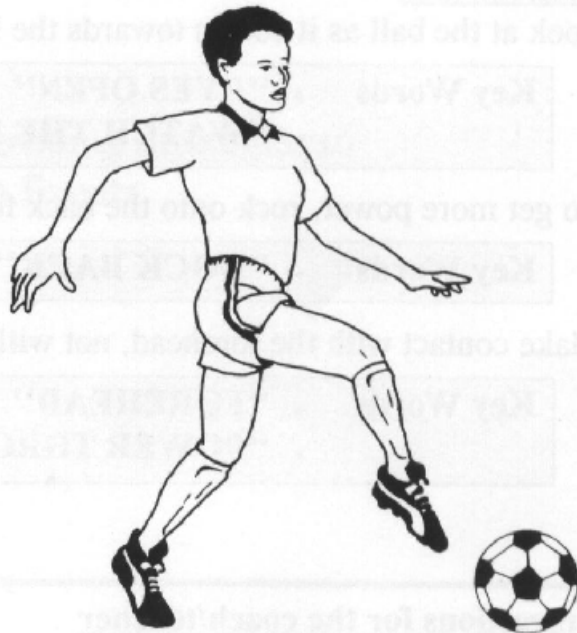
<p>Shooting</p>	<p>The aim of the game is simple: SCORE GOALS . To score goals, your players need to develop both good shooting technique and a positive attitude towards taking shots whenever they have a good opportunity. When shooting, approach the ball slightly from the side, not straight on . This allows the foot to make a more natural and effective strike on the ball.</p> <p>Key Words: FROM THE SIDE + SWEEP AROUND</p> <p>For good accuracy and power, keep the head down and strike the ball with the instep and with the ankle firmly locked.</p> <p>Key Words: HEAD DOWN + TOE DOWN + WATCH THE FOOT STRIKE</p> <p>Make a strong impact on the ball and follow through with the foot</p> <p>Key Words: STRIKE</p> <p>As a general rule, try to teach players to control the ball before trying to shoot . Shooting a rolling ball is a difficult skill and only the most advanced Special Olympics players will accomplish it successfully.</p>	 
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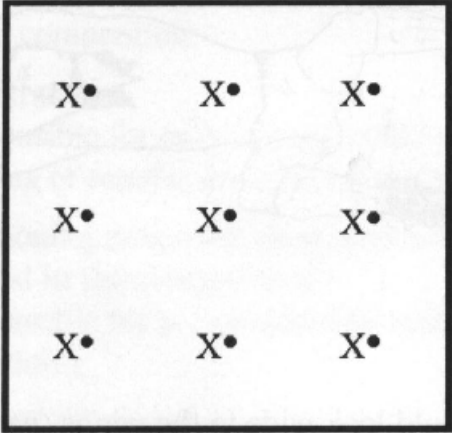
Sample Sport Skill Development Exercises

<p>Control (Receiving)</p>	<p>If players simply "blast" the ball every time it comes to them, they will never be successful soccer players . "Control" refers to the skill of receiving a ball with any part of the body and making that ball YOURS . It is the essential starting point of becoming a skillful soccer player.</p> <p>Use the inside of the foot to bring a ground ball under control . All the body weight should be on the supporting leg with the receiving foot raised slightly off the ground.</p> <p>Key Words: OPEN OUT THE FOOT + RAISE THE FOOT</p> <p>Relax and cushion the ball rather than offering resistance against the ball.</p> <p>Key Words: SOFT FOOT + CUSHION</p> <p>For airballs, relax the body as the ball hits the chest or thigh - depending on the height of the ball . "Give" with the ball rather than offering resistance.</p> <p>Key Words: RELAX + CUSHION</p> <p>Help lower ability players move into position and get behind the flight of the ball. Use gentle physical prompting when necessary.</p> <p>Many players are too excited and caught up in the game to relax when the ball arrives .</p> <p>Coaching a player to slow down, relax, and concentrate is as important as coaching the correct receiving technique.</p>	<p>The top illustration shows a player receiving a ball with the inside of their foot. A dashed line indicates the ball's path from the air to the foot. The bottom left illustration shows a player receiving an airball with their chest, with a downward arrow indicating the ball's path. The bottom right illustration shows a player receiving an airball with their thigh, also with a downward arrow indicating the ball's path.</p>
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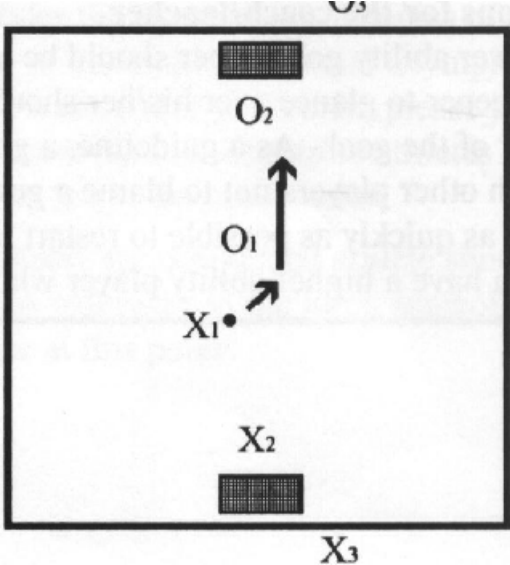


