

# Special Olympics

## Merchandise Development Guide

Version 2.0 / Accredited Programs / English

***Special Olympics***



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# Introduction

We believe creating can be a fun and energizing process. We want to build a diverse range of merchandise that is unique to each of our Accredited Programs and that connects our movement through the shared values and messages of Special Olympics.

The examples shown in this guide should act as inspiration for creating your merchandise. You will see guidance for certain Special Olympics brand elements you will need to incorporate—it is also useful to refer to the Special Olympics Brand Identity Guidelines in places. You'll also find contact details at the back of this document if you have any questions.



# Using these guidelines

**These guidelines have been designed to help you create merchandise for your teams, fans, athletes, families, volunteers and supporters. In the following pages, you'll find examples and step-by-step guides to help you create designs which are eye catching and energetic. These guides should support you in harnessing and expressing your creative ideas and help you over-come technical constraints.**



**These symbols are used throughout the guides call out key points of interest.**

## **Messaging**

This symbol highlights about the way we communicate with words.



## **Look & Feel**

This symbol highlights information about visual appearance and graphic style.



## **Mark and Symbol**

This symbol highlights information about how we handle the Special Olympics mark and symbol.



## **Technical**

This symbol highlights technical information about creating artwork files.



## **Take care**

This symbol alerts you to common mistakes to watch out for or areas that may be open to misunderstanding.

# Creating your graphic

**In this section, you'll find practical advice on the main elements you'll need to construct your merchandise design and tips on how to use them. You'll see an outline of the important things to consider for each audience and what to emphasise in your designs. You'll also find helpful technical elements and suggestions of where to find inspiration.**

**Please note:**

T-shirts have been used through out these guides as a quick way to show you how to create your merchandise. However, the same approach can be applied to creating graphics & messaging for any other type of merchandise.

**There are three main audience to consider when creating merchandize designs: teams & athletes, members & volunteers, fans, family & supporters. Each audience has different informational requirements based who they are and how they are involved with Special Olympics.**



Your specific target audience will affect the approach you take and the degree to which the Special Olympics brand identity will need to be emphasized and contextualized.



Take the time to identify the specific audience with whom you wish to communicate. If you have multiple audiences try to list them and their particular characteristics.



#### **Teams & Athletes**

The spirit of friendship and working together is an important part of the team & athlete experience. Celebrating who your team is and the ideas & values that are important to the team are key for this audience.



#### **Members & volunteers**

The spirit of generosity, community and possibilities are important ideas that inspire members and volunteers. Being able to show who (Accredited Program) and what (event) they are supporting are key. Volunteers should be easily identifiable.



