



Sports

Special Olympics offers year-round training and competition in 30 Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. Participation is open to anyone ages 8 and older, and programs are designed to serve all ability levels. There are nearly 30,000 athletic competitions annually around the world. Competitions include local, national, regional and World Games. The fundamental difference that sets Special Olympics competitions apart from those of other sports organizations is that athletes of all ability levels are encouraged to participate, and every athlete is recognized for his or her performance.

- In a process called divisioning, athletes are divided into different divisions according to factors such as age, gender and level of ability. Competitions are structured so that athletes compete with other athletes of similar ability in equitable divisions. The focus at Special Olympics competition including World Games is personal achievement and accomplishment.
- All athletes advance to the final, and all athletes performances are valued in and praised.
- Athletes do not compete by region or country. Ultimately, the World Games recognize the abilities and performances of each individual athlete. It is not a competition to see how many medals a country can win.

Official Summer Sports

- Aquatics
- Athletics (Track & Field)
- Badminton
- Basketball
- Bocce
- Bowling
- Cycling
- Equestrian
- Football (Soccer)
- Golf
- Gymnastics (Artistic and Rhythmic)
- Powerlifting
- Roller Skating
- Sailing

- Softball
- Table Tennis
- Team Handball
- Tennis
- Volleyball
- Judo

Official Winter Sports

- Alpine Skiing
- Cross-Country Skiing
- Figure Skating
- Floor Hockey
- Speed Skating
- Snowboarding
- Snowshoeing

MATP Sports (Motor Activities Training Program)

Motor Activities Training Program refers to activities for lower ability athletes who are not able or ready to participate in Special Olympics sports training and competition activities. MATP is for athletes who don't yet have the skills to participate in a competitive environment. It aims to develop their motor skills, with tasks such as pushing a ball, or stepping across a low bar. Many athletes have physical disabilities, as well as severe learning disabilities.

Recognized Sports

Recognized Sports are those that are popular within a limited number of countries. Special Olympics monitor these sports watching for emerging trends with the goal to develop them into official Special Olympics sports.

- Cricket
- Netball
- Kayaking