

*SpecialOlympics.org*



# 2018 Special Olympics Style Guide

*Special Olympics*





# Preface

Using a consistent writing style and form in all Special Olympics communications enhances the clarity and professionalism of our materials. It's easy to do – and this guide makes it easier!

In general, Special Olympics follows the Associated Press Stylebook, one of the most widely used guides, along with Webster's New World College Dictionary (the dictionary recommended by AP).

NOTE: The 2018 Special Olympics Style Guide is designed as a quick reference; it is not meant to be a glossary of every term or program. Instead, the Style Guide focuses on some of the most commonly asked questions, explains correct usage, and points out where Special Olympics style diverges from AP style.

For handy reference, a guide to the Most Common Errors is included.

If you have questions or suggestions, please feel free to ask a member of the Brand, Content, Communications Department or email [kmckenna@specialolympics.org](mailto:kmckenna@specialolympics.org).

# Style -- Most Common Errors



## CORRECT

## INCORRECT

### General Terms



Special Olympics

~~the Special Olympics~~



Special Olympics athletes

~~Special Olympians~~



Special Olympics event  
or athlete, supporter, etc. Always add an "s"

~~Special Olympic event~~  
or athlete, supporter, etc.

### Capitalization



the Special Olympics movement

~~the Special Olympics Movement~~



athlete  
athlete is lowercase

~~Athlete~~



partner  
partner is lowercase

~~Partner~~

### Program -- P or p?

Capital P when referring to accredited Programs (Special Olympics Australia, Special Olympics Zambia, etc.)  
Lower case in all other uses (Healthy Athletes program)

### Other

#### Special Olympics always comes first (on first reference)

**Correct:** Special Olympics Healthy Communities® | **Incorrect:** Healthy Communities®

#### Calendar dates are written in order of date-month-year (no comma needed)

**Correct:** 28 November 2019 | **Incorrect:** November 28, 2019; 28 November, 2019

## **A Very Special Christmas®**

Title of ongoing series of holiday music compilation albums, CDs and DVDs benefiting the Christmas Records Trust, which funds grants and programmatic development. Spell out on first reference; may be abbreviated as AVSC thereafter. NOTE: Records is plural. Also see Christmas Records Trust.

## **academic degrees**

Use only if requested or pertinent. Spell out degrees in text: use bachelor's degree, master's degree, etc. After someone's full name, use abbreviations: Ph.D., M.D.

## **ages**

Always use numbers. Examples: Special Olympics athletes can range in age from 8 to over 80. Young Athletes are 2 to 7 years old.

## **a.m., p.m.**

Lowercase with periods.

## **among, between**

Use among for more than two items, between for two items. Examples: The funds were divided among Tom, Dick and Harry. The argument was between Romulus and Remus.

## **articles (newspapers, magazines, etc.)**

Place the headlines/titles of newspaper, magazine and other publication articles in quotes. Do not italicize.

## **athlete**

Lowercase in all uses. Example: Special Olympics athletes are children and adults with intellectual disabilities in more than 170 countries around the world.

## **athlete oath**

"Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." On first mention, call it the Special Olympics athlete oath; thereafter, the oath. NOTE: Do not call this "the Special Olympics oath."

## **Athlete Input Council**

Athlete Input Councils give athletes the opportunity to share ideas and opinions with Special Olympics leadership. These can happen at the local, state, national or international level.

## **Athlete Leadership**

Special Olympics Athlete Leadership on first reference, Athlete Leadership thereafter. NOTE: We no longer use the term Athlete Leadership Programs or ALPs. We simply refer to Athlete Leadership; no acronym or abbreviation needed.

Example: Athlete Leadership aims to create a culture of inclusion where people think differently about what it means to lead and influence others.

**autism**

Lower case. Also known as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). When possible refer to an athlete with this diagnosis as a person with autism (using people-first language). Use of the term autistic is acceptable, but not preferred. See also people-first language.

**Board of Directors, Special Olympics International Board of Directors**

Always capitalize. We refer to our Board as the Special Olympics International Board of Directors; on second reference, we refer to the Board of Directors or International Board of Directors. Someone can be called a Member or Director of the International Board of Directors, a Board Member, or a Member of the Board. Please do not say “Board Director.” Examples: Vanessa Williams, Director, Special Olympics International Board of Directors. Or: Shi Derong, Member of the Special Olympics International Board of Directors. (This is Special Olympics style, contrary to AP Style.)

**book titles**

Place in quotes.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

Do not hyphenate. Do not use an ampersand.

**capital, capitol**

A capital is the city where a seat of government is located. A capitol is a government building, i.e., the U.S. Capitol.

**capitalization**

- Always capitalize Program when referring to Special Olympics Programs.  
Example: The Program held its first-ever Unified competition in October 2015.
- When referring to activities and initiatives, only capitalize “program” when it is part of an official acronym. Example: Motor Activity Training Program.
- Capitalize an official title, whether it comes before or after the individual’s name. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.)