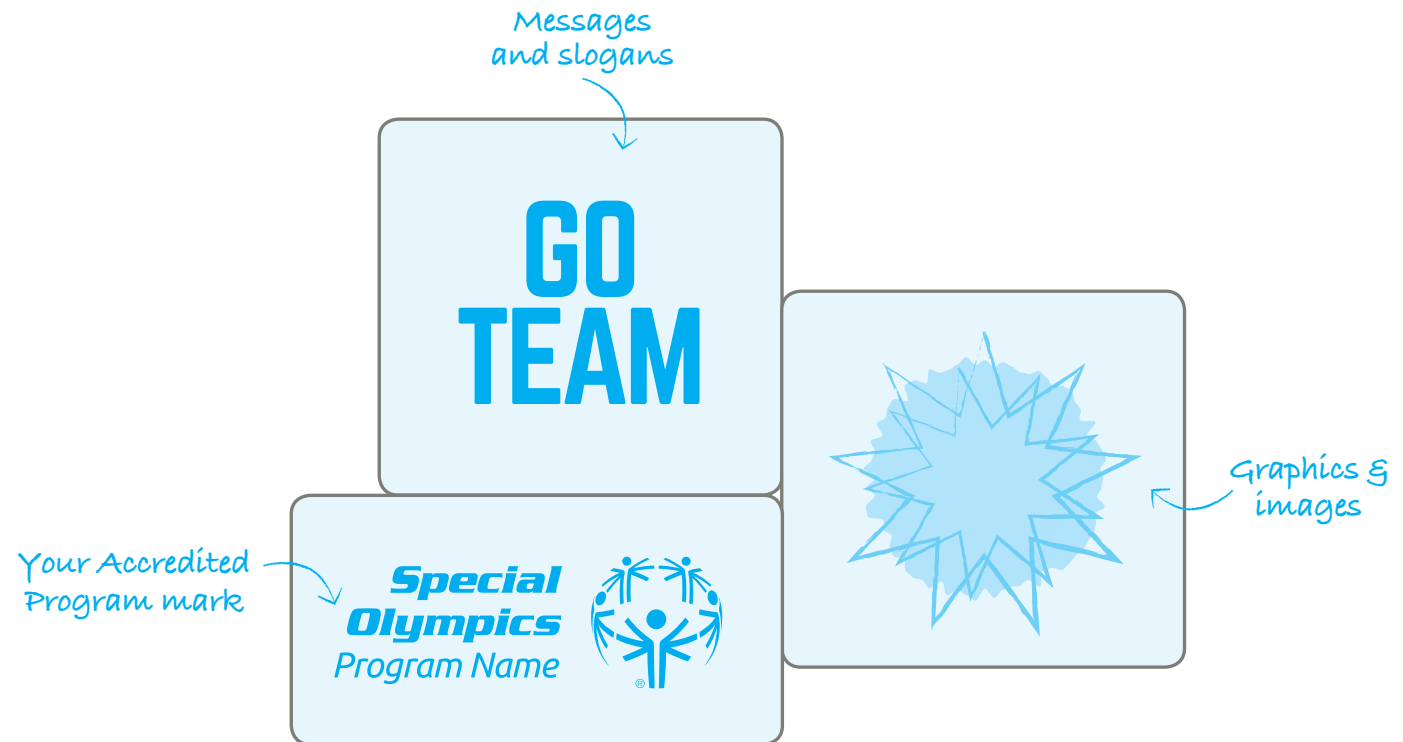
#### **Fans, family & supporters**

Enjoyment and empowerment are important to people who support our teams and athletes. Being able to express their belief and pride for the athletes they're supporting is important. Amplifying their message as much as possible is also key.



There are three core building blocks to each piece of merchandise design, no matter what item you are creating. These are: your message or slogan (text), your signature graphic (image) and the Special Olympics mark (logo).

On the following pages you will see which of these building blocks need most emphasis for each audience.



### Creating Emphasis

The building blocks can be combined in a range of ways depending on what you want to emphasise and who your target audience is.





The key element to call out on team merchandise will be the team name, team crest or symbol. These should be clearly displayed and use the team colors. The use of secondary messaging and graphics should be kept to a minimum.



#### Team Crest / Symbol

Your team crest or Accredited Program mark should be the main focus for your merchandise. The crest or program mark should always be placed on the front (see Appendix for crest design).



#### Graphics

Any graphic elements used should relate to the team or program name — elements such as the team crest, team symbol or icon can be used.



#### Messaging

Messaging is generally not needed on team merchandise. However, some minor messaging relating to an event or games you might be attending or hosting can be placed on the back.

EMPHASIS



#### OTHER EXAMPLES





Dynamic & personal messaging is key to supporter merchandise. We want to share our passion for our teams and the athletes who make up our movement. Our supporters and fans are the best ambassadors and our merchandise should show this.



#### Messaging

Your messaging should be personal, dynamic and active. Your messages can range from support of a team, a sport or Accredited Program to support of an individual or athlete.



#### Graphics

The graphics you use should support your messaging. Simple, bold graphics or illustrative text should be used where possible. The use of full color photographic images should be avoided.



#### Mark and Symbol

The Accredited Program mark, team crest or the Special Olympics symbol should always be used and should appear on the front or sleeve.



When choosing slogans and messaging, avoid using phrases that are trademarks registered by third parties. When in doubt, consult local legal counsel or the SOI Legal Department.

EMPHASIS



#### OTHER EXAMPLES

Make your messages personal

Get family and friends involved

Share your passion and team support

For fundraising merchandise the event name, date and location are the key elements to call out. Merchandise for fundraising will work both as a form of advertising for the event and as a keepsake for those who take part.



#### Messaging

Official messaging should focus on the event name and location. Participants might choose to use more personal messages to show support for an individual or team.



#### Mark and Symbol

The Accredited Program mark, team crest or the Special Olympics symbol should always be used and should appear on the front or sleeve.



