



Special Olympics Motor Activity Training Program, *Basketball Guide*



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INTRODUCTION

This guide provides information on Special Olympics Motor Activity Training Program skills related to the Official Special Olympics Sport of Basketball.

Below are the skill areas we will focus on.

- **Tracking** – paying attention to a person or object moving through various senses and displaying a response.
- **Mobility** – Athlete’s preferred method of moving around (independent or assisted). Athletes may have more than one method of mobility. Also, some athletes that are assisted may have more of a sensory experience.
- **Throwing** - Moving (throwing or pushing) an object to a specific target using any extremity (including head) or adaptive equipment. Can be used for passing and shooting.
- **Catching** – Being able to accept (actively or passively) a ball or object and hold (active) or cradle (passive).
- **Ball Handling** – Being able to dribble, modified drill, hold or cradle a ball or object while moving towards a target.

Athletes who master these skills may progress to Official Special Olympics Basketball individual skills competition events.

- For more information please visit www.specialolympics.org



CUES AND ASSISTANCE

Cues – When talking about adapting a skill or task, adapting with cues to give attention to specific areas can be helpful. Giving cues can assist learning or help let the student focus on the movements.

Types of Cues	Examples
Visual cues can be demonstration or visual markers to indicate targets or finish lines.	Bright cones, polypots, colored tape, bright paper, walls.
Auditory cues can be short verbal instruction or sounds indicated where a target or equipment is.	“Go”, “Stop” “Hold ball” “Look at target/basket”, Stereos/music (as a finish line), balls that make noise.
Tactical cues are useful when indicating what body part needs to move.	Nudge to start running or walking, Touching arm and shoulder to use arm, Touch in front of body to indicate stop.
Mixed cues are good for reinforcing different parts of a skill.	Touching arm to throw with “Throw” cue at a bright cone. Nudging and saying “Go” to walk/run towards wall.

Tips for Cueing

- Keep it simple. Avoid long phrases, difficult visuals, too many cues at once.
- Make it easy to understand. Which method would be best for student?
- Be consistent with cues.



LEVELS OF ASSISTANCE

Level	Amount of Assistance	Example
Independent	No assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student is able to hold a basketball on their lap and prevent it from falling. - Student is able to throw a small basketball into a basket that is chest level.
Independent with Environmental Cues	Requires setup.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student moves to marker and returns back to starting point without prompting or assistance. - Student independently passes a ball to their partner who is wearing a pinny.
Independent with Verbal Cues with/without Environmental Cues	May require setup and verbal reminder for the task.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After being given a verbal cue, gets ready to catch a basketball. - After being instructed to pick up and carry a basketball and make a basket in a colored hoop with arrow sign, student completes the task.
Tactile Cues with/without Other Cues	May require setup. Use tactile cues and other cues if needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student is given a touch cue on their hand to push a ball down a ramp to pass to partner. - Student is given a verbal and touch cue on their shoulder to start and stop at different positions on court.
Minimal Assistance	May require cues. Physically help the student with 0-25% assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student tries to raise their hand to throw a ball and receives minimal assistance to raise their arm at wrist or elbow. - Student needs one hand assistance for balance to walk up and down court.
Moderate Assistance	May require cues. Physically help the student with 25-75% assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student needs assistance at their elbow to raise their arm make a basket that is close and student is able to move wrist to push ball in. - Student needs some assistance but is able to help with positioning so they can hold the ball in their lap without is falling out while moving
Maximum Assistance	May require cues. Physically help the student with 75-90% assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student has partial movement of arms and hands, but needs assistance to open arms wider to catch a ball. Student is able to participate in closing their arms.
Total Assistance	Full assistance while the student is passive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student's arm is moved with assistance through motion to throw and catch a ball with a partner. - Student has maximum assistance for ball being placed on a ramp, and student is assisted with pushing it down the ramp to score a goal/basket.



