

## About the game

Boccia is similar to the game of Boule. It is played on a smooth, flat surface. The aim of the game is for the player to place as many of his or her own balls closer to the jack ball than their opponent. It is a target game which relies upon skill, accuracy and tactics.

### The origins of Boccia

When first introduced into the UK, the sport was designed only for individuals with severe cerebral palsy and other severe impairments. Although this is still the case at a Paralympic level, Boccia is now a popular sport played throughout the community.

Boccia is now governed worldwide by the international Boccia committee **BISFED** (Boccia International Sports Federation).

### Formats and player positions

Boccia can be played in individuals, pairs and team formats, all events are mixed gender. The game consists of 4 ends for individuals and pairs and 6 ends for teams.

In each end an individual player will throw 6 balls, pair players will throw 3 balls each and team players will throw 2 balls each.

According to the format being played the players will occupy certain boxes in which they will sit and play the game.





## The basic rules of Boccia

- ▶ Boccia is an attack and defend game, where each side (Red and Blue) attempts to score as many points as possible by propelling their coloured balls closer to the white jack ball than their opponent.
- ▶ Each side can have 1, 2 or 3 players, depending on whether the competition is a singles, pairs or team match.
- ▶ A match consists of 2 sides competing against one another over a specified number of ends.
- ▶ An end consists of all 13 balls (the jack, 6 Red, 6 Blue) being propelled onto court.
- ▶ Singles and pair matches consist of 4 ends and team matches consist of 6 ends.
- ▶ The colours thrown are decided using a coin toss, the winning player/captain can choose to be either Red or Blue.
- ▶ In Team Boccia both sides must occupy their designated boxes on the court from where all balls are propelled (Red in boxes 1, 3 and 5, and Blue in boxes 2, 4 and 6).
- ▶ The red side always initiates the first end by propelling the jack into court.
- ▶ In a team and pairs match each player propels the jack onto court in turn, working from right to left as the referee looks at the players. In a singles match both players will alternate twice.
- ▶ The player who propels the jack ball also propels their side's first coloured ball.
- ▶ A player from the opposite side then propels their first coloured ball.
- ▶ The side which is not closest to the jack must play until they either manage to get closer to the jack, or run out of balls.
- ▶ The side left with remaining balls, then propels all of them onto the court.
- ▶ The end is complete when all balls from both sides have been propelled.
- ▶ The end is scored by awarding 1 point for every ball of the same colour, closer

You can find an abridged guide and the full rules on our website [www.bocciaengland.org.uk](http://www.bocciaengland.org.uk)

## Propelling a Boccia ball

There are many methods of 'legally' propelling a Boccia ball. Below are some examples of the different techniques:

### Throwing

Over arm, dart throw, or under arm.



### Kicking

Over the floor, or off the body.



### Rolling

Over the floor, or down the body.

### Assistive device (using a ramp)

Release with a head pointer.



### Assistive device (using a ramp)

Release with part of an arm, leg or the

### Throwing Rules

Whilst propelling a jack or coloured ball the player must:

- ▶ Be within the throwing box
- ▶ Wait until the referee indicates before propelling the ball
- ▶ Keep one buttock in contact with the chair
- ▶ Be the last point of contact with the ball

# Assistants and assistive devices

Some players are allowed to have an assistant or an assistive device and assistant (ramp assistant) to aid them throughout the game.

## Assistants

Assistants have two distinct roles dependent on whether they are assisting a player with, or without, an assistive device.

### Assistant to a player without an assistive device

The assistant will sit or stand to the rear, and outside of, the throwing box. They are allowed to look into court.

The assistant, at the player's request, will help:

- ▶ Pass a ball to the player.
- ▶ Manoeuvre the player's chair.
- ▶ Collect balls between ends.
- ▶ Help reposition the player in a chair.
- ▶ Sign score sheets on behalf of the player.
- ▶ Carry out other duties, but only at the player's request or the referee's discretion.

### Assistant to a player with an assistive device (ramp assistant)

Assistants when instructed by the player:

- ▶ Position and secure wheelchairs.
- ▶ Position and secure a ramp.
- ▶ Shape and place balls on the ramp.

Ramp assistants need to remain in the throwing box facing away from play until the referee says they can turn into court.

**NOTE: If an assistant is obscuring the line of play of an opposing player, they should move when asked. They must still be facing away from play when doing this.**

### Assistive Devices (ramps)

Criteria for assistive devices:

- ▶ Must fit into an area measuring 2.5m x 1m.
- ▶ Must not contain any mechanical device that will aid propulsion.
- ▶ The player must make direct physical contact with the ball immediately before release onto the court. This could be via an aid that is attached directly to the player's head or mouth, or released by touch of an arm, chin, hand or foot.
- ▶ The assistive device must be moved after each ball is played to break the horizontal plane of movement.



# Etiquette and conduct of a Leader

**Leaders** are in a position of responsibility and are often acting as a role model for others. It is therefore important that you set a good example.

## Aims of a Community Leader

Below are some of the things you should aim to achieve as a **Leader**:

- ▶ Know the rules of the game
- ▶ Be professional
- ▶ Act confidently
- ▶ Be consistent
- ▶ Behave appropriately
- ▶ Be presentable

## Communication

To be an effective **Leader** it is very important to have a variety of well developed communication skills.