Examples: Mary Davis, Chief Executive Officer, addressed the conference. Chairman Timothy P. Shriver delivered a videotaped message.

**Celsius**

Use this term rather than centigrade for the temperature scale based on the metric system.

When giving a Celsius temperature, use these forms: 40 C or 40 degrees Celsius.

In Special Olympics documents, we generally express temperature using the Fahrenheit scale and provide the Celsius equivalent in parentheses.

Example: 77 F (25 C).

**center, centre**

Both spellings are fine. This extends to other differences in American/British English, including behavior/behaviour, programs/programmes, honor/honour, etc.

**Christmas Records Grants (CRG) or Christmas Records Trust (CRT)**

Capitalize Christmas Records Grants or Christmas Records Trust. In subsequent mentions, use CRG or CRT. NOTE: Records is plural. Also see: A Very Special Christmas.

**Closing Ceremony**

Capitalize. Treat as singular. Examples: The Closing Ceremony starts at 5 p.m. BUT: Thousands of athletes plan to attend both Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

**Choose to Include**

This is our ongoing awareness and fund-raising campaign, based upon Three Pillars: 1/Inclusive Sport and Health; 2/Unified Generation; 3/Athlete Empowerment. NOTE: Both hashtags #choosetoinclude and #ChooseToInclude are acceptable. See also Three Pillars.

**commas**

Use commas to separate elements in a complex series; do not use in a simple series. Examples: The flag is red, white and blue. BUT: "... encourage relationships between schools and Programs, engage youth with and without disabilities, and build communities." NOTE: Commas always go inside quotation marks. As in: "This is how it should look," she said. "Even if it's an incomplete sentence," he added.

**company**

Spell out when used as part of a company name. (This is Special Olympics style, contrary to AP style.) Example: Otis Elevator Company.

**Connect**

The full term is Special Olympics Connect. This is the system replacing GMS/Games Management Software. Please use Special Olympics Connect on first reference. SO Connect and/or Connect is acceptable on second reference. See Special Olympics Connect.

**Cops on Doughnut Shops®**

For more than a decade, this partnership between Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics organizers and Krispy Kreme stores has raised funds and awareness for Special Olympics.

**corporation**

Spell out when used as part of a company name. (This is Special Olympics style, contrary to AP style.) Example: Microsoft Corporation.

**currency**

For the benefit of our international audience, use US\$ when referring to American currency. Example: Special Olympics received a grant of US\$250,000.

**dates**

Whenever possible, we follow the world's most widely used construction for dates – date-month-year: 19 September 2019. No comma. Months are spelled out.

Note: Please avoid using a conversational form, such as March 14th through March 25th. Correct form is: The World Games are set for 14-21 March 2019. (This is Special Olympics global style, contrary to AP style.)



**developmental disabilities**

A general term for a range of conditions related to impairment in physical, learning or behavioral areas. These conditions include intellectual disabilities. NOTE: Special Olympics uses the more specific term: intellectual disabilities (See intellectual disabilities.)

**directions**

In general, lowercase north, south, northwest, northern, southern, etc., when they indicate compass direction. Capitalize when they designate regions, especially in the United States. Examples: He drove west, then along the southern coast. A storm system that developed in the Midwest is heading toward the East Coast.

**disabilities**

Use “people first” language: refer to the person first – and any disability thereafter. Never use crippled, handicapped, or mentally disabled or retarded. If applicable, refer to a person with a disability, not a disabled person; someone who uses a wheelchair, not someone “confined” to a wheelchair or wheelchair-bound; or a person with autism, not “suffering” from autism. NOTE: Also pay attention to singular/plural usage. Examples: a person with an intellectual disability; people with intellectual disabilities.

**divisioning**

Lowercase. Special Olympics competitions are structured so that athletes compete with other athletes of similar ability in equitable divisions. This practice marks one of the fundamental differences between Special Olympics competitions and those of most other sports organizations.

**Down syndrome**

Not Downs syndrome or Downs Syndrome. The word syndrome is lowercase.

**email**

No hyphen.

**exams**

Do NOT use this word to describe what takes place at Special Olympics Healthy Athletes events or clinics. Screenings is the preferred term.

**eyeglasses**

One word.

**FYR Macedonia**

Refer to this country as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Abbreviate as FYR Macedonia. Do not use just Macedonia alone. NOTE: Refer to our Program there as Special Olympics FYR Macedonia (FYROM), not as Special Olympics Macedonia (see also Macedonia).



### **Fahrenheit**

The temperature scale commonly used in the United States. When giving a Fahrenheit temperature, use these forms: 70 F or 70 degrees Fahrenheit. In Special Olympics documents, we generally express temperature using the Fahrenheit scale and provide the Celsius equivalent in parentheses. Example: 77 F (25 C).

### **Family Network**

Use Special Olympics Family Network on first reference, Family Network thereafter.

NOTE: This replaces the term Family Support Network.

### **Federal**

Generally lowercase. Capitalize only when it is part of a proper title.