EQUIPMENT

Balls

Use a basketball when possible. Remember basketballs come in many sizes. Size 7 is used for men's competition and size 6 is used for teens and women's competitions. Having a ball that is a smaller size is usually easier to handle and is also lighter. Balls that are over inflated are harder to grip but bounce higher and balls under inflated are slighter easier to grip but do not bounce well. Foam balls may be safer for children who cannot protect themselves. Depending on the task of a station you may prefer one type to another. Ideally each station will have a variety of balls available to accommodate any athlete's needs or an easy to get to equipment location for fast equipment switches. For students that may only be able to use one hand, they may need use a one-handed ball that bounces (tennis balls, bouncy ball, other). Some students may have more success with alternative balls and students can have different balls for different activities.

When choosing an alternative ball start by addressing the weight, size and how well it can be held and handled. While dribbling and bouncing are important, it does require a student to have certain amount of directed force and reaction time. If a student has trouble, then carrying a ball for movement games may be a more appropriate activity.

Baskets

The standard basketball basket can be very difficult for many athletes, even if it is adjustable. Alternative for baskets can be empty garbage cans, storage containers, buckets or hoops. The height and distance away from a student are determined by the range a student can throw or move ball. Some baskets may need to be hoops on the ground or directly next to the athlete.

Markers

While many students may not know all the court marking on a full-size basketball court. Having visual or other type of markers can be helpful for aligning with passes, shooting and directions. Visual markers can be pictures or signs on the wall, floor or cone, colorful tape on the floor or wall. Markers can also be people (aide or peers), but this works best when there is a relationship formed already. When using visual or tactile markers, less is more. Making the markers purposeful for a primary function and not overwhelming, will help students focus and keep the purpose in mind.

Catching Aids

First consider a ball only for catching and then switch out when throwing. An example would be a soft ball (foam ball, blow up ball, net ball) for catching and then the student can throw that ball or be switched for another ball better suited for throwing. Visual markers can be cones, pictures, signs or colorful tap on the floor or wall. The catching aide should be easy to angle and move. It is important to consider the types of ball that should be used for catching and then for throwing. For example, a student can use a softer ball (foam ball, blow up ball, net ball) for catching, and then the student can throw that ball or use another ball better suited for throwing. Another option is using a catching aide (wide basket, low rise storage container, or box).

Throwing

If throwing ability is limited for a student there are a few considerations. 1. Pushing a ball over a lap or down a small ramp, 2. Knocking a ball off a tee 3. Assistance with raising arms and student dropping or throwing the ball. These options are best for students with limited arm mobility especially if they have difficulty raising one or both hand to chest level.

Remember: Equipment should enable student to perform. Goals or outcome of activity should help determine which equipment is picked (a ball easier to kick vs a ball easier to push down ramp)

Prescribed equipment – This guide will not cover prescribed mobility or movement equipment such as walkers, gait trainers, walking aides, braces, splints, or wraps. Prescribed equipment such as these should be used as directed by a parent or professional. If equipment needs to be adjusted or used for any activity, please consult a professional (PT or OT).



ACTIVITIES

Tracking

TITLE: Target Gazing/pointing

GOAL: Have student move body to find or look at target.

EQUIPMENT: Visual landmarks, bright targets, equipment that makes noise, volunteers or other coaches.

ACTIVITY: Have athletes look towards target area. Students can look, point or move towards area. Repeat targets. Ex: Different area, baskets, other signs or pictures, entrances and exits.

ADAPTATIONS: Focus on tracking with students' available movements, maybe neck or eyes only or whole body. Some students may want to move towards the area named. Using sounds or voices for tracking may be better for some athletes. If students have a hard time looking around or noticing far away objects they may need additional cue or objects to be closer.

TITLE: Light or sound finding

GOAL: Have student find bright light or sound target.

EQUIPMENT: Flashlight, stereo, beeper ball, basketball, teammates.

ACTIVITY: Have students follow sound or light or both with eyes, head, or body to move towards the target. Target can be kept on and moved or shut off, moved and then turned back on. Repeat for a short time. Can use bouncing ball or teammate calling over for sound.

ADAPTATIONS: Change the volume to one that best suits student. When adjusting light, look to adjust color, blinking, or room lighting if possible. Using a video on an ipad or other device may work well to motivate students. It can be hard if the area is noisy, making distinct and clear sound may help students distinguish from other sounds. This activity can be used by itself or with other activities.