You will come across a wide range of athletes when you are leading, so be prepared to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the players.

Please see below for some tips.

Face your audience and keep your mouth clear from any obstructions

Speak directly to the person and not through the assistant

Get the distance right, not too close or too far away and on the same level

Where appropriate communicate visually as well as verbally

Adjust the volume, pitch and speed of your voice according to the circumstances

Face the light (don't sit with your back to the window or light source)

Be clear and concise in a way that meets the audience's needs and be confident

Be aware of individual needs and be responsive to them

Be patient, you may need to explain things to players more than once

## Warm up/cool down tips

As with many physical activities and sports, it is important to prepare the mind and body before and after each session. Boccia is played by disabled and non-disabled athletes, and is no exception to this rule.

### Why use these techniques?

Despite recognising that individual players may well develop their own warm up/cool down routines to suit their own needs and preferences, these general guidance notes can be used especially with beginners.

### Importance and function of warming up/cooling down

- ▶ Protects against injury
- ▶ Improves the body's efficiency
- ▶ Helps to focus the mind
- ▶ Practice improves performance

### Key parts of the body repeated movement exercises

#### Trunk

- ▶ Turn left and right
- ▶ Bend from side to side
- ▶ Bend forward and back

#### Neck

- ▶ Turn left and right
- ▶ Bend from side to side
- ▶ Bend forward and back

#### Shoulders

- ▶ Lift up and down
- ▶ Circle forwards and backwards

#### Arms

- ▶ Circle forwards and backwards
- ▶ Extend above the head, out to the sides and down to the floor

#### Wrists

- ▶ Circle in both directions
- ▶ Bend up and down
- ▶ Clinch and extend fingers bend and extend



## Cornerball games

Cornerball is a collection of mini games designed to test players skills in a fun and action packed way.

### Basic Setup

Arrange 4 chairs back to back facing out, and for each chair set up one of the mini games.

### Straight Hoop

Players have to try and get 6 balls into a small hoop.

### Over and In

Players have to try and get 6 balls over an obstacle and into a hoop.

### Mind the Gap

Players have to try and get 6 balls through the cones and into a hoop.

### Knock On

Players get six balls and have to try and knock the white ball (Jack) into a hoop.



## Skill practices and games

Skill practices can be used as a training tool and an activity in their own right. They provide variety and they are fun.

As well as helping develop the core skills of accuracy, consistency, control etc, they also help develop secondary skills including:

- ▶ Perception and decision making
- ▶ Taking turns and competitiveness
- ▶ Social interaction and communication

## Notes on devising practices and games

### Which player or players am I going to be working with?

- ▶ Number of players
- ▶ Level of ability
- ▶ Level of knowledge
- ▶ Level of skill

