



Special Olympics Motor Activity Training Program, *Soccer 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 soccer.

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** - 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
- **Kicking** – Using feet or legs (actively or passively) or other equipment to move a ball on the ground
- **Trapping** - Using feet or legs (actively or passively) or other equipment to stop a ball on the ground

Athletes who master these MATP Skills may progress to the individual skills competitions in Official Special Olympics Soccer 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” “Stop ball” “Look at target”, 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 leg they should kick with, Touch in front of body to indicate stop.
Mixed cues are good for reinforcing different parts of a skill.	Touching leg to kick with “Kick ball” cue towards a goal. 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 track a moving ball without any cues. - Student kicking a ball into a goal with without other assistance.
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 kicks a ball into a goal that is visually distinct with cones or markers.
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, - student takes a turn kicking the ball into a goal. - After being instructed to kick a ball towards colored goal 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 score a goal. - Student is given a verbal and touch cue on their arm to push ball towards goal with short floor hockey stick.
Minimal Assistance	May require cues. Physically help the student with 0-25% assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student tries to raise their leg to kick a ball, and receives minimal assistance to raise their leg at the heel. - Student needs on hand assistance for balance to kick ball with more power.
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 put ball on ramp to score a goal. - When using a walker student needs help with balance to raise one leg to kick a ball.
Maximum Assistance	May require cues. Physically help the student with 75-90% assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student can minimally move their leg to kick a ball while in their wheelchair and needs assistance for full range.
Total Assistance	Full assistance while the student is passive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student's leg is moved with assistance through motion to swing leg to hit a ball. - Student needs assistance for ball being placed on a ramp, and student is assisted with pushing it down the ramp to score a goal.



EQUIPMENT

Balls

The type of ball you use will depend on how you use it. Standard soccer balls may be fine, but consider modifying to a bigger ball to make it easier to see or hit, lighter ball if student may not have a lot of power to kick far, a ball that makes noise for students with visual impairments or limited ability to look around.

“Kicking” Aides

These resources are geared towards students who use wheelchairs, and due to height of wheelchair or limited use of legs or feet, they may need an alternative way to move the ball. For students with good arm control and strength, consider using a lightweight hockey stick, shortened pool noodle or something similar. Students can strike the ball in place of kicking it. For students who may still have trouble, consider using a ramp or similar. You can also add a barrier in front of the footrest. A footrest may help with dribbling and trapping, but will still need an alternative to mimic power kicking.

Trapping Aides

Trapping requires proper reaction and speed to execute, and not every student will have the skill required. If sage, passive stopping can be a good alternative. Trapping aid should act as a target to stop a ball and a student can get the ball from. Some examples are corrugated plastic signs, large plastic bins, etc. Aide should not be used in game play, but can be utilized in partner drills.

Goals & Markers

Markers will vary depending on where you are playing. If you are playing indoors vs outdoors, large area vs small area. Having visuals or other type of markers can be helpful for aligning with passes, shooting goals and directions to move. Visual markers can be cones, pictures, signs or colorful tap on the floor or wall. When using visual or tactile markers, less is more. Making the markers purposeful for a primary function and not an overwhelming organizer, will help students focus and keep the purpose in mind. Making goal bright and stand out can help draw student’s attention. Consider using a smaller goal when activities occur on a smaller scale.

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 lines or areas, goals, other targets 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.

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: Ball chase

GOAL: To track a ball and then move towards, locate or tell where it is.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, people to kick the ball.

ACTIVITY: Kick or pass a ball and have student move over to it, look at it, or say where it is or who has it.

ADAPTATIONS: Start slow and close. Can use a bigger brighter ball. Start with only one action and add more as student is able to successfully complete task. Make sure student's response to tracking is something they can do easily.



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, lines and goals).

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). Also consider having students roll under a bar held off ground so that the student has to lean forward in his/her chair. 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). To assist with following the direction of the obstacle course, use polyspots or floor tape to show the direction to follow.

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, zigzags, 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, change of directions, 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.



Kicking

TITLE: Small Kick and follow

GOAL: Have student kick or push a ball, follow and move next to ball and repeat till end point.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, markers, items to push ball (if needed).

ACTIVITY: Have student walk or wheel to ball and give a small kick or push. Have student track and move to ball and give another small kick or push. Similar to dribbling. Repeat until end point.

ADAPTATIONS: Can use a ball that is easy to track (bigger, bright color, makes noise, lights up). Students who use wheelchairs may need an alternative (kick, push, use lightweight hockey stick or similar). Partly deflate ball to limit balls movement.

TITLE: Passing kick

GOAL: To have a student pass or bring a ball to another student.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, Items to push ball (if needed).

ACTIVITY: Have student kick or push or bring a ball to another student. Start students close together and gradually move them apart. If student pushes or brings ball to another student, make sure they return to their starting spot.