Example: The federal building houses the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

### **fewer, less**

In general, use fewer for individual items, less for bulk or quantity. Examples: Fewer than 10 applicants called about the position. I had less than US\$10 in my pocket.

### **Final Leg**

Capitalize, do not use quotes. A Final Leg consists of the last miles of a Law Enforcement Torch Run® in the days leading up to the Opening Ceremony of a Special Olympics competitive event. See Law Enforcement Torch Run.

### **Flame of Hope**

No quotes, no italics. The torch carried in the Law Enforcement Torch Run® and used to light the cauldron at Special Olympics Games. There is no registered trademark for Flame of Hope.

### **fundraiser, fundraising**

Do not hyphenate.

### **Games**

Capitalize in all instances when referring to Special Olympics Games. (This is Special Olympics style, contrary to AP style.) Treat as a collective plural rather than a collective singular expression. Example: The World Summer Games were held in Los Angeles. NOT “was held.”

When naming Games, put Special Olympics first whenever possible. The idea is for Special Olympics to stand out, rather than the year or location. Preferred: Special Olympics World Winter Games Athens 2011. Not: 2005 Special Olympics World Winter Games, Nagano, Japan.

See below for specific guidance.

- **World Games**

Capitalize. Designate the season only in title of World Winter Games, as in: Special Olympics World Games CITY/LOCATION YEAR (for summer competition) or Special Olympics World Winter Games CITY/LOCATION YEAR (for winter).

Examples: Special Olympics World Winter Games Austria 2017; Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019.





NOTE: On second reference, events may be abbreviated to World Games, the 2019 (or whichever year) Games, or the Games, if the meaning is clear within the context. See below list of past and upcoming World Games for full titles.

- **Regional and National Games**

Capitalize the R and N. Example: Special Olympics Asia-Pacific Regional Games, as well as the season for Programs that hold Games in both summer and winter sports.

- **U.S. State Games**

Capitalize. Identify the season for Programs that hold Games for both summer and winter sports (e.g., Special Olympics Maryland Summer Games).

- **local Games**

Capitalize Games, lowercase local.

- **Other**

Capitalize multinational or multistate events. Examples:

- Special Olympics Middle East/North Africa Regional Games
- Mid-Atlantic Invitational Golf Tournament

### **Special Olympics World Games and World Winter Games**

(Note the change from “International” to “World” in 1991. Also note that, as of 2018, Special Olympics no longer numbers Games in official titles.)

#### **1968**

1st International Special Olympics Summer Games  
Soldier Field, Chicago, Illinois, USA

#### **1970**

2nd International Special Olympics Summer Games  
Soldier Field, Chicago, Illinois, USA

#### **1972**

3rd International Special Olympics Summer Games  
University of California at Los Angeles, Los Angeles, California, USA

#### **1975**

4th International Special Olympics Summer Games  
Central Michigan University, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, USA

#### **1977**

1st International Special Olympics Winter Games  
Steamboat Springs, Colorado, USA

#### **1979**

5th International Special Olympics Summer Games  
State University of New York at Brockport, Brockport, New York, USA

#### **1981**

2nd International Special Olympics Winter Games  
Stowe and the Village of Smugglers’ Notch, Vermont, USA

#### **1983**

6th International Special Olympics Summer Games  
Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, USA



**1985**

3rd International Special Olympics Winter Games  
Park City, Utah, USA

**1987**

7th International Special Olympics Summer Games  
University of Notre Dame and Saint Mary's College, South Bend, Indiana, USA

**1989**

4th International Special Olympics Winter Games  
Reno, Nevada, and Lake Tahoe, California, USA

**1991**

8th Special Olympics World Summer Games  
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

**1993**

5th Special Olympics World Winter Games  
Salzburg and Schladming, Austria

**1995**

9th Special Olympics World Summer Games  
New Haven, Connecticut, USA

**1997**

6th Special Olympics World Winter Games  
Toronto and Collingwood, Ontario, Canada

**1999**

10th Special Olympics World Summer Games  
Raleigh, Durham and Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA

**2001**

7th Special Olympics World Winter Games  
Anchorage, Alaska, USA

**2003**

11th Special Olympics World Summer Games  
Dublin, Ireland

**2005**

8<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Winter Games  
Nagano, Japan

or

Special Olympics World Winter Games, Nagano, Japan 2005

**2007**

12<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Summer Games  
Shanghai, China

or

Special Olympics World Summer Games, Shanghai 2007

**2009**

9<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Winter Games  
Idaho, USA

or

Special Olympics World Winter Games, Idaho USA 2009

**2011**

13<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Summer Games  
Athens, Greece

or

Special Olympics World Summer Games, Athens 2011



**2013**

10<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Winter Games  
PyeongChang, Republic of Korea

or

Special Olympics World Winter Games PyeongChang 2013

**2015**

14<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Summer Games  
Los Angeles, USA

or

Special Olympics World Games Los Angeles 2015

**2017**

11<sup>th</sup> Special Olympics World Winter Games  
Styria, Austria

or

Special Olympics World Winter Games Austria 2017

**2019**

Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019

Additional note: Some computer software programs automatically use a superscript for the ordinal, while others do not. Whenever possible, the superscript is preferred.