### What is the purpose or aim of skill practice?

- ▶ Precision
- ▶ Power
- ▶ Pace
- ▶ Shot selection
- ▶ Tactics

### What resources do you have to set up the skill practice?

- ▶ Time
- ▶ Equipment
- ▶ Space
- ▶ Assistance

### How can practices be adapted to meet the needs of a player?

- ▶ Vary the equipment
- ▶ Vary the space
- ▶ Vary the distance
- ▶ Change roles

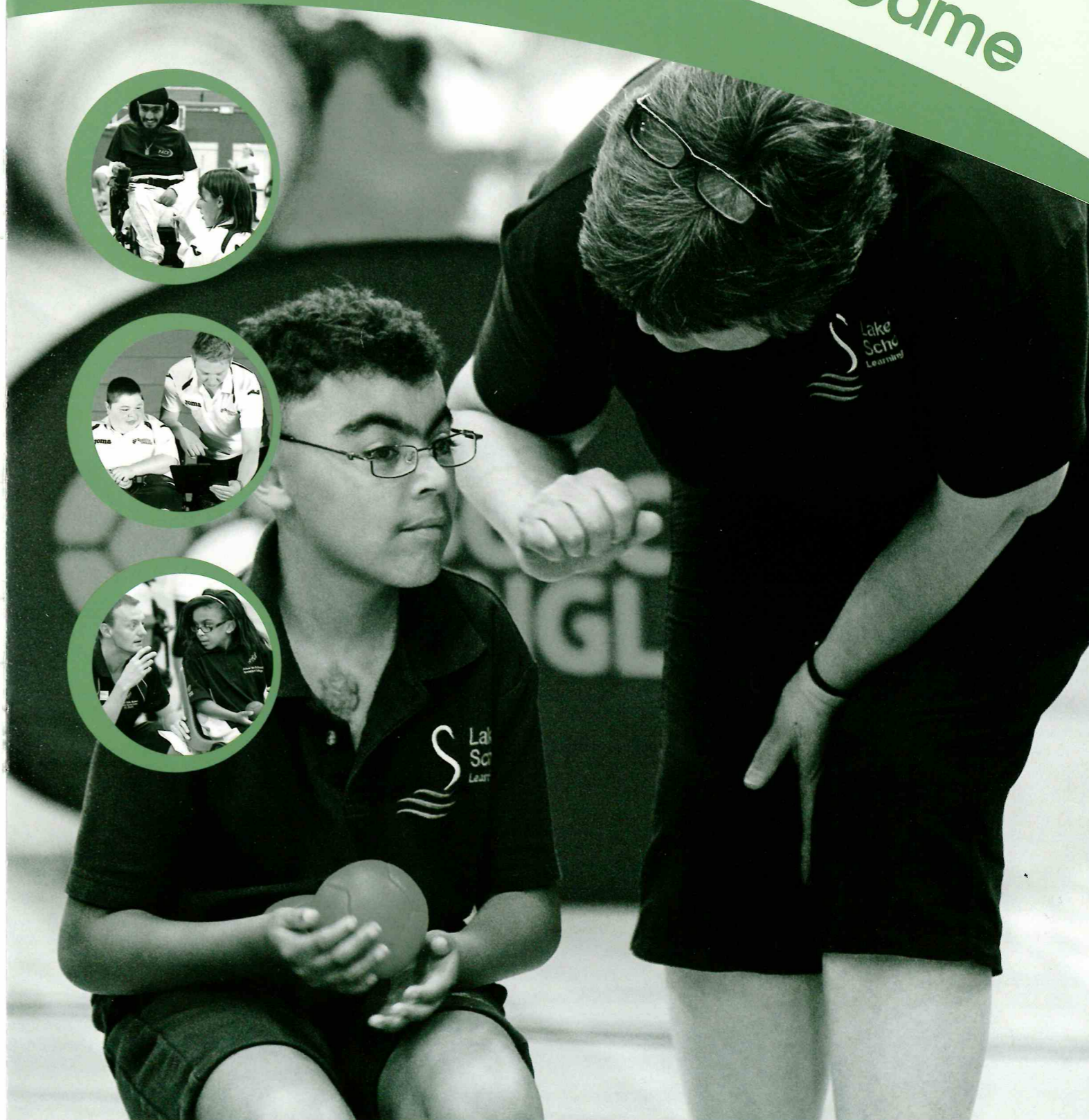
### Are the practices safe and fun?

- ▶ Does the practice adhere to the 'spirit of the game' of Boccia?
- ▶ Are the practices implemented both achievable and challenging?