TITLE: Team follow

GOAL: To follow team or teammates from spot to spot.

EQUIPMENT: Teammates, ball (optional).

ACTIVITY: Have a teammate move to a spot on the court. Can be identified before, with pennies, or verbally. Have student walk, wheel, verbally or gesturally direct or initiate movement over towards teammate. Student can also take other role of being the teammate that is followed.

ADAPTATIONS: This activity can be combined with other activities. One student can perform a task, and another must track and follow. Try to be consistent with cues and people used per session. Start for shorter distance and progress to further. If a student is dependent with mobility try to focus on the sensory experience or choices.



Mobility

TITLE: Destination walk/wheel

GOAL: Have students engaged through physical, cognitive or sensory experiences using their preferred mobility to get to a set destination.

EQUIPMENT: Placement markers (cones, pictures, ploy spots), Objects that they can carry (optional).

ACTIVITY: Have students move to designated route or spot with visual cues or verbal cues. You can assign a task as well (high five, get ball, etc). Students can move with whatever preferred mobility they use. Students should be challenged to be independent with areas they can be (giving instructions, acknowledging movement, walking with distant supervision).

ADAPTATIONS: Students may need help for partial or full trip. Use consistent items, pictures and commands when giving directions. Can assign familiar task or have familiar people at destination.

TITLE: Obstacle course

GOAL: Have students engaged through physical, cognitive or sensory experiences using their preferred mobility to overcome various obstacles.

EQUIPMENT: Cones, steps ups, hurdles, wide balance beams or tape, step on balance equipment.

ACTIVITY: Students navigate through obstacle course (3-6 part). Ideally course gives various challenges like: vertical movement, balance, lateral movement, upper body movement, following commands.

ADAPTATIONS: For students who use wheeled mobility try to have alternatives to vertical movement obstacles such as a low vertical rise or a ramp. Students can also have alternative task using arm or legs (put arm or leg through hoop or touch the cone with arm or leg). For students that use mobility devices make sure the course and obstacles are wide enough to accommodate and upper body activities can be done safely.

TITLE: Instructed wheel/walk

GOAL: Have students follow directions and cues on how to move.

EQUIPMENT: Cones, floor tape, arrow signs

ACTIVITY: Have students follow directions (verbal, visual, gestural, or mix) for a short duration. Directions can be in a form that students can follow. Example of verbal instructions would be: walk forward, back backward, walk faster, walk sideway, stop, turn to the goal, turn to the sideline. Activities can use sport equipment if desired.

ADAPTATIONS: Students may need assistance and demonstration to follow directions and it may take a while if student to understand new movements. Students who use wheelchairs will be unable to do lateral movements and will need an alternative.



Throwing

TITLE: Targeted Ball push or roll

GOAL: To roll a ball on the floor or to push a ball from a lap, table, or ramp to a target.

EQUIPMENT: Ball and table or ramp if needed, Target (person, floor target, bucket).

ACTIVITY: Have student roll ball on ground, down a ramp or off a short table to low basket or person. Ramps should be positioned to either end at a person or basket.

ADAPTATIONS: Ramps can be used but some ramps may require someone to hold it. Students who have difficulty using their hands can use their legs (kicking), elbows or head to push an object or with adapted equipment.

TITLE: Assisted throw

GOAL: To release an object while the arm is still moving.

EQUIPMENT: Target and object to throw.

ACTIVITY: Have students throw an object with assistance (if needed) at a target or person.

ADAPTATIONS: Making sure the object is a good size to hold and release and weight is not too heavy. Make sure target or person is close enough to receive ball or object. If a student has a trouble releasing their grip having a something the ball can slide out of or off of could be used. (needs clarification? Ideas for adaptation for throw and release).

TITLE: Tall target reach

GOAL: To reach and put an object into a basket or target.

EQUIPMENT: Ball or object, adjustable target (low basket, bucket, hoop, other).

ACTIVITY: Have student reach up with one or two hands to put object in target or basket. Or have student sit up with as upright as posture as possible to push, say "go", or knock object into basket.

ADAPTATIONS: Adjust height of target or basket as needed but should be close to student, give assistance at arm or torso, can use Velcro balls and target as alternative, students can also raise torso and neck to seeing the object and cue to score a basket.