**Games Management Software**

Spell out and capitalize on first mention when referring to the software used by Special Olympics for Games registration, divisioning and results. Abbreviate as GMS thereafter. NOTE: Soon to be replaced by Special Olympics Connect. See Special Olympics Connect.

**Games Organizing Committee**

Formerly used to describe an organization that plans, organizes, finances and conducts Special Olympics World or Regional Games. NOTE: This phrase has been replaced by Local Organizing Committee, abbreviated as LOC on second reference.

**geographic names**

Spell out names of countries, states and cities. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.) For U.S. state names, add USA afterwards. Examples: Special Olympics Rhode Island (USA) hosted a competition in the fall.

**Get Into It**

A K-12 school curriculum developed by Special Olympics and distributed to educational institutions to encourage students to respect and embrace the differences and similarities in people with and without intellectual disabilities. Formerly known as SO Get Into It.

**Global Messengers**

Always capitalize. The term refers to Special Olympics athletes who have received training to become spokespeople for people with intellectual disabilities and to raise awareness of Special Olympics. These athletes are referred to as Special Olympics [Program name] Global Messengers. Example: Special Olympics China Global Messengers.

In addition, every few years, 10-12 athletes are chosen from Programs around the world to serve four-year terms as spokespersons for the Special Olympics movement; they are Special Olympics Sargent Shriver International Global Messengers. Also see Health Messengers.



### **Global Strategic Plan, 2016-2020**

Special Olympics Global Strategic Plan, 2016-2020 on first reference to our vision and strategy for the next five years; Strategic Plan on second reference. Capitalize references to the plan's framework, including the goals to Improve Athlete Performance and Build Positive Attitudes. See also Strategic Plan.

### **GMS**

See Games Management Software.

### **GOC**

See Games Organizing Committee and Local Organizing Committee.

### **good will, goodwill**

The noun is two words. The adjective is one word.

### **grass roots, frass-roots**

Two words; hyphenate when used as an adjective.

### **Guardians of the Flame®**

Capitalize, no quotes. Describes law enforcement officers who take part in a Torch Run, including a Final Leg. See Final Leg and Law Enforcement Torch Run®.

### **Heads of Delegations**

Capitalize. After first reference, can be abbreviated as HOD. This refers to the leaders of the delegations that will be competing at a World Games.

### **Heads of Delegation Seminar**

Formerly called the Heads of Delegation Conference. Generally held one year prior to a World Games (at the World Games location), these meetings offer an overview of World Games for Heads of Delegations.

### **Health**

Our Special Olympics Health program is growing and now includes more than Healthy Athletes events. On first reference, when referring to our overall health work, please refer to the overarching program as: Special Olympics Health, made possible by the Golisano Foundation. This can include Healthy Athletes events, fitness and wellness initiatives, and Healthy Communities programming. On second reference and thereafter, refer simply to Special Olympics Health or the Special Olympics Health program. (See also: Special Olympics Health).

Examples: Special Olympics Health, made possible by the Golisano Foundation, is breaking new ground. Or: Our Special Olympics Health program, made possible by the Golisano Foundation, is expanding around the world.

### **Health care (noun)**

Two words, no hyphen.



### **Health Messenger**

Capitalize. A Health Messenger is a Special Olympics athlete trained to serve as a leader in health and/or fitness within their Special Olympics community or the community at large.

### **Healthy Athletes®**

Use Special Olympics Healthy Athletes®, made possible by the Golisano Foundation on first reference; Healthy Athletes thereafter. At Healthy Athletes events, Special Olympics athletes are offered free screenings and services. The Healthy Athletes name covers eight disciplines:

- Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes® (vision)\*
- Special Olympics Special Smiles® (dental)
- Special Olympics Healthy Hearing (hearing)
- Special Olympics FUNFitness (physical therapy and nutritional advice)
- Special Olympics Health Promotion (general health and fitness)
- Special Olympics Fit Feet (podiatry)
- Special Olympics MedFest® (sports physical exam)
- Special Olympics Strong Minds (adaptive/coping skills)

\*This is a partnership between Special Olympics and Lions Clubs International. Always use the full name as shown above on first reference; use Opening Eyes thereafter.

NOTE: When mentioning any of the Healthy Athletes disciplines, please include Special Olympics on first reference, as in: Special Olympics Special Smiles®.

Additional note: some computer software programs automatically use a superscript for the registered mark, while others do not. Whenever possible, the superscript is preferred.

### **Healthy Community**

Within Special Olympics, a Program is identified as having achieved Healthy Community recognition after meeting several criteria related to year-round health programming. The plural term Healthy Communities® may be used when referencing the overall year-round Special Olympics health work and recognition structure.