## Pull-Out Notes



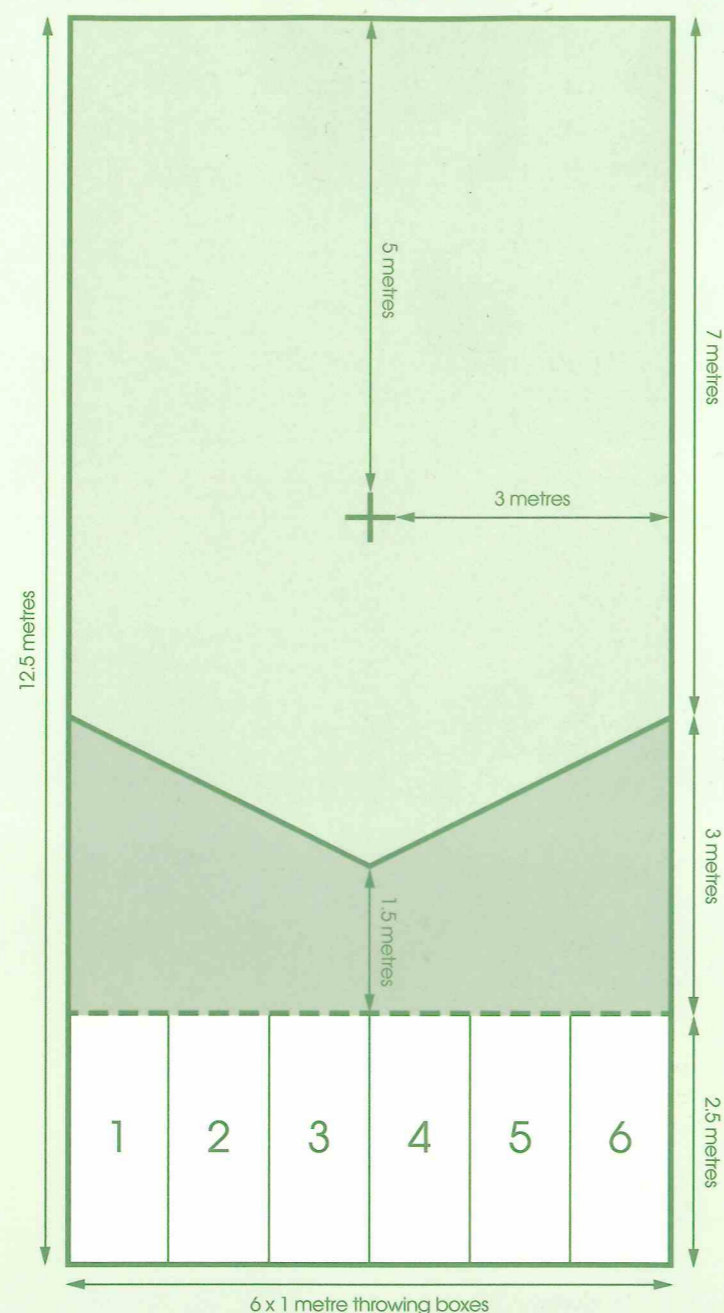
# Playing The Game



## Playing Notes

- ▶ If the jack is fouled (i.e. one of the throwing rules has been broken or it hasn't landed in a valid area of play) pass the jack ball on to the next player to throw (i.e. the player in the second throwing box).
- ▶ The side to throw first uses the red balls and occupies the first throwing box.
- ▶ A player, their ramp and ramp assistant must be within the throwing box during play.
- ▶ A jack ball that is knocked out of court during play must be re-positioned on the 'replaced jack cross'.
- ▶ A ball that lands on the line is deemed out of play.
- ▶ If the first 2 coloured balls are of equal distance from the jack, then each side will be awarded 1 point each.
- ▶ The side with the closest ball to the jack, will receive 1 point for each ball that is closer to the jack than their opponent's.
- ▶ Coloured balls that land out of the valid area of play, become a dead ball and are placed to the side of the court.

## Boccia Court Diagram



## Completion of a game

- ▶ The side with the highest score at the end of all the ends is declared the winner.
- ▶ If the total scores are equal at the end of a game then a 'tie-break' is to be played.

## Tie-break

- ▶ Jack is placed on the 'replaced jack cross'.
- ▶ Coin toss determines which side plays first.

## Assistants

- ▶ May sit or stand outside of the throwing box.

## Assistive devices (ramps)

- ▶ A player must be the last to make contact with a ball before release on to the court.
- ▶ The ramp must be moved between shots.

## Ramp assistants

- ▶ When instructed by a player they can position and secure a wheelchair or ramp, and shape and place balls on a ramp.
- ▶ They must remain facing away from play until a referee lets them face the court.

# Scenarios During Play

This section provides examples of potential scenarios that you may encounter whilst refereeing a game of Boccia. We have included a response you should use when dealing with these cases.

## Scenario

## Response

**Simultaneous release of balls (a player/ team releases more than one ball at the same time)**

All balls released are deemed to have been played and remain on the court. However if the referee thinks that this has been done to gain an advantage, then both balls must be retrieved.

**Balls thrown without the referee's instruction**

The ball is retracted if a player throws when not indicated to do so by a referee. The referee is to remind a player that they can only play the ball once the referee has indicated so.

**Dropped versus thrown**

If a player accidentally drops the ball the referee can allow that player to re-play that ball. There is no limit to the number of times a ball may be re-thrown, it is at the total discretion of the referee.

**The player is out of their throwing area on release of ball**

This action will lead to the retraction of the thrown ball and the awarding of 2 penalty balls. The penalty balls will be played once all 12 balls have been played in an end.

**The player doesn't keep 1 buttock on the chair whilst propelling a ball**

This action will lead to the retraction of the thrown ball and the awarding of 2 penalty balls. The penalty balls will be played once all 12 balls have been played in an end.

**Ramp isn't moved between shots to break the horizontal plane**

This action will lead to the retraction of the thrown ball and the awarding of 2 penalty balls. The penalty balls will be played once all 12 balls have been played in an end.

**A player's ramp assistant is out of the throwing box**

This action will lead to the retraction of the thrown ball and the awarding of 2 penalty balls. The penalty balls will be played once all 12 balls have been played in an end.

**A player's ramp assistant turns around to face play**

This action will lead to the awarding of two penalty balls. The penalty balls will be played once all 12 balls have been played in an end.

**Substitution (in team games)**

Substitution must take place between the 'ends'. The referee must be informed of the substitutions (players that have been substituted cannot be substituted back into play).

**A ball lands on any of the boundary lines**

Any ball, including the jack ball, will be deemed to be out of the court if it touches or crosses over the boundary line.

**A deliberate attempt to disturb another player whilst they are throwing**

Warn players that their behaviour is unacceptable, reinforce the 'spirit of the game'. The referee will note this on the score card. If a second warning is given to the player, the player is disqualified.

**Referee errors**

If a referee knocks the balls, they are reset if the position is known or the 'end' is a 'disrupted end' and is re-started. If a referee calls the wrong colour to play, the ball is retrieved and thrown again.

**A player argues with a decision made by one of the officials**

A player may request clarification. If the player still disagrees, they can refuse to sign the result sheet, but must provide a written protest to the organisers within 30 minutes of the end of the game.

# Boccia score sheet

Competition: .....

Round/Division: ..... Date: .....

Player/Team: ..... v Player/Team: .....

	Red	Blue
Player/Team		
End 1		
End 2		
End 3		
End 4		
End 5		
End 6		
<b>Final Score</b>		
Tie Break		

**Referee's Notes:**

**Red** Signature: .....

**Blue** Signature: .....

Referee's Signature: .....



## Skill practice exercises

Each practice can be used to develop specific skills which can be incorporated into a skills circuit or used as mini adapted games in their own right.

All practices use equipment which should be found within schools, and sports centres for example hoops & skittles. Alternatively you can improvise with: boxes, bins, chairs etc. Any practice games can be adapted to meet the needs of individual players.