Catching

TITLE: Ready to Catch/Trap

GOAL: To have students open arms or move body to allow trapping a ball or object.

EQUIPMENT: Preferred object – balls or other equipment.

ACTIVITY: Give a cue (verbal, visual, tactile or mix) and have student open arms or change body position to receive a ball or other object.

ADAPTATIONS: Giving multiple cues as needed for processing. Give assistance for opening arms when needed. Students may be able to express readiness to receive ball. It is ok if object or ball is not fully caught. If desired can use a trapping modification velcro, net or bucket or other.

TITLE: Slow Catch/Trap

GOAL: To have student close arms while slow moving object comes to them.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, ball net or small ball with string tied to it.

ACTIVITY: Give a cue ((verbal, visual, tactile or mix) and have them open arms to be ready to catch or trap. You can lower ball into students hand slowly or walk dangling ball over to student slow. Cue student to catch or trap ball.

ADAPTATIONS: Use soccer trainer net to hold basketball. If student has limited ability to catch/trap see if they can communicate when you should lower or how fast. If student cannot communicate you can assist catch/trap narrating what the ball is doing and appealing to students senses.

TITLE: Adapted Catch/Trap

GOAL: To catch or trap a moving object.

EQUIPMENT: Ball or preferred item to catch and any equipment for modifications.

ACTIVITY: With cues have student trap or catch a moving object with assistance or modifications as needed.

ADAPTATIONS: Start with slow moving objects. For throwing try a scarf or tissue or a float ball. Aim objects to where it is easy to catch it may not be the students center and focus on what motions a student is able to do. Students can hold bucket or bins to help catch.



Ball Handling

TITLE: Ball bounce

GOAL: To have student bounce, hit ball down, hold or trap a ball.

EQUIPMENT: Basketball, adapted ball (smaller or bouncier).

ACTIVITY: If bouncing, either have student bounce once and try to catch or have student try to hit the ball down while someone holds it out. If a student is unable to generate the force needed to bounce holding or carrying a ball may be a better option. Have student actively hold basketball as best they can while moving independently or while being pushed in a wheelchair.

ADAPTATIONS: When bouncing or hitting a ball down try to give as much stability as possible but leaning against a wall or having the other hand used as support. Start of stationery and progress to small movements then continuous movements. If the student is holding or trapping and are having trouble, try to position them or the ball so it is easy to hold. Also over inflated balls bounce higher but can be harder to control.

TITLE: Go to goal

GOAL: Have students dribble, bounce, or carry a ball towards.

EQUIPMENT: Basketball or modified ball, cones or starting point, Basket or other goal.

ACTIVITY: Have student pick up or receive a ball then have them move to the designated goal. Students can place ball in or by the goal area. Students can dribble, bounce and step, or carry a ball. Obstacles optional.

ADAPTATIONS: Students can either pick up, be given or have the ball passed to them. For athletes who cannot dribble have them hold ball and walk or hold ball while being pushed in their wheelchair.



Personal Best Games

These are all individual games for personal best. Not everyone has to participate the same way but can be played as a group.

TITLE: Point Challenge

GOAL: Have the class or team score baskets until the goal number is achieved.

EQUIPMENT: Basket balls and other balls if needed, baskets (regular baskets, garbage cans, buckets, hoops, equipment bins), markers (if needed).

ACTIVITY: Have multiple baskets and shooting zones set up. Have points assigned to each shooting zone and basket. Easier shots are low points and harder shots are higher points. Students can be paired or single. Have students shoot baskets from markers into baskets to score points. Each group has a set time to score points. If partnered, then partner can keep track of points. Points scored are subtracted from goal points. Students can go for time, alternate groups, or compete in teams with one team going at a time. Have baskets of different heights (e.g., a trash can is a good basket for children who only can push a ball off their laptray). Targets also can be markers on the floor too (not just baskets).

ADAPTATIONS: Shooting zones and baskets should be separated enough for safety. Add additional rules ex “If you make 3 in a row you have to try a high point basket” or “get a second chance by showing good teamwork”. Ideally there should be a basket, ball and shooting zone for everyone. Baskets can be on ground or on wall if needed, balls can be modified to be one handed, one basket can have different scoring zones. If students need physical assistance the basket will still count but maybe a different value if rules dictate so.