NOTE: For a Program receiving 1-year or 3-year Healthy Community grants, it is important to refer to such a Program as a "Healthy Community grantee" or one that is "seeking to achieve Healthy Community recognition" until officially recognized as a Healthy Community.

Examples: Special Olympics is working toward creating Healthy Communities around the world.

Special Olympics New York is recognized as a Healthy Community through its dedication to athlete health year-round.

### **Host Town program**

This involves cities and towns around a World Games location that volunteer to host Special Olympics athlete delegations for several days prior to a World Games competition. The Host Town – or Host Towns – program allows athletes to rest, acclimate and train prior to competing at World Games.

**inclusive health**

The 2016-2020 Special Olympics Health Strategy references supporting inclusive health for people with intellectual disabilities. Inclusive health means equitable access to quality health care, education and services for people with intellectual disabilities.

**intellectual disabilities**

As of 2004, this is the official term used by Special Olympics to refer to our focus population. Use the singular when referring to one person, e.g., “a child with an intellectual disability,” or “a child with intellectual disability.” Use plural when referring to more than one person, e.g., “adults and children with intellectual disabilities.” May be abbreviated as “ID” on second reference. NOTE: Special Olympics does not use the term intellectual and developmental disabilities, which is a broader category. As background, see **developmental disabilities**.

**International Association of Chiefs of Police**

Abbreviate as IACP after first mention. The founding law enforcement organization of the Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics.

**internet**

Do not capitalize.

**Korea**

The Special Olympics Program is located in Korea. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.) However, when necessary, use Republic of Korea or South Korea to identify the country that hosted the 2013 World Winter Games. Example: The 2013 Special Olympics World Winter Games were held in PyeongChang, South Korea.

**Kosovo**

The official name is Kosovo and its abbreviation is KOS.

NOTE: We no longer need to add the statement: “under UNSCR 1244/99.”

**Law Enforcement Torch Run®**

Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics on first reference; use Law Enforcement Torch Run, Torch Run or LETR thereafter. The first use of the full title should include the registration symbol ® after the word “Run.” Law enforcement officers carry the Flame of Hope (torch) prior to a Special Olympics competition to raise funds for and awareness of the Special Olympics movement worldwide. Officers involved in the Law Enforcement Torch Run are also called Guardians of the Flame. NOTE: law enforcement officer is lowercase, no hyphens. See also Final Leg, Flame of Hope.

**Local Organizing Committee**

Organization that plans, organizes, finances and conducts Special Olympics World or Regional Games. On first mention, spell out and capitalize; also include a reference to the specific event (eg the Local Organizing Committee for the 2019 Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi). Abbreviate as LOC thereafter. NOTE: This term replaces Games Organizing Committee.



**long-distance**

Hyphenate as a compound modifier. Examples: She has been training to be a long-distance runner. BUT: It's a long distance to the beach.

**long jump**

As a noun, two words. As an adjective, hyphenate.

Examples: He competed in the long jump. She won a medal in the long-jump event.

**longtime**

One word as a compound modifier. Examples: They are longtime supporters of Special Olympics. BUT: They've been friends a long time.

**Macedonia**

Refer to this country as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Abbreviate as FYR Macedonia. Do not use Macedonia alone. NOTE: Refer to our Program there as Special Olympics FYR Macedonia (FYROM), not as Special Olympics Macedonia.

**magazines**

Place in quotes. Lowercase "magazine" unless it is part of the title of the publication; do not italicize the word "magazine." (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.) Examples: "Harper's Magazine," "Newsweek" magazine.

**measurements**

All Special Olympics documents should include both metric and U.S. measuring systems.

- foot—the basic unit of length in the U.S. measuring system. The metric equivalent is exactly 30.48 centimeters.
- kilometer—the metric term for 1,000 meters. A kilometer is equal to approximately 3,281 feet or five-eighths (0.62) of a mile. NOTE: Abbreviate as km.
- knot—one nautical mile.
- meter—the basic unit of length in the metric system. It is defined as being equal to approximately 39.37 inches. NOTE: Abbreviate as m.

**mental retardation**

Do not use. This outdated wording was eliminated from U.S. federal health, education and labor policy by the passage of Rosa's Law in 2010. It has been replaced with the term "intellectual disability." In descriptions, please use "people first" language, as in: a "person with an intellectual disability" or children and adults with "intellectual disabilities."

**mid**

No hyphen unless followed by a number or a capital letter. Examples: midterm exam, mid-April, mid-1930s.

**millions, billions**

Use figures with million or billion.

Example: More than 5 million athletes and Unified teammates participate in Special Olympics.

**Minister**

Capitalize before or after a person's name. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.)

Example: Yasmina Baddou, Minister of Health, Morocco.



### **Ministry**

As a government entity, capitalize. Example: the Ministry of Sports, the Ministry of Education.

