

## Theme 2: Para sports

### Unit 3: Let's play the Para sport of goalball

#### Learning objective:

To become aware of different Para sports and adaptations

#### Introduction

Goalball is a game for athletes with vision impairment. To ensure fair and equitable competition, all goalball players must wear blackout eyeshades. A ball with bells embedded inside it is used, enabling participants to hear and track the ball as it moves around the court. Tactile markings on the court help players to orientate themselves. The sport is played on a 18m x 9m court. During play, there must be complete silence so that players can clearly hear the movement of the ball. Further information about goalball can be found in the Overview of Para sports.

Use the Agitos Foundation film, '*I'mPOSSIBLE: Goalball*' to introduce the game and the main moves: [youtu.be/P\\_LJ6eDjGGc](https://youtu.be/P_LJ6eDjGGc)

**Activities 1a and b** are the main activities for **younger** 🧑🏻 and **older** 🧑🏻 students who are new to the game of goalball. These activities can also be used as practice activities for more experienced players 🧑🏻 before moving on to their main activity; Activity 2.



#### Activity 1a

Let's get started learning these skills:

rolling a ball underarm; scoring goals; defending.



#### Equipment

Soft acoustic balls with bells inside (or, alternatively, with plastic bags wrapped around them) eyeshades or blindfolds (something to cover the eyes); targets, such as cones, plastic

bottles or piles of stones; goals made from cones, goal nets or other markers; tactile markings, for example, string under tape.

### Skills practice

Wearing an eyeshade and, if necessary, with a sighted friend help you:

- Move around a court or defined playing area, starting, stopping and changing direction on command.
- In pairs:
  - ✓ Roll the acoustic ball back and forth to each other. Begin close together, but once successfully rolling the ball back and forth, move farther away from each other and repeat the activity.
- Take it in turns to try to score a goal by rolling the acoustic ball along the floor. Set up a goal line, area of a wall, goal or target that must be hit or crossed to count as a 'goal'. Give players three or four attempts each to score a goal.
- In groups of six to eight:
  - ✓ Take it in turns to act as a defender.
  - ✓ One at a time, players should kneel on the mat in front of the goal/goal line.
  - ✓ The other players then take it in turns to roll the lightweight, acoustic ball along the floor to try to beat the defender and score a goal.
  - ✓ The defender should lie down in front of the goal, using their body to block the ball.
  - ✓ After a player has successfully saved two or three shots at goal, they should switch to allow another player to act as a defender
- Let's give the game a go.
- Play one-a-side games of goalball on a defined court. The attacking player must roll the acoustic ball to score a goal. The defender should then try to block the ball with their body. A goal is scored if the ball crosses the opponent's goal line, hits a target or goes into a goal (depending on what you're using as your goal).





### Activity 1b

Let's practise our skills  
and get ready to play

Try out the accuracy and skills games below to build the techniques needed to play goalball.

### Skills practice

- While wearing eyeshades, play a game of dodgeball. Divide players into groups of eight to ten. They should stand in a circle formation with one player in the middle. Each outside player must stand behind a tactile marker. Outside players roll the soft, acoustic ball to try to hit the player in the middle. They must aim to hit the central player below the knee. If successful, the outside player changes places with the player in the middle. While in the middle, players must listen for the ball and react accordingly. In the initial stages of learning and playing the game, it may be necessary to have a sighted player overseeing the game.
- Play a three-a-side game of goalball:
  - ✓ The object of the game is to roll the acoustic ball into the opposing team's goal, while opposing players try to block the ball with their bodies.
  - ✓ Set up three mats at each end of the court. Secure the corners of each mat with tape. Invite one learner to sit on each mat. Ask all participants to put on eye shades.
  - ✓ Encourage learners to adopt a kneeling position. Have one team roll the ball and the other team try to block the ball with their bodies.
  - ✓ A goal is scored if the ball crosses the goal line of the opposing team. Make sure everyone has a chance to play.
  - ✓ Play for short, specified periods of time (for example, five minutes). The winning team is the team that scores the most goals in the allotted time.
  - ✓ As players become more proficient, increase the length of the game and include two short halves (for example, play two halves of five minutes with a short break in between).