<p>Passing</p>	<p>Football is a team game . Playing as a team requires each player to be able to pass the ball well. Make eye contact with the intended receiver. This is the starting point for successful passing. Key Words: HEAD UP + LOOK AT YOUR TEAMMATE The inside of the foot can be used for short "push" passes . The ball should be struck firmly, with the foot following through in the direction of the intended receiver. Key Words: PUSH THE BALL FIRMLY + FOLLOW THROUGH WITH YOUR FOOT The instep can be used to send longer passes. Key Words: TOE DOWN + FIRM STRIKE Lower ability players usually under-hit passes. At this level, encourage players to concentrate on kicking with some power in the general direction of a teammate before being too concerned with precise accuracy. The major problem with most players is that they do not look for teammates before passing. Sometimes this is difficult in the action of the game . At home, try 'freezing' the play, allowing the player with the ball to stop, look for a teammate, make a pass, and then continue playing.</p>	 <p>A black and white line drawing of a male soccer player in a short-sleeved jersey and shorts, captured in the middle of a passing motion. He is leaning forward with his right leg extended towards a soccer ball on the ground. His left leg is bent and his arms are outstretched for balance. The ball is positioned just ahead of his right foot.</p>
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<p>Games to play at home</p>	<p>Dribble in the Square Designate a 15 yards (meters) x 15 yards square in a park, field or yard.</p> <p>Every family member has a soccer ball.</p> <p>Everyone dribbles around inside the square avoiding collisions with other players.</p> <p>Introduce different dribbling moves: Moving forward (TOE DOWN). Sole of the foot (REVERSE). Inside of the foot to change direction (CHOP).</p> <p>Take turns playing as a CHASER. Players must try to avoid having their ball kicked out of the square by the chaser. Play for 30 seconds. Award 1 point for keeping the ball safe.</p>	 <p>The diagram shows a square field with a thick black border. Inside the square, there are nine 'X' markers, each with a small black dot to its right. The 'X' markers are arranged in a 3x3 grid, with three 'X' markers in each row and three 'X' markers in each column.</p>
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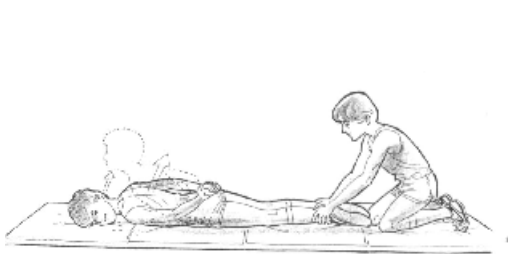


<p>Games to play at home</p>	<p>Control and Shoot</p> <p>Set up a 4 yards x 2 yards goal.</p> <p>Place a starting cone 12 yards out and a shooting cone 6-8 yards out.</p> <p>A 'Roller' rolls the ball out slowly to player who must control it then dribble and shoot within 3 seconds .</p> <p>Same player repeats three times then trades places with the 'Roller'.</p> <p>With more mobile players, roll the ball slightly to one side and make the player move to get behind the ball, control it, and shoot.</p>	
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Sample Strength and Conditioning Activities