ADAPTATIONS: Can use a ball that is light and/or bigger so it is easier to kick. Can have different distances depending on who is kicking. If the person is unable to trap the ball may want to have a designated trapper or other stopping equipment. Have polyspots for students to stand on so starting spot is clear.

TITLE: Goal Kick

GOAL: To have student kick, push or move ball into goal.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, goal, Items to push ball (if needed)

ACTIVITY: Have student kick or push or bring a ball to a goal. Start student close to goal if kicking. Students who use wheelchairs may need an alternative (kick, push, use lightweight hockey stick or similar).

ADAPTATIONS: Can use a ball that is light and/or bigger, so it is easier to kick. Goals can be set to different sizes and visual cues. Put a target inside the goal (e.g. football pylons or cones) for student to aim at.



Trapping

TITLE: Stationary trap

GOAL: To lift and mimic trapping a ball.

EQUIPMENT: Ball

ACTIVITY: Have student bring foot to ball to practice trapping motion.

ADAPTATIONS: Put tape mark on ball to show where foot should go. Student may need to be positioned around ball if they are unable to turn foot. Can also trap by stepping on it.

TITLE: Ball trap or stop

GOAL: To trap or stop a slow-moving ball.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, Items to stop ball (if needed).

ACTIVITY: Have student bring foot or handheld item to ball or stop ball passively for a slow-moving ball.

ADAPTATIONS: Student can use handheld item like light weight hockey stick or similar. Try having them be engaged by indicating "go" or "now".

TITLE: Ball trap or stop and kick.

GOAL: To trap or stop a slow-moving ball and kick to a goal or person.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, Items to stop ball (if needed), goal (if needed).

ACTIVITY: Have student bring foot or handheld item to ball or stop ball passively for a slow-moving ball and have student kick or bring ball to goal or person.

ADAPTATIONS: Student can use handheld item like light weight hockey stick or similar. If student is passively stopping, try have engage by indicating "go" or "now". Start goal or person close to student.



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: Power kick

GOAL: To kick, hit or push a ball as far as possible.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, markers for distance, items to push ball (if needed), ramp if pushing.

ACTIVITY: Have student walk, run or stationary kick, hit with stick or push a ball down a ramp to have ball travel as far as possible. Students should get at least two tries.

ADAPTATIONS: Have students use the best method for them. Some students may need assistance to push ball down ramp. Student can use handheld item like light weight hockey stick or similar.

TITLE: Soccer bowling

GOAL: To knock down pins (or similar) with a ball first and self second.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, Items to push ball (if needed), pins or similar (empty soda or water bottles), goal (optional).

ACTIVITY: Have students kick, hit or push a ball towards pins to knock them down. For second attempt student can use ball again or use self to knock down pins.

ADAPTATIONS: Can use ramp if needed for pushing. Adjust start position so that it is challenging but not too difficult. Can vary number of pins and set up for different students.

TITLE: Soccer shoot out

GOAL: To try and score different goals from different positions.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, markers for spots, items to push ball (if needed), ramp if pushing, goal.

ACTIVITY: Have students rotate through different spots (3-5) and have them kick, hit, or push to score goals.

ADAPTATIONS: Can use ramp if needed for pushing. Adjust start position for each student so that it is challenging but not too difficult. If student has difficulty scoring from different positions can do same position but different balls or body parts.



Group Games

TITLE: Make the Play

GOAL: Have each person carry out a role in making a goal.

EQUIPMENT: Ball, spot markers or cones, goal.

ACTIVITY: Have students get into groups. Each round students are assigned a certain part of a play, even if adapted. Students must cooperatively execute a play using the skills. 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, have demonstration before or model during game).

TITLE: Soccer 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: Ball, equipment needed to trap, hit or push, ending goal.

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 and ending in shooting a goal. Can be done as teams or for best time.

ADAPTATIONS: Put students in roles they can complete (passing, giving a ball, kicking, shooting goal), If students have limited active movement they can assist carrying or pushing a ball to another person or other activity with assistance as needed.

TITLE: Get off my lawn

GOAL: Have students kick, throw, push or hit balls off their team zone and on to the other team zone. To have the least amount of balls in your zone when time ends.

EQUIPMENT: Balls (depends on how many students are playing), Cones to make zones, Equipment needed to push or hit ball (if needed).

ACTIVITY: Divide students into teams and assign them to a zone. Student have to kick, hit, push ball from their zone to the other team's zone. Can have students rotate or work in pairs. When time stops whichever team has the least wins.

ADAPTATIONS: Students may need cues for direction. If students are using a ramp to push down, they will need assistance to set up. Try to keep teams balance and utilize rules like working in pairs or rotating.



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
- Stationary Trap
- Destination walk/wheel
- Other general movement exercises (not listed)

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

- Ball chase
- Ball trap or stop
- Small kick and follow
- Goal kick
- Obstacle course (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)

- Power kick
- Soccer bowling
- Soccer relay
- Make the play

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

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