### **Motor Activity Training Program**

Activity is singular. Abbreviate as MATP after first mention. A program specially designed for athletes who are unable to participate in official Special Olympics sports competitions due to functional abilities. NOTE: Be careful not to use the redundant phrase “MATP program.”

### **movement**

Lowercase. Example: Her inspiring speech marked a turning point in the Special Olympics movement.

### **movies, musicals, operas**

Place in quotes.

### **multi**

In general, no hyphen. Examples: multinational, multiregional, multistate.

### **National Director**

Capitalize. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.)

### **National Games**

Capitalize. See Games.

### **the Netherlands**

The word “the” is lowercase. Example: Athlete Leaders gathered in Groningen, the Netherlands.

### **nonprofit**

One word, no hyphen.

### **numerals**

Spell out numbers one through nine, except for ages and before millions or billions. Use figures for 10 and above.

Examples: Special Olympics has seven Regional offices. A delegation of 23 athletes is expected.

NOTE: Follow the same rule for most ordinals (first, second, third, etc.) UNLESS they’re used to form a name/title. Example: The 8th Special Olympics World Winter Games were held in Nagano, Japan.

### **Olympic-type or Olympic-style sports**

Used to describe the 30+ sports offered to Special Olympics athletes. Hyphenate.

### **online**

One word.

### **open water swimming**

Lowercase. No hyphen.

**OSEP**

This abbreviation may be used on second reference for the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs at the Department of Education (OSEP). Referring to the U.S. Department of Education alone is not acceptable.

**Opening Ceremony**

Capitalize. Treat as singular. The Opening Ceremony was held at the University of Nebraska. Also note: Many volunteers worked at both the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

**Palestinian Authority**

Not Palestine Authority. However, the Special Olympics Program in the MENA Region is referred to as Special Olympics Palestine.

**Pan American Health Organization**

On first mention, use Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO). PAHO is fine on subsequent use. Please refer to PAHO as a partner.

**Parade of Athletes**

Capitalize. The procession of athletes at the start of an Opening Ceremony.

**partner**

Not capitalized. Unified partners refers to people without intellectual disabilities. Example: The Unified Sports tennis match featured an athlete from Costa Rica and a partner from Turkey.

**people-first language**

lower-case. People-first language puts the person first, not a diagnosis. People-first language signals that a person is not defined by a disability; disability may just be one characteristic – and comes last. Examples: child with an intellectual disability; adult with autism; athlete with cerebral palsy.

**percent**

One word. Use figures only, as in: 3 percent, 50 percent.

**personal best**

Lowercase. Special Olympics athletes are always trying to exceed their personal best in every sport. NOTE: An athlete's personal best is defined as the best result (highest score, fastest time or other individual stat) that he or she has ever achieved.

**Plane Pull®**

A Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics fundraiser. Capitalize.

**Polar Plunge®**

Capitalize. A Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics fundraiser. Polar Plunge is a registered trademark of Special Olympics and is recommended over "Polar Bear Plunge" and other similar names not registered by Special Olympics.



## prefixes

In general, do not hyphenate when using a prefix with a word starting with a consonant.

- Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel (e.g., pre-existing)
- Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized (pre-Colombian).
- Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes (e.g., sub-subparagraph).

## Preliminary Games

Capitalized. This term is preferred over Test Games, but either one is acceptable. May be shortened to Pre-Games. Invitational Games may also be used.

## President, the President

Capitalize. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.)

## Prime Minister, the Prime Minister

Capitalize. (This is Special Olympics style, not AP style.)

## Program

The word “Program” is always capitalized when referring to a Special Olympics Program to differentiate it from initiatives and activities. Example: Special Olympics Australia’s National Games were one of the Program’s most successful ever.

- **National Programs**

Capitalize.

Example: Representatives of nine National Programs attended the seminar.

- In National Program names, “Special Olympics” precedes the country name (Special Olympics Malawi, not Malawi Special Olympics).

- **State and Provincial Programs**

In state and provincial Program names, “Special Olympics” always precedes the state or province name.

Examples: Special Olympics Massachusetts, Special Olympics District of Columbia, Special Olympics Ontario.

The same rule applies to city Programs. Example: Special Olympics Toronto.

## Project UNIFY

This term is no longer in use. Please see Unified Schools.

## quotation marks

Please note that commas and periods always go inside quotation marks, even with sentence fragments. Example: We call this “an easy rule.” NOT: We call this “an easy rule”.

## ®

Registered trademark symbol is used only on first reference. NOTE: Some computer software programs automatically use a superscript for the registered mark, while others do not.

Whenever possible, the superscript is preferred. NOTE: Please see Trademarks for a list of Special Olympics’ registered trademarks.



## R-word

Note hyphen and capital "R." Refers to the words "retard" or "retarded." Derogatory use of these words can hurt millions of people with intellectual disabilities, their families and friends.

## Regions (Special Olympics)

With a capital "R." Always use the full Special Olympics Region name on first reference, as in: Special Olympics Europe Eurasia, not SOEE. Special Olympics is organized into seven Regions. The Regional offices provide training and support to their area Programs.