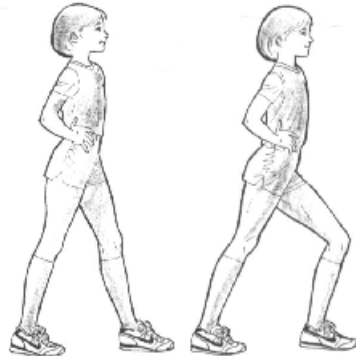
Do at least one of these activities for at least 5 minutes

Jump-the-Line	Find or make a line on the floor. Place both feet on one side of the line and then jump up so that both feet land on the other side of the line. Jump back and forth as quickly as possible for 30 seconds. Rest for 30 seconds and then repeat.	
Wall Sit	Place your back against a wall and move down so that it looks like you are sitting in a chair – BUT THERE IS NO CHAIR! Hold yourself there by pushing with your legs for 30 seconds, rest for 30 seconds and then do it again.	
A. Trunk Exercises Sit Ups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lie on floor with knees bent. Clasp hands behind head. Come up to a 45 degree angle, or "crunch", position. Return to lying position. Repeat exercise 5 times; gradually increase to 10 times or more. 	
Trunk Lifts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Lie face downward on the floor with toes pointed back and hands behind the back. Let partner hold your feet down with hands on the backs of your ankles. Slowly raise upper body up off the ground as high as possible, and return. Avoid using arms for leverage; use trunk muscles. Keep hips, thighs, knees, and feet on the floor. 	



<p>B. Arms and Shoulders Push-ups</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. With body inclined forward, place weight on hands and feet.b. Bend arms to drop the chest to the floor; then push up to original position. Do not bend back, hips or knees. Keep head up.c. Repeat exercise 5 times and gradually increase to 10 repetitions.• Variation: start from kneeling position. Walk hands forward so that body is straight and inclined forward. Weight is on hands and knees. Bend arms to bring chest to floor then push up to original position. Knees are bent, but do not bend hips.	
<p>Mountain Climber (Actually good for both Arms and Legs!)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Squat down so chest touches knees and hands are on floor in front of and outside of the feet.b. Extend one leg straight back, resting it on its toes.c. Support the weight of the body with the bent leg and the hands.d. Switch the legs quickly, moving one forward and one back.e. Repeat the switches several times to resemble climbing up a mountain.f. Keep the head up, and stay on the toes.	



<p>C. Legs: Jump and Reach</p>	<p>a. Stand with feet slightly apart. b. Bend knees and hold arms down toward the ground. c. Swing arms forward and up, and reach as high up as possible. d. Jump straight up off the floor using a strong push off the feet. e. Flex knees and ankles to soften landing; then, jump again straight up off the floor.</p>	
<p>Alternate Knee Bends</p>	<p>a. Stand with one leg in front of the other, feet pointing forward, and hands on hips. b. Bend front knee slowly to a 60 degree angle and return. c. Switch legs and repeat bend with other knee. d. Keep the head and back erect.</p>	



Sport Specific	Exercise	Description
More Stretching and Strengthening Ideas		
Stretches	<p>1) Torso Twist</p> <p>2) Knees to Chin</p> <p>3) Hip Stretch</p> <p>4) Trunk Stretch</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Place a stick behind your back, holding with one hand near each end. Stand upright and flex knees. While breathing normally, turn torso slowly to the right; hold, then turn torso slowly to the left and hold. Keep your abdominal muscles tight throughout! Start out doing this exercise for one minute or about ten repetitions and increase them over time. - To stretch lower back, lie on your back with your feet flat on the floor and knees up. Reach and clasp your arms around your knees, pulling knees up to your chest and hold for 10 counts. Relax your hands, let your knees and feet back down and repeat. As an alternate, try one knee at a time. - Lie on your back, with legs bent and feet flat on the floor. Cross the left leg over the right so that your left ankle is just over your right kneecap. Grasp your bent right leg and gently pull both legs toward your chest. Hold the stretch for 10 seconds and repeat three times. Relax and start over by crossing the right leg over your flexed left leg. Pull both legs up to chest and repeat three times, holding for 10 seconds. - To stretch your hips and lower back, lie on your back with your legs straight. Bend left knee up and cross it over your right leg, placing left foot outside of right knee. Reach your left arm straight out along the floor. Put your right hand on the outside of the left knee and



