

Theme 2: Para sports

Unit 2: Let's play the Para sport of sitting volleyball

Learning objective:

To become aware of different Para sports and adaptations

Introduction

Sitting volleyball is a global game played by athletes with physical impairments. Its rules are very similar to standing volleyball, but it is played on a smaller court and uses a lower net. This makes the game faster than standing volleyball. Further information about the game can be found in the Overview of Para sports.

Use the Agitos Foundation film, 'I'mPOSSIBLE: Sitting volleyball' to introduce the game and the main moves: youtu.be/vW1VouTLnME.

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





Activity 1a

Let's get started learning these skills:

throwing and catching over a net, from a sitting position.

Equipment

A beach ball, balloon or other large, lightweight ball; a low net (or string) about 1 metre off the ground; targets such as cones or plastic bottles.

Skills practice

- Sit on the floor. Use your hands to move in different directions around the court – starting, stopping and changing direction on command.
- In pairs:
 - ✓ Sit opposite each other, roughly a metre apart.
 - ✓ Practise throwing the ball to each other and catching it.
 - ✓ Remain seated throughout. Once successful, move farther away and repeat the activity.
- Throw the ball over the net to your partner, who should then catch it and return it over the net. How many times can the two of you pass the ball back and forth before it is dropped?
- Throw the ball over the net so that your partner needs to move to catch it. Learners should remain seated throughout the activity and use their hands to help them move across the floor.
- Divide learners into groups of four:
 - ✓ Sit in a square formation.
 - ✓ Pairs of students should throw and catch the ball.
 - ✓ Repeat the activity with two learners on each side of the net.
- Groups of four or six learners sit in a small circle. They work together to try and keep a balloon or lightweight ball in the air by gently hitting it upwards with both hands (volleying). Learners should try to avoid catching the balloon/ball. How long can you keep the balloon/ball in the air (or for how many hits)?
- Play two against two, with or without a net. The ball should be passed between the two learners on the same team before it is passed over to the other team. A point is scored if the ball is dropped by the opposing pair. The winning pair is the first team to score eight points.



- Let's give the game a go.
 - ✓ Divide the learners so that there is an equal number on both sides of the net. It is usual to have six learners per team; however, the number can be adjusted depending on the class size and the facilities available. Remember, the fewer the learners per team, the more involved each learner will be in the game.
 - ✓ All learners must be seated and remain seated at all times.
 - ✓ Begin with a balloon. Each team member must touch the balloon once before they send it over the net to the opposing team. Explain to the learners that this adaptation to the sport slows down the game and gives

learners of all abilities the opportunity to play. This adaptation also allows equal participation from all learners, because every player on a team must touch the balloon. If necessary, learners can be permitted to catch the balloon before sending it over the net.

- ✓ Once learners have developed their understanding of the sport, switch the balloon for a volleyball (or light weight, equivalent sized ball). Teams aim to send the ball over the net and land it within the opponents' court or playing area. The ball should be touched three times, by three different learners, before it is passed over the net. The winning team is the first to score 25 points (this can be reduced).



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 sitting volleyball.

Skills practice

- Place targets on the floor on the far side of the net. Learners take it in turns to try and hit the targets by throwing the ball with one hand (serving action) over the net. Each learner should have three attempts. Score one point for each successful attempt.



- Play a two-a-side game, with or without a net. Begin with a serve. The ball should be passed between the two learners on the same team before it is passed over the net to the other team. Combine setting and passing, as well as digging and passing. A point is scored if the ball is dropped by the opposing pair. The winning pair is the first to score ten points.
- Play a three-a-side game on a court with a net. Include some or all of the main skills used in the game: serving, digging, setting, spiking and blocking. Play one-set matches where the winning team is the first to ten points.



Activity 2

Let's give it a go:
experiencing the Para
sport of sitting volleyball



Please see the Overview of Para Sports and the film '*I'mPOSSIBLE: Sitting volleyball*' (youtu.be/vW1VouTLnME) for a brief introduction to sitting volleyball.

Playing area

A smooth-surfaced area roughly 10m x 6m in size, marked with chalk, tape, cones or markers.

Place a low net (approximately 1 metre high) over a central line which divides the court into two 5m x 6m halves.

For more advanced games, include parallel attack lines approximately two metres from the central line.

Equipment

- Balls of varying sizes and weights, are suitable for the age and ability of the students – e.g. beach balls, balloons, volleyballs.
- Net (or an alternative such as string) that stands at least 1 metre off the ground.

How to play

- Teams usually include six players.
- Players must have their pelvis in contact with the floor at all times.
- Teams aim to hit the ball over the net so that it lands within the opponent's court.

- Teams are permitted to pass the ball among themselves three times before it has to go over the net.
- Blocking an opposing team's serve is permitted. This is different to the rules of volleyball.
- The first team to 25 points wins the set, as long as they win by two clear points.
- The first team to win three sets wins the match.

Further information and films can be found on the IPC website:

www.paralympic.org/sitting-volleyball



Inclusion tips:

- (T) Use visual aids and demonstrations.
- (R) Reduce the number of players.
- (R) Increase the number of intrateam passes permitted before the ball must go over the net.
- (R) Allow the ball to be caught before it is passed.
- (E) Lower the height of the net.
- (E) Use a lighter, bigger or slower ball.
- (E) Use equipment that visually contrasts with the playing area.



Extension activity

Research the role of the libero, the purpose of the attack line, other rules of the game, plus attack and defence strategies used in sitting volleyball; and apply this knowledge to your own games.

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

To extend students' understanding of the game, they could take on the role of coach and/or referee. A guide to acting as a referee can be

found in the official sitting volleyball guide (page 8): www.worldparavolley.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2017-2020-SITTING-Volleyball-Rules-with-Diagrams.pdf

Optional independent research

Research the Para athletes who represent your country by being part of the national sitting volleyball 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 sitting volleyball? What was the most difficult aspect of the game?
- How would you describe sitting volleyball?
- If you had a classmate with an impairment, how could you make the game more inclusive for them? For example, how might you include a classmate who is visually impaired? One method might be to think about the rules and the equipment. For example, you could use a ball which makes noise as it moves or allow more players per team.

Homework task

- What can you tell your family about sitting volleyball? What can they tell you about the sport?
- What more can you find out about sitting volleyball?

Evaluation task

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