TITLE: Bounce Challenge

GOAL: Have a student dribble, bounce and catch, drop, or knock ball down as many times as they can in 1 minute.

EQUIPMENT: Basketball or other ball, “tee” (something to knock ball off if needed), designated area.

ACTIVITY: Students are paired up or grouped up. One student goes into designated area and after go signal they dribble, bounce and catch, drop, or knock off ball as many times in one minute as they can. If student chooses drop or knock off their assigned professional, partner or group member will help them by resetting. Everyone tries at least twice. Teacher can assign different challenges to students.

ADAPTATIONS: Students that may need assistance to have ball drop or knock off. The tee can be someone’s hand or regular tee but with adapted ball.

TITLE: Fun Skill

GOAL: Have students explore use of basketball or related equipment.

EQUIPMENT: Basketball or other adapted ball, baskets, any other objects teacher would like to incorporate (having other objects and having students figure out how to use them).

ACTIVITY: Have students design their own basketball trick. It can be simple or complex as they want. There is no scoring but there is a demonstration at the end for anyone who want to demonstrate. Tricks can include other equipment as well.

ADAPTATIONS: Only adaption is if a student needs assistance to perform their skill. Mostly this entails being creative and praising what can be accomplished.



Group Games

TITLE: Make the Play

Goal: Have each person carry out a role in making a basket

EQUIPMENT: Basketball, sport markers or cones, basket or bucket.

ACTIVITY: Have students get into groups. Each round students are assigned a certain part of a play, maybe adapted. Students must cooperatively execute a play using the skills. Skills can include, ball handling, passing, and shooting. Plays can be timed or scored. Students can practice the play before execution.

ADAPTATIONS: Make sure team knows adapted skills are included. Be ready for the adapted skill needed (assistance, equipment, other).

TITLE: Basketball relay

GOAL: Have students pass ball to each other to complete the relay circuit. Can be done in teams or as group against time.

EQUIPMENT: Basketball or other ball, equipment needed to catch, ending basket.

ACTIVITY: Have students arranged to pass the ball from one person to another to complete a relay race. Race can include a variety of passes or ball handling, ending in shooting a basket. Can be done as teams or for best time. If done as teams, then teams should have a counterpart with the same role on the other team.

ADAPTATIONS: Put students in roles they can complete (passing, giving a ball, shooting into modified basket), If students have limited active movement they can assist carrying a ball to another person (while being pushed if needed), handing off a ball or other activity with assistance as needed.

TITLE: Pass and Pick

GOAL: Have students pass a ball to each other with timer or music and preform activity of the student who has the ball when time goes off or music stops.

EQUIPMENT: Basketball or other ball, any catching adaptations, timer, card with exercises on them.

ACTIVITY: Students pass ball to each other. When timer goes off or music stops the student who has the ball shows their card and the class performs that activity. Activities can be basketball related or fitness related.

ADAPTATIONS: Not everyone has to stand the same distance apart. Some students can be closer than others. Cards can have more than one activity to allow for adaptations.



Sample Practice - 45 mins

This is an example of a practice schedule and activities. All practices should be adjusted to meet the needs of the individual athletes in the group. Make the best effort to remain consistent with activity choices and not switch each session. This will allow for processing and motor learning to occur between sessions and will help athletes to retain skills previously learned.

Warm up 7-10 mins: (pick 2)

- Target Gazing/pointing
- Tall target reach
- Destination walk/wheel
- Other general movement exercises (not listed)

Individual skills 12-15 mins: (pick 2-3)

- Targeted Ball push or roll
- Catch/Trap Phase 1 or 2, Go to goal
- Instructed wheel/walk (stations are a great way to work on skills and prevent boredom)
- Students can spend 5-7 minutes at a station and then rotate to another station)

Games 12-15 min: (pick 1-2)

- Point Challenge
- Bounce Challenge
- Make the Play
- Basketball relay

Cool Down 3-5 mins: (pick 1-2)

- Cool down walk or cool down exercises (not listed)