#### Graphics

Your graphics and imagery should support the type of event (the sport) or the location (city or state) and help to create a distinct visual for when and where the event is taking place.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

\* For further information on creating an identity or mark for games and events please see the **National & State Games & Tournaments Identity Development Guide**.  
[Download here >](#)



When choosing your fonts you should aim to select a typeface, or range of typefaces which reflect the tone of your merchandise—these might be strong and robust, or hand written and personal. The typography should be clear, easily read and enable application at small sizes.

Your typography should use either:

- A** **Ubuntu** or **Norwester**— the preferred typefaces of Special Olympics
- B** A typeface which compliments the style of the team or club mark
- C** Reflect the style or tone you wish to create with your merchandise.

You can download **Norwester** for free from [www.jamiewilson.io/norwester](http://www.jamiewilson.io/norwester) or download **Ubuntu** for free from [font.ubuntu.com](http://font.ubuntu.com)



#### BUILDING YOUR GRAPHIC

##### STEP 1

Owen

Select your typeface

##### STEP 2

Owen

Outline the font

##### STEP 3

Owen

Place another version of the font with no outline on top

##### STEP 4

TEAM  
Owen  
33

Skew the angle and add your other elements

The choice of color is a key part to creating your merchandise. Color choice can help to emphasize your club or team, the sport you play or a the time of year (for events). When selecting your color consider:

- A Use your state, team or local flag** as a source of colors for your area.
- B Use Colors associated with your sport.**  
Some sports are naturally associated with specific colors.
- C Seasonal colors**  
You may wish to associate with a particular time of year for an event—browns, oranges and reds for fall or bright colors for summer.



## BUILDING YOUR GRAPHIC

## STEP 1



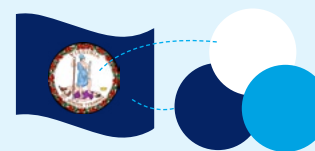
Select or design your graphic

## STEP 2



Create your message

## STEP 3



Select your colors

## STEP 4



Combine all your elements



Use of the Special Olympics symbol with tournament and games marks is the only instance where the SO symbol can break with the core brand guidelines and use alternative colors.

## Our Graphic Style

Building a shared visual approach

All our merchandise should share a unified (not uniform) look and feel. Some of the key characteristics of the Special Olympics graphic style (for merchandise) are:

### 1 Bold typography

Your typography should be bold and strong. Type and image (or graphic) should compliment each other and have a strong visual impact.

### 2 Iconic graphic shapes

Your graphic shapes should have an iconic quality (should be instantly recognizable). These can be created using vector graphics or clip art.

### 3 Iconic photography

Photographic images should have an iconic quality and be easily recognized. To make the image as clear as possible your image should have the background removed. The image should be used in single color. Full color photographic imagery should be avoided.