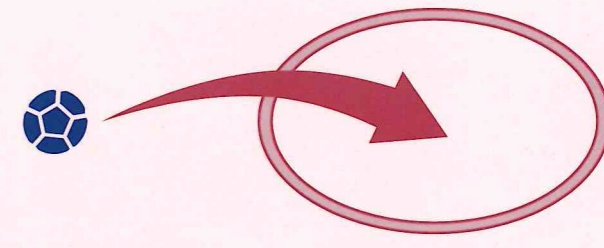
**Activity 1**  
Roll ball so that it stops within hoop

**Objective/Skills**

- ▶ Accuracy
- ▶ Concept of target area
- ▶ Rolled Propulsion

**Equipment**

- ▶ Boccia balls and various hoops



**Activity 2**  
Throw ball to land and stop within hoop

**Objective/Skills**

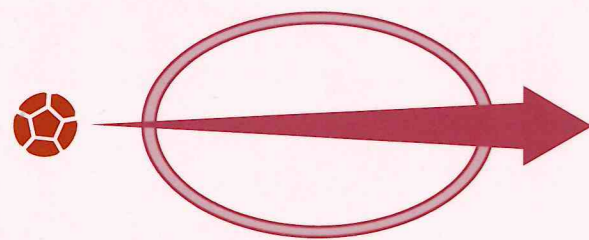
- ▶ Accuracy
- ▶ Concept of target area
- ▶ Ability to stop ball
- ▶ Thrown propulsion

**Equipment**

- ▶ Boccia balls and various hoops

**Incidental/Tangent Skills**

- ▶ Perceptual



### Activity 3

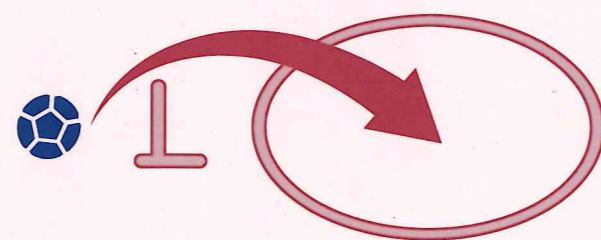
Roll ball so it passes through hoop and out

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Strength of rolled propulsion

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls and various hoops



### Activity 4

Throw ball over an object to land within hoop

#### Objective/Skills

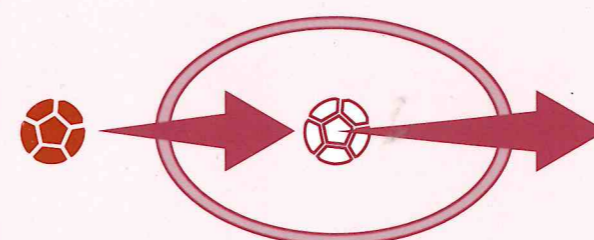
- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Height
- ▶ Ability to throw over balls

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, hoops, plus hurdle or chair

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Perceptual



### Activity 7

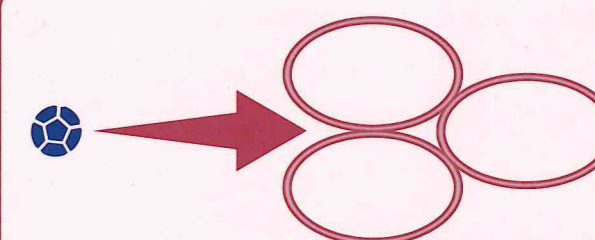
Propel ball to knock a jack ball out of hoop or without knocking jack ball out of hoop

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Ability to get close to target
- ▶ Ability to hit and move target
- ▶ Greater control and accuracy

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, beach ball, target balls



### Activity 8

Propel balls into various hoops to score points

#### Objective/Skills

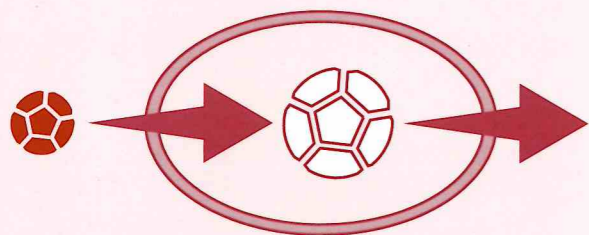
- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Competitive pressures

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, various hoops, chalk

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Decision making
- ▶ Competition numeracy
- ▶ Colour recognition



### Activity 5

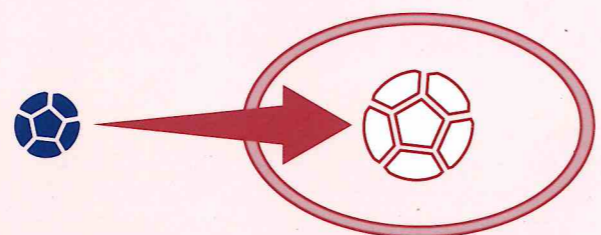
Propel ball to knock a large ball out of hoop

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Height
- ▶ Ability to get close to target

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, beach ball



### Activity 6

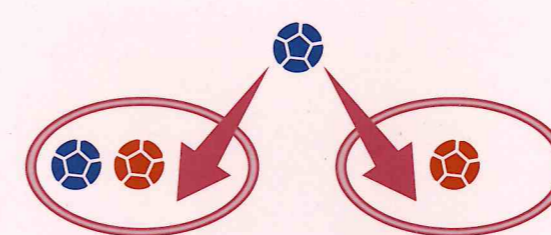
Propel ball into hoop without knocking a large ball out of hoop