- Special Olympics Africa
- Special Olympics Asia Pacific
- Special Olympics East Asia
- Special Olympics Europe Eurasia
- Special Olympics Latin America
- Special Olympics Middle East/North Africa
- Special Olympics North America

## Sargent Shriver International Global Messengers

See Global Messengers.

## screenings

This is the preferred term to describe what takes place at Special Olympics Healthy Athletes events or clinics. Please note that we no longer use the word "exams."

## semicolon

Use to separate complex information or lists beyond what a comma can convey; also to link independent clauses. If these clauses get too unwieldy, however, consider writing separate sentences.

## Shriver family members

Eunice Kennedy Shriver, Founder (Mrs. Shriver or EKS on second reference)

Sargent Shriver, former President and Chairman of the Board Emeritus

Timothy P. Shriver, Chairman, Special Olympics International\*

Anthony K. Shriver, Founder, Best Buddies International

Bobby Shriver, Member, Special Olympics International Board of Directors, also producer of "A Very Special Christmas" record/CD/DVD series

Maria Shriver, former Member, Special Olympics International Board of Directors

Mark Shriver, President, Save the Children Action Network

\*NOTE: When mentioning the Special Olympics Chairman in introductions, please use Dr. Timothy P. Shriver. For documents and formal correspondence, his signature is Timothy P. Shriver, Ph.D. For all else, including press releases and anything on the website, use Tim Shriver (plus his title on first reference).

## Soldier Field

In Chicago, this is the site of the 1st International Special Olympics Summer Games in 1968 and the 2nd International Special Olympics Summer Games in 1970.



### **Special Olympics**

The preferred name is Special Olympics. Please do not refer to: “the” Special Olympics or a Special Olympic (singular) competition. If possible, avoid the possessive (Special Olympics’); never refer to Special Olympics’s.

NOTE: The legal name is Special Olympics, Inc. – not Special Olympics International. You do not need to use the official name, except in documents. Also: The abbreviations SOI or SO are acceptable in informal use only.

### **Special Olympics athlete oath**

See athlete oath.

### **Special Olympics athletes**

Lowercase. NOTE: Our athletes are not Olympians or Special Olympians. And please don’t forget the ‘s’ in Olympics.

### **Special Olympics Connect**

See Connect.

### **Special Olympics Health**

See Health.

### **Special Olympics USA**

Always use Special Olympics USA to refer to athletes and coaches representing the United States of America at a World Games competition. Do not say Special Olympics Team USA or Team USA. (Team USA – without the words Special Olympics – refers to the U.S. Olympic team.) Do not use periods in USA.

### **Special Olympics Unified Schools**

See Unified Schools.

### **sports**

Individual sports are not capitalized. Athletes can compete in 30+ sports, including summer and winter sports, as well as local and demonstration sports. NOTE: Special Olympics prefers to refer to sports offered, rather than official sports.

Example: Special Olympics offers more than 30 sports around the world.

- Summer sports offered as part of the movement’s sports training and competition.
    - athletics (track and field)
    - badminton
    - basketball
    - beach volleyball
    - bocce
    - bowling
    - cricket
    - cycling
    - equestrian
    - football (soccer)
- NOTE: Soccer, in parentheses, appears after “football” at the first mention in locations where readers might confuse the sport with American football.





golf  
gymnastics (artistic)  
gymnastics (rhythmic)  
handball  
judo  
kayaking  
open water swimming  
powerlifting  
roller skating  
sailing  
softball  
swimming  
table tennis  
tennis  
triathlon  
volleyball

- Winter sports offered as part of the movement’s sports training and competition.  
alpine skiing  
cross-country skiing  
figure skating (Hyphenate when a compound adjective, e.g., figure-skating venue)  
floorball  
floor hockey (Hyphenate when a compound adjective, e.g., floor-hockey stick)  
snowboarding  
short track speedskating (Hyphenate only when used as a compound adjective, e.g., the short-track speedskating competition)  
snowshoeing
- Demonstration sports: These are sports that take place only at a Games event.  
Examples include stick shooting.
- Locally popular sports: Programs may offer sports – such as flag football or dragon-boat -- that are popular in certain parts of the world.

### **Spread the Word to End the Word®**

Capitalized. The campaign for mutual respect and dignity that has spread across the United States and around the globe, involving people of all ages – from high schools to college campuses and corporate offices. The goal of Spread the Word to End the Word is for people to think about the hurtful and disparaging uses of the word “retard” and pledge to stop using it.

### **Strategic Plan**

This is an informal way to refer to our Global Strategic Plan. On first reference, please say: Special Olympics Global Strategic Plan, 2016-2020 when referring to our five-year vision and strategy. Capitalize references to the plan framework, including goals to Improve Athlete Performance and Build Positive Attitudes. See also Global Strategic Plan.

### **Strive**



Strive is a 10-station assessment tool created to provide a standard method to measure an athlete's level of fitness. NOTE: Strive is the next generation of the assessment tool that was known as TRAIN.