### BUILDING YOUR GRAPHIC

#### STEP 1



Choose an iconic image

#### STEP 2



Clip out the image to remove the background and save as a gray scale .tiff file

#### STEP 3



Combine your image and type

#### STEP 4



Select and apply your color

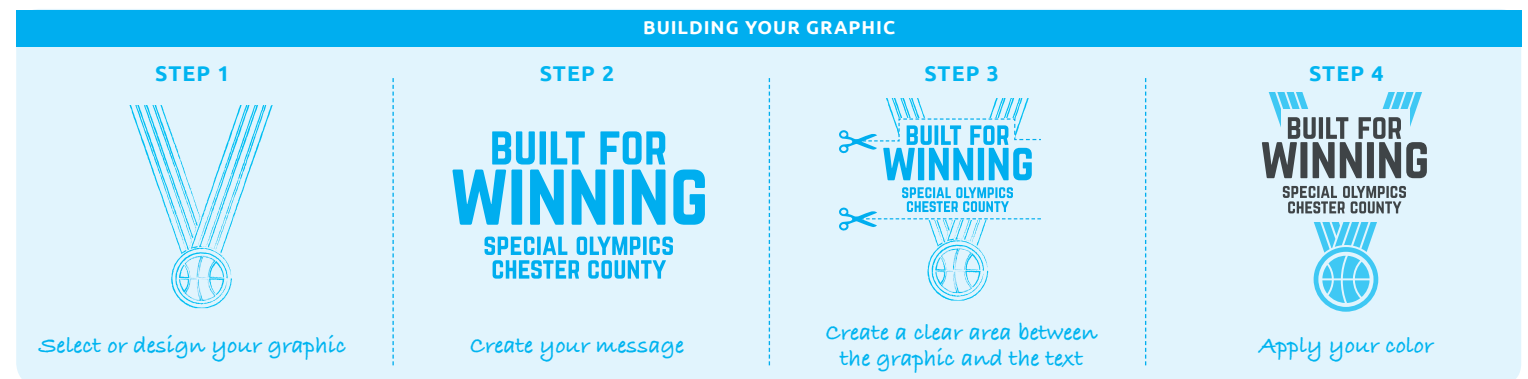


Always seek written permission from the owner of the picture and any people included in the picture you wish to use.



**Things to look out for when making your graphic and applying it to the final garment:**

- 1 Spacing**  
Make sure that each of the elements have enough space around them so that they can be clearly read and easily recognized. The graphics and text should not clutter one another where possible.
- 2 Color contrast**  
The colors you choose for your graphic, text and garment should work together to maximise legibility. The main text should clearly stand out and be easily read. Graphics and images used in low contrast on the background.
- 3 Program Mark size**  
Your Accredited Program mark should be used at an appropriate size to make sure it is clearly visible and can be easily read.



# Application

Once you have created your graphic you will need to apply it to the merchandise item. This section provides some simple tips for applying your graphic.




## Accredited Program mark

### Positioning your mark

**All merchandise is required to contain your Accredited Program mark. The complete Special Olympics mark or Accredited Program mark should appear either:**

- A** On the front (connected with the graphic)
- B** On the sleeve or chest

Your program mark should be reproduced at an appropriate size where it is clearly legible. The same approach to applying your program mark should be followed for all other garments and types of apparel.

 Programs may only use the Special Olympics logo in conjunction with the Program name.

#### PLEASE NOTE:

For information on creating an identity or mark for games and events and how to use the Special Olympics symbol for these please see the **National & State Games & Tournaments Identity Development Guide**.

[Download here >](#)



The choice of apparel, material and finish is key to creating a range of desirable merchandise. Here are points to consider when selecting which apparel or merchandise to use:

- 1 Bold statements and larger graphics might be used on apparel which is more suited to a younger audience.
- 2 Consider using both the front and back of double sided items.
- 3 The back of t-shirts can be used for application of tournament co-branding for sponsors (excludes team jerseys).
- 4 More discreet branding may be more suited to some audiences.
- 5 Graphics should be adaptable and may need to be simplified to work at smaller sizes.
- 6 Your merchandise graphic may need to be adapted for certain applications.



# Management

Creating any piece of merchandise will require you to write a brief, create a design, and have the design printed or produced. This section provides you with tips for each stage of the process.

# Management Checklist

**This simple checklist provides you with all the considerations required for creating appropriate and effective merchandise designs.**

## Design

**When creating your merchandise graphics please ensure that you have considered the following elements:**

- ☐ Who are you creating the merchandise for, and what is the message they will want to communicate?
- ☐ An appropriate, limited, color combination has been selected
- ☐ No full color photography is used
- ☐ Your graphic and messaging works in limited color reproductions (single or two color screen print etc.)
- ☐ The graphic works at small sizes (for button badges, pins or similar)
- ☐ The Special Olympics symbol (if used as part of an event graphic) uses a suitable complimentary color

## Output

**When creating final artwork please ensure that the following variations are addressed:**

- ☐ Photographic images are saved as single color (gray scale) .tiff format
- ☐ Graphics or typographic elements are saved in .eps vector format (with fonts outlined)
- ☐ Single color versions of your graphic are available (may be required for certain applications, e.g. embroidery)

## Application

**When applying your tournament or event identity ensure that the following are addressed:**

- ☐ Your Accredited Program mark is placed in an appropriate position
- ☐ Only use the graphic in isolation (without the Accredited program mark) at small sizes or in area where you are restricted by space

# Management

## Contact

If you have questions about designing your merchandise, the Special Olympics brand identity, or would like further information, please contact: **brand@specialolympics.org**



### **Sharing and learning**

We would love to share any favorite piece of merchandise with the wider Special Olympics community via our Pinterest boards. By sharing great examples we want to inspire other programs to develop their own unique pieces. Please send us images or files of your finished merchandise—the best pieces will be added to one of our boards at **[www.pinterest.com/specialolympics](https://www.pinterest.com/specialolympics)**

# Appendix

Here we have supplied some of the relevant pages from the master brand guidelines which will be useful to reference when creating your merchandise.