	<p>5) Upper Back Stretch</p>	<p>slowly pull your left knee over to the right keeping your left arm extended and shoulder on the floor. Try to hold the stretch a total of ten seconds, three times. Then switch and repeat on the opposite side.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clasp fingers behind your head so elbows are forward. Pull elbows back slowly until fully extended and parallel to shoulders. Hold elbows in that position for 5 seconds. Repeat stretch 10 times.
<p>Strengthening</p>	<p>1) Upper Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Squeeze <p>2) Lower Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arm and Leg Reach <p>Stair climbing, walking or jogging</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - - Strengthen wrists, arms, and forearms by squeezing a soft rubber ball, tennis ball, or hand grip everyday. Squeeze as many times as you can until your hands feel fatigued. Make sure you squeeze a ball that is small enough to fit into your hand, to assure all five fingers are exercised. - Strengthens lower back. Get on the floor, on your hands and knees. Extend your right arm out in front of you, parallel to the ground. From this position extend your left leg out behind you, holding this extension for 5 seconds. Lower the arm and leg and repeat 5 times. Relax, extend left arm out in front parallel to the ground and right leg out holding 5 seconds and repeat 5 times as well. - Strengthens thighs and rear end.



Appendix A

Weekly Home Training Plan

Arm circles	Hold arms out at shoulder height, make small circles rotating arms forwards for 15 seconds. Rest. Repeat, rotating arms backwards for 15 seconds.
Jogging	Jog in place or around a field for 1-2 minutes.
Hamstring Stretch	With legs slightly apart, bend over and try to touch knees, then shins, then ground. Hold for 10 seconds. Relax. Repeat 2-3 times.
Ball Dancing	Alternately, tap the top of the ball lightly with the sole of the right foot, then with the sole of the left foot. Alternate for 15 seconds. Rest. Repeat.
Quadriceps stretch	Using your partner for balance if necessary, hold ankle and slowly pull to touch heel to backside, hold for 10 seconds. Repeat with other leg.
Passing	Pass back and forth with your partner, 5 yards apart for 1-2 minutes.
Calves / Achilles Stretch	In a push-up position against a wall, one leg forward, one leg back, keep heels on ground, move hips forward and stretch calf muscle. Hold for 30 seconds. Relax. Repeat with other leg forward.
Jumping Jacks	15 Jumping jacks (slowly).
Groin Stretch	Sitting with soles of feet together, hold your ankles and push your knees down gently with elbows, keeping your back straight. Hold for 10 seconds. Relax. Repeat.



IMPROVING ATHLETE PERFORMANCE

Exercise of Week

Exercise for a minimum of 5 minutes.