### **teammate**

Not capitalized. Refers to people with and without intellectual disabilities who participate in Unified Sports. Example: More than 1.2 million teammates take part in Special Olympics Unified Sports. NOTE: When appropriate, the term teammate is preferred over partner.

### **Technical Delegates**

May be abbreviated as TDs on second reference

### **Tip-A-Cop®**

Capitalize (including the "A") and use hyphens. A Law Enforcement Torch Run® fundraising event in which officers assist with waiting tables at a restaurant and collect "tip" donations for Special Olympics.

### **T-shirt**

Capitalize the "T."

### **Three Pillars**

Capitalized. Special Olympics' five-year awareness and fundraising campaign – known as "Choose to Include" – is based on Three Pillars. They are: 1/Inclusive Sport and Health; 2/Unified Generation; 3/Athlete Empowerment.

### **titles**

Special Olympics titles are capitalized when used before or after a name. No commas are needed if the name goes first.

Examples: Mary Davis, Chief Executive Officer, will deliver remarks at Opening Ceremony. Special Olympics Chairman Tim Shriver is the featured speaker. NOT: Special Olympics Chairman, Tim Shriver, is the featured speaker.

### **Torch Lighting Ceremony**

Always capitalize.

### **Torch Run**

Use Law Enforcement Torch Run® for Special Olympics on first reference. Law Enforcement Torch Run, Torch Run, or LETR thereafter.

### **Trademarks**

Trademarks registered by Special Olympics include:

A Very Special Christmas®  
Cops on Doughnut Shops®  
Cops on Top®  
Guardians of the Flame®  
Healthy Athletes®  
Healthy Communities®  
Law Enforcement Torch Run®  
Medfest®



Opening Eyes®  
Plane Pull®  
Plane Unified®  
Polar Plunge®  
Special Smiles®  
Spread the Word to End the Word®  
The Champion's Society®  
Tip-A-Cop®  
Truck Convoy®  
Unified Champion Schools®  
Unified Sports®  
World's Largest Truck Convoy®

NOTE: Special Olympics International, through its Legal Department, is the only organization permitted to register Special Olympics trademarks. See also ® for instructions on when to use the registered mark ®. Do not add a trademark (™) symbol for trademarks that are not registered.

### **Train-the-Trainer**

Hyphenated and capitalized.

### **Unified**

Capitalized when used as an adjective. Examples: John is a Unified partner at his school. This is Sheila's first year as a Unified athlete. Keith coaches Unified floor hockey. See also Unified Sports.

### **Unified Schools**

Formerly known as Project UNIFY. Use Special Olympics Unified Schools on first reference. This is an education-based strategy that uses inclusive sports, youth leadership and whole-school engagement to develop school communities where all youth – with and without intellectual disabilities – work together toward greater respect and dignity for people with intellectual disabilities.

NOTE: In the United States, schools implementing the Unified Schools strategy can be recognized as Special Olympics Unified Champion Schools.

### **Unified Sports**

Capitalized. NOTE: On first reference, please say Unified Sports – on second reference, it is acceptable to refer to a Unified game or teammate. See also Unified.

### **Unified Sports Experience**

Formerly known as Unity Sports. These are exhibition games that team people with and without intellectual disabilities on the field of play. These games often involve celebrities.

### **Unified Sports Rivalry Series**

A Unified Sports Rivalry game or series is a Special Olympics Unified Sports competition in which teams represent traditional college rivals (i.e. Alabama vs. Auburn). The teams are comprised of university students and local Special Olympics athletes. These games are typically held around the same time as a larger game between the two schools.

### **United States, U.S., USA**

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Spell out when used as a noun. Use U.S. only as an adjective. Use USA (no periods) after U.S. State Program names on first reference.

Examples: Canada, the Caribbean and the United States make up Special Olympics North America. Special Olympics Connecticut is a U.S. Program. Special Olympics Texas (USA) hosts its Fall Classic in October.

### **Washington, D.C.**

Include comma and periods (except in mailing addresses).

### **website**

One word, lowercase.

### **World Health Organization**

When abbreviating, use WHO; do not put “the” in front of WHO. If necessary, please refer to WHO as a collaborative organization, not a partner.

### **World Games**

Use this term to describe Special Olympics World Games competitions involving summer sports. This replaces the term “World Summer Games.” NOTE: We continue to use the phrase World Winter Games. See also Games.

Examples: Two tours are planned to potential hosts of the 2025 World Winter Games. Athletes will compete in 24 sports at the Special Olympics World Games Abu Dhabi 2019.

### **year-end**

Hyphenated for both noun and adjective.

### **year-round**

Hyphenated.

### **Young Athletes**

Athletes is plural. Young Athletes is an inclusive program created to reach out to children with intellectual disabilities ages 2 to 7 and introduce them to the world of sport. Do not say Young Athletes program or abbreviate as YAP. Do not add a trademark (™) symbol.