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Ability to hit and move target

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, beach ball



### Activity 9

Propel coloured balls into hoops (Teams R/B)

#### Objective/Skills

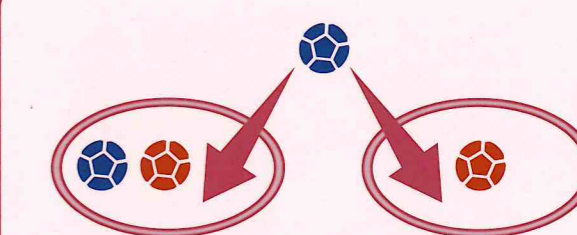
- ▶ Accuracy and control

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, various hoops, chalk

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Decision making and communication
- ▶ Competition and taking turns
- ▶ Scoring and numeracy
- ▶ Colour recognition



### Activity 10

As Activity 9, option to knock opponent's balls out

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Ability to move opponents balls

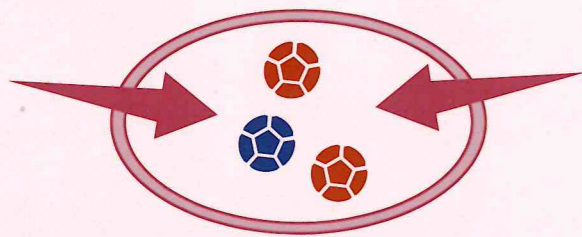
#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, various hoops, chalk

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Decision making and communication
- ▶ Competition and taking turns
- ▶ Scoring and numeracy
- ▶ Colour recognition





### Activity 11

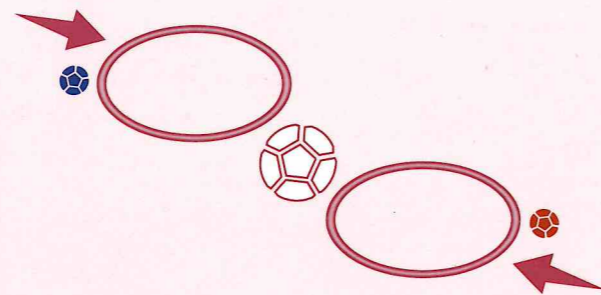
Teams try to get as many of their balls inside the hoop as they can

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy
- ▶ Control
- ▶ Ability to score and remove opponents balls

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, single hoop



### Activity 12

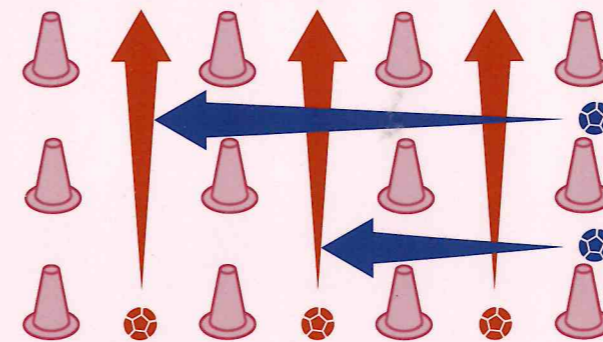
Propel a football with Boccia balls so that it stops an opponent's hoops

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy
- ▶ Control
- ▶ Ability to get close to target

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, hoops, football



### Activity 15

Teams propel balls to score while the other team attempts to block in designated lanes

#### Objective/Skills

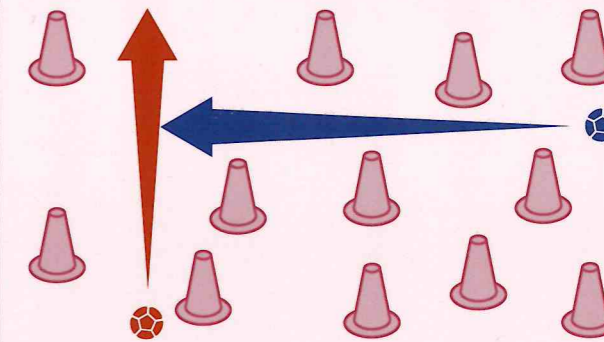
- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Blocking
- ▶ Space and distance

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 12 cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Social interaction
- ▶ Competition and taking turns
- ▶ Scoring and numeracy



### Activity 16

As Activity 15 but with cones randomly placed

#### Objective/Skills

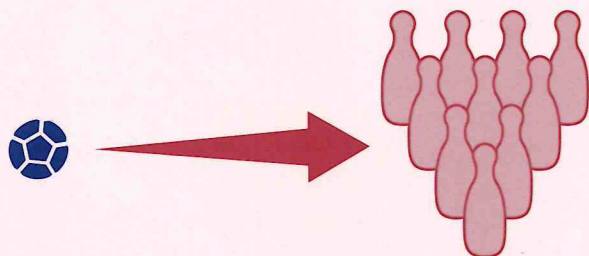
- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Blocking
- ▶ Space and distance

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 12 cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Social interaction
- ▶ Competition and taking turns
- ▶ Scoring and numeracy