Juggling



Shooting



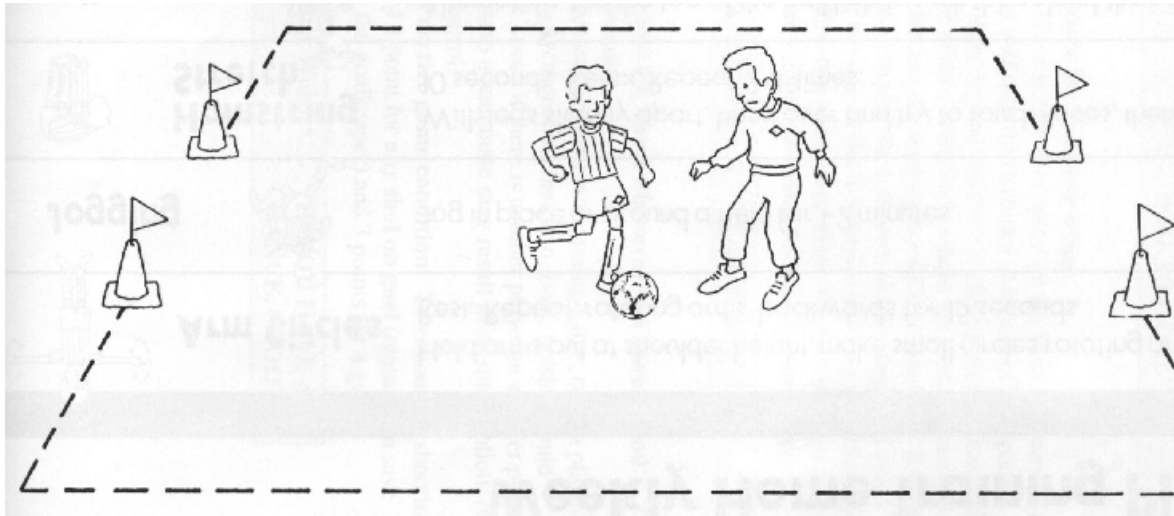
Controlling



Dribbling



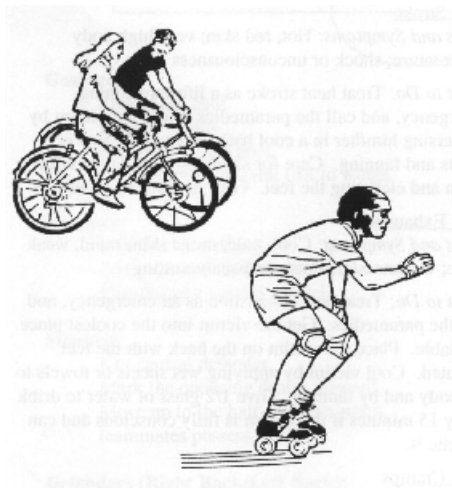
IMPROVING ATHLETE PERFORMANCE



Play "1-on-1 "mini-soccer" for a minimum of 5 minutes. Use cones or markers as goals. Field size should be about 15 yards by 15 yards.



CROSS TRAINING SUGGESTIONS



Within Special Olympics, there are many sports that use some of the same skills and muscle groups as football. There are several individual sports that are excellent cross training sports. Cycling uses the legs, especially the quadriceps muscles. Cycling also helps athletes develop areas prone to injury and essential for defense. Roller Skating and Speed Skating also develop muscle strength, balance, power, and endurance. Tennis enhances agility and lateral movement.

Basketball and Team Handball are very similar team games in comparison to football. Team Handball, especially, requires similar basic skills of moving, dribbling, passing, catching, and defense. However, there is limited dribbling and the ball is thrown into a goal instead of being kicked.

The purpose of cross training is to take part in activities that place similar demands on the body as football. These sports are different, challenging, and fun. However, training is specific. The advantages of cross training activities is enhancing general fitness, not improving specific football skills.



Appendix B

Sample Off-Season Fitness Program

Warm-up (15 minutes) 10 repetitions each exercise

Head Turns - side to side
Shoulder Shrugs
Arm Circles – with arms elevated to side, elbows straight
March in Place
Up and down on toes
Windmills

Stretching (15 minutes)

See Above

Aerobic Activity (20 minutes)

Jogging (wheelchair running)
Jumping Jacks
Jumping up and down
Hopping from one foot to the other
Windmills
Sidestepping in a line
Dancing
(Alternate activities for athletes in chairs: medicine ball toss
alternate knee kicks
arm swing to opposite ankle
figure 8 with wheelchair
dance in chair)



Muscle Endurance (20 Minutes)

Or

Muscle Strength (20 Minutes) depends on the number of sets and repetitions

Bent-knee or regular push-ups

Or Chair push-ups

Bent-knee sit-ups

Bent-knee diagonal sit-ups, elbow to knee

Partner Resistance Walking or Riding with stretch band

Half-squats or alternate lunges

Or Knee Straightening

Up on Toes

Or stretch band resisted toe pointing

Stretch band resisted arm presses forward

Stretch band resisted arm flys from front to side

Stretch band rowing

Weight lifting (use weights or milk bottles filled with sand):

Lift arms straight forward

Lift arms out to side with elbows straight

Bend and straighten elbows.

Cool-Down

Slowly walk or wheel in circles

Trunk twists

Arm circles

Shoulder circles

Head turns

Stretching (insert cool-down stretches here)