### Activity 2

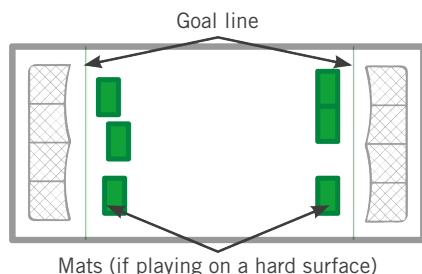
#### Let's give it a go:

experiencing the Para sport of goalball.

Please see the Overview of Para sports and the film 'I'mPOSSIBLE: Goalball' ([youtu.be/P\\_LJ6eDjGGc](https://youtu.be/P_LJ6eDjGGc)) for a brief introduction to goalball.

### Playing area

A smooth-surfaced area roughly 18m x 9m in size, marked with tactile markings, such as string under tape. Include a goal line at each end and goal nets, if available.



When learning the game and getting used to playing on hard surfaces, players can attack and defend from padded mats.

### Equipment

- Balls with bells embedded inside (for a low-cost alternative, use a ball with a plastic bag wrapped around it).
- Eyeshades, or some other equipment to cover the eyes.
- Elbow and knee pads (alternatively, towels wrapped around knees and elbows secured with tape), or mats on hard surfaces; tape; goals/cones, or some other equipment that can be used to mark out the goals.



### How to play

- The game is played three-a-side.
- The object of the game is to score as many goals as possible by using a bowling action to roll the ball along the floor, causing it to cross the opposing team's goal line.
- The opposing team tries to block the ball with their bodies.
- No player can have more than two consecutive throws.
- If a ball is thrown over the side line, possession changes to the other team.
- Teams have 10 seconds from the first defensive contact to get the ball back across the centre line.
- Each match consists of two 12-minute halves with a three-minute break in between.
- The winning team is the team that scores the most goals in the given time.

Further information and films can be found on the IPC website: [www.paralympic.org/goalball](http://www.paralympic.org/goalball)



### Inclusion tips:

- (T) Explain the game using verbal and visual cues as necessary.
- (T) Allow sighted friends to take part until players feel confident and safe.
- (R) Reduce the number of players. Begin playing one-a-side games of goalball, with each player required to remain on their mat or within a defined area.
- (E) Reduce the size of the court so there is less distance between the players.
- (E) Play from wheelchairs or a seated position, using zones if necessary to ensure everyone stays safe during the game. Players can block the ball using their wheelchair, a stick or a bat.



### Extension activity

Research the rules of the game, attack and defence strategies, and other goalball techniques. Apply this knowledge to your own games.

Take part in class goalball competitions and tournaments, or challenge another local school to a competitive game. Also, set up and oversee goalball tournaments and festivals for younger children.

To extend students' understanding of the game, students could take on the role of coach and/or referee. A guide to acting as a referee can be found in the official goalball referees manual: [www.ibsasport.org/sports/files/609-Referees-IBSA-Goalball-Officials-Certification-Programme-Manual.pdf](http://www.ibsasport.org/sports/files/609-Referees-IBSA-Goalball-Officials-Certification-Programme-Manual.pdf)

### Optional independent research

Research the Para athletes who represent your country by being part of the national goalball team. Use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or similar social media apps and websites to show your support to them.

### Discussion/reflection questions

- How did you feel playing goalball? What was the most difficult aspect of the game?
- What skills and abilities must one gain to become a good goalball player?
- What difficulties might Para athletes who play goalball face in daily life? How might they overcome these difficulties? How could you help them?

### Homework task

- Describe to family members what it is like playing goalball wearing a blindfold.
- What more can you find out about the sport of goalball?
- What other sports are played by those who have vision impairment?

### Evaluation quiz

Complete the evaluation quiz independently, in pairs or small groups.

