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# PARALYMPIC SPORT IN THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Boccia



# ACTIVITY: Boccia

INCLUSION 2024

Paralympic Sport in the Physical Education Programme

## BACKGROUND

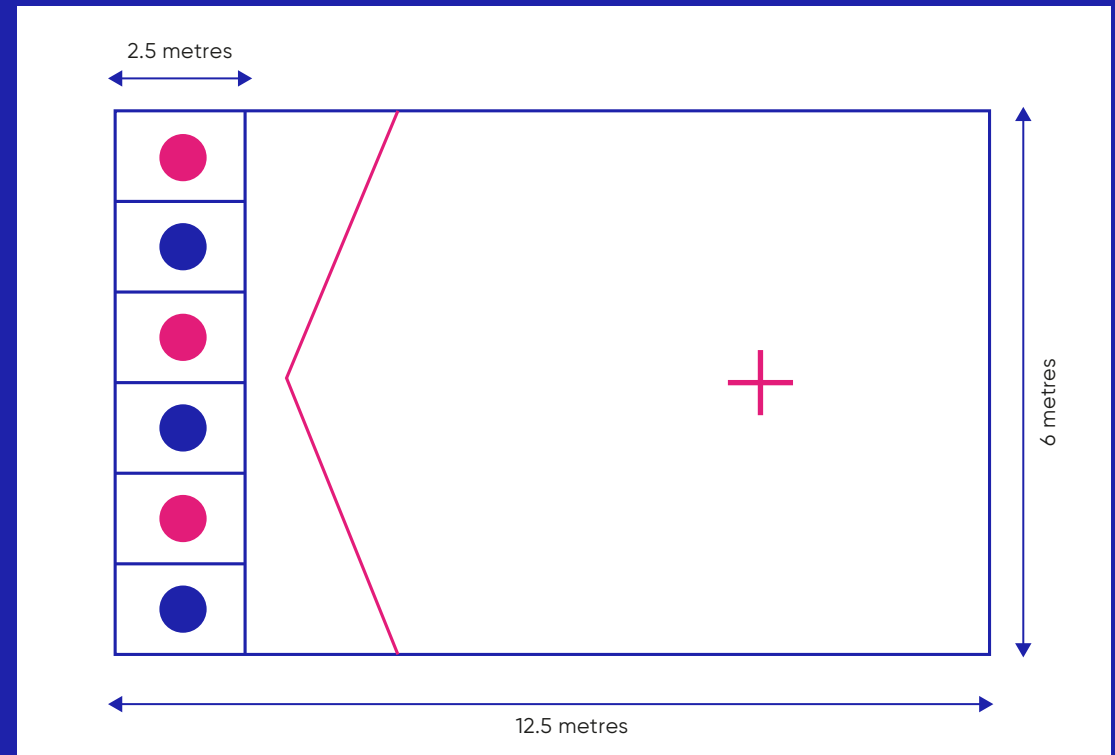
- Boccia (pronounced 'bot-cha') is a Paralympic target sport with similar rules to Petanque (French boules) or Lawn Bowls.

## WHAT YOU NEED

- Boccia balls (or equivalent). See STEP for other ideas.
- Throw-down lines or non-marking tape to mark court.
- Chairs for players not using wheelchairs.

## HOW TO PLAY

- The aim in competition boccia is to score as many points as possible by getting as many of your own boccia balls closer to the jack (or target ball) than your opponent.
- Boccia can be played in teams (3-a-side), pairs (2-a-side) or individually. Recreationally, any number can play depending on availability of equipment.
- Players can roll or throw the ball, propel it with their feet, or roll it down a ball-sending ramp (assistive device).
- Red ball players sit in boxes 1, 3 and 5 (from the left facing the court) and blue ball players in boxes 2, 4 and 6.
- In team boccia (3-a-side), each player throws two balls corresponding to their team colour – red or blue.
- In team boccia, each game consists of 6 ends. An end is completed when all 13 balls (jack, all the reds and blues) have been played.
- The jack ball is thrown by each player in turn at the start of each 'end'. The player in Box 1 (left-hand box when facing the court) starts the first end, and player 6 starts the sixth and final end.
- Players should agree on a team captain. During play, the captain decides which player on their team plays next.
- The side with the most balls closest to the jack scores 1 point for each scoring ball. At the completion of 6 ends, the points scored on each end are added together – the team with the highest total score wins!



## THINK ABOUT



Propelling the ball in different ways. Find what's best for you. And do you need to alter your sitting position? You may have to do this between shots depending on the position of the target ball. And remember, your feet, chair and any ramp must be behind the front line of your box.

Use the STEP adaptation tool to ensure that players of all abilities can participate

<b>SPACE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Boccia is played on an indoor court or in any suitable indoor space.</li><li>• Recreational boccia can be played in any flat indoor or outdoor space, including on grass.</li></ul>
<b>TASK</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try propelling the boccia balls in different ways; for example, overarm, underarm or dart-type throws.</li><li>• Use boccia balls to play other target games; for example, rolling them into a hoop taped to the floor; or up and over into a box.</li></ul>
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Boccia is played with specially designed leather balls. However, for recreational play, you can use bean bags or balls made from paper.</li><li>• Some players can use a ramp or gutter to send the ball towards the target.</li></ul>
<b>PEOPLE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rotate team captains to give players the experience of decision-making and leadership.</li><li>• Players who have vision or spatial impairments can be assisted by a team-mate who can provide verbal or sound cues from near the target ball.</li></ul>

## CROSS-CURRICULAR IDEAS

### MATHEMATICS

In boccia, the referee often has to measure the distance between competing balls and the jack to determine who is nearer. In addition to the distances between boccia balls, their random dispersal across the court also enables young people to consider the simple geometric shapes that connect them and the angles that these shapes form. As part of a game, before collecting up the balls, young people can explore the relationship between each ball and the jack, or balls of the same colour. They can use masking tape or throw down lines to create the shapes they identify.

### HISTORY, GEOGRAPHY AND LANGUAGE

Challenge young people to investigate the history of the game of boccia. What is the origin of the name, for example? The background and origins of similar games, such as lawn bowls or the French game of *petanque*, can also be explored.

### DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

A unique aspect of boccia is the use of assistive devices to enable severely impaired players to compete. These include ramp, gutter and tubular ball-sending devices and head pointers for those whose arm or hand control is impaired. Challenge young people to devise different ways of sending a boccia ball accurately into the court. They can use readily available materials, or they may be able to design and construct a simple device considering that some players might use different parts of their body to send the ball.

## SAFETY

- Ensure that the playing area is clear before any boccia balls are thrown.