



## Boccia Guide

### How to Play

Boccia is a ball game that is easily adapted to suit the needs of those with physical disabilities and restricted mobility. Traditionally it is played with a White Jack but we have found that for engaging a group of participants it is better playing with a numbered wedge.



Each participant takes a turn at a time. One go consists of throwing 6 balls of the same colour (traditionally red or blue). The total score is added up from any scoring balls and written on the score board so the group can see who has scored what.

After each person has had a go, the one with the highest score wins.

Scores are reset to zero after every round to give everyone a chance of winning a game

Alternatively, you can play with the traditional way with the white jack. This is when 2 participants go head to head, one with red balls and one with blue balls. They alternate turns to throw or bowl a ball with the aim of getting them as close to the white jack as possible. After all balls have been thrown the winner is whoever is closest to the white jack.



Participants are allowed to knock their own and their opponents balls closer or out of the way.

### Adaptations

- Standing
- Bend both Knees (not necessarily a full bend)
- One foot in front of the other
- Front foot opposite to hand that you are throwing with



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- Stay standing up straight
- This is ideal for those who have difficulty bending (knee or hip conditions)
- Also, it's more suitable for those with minor balance problems
- Where balance is more of a prevalent issue, the participant can hold onto something for support.
- For example, a table, walking stick or the back of a chair (ensure the chair is stable)



- Stay Standing up straight
- This is ideal for those who have difficulty bending (knee or hip conditions) and those who have mild balance issues
- Hold on to something for support, for example, a table, walking stick or the back of a chair (ensure chair is stable)



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- Boccia can also be played whilst seated for those who are unable to play standing up.
- We recommend that participants play standing where possible to get the maximum health benefits but quite often people will begin in a seated position and progress to standing if possible.
- This variation sees people sitting to the front of their chair and leaning down towards the floor.
- Not everyone will be able to lean forward from their chair, so the next variation is to sit upright whilst playing.



- Some participants may not have the ability to hold and/or throw a Boccia ball
- In this scenario a ramp is used to provide the power for a throw, and the instructor can provide the adequate support to the player, for example holding the ramp for them if necessary or placing the ball in the ramp for them.
- This is designed to offer maximum opportunity for the group to be as inclusive as possible.



- Set the group up in a horse shoe style layout, so each participant can see the person who is taking their go and the scoring wedge. This encourages social interaction with each other amongst those taking part. Those that don't wish to take part but would like to spectate can still sit with the group, and engage in the session



- In general, Boccia is played with an underarm grip. You'll find that some participants struggle with this due to arthritis in hands/fingers or weakness. Therefore, an overarm grip can be used



- When working with people that have visual impairments, you can use your voice as a target and ask the player to aim their throw shot towards you (as seen opposite in a game of Boccia). You can then describe the level of power required, and any adjustments that may need to be made for their next shot. Be sure to try and describe the activity in as much detail as possible, and support people with feeling all of the equipment before the activity starts



## Tips for Sessions with Dementia Support Groups

- For a Dementia group (or a group with very limited mobility), it is worth setting them up in a circle and moving the scoring wedge round in front of each person so they don't have to get up each time. We encourage you get people moving as much as possible but in some circumstances it is not practical



- Some participants will find it hard to understand what you want them to do, i.e. throw or roll the ball towards the target. This is where patience is key and you may need to try different methods to get them to do the activity. Some ideas are:

- Crouch down at the other end of the target (as pictured), place hands above the middle and ask them to throw the ball to you
- Stand beside the participant and demonstrate the action you wish them to undertake (pretend to throw)
- Place the ramp next to them and ask them to drop the ball into the ramp – you may need to guide their arm to place the ball above the ramp (make sure you've aimed the ramp towards the target)



- To encourage social interaction between participants, it's a good idea to try and get them to pass the balls to the next person beside them after they've finished their turn