

Get involved in Para-sport

Learn the basics to help connect athletes to Para-sport

What is Para-sport?

Para-sport is a term used for sports that have a pathway to the Paralympic Games. However, there are many opportunities for athletes from school age to get started in school sport and join clubs, social sport and for those more competitive to compete at state, national and international level. There are 28 Para-sports at the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games.

In order to be eligible to compete in Para-sport, athletes must have a physical, vision or intellectual impairment from one of the following eligible impairments:

Eligible impairments	Description
Loss of limbs	Partial or complete absence of bones or joints due to amputation or deficiency from birth.
Muscle weakness / Impaired muscle power	Muscle weakness or paralysis from conditions such as muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, nerve damage, spinal cord injury or damage.
Co-ordination impairments Hypertonia, Ataxia or Athetosis	Impairments from neurological conditions such as acquired brain injury, cerebral palsy and multiple sclerosis that affect co-ordination and smoothness of movement and balance.
Restricted joint movement	Restricted movement or tightness in a joint/s from conditions such as joint fusions and other restricting conditions.
Short Stature	Reduced standing height and limb length from conditions such as achondroplasia or other conditions that affect growth.
Leg length difference	Significant difference in leg length from a deficiency at birth or trauma.
Intellectual Impairment	An IQ of 75, and impairments in adaptive behaviour (conceptual, social and practical skills) – that is observed before the athlete is aged 18.
Vision Impairment	Impairment of the eye structure, optic nerves or pathways, or vision area of the brain, resulting in a loss of vision in both eyes. Caused by conditions such as albinism, macular degeneration, macular or cone rod dystrophy and retinitis pigmentosa.

What is classification?

Classification is an assessment process that determines which athletes can compete in each Para-sport and who they can compete against. Athletes are grouped with others whose impairments affect them in similar ways in their sport.

How can you be involved?

There are many people that can assist athletes to get involved in Para-sport. Whether you're an allied health professional, teacher, club volunteer, coach, friend or family, there are lots of ways you can be involved.

- Encourage people you know who are interested in Para-sport to make an enquiry via the Paralympics Australia website
- Research and promote the Para-sport opportunities in your area
- Help athletes to get classified by contacting the national sporting organisation and completing the paperwork for their sport of interest
- Volunteer for Paralympics Australia event or get involved in a Para-sport as a volunteer, official, coach, therapist or trainer
- Become a supporter, champion and fan of Para-sport by following @AusParalympics on social media