# Appendix

## Visual identity

## Brand mark

### Lock-up options

There are a number of lock-ups of the mark that provide flexibility for different layout situations. The standard lock-up has been optimized for placement of the mark in the top-right or bottom-right of regular print items.

#### Two Line (Standard)

The lock-up with the logotype used across two lines is the best option for general use where space may be restricted.

#### Single Line

The one line lock-up is ideal where more horizontal space can be afforded for the mark.

#### Centered

The centered lock-up of the mark is best for vertical application or center-axis layouts.

#### Web/Online

The convention for websites, emails and eZines is that the symbol appears in the top left corner. For these applications a lock-up with the symbol to the left is available.

This lock-up may also be used in situations where the mark must be placed on the left side of an item – e.g. Envelopes.

*Standard lock-up refers to use with scripts that read from left to right.*

### PRINT USE

#### Two Line Lock-up (Standard Version)

***Special  
Olympics***  
*Program Name*



#### Single Line Lock-up

***Special Olympics***  
*Program Name*



#### Centered Lock-up



***Special  
Olympics***  
*Program Name*

### ONLINE USE

#### Web/Online Lock-up



***Special Olympics***  
*Program Name*

#### Note

All of these lock-up options are available in a variety of artwork versions and file formats. An adapted version of the lock-up has also been developed for programs with longer names.



# Appendix Visual identity

## Brand mark Background color

### Color mark

The color mark should only be used against white.

### Single color marks

On backgrounds that have a tonal value of between white and 30% black, the single color mark should be used in a dark color.

On backgrounds that have a tonal value greater than 30% the White version of the mark should be used.

### Low contrast

When positioning the mark against a photographic background, place the single color or white mark as appropriate against a low-contrast section of the photograph.

*Place color mark on white background*



*Place single color mark on low contrast background*



*When placing single color mark against a background, please ensure that there is appropriate contrast between the color of the mark and the background color.*



0%

30%

100%

## T-shirts

### Athlete program level branding – No sponsorship



**Athlete T-shirts or uniforms used for competitions should not carry any sponsorship branding. They can be branded with the Accredited Program mark. For T-shirts created for specific Special Olympics events the event branding may be included.**

- 1** Large application using centred lock-up. Used when no other graphic elements required.  
Symbol height:  $\pm 100\text{mm}$  / 3.9"
- 2** Medium sized application using horizontal lock-up. Can be used on its own or when accommodating an event title or graphic.  
Symbol height:  $\pm 70\text{mm}$  / 2.8"
- 3** Crest application. Can be used on team t-shirts or jerseys when team numbers are required.  
Symbol height:  $\pm 30\text{mm}$  / 1.2"
- 4** When using dark colored T-shirts the brand should be printed in white.
- 5** When using light colored T-shirts other than white the brand should be printed in black or a color that creates sufficient contrast with the T-shirt base color.



## T-shirts

Lock-up for sub-programs, clubs or teams

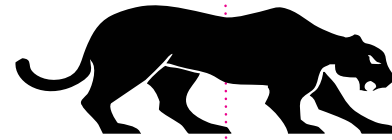


**When creating shirts for sub-programs, clubs or teams, a lock-up can be used that gives primacy to the actual team name. This acknowledges the importance of local teams within Special Olympics and facilitates the creation of distinct team identities for games within a program.**

- 1 The name of the team has primacy on the shirt ensuring team or club recognition between competing teams. The choice of typeface and design of this element is at the discretion of the program.
- 2 The name of the Accredited Program to which the sub-program, team or club is affiliated is set in all capitals Ubuntu Bold as illustrated here.
- 3 The Special Olympics symbol is centred beneath the program name.
- 4 The color, typestyle or motif created for each team reflects the local identity of the club or team while clearly identifying the club or team as being within the Special Olympics Accredited Program.

Sub-program / Team / Club  
*Local expression*

1



**CLUB/TEAM  
NAME**

Program  
*Standardized*

2

**SPECIAL OLYMPICS  
PROGRAM NAME**

3



4