### Activity 13

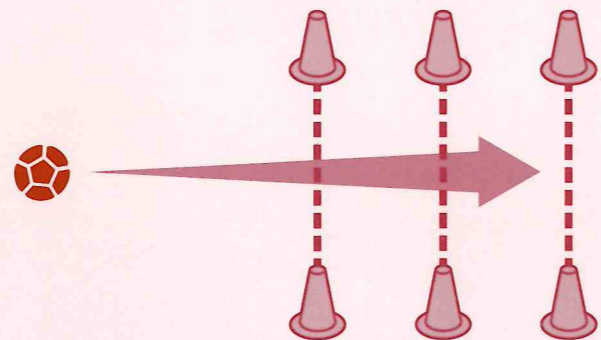
Knock down the skittles (like Ten Pin Bowling)

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Ability to get close to target

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, skittles



### Activity 14

Teams propel balls to score in opponents box while preventing them from scoring

#### Objective/Skills

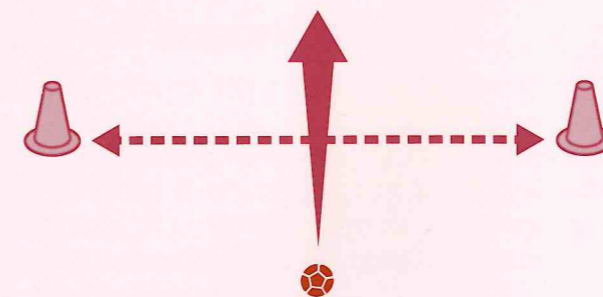
- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Ability to score and prevent scoring
- ▶ Judgement of angles

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Social interaction
- ▶ Competition and taking turns
- ▶ Scoring and numeracy



### Activity 17

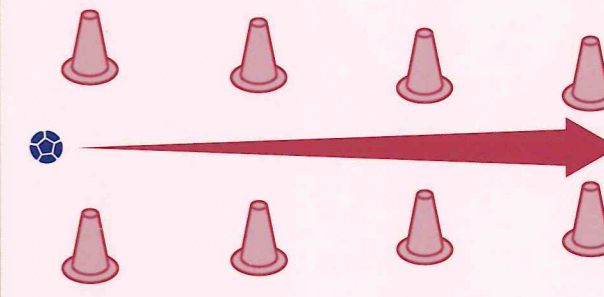
Propel balls through 2 cones progressively narrowing

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Accuracy and control
- ▶ Rolled propulsion

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 2 cones or skittles



### Activity 18

Propel ball through channel of cones progressively narrowing in width

#### Objective/Skills

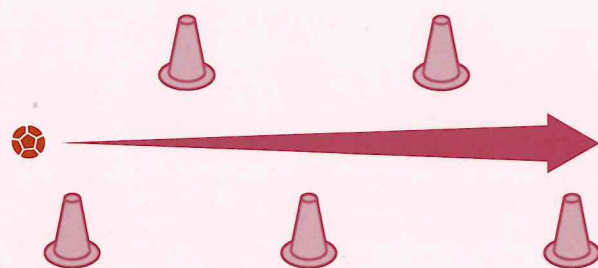
- ▶ Sustained accuracy
- ▶ Rolled propulsion
- ▶ Judgement of distance and space

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 8-10 cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Perception



### Activity 19

Propel ball through an offset channel of cones progressively narrowing in width

#### Objective/Skills

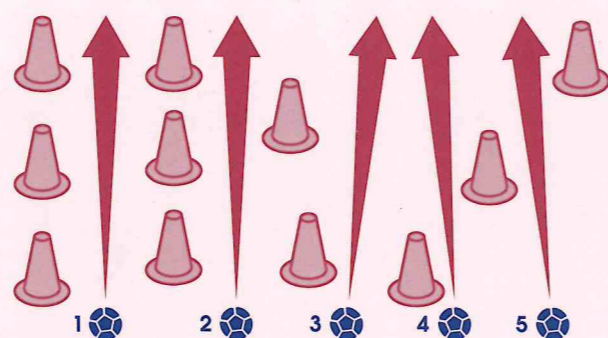
- ▶ Sustained accuracy
- ▶ Rolled propulsion
- ▶ Judgement of distance and space

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 4-6 cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Perception



### Activity 20

Balls are rolled through a selection of numbered routes designated by cones

#### Objective/Skills

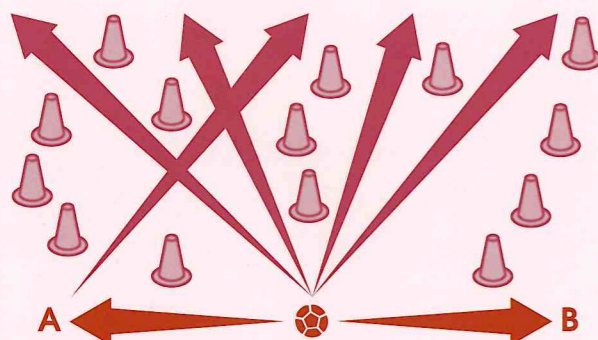
- ▶ Sustained accuracy
- ▶ Judgement of angles
- ▶ Manoeuvring of wheelchair
- ▶ Understanding instructions

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 10-15 cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Perceptual and decision making
- ▶ Numeracy



### Activity 21

Balls are rolled through discovered paths in randomly spread cones, chair can be moved along A/B line progressively narrowing

#### Objective/Skills

- ▶ Sustained accuracy
- ▶ Judgement of angles
- ▶ Manoeuvring of wheelchair
- ▶ Rolled propulsion

#### Equipment

- ▶ Boccia balls, 15-20 cones or skittles

#### Incidental/Tangent Skills

- ▶ Perceptual and decision making



## Getting involved in Boccia

There are many volunteer opportunities to get involved in Boccia. Volunteering is any non-compulsory activity which involves spending time, unpaid, doing something of benefit to other people or society.

### Why is it important?

Many sports clubs, organisations, leagues etc. are highly dependent on volunteers for their day to day running, to such an extent that without them many couldn't operate. YOU could be among the next generation of volunteers that make sport function.

### How can it benefit you?

Volunteering is a rewarding and fun experience, where you can;

- ▶ Keep skills up to date
  - practice makes perfect.
- ▶ Increase confidence and knowledge.
- ▶ Meet different people with similar interests.
- ▶ Keep up to date with changes in the rules/laws and ethics of sport/activity, interpretation and application.
- ▶ Have FUN.

### Where do I go from here?

You obtain the Boccia Leaders Award by completing a minimum of 2 hours of volunteering in a leadership capacity. The more you volunteer the greater experience you will gain. See overleaf for the Leaders Diary and how to fill it in.

If you want to progress further within boccia, the next stage on the coaching pathway is the Level 1 Award in Coaching Boccia.

### Ways to access opportunities

- ▶ In school - Speak to a PE teacher.
- ▶ In the region - Contact your local sports authority or national Boccia organisation listed on the back cover for more information about how to get involved.

### Keep in touch

Keep up to date with what is happening in the world of boccia by visiting your home country website (see back page).

# Glossary of terms

Below are some explanations of the more commonly used words and phrases used throughout this guide, that you need to remember.

**Assistant** A helper used by some players to assist them with their game.

**Assistive Device** An aid to play the game.

**Classification** Grouping individuals in the interest of equal competition.

**Coloured ball** One of the red or blue balls.

**Communication** The exchange of ideas and thoughts, messages or information via speech, signals, writing or behaviour.

**Competition** Competing for a reward.

**Court** The playing area.

**Cross** The cross on the court where the jack is placed in the event of a tie-break.

**Dead Ball** A ball over the boundary line or stopped in a non-valid area of the court; a ball removed from the court by the referee; or a ball thrown after the time has expired.

**Dead Ball Container** A container that holds the dead balls. It is placed outside of the court, but in sight of the players.

**Disrupted End** When the balls have been moved outside of the normal order of play, either accidentally or deliberately.

**Dropped** Accidental release of the ball, often a result of involuntary action.

**End** A section of a game. A team game consists of 6 ends, whereas an individual or pairs game consists of 4 ends.

**Equidistant** Equal distance.

**Equity** Treating people equally.

**Etiquette** Rules that govern socially acceptable behaviour within the game.

**Fouled ball** Violating rules or standards.

**Format** The organisation of players into teams, pairs or singles groupings.

**Jack Ball** The white target ball.

**Head Pointer** An assistive device used by a player to initiate ball movement.

**Involuntary** The subject concerned is not in control of their actions.

**Match** A competition between 2 sides where a set number of ends are played.

**Official** A person who is assisting with the application of the rules of the game.

**Playing Area** A valid area of the court.

**Propel/Propelled/Propulsion** To cause the ball to move forward or onwards.

**Ramp** An assistive device used by a player to aid propulsion of the ball.

**Ramp Assistant** A helper used to support players using ramps with their game.

**Side** An individual, pair or team (3).

**Simultaneous** Something happening at the same time e.g. the release of 2 balls.

**'Spirit Of The Game'** Refers to common courtesy from spectators, coaches and other players when another is playing a ball

**Substitution** Use of an extra player (in a team game) to replace another on court.

**Throw** Term used for propelling a ball onto the court (whether by throwing, kicking or releasing the ball using an aid).

**Throwing Box** The area on court in which the player sits in order to play the game.

**Tie-break** An extra end played to complete a game when the scores are equal.

**V Line/Jack Line** The line that the Jack ball must cross over to be considered in play.

**Violation** An action which is deemed to be against the rules of the game.

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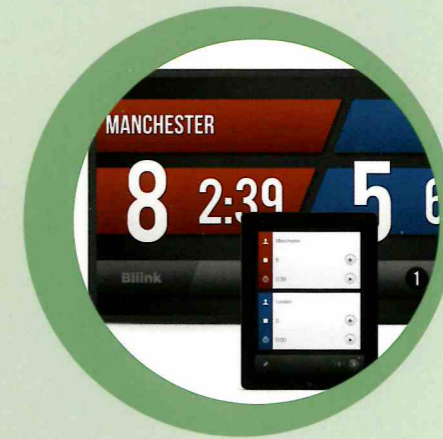
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