



ADAPTIVE ACTIVITY: SITTING VOLLEYBALL

Physical Education
Activity
Grades 4 – 8





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Sitting Volleyball is one of the core sports of the Invictus Games and has featured at every Invictus Games since 2014. Other core sports that will happen in 2025 include Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Rugby, Swimming, and Indoor Rowing. The Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025 will be the first time winter sports are included at the Games. These sports are Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, Nordic Skiing, Biathlon, Skeleton, and Wheelchair Curling.

Sitting volleyball is different from regular volleyball in that the players are seated on the floor and the net height is lower. These adaptations ensure that people with different abilities are able to play together and keep the competition fair.

Objective

Students will be able to:

- learn about the evolution of sitting volleyball and its place in the Paralympic Games as well as the Invictus Games
- develop an understanding of the inclusivity of sitting volleyball through play
- learn the rules of the sport and try it for themselves

Target Audience

This activity is suitable for grades 4-8 but may be modified for younger or older audiences. This activity can also be modified to fit available time or can be stretched out over multiple days.

TEACHER NOTES

This activity is intended as a simulation, not a replication. It will provide insight and help students to understand, but it is not the same as lived experience.

The following contain suggestions if this is their first introduction to the Invictus Games.

1. Introduce the Invictus Games by showing the "Heart of Invictus" trailer [Heart of Invictus | Official Trailer | Netflix \(youtube.com\)](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeJuxMYhmEc) (1:55 mins) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BeJuxMYhmEc>). This allows students to experience the competitors' resilience and passion and the excitement of the Games.
2. Give students "**The Invictus Games: Student Information Handout**". Either go over the handout with the class or have them read it independently.
3. Introduce them to Sitting Volleyball by showing the video: [Sitting Volleyball | Amazing Volleyball Actions \(HD\) \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEbtrgqkPpQ) (3:01 mins) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEbtrgqkPpQ>)
4. As a class, discuss the differences they notice between traditional Volleyball and Sitting Volleyball.
5. Review the evolution and how the sport will be played at the Invictus Games 2025. Try Sitting Volleyball with your class.

Additional Videos & Resources:

[Sitting Volleyball Final: Poland x Georgia \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UL6Xlaz60Eg) (2:14 mins) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UL6Xlaz60Eg>)

[Paralympic Sport A-Z: Sitting volleyball \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXLSzwJoT4M) (2:28 mins) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXLSzwJoT4M>)

[Adaptation Sitting Volley \(French Only\) - Adaptation Volley Assis \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDACNyrBhjo) French with English subtitles (1:14 mins) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YDACNyrBhjo>)

[Sitting Volleyball - Volleyball BC](#)

[Sitting teams | Volleyball Canada](#) – includes a downloadable pdf fact sheet

THE INVICTUS GAMES STUDENT INFORMATION HANDOUT

The Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025 celebrates the unconquered human spirit of military service members and Veterans who are wounded, injured, or sick. From February 8-16, 2025, over 500 of these heroes will travel from up to 25 different nations to Vancouver and Whistler for the first-ever Winter hybrid Games. These service members will compete in 11 different sports to support their journey of recovery with their family and friends cheering them on from the sidelines.

'Invictus' means unconquered and embodies the fighting spirit of the participants, as well as their motivation to move on with their lives, and to not let themselves be defined by their struggle.

This 7th edition of the Games will be held on the traditional territories of the Lilwat7úl (Lílwat), xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səlilwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. The Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025 are working closely with the Nations to ensure they respond to Canada's Truth & Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and to ensure Indigenous protocols are respected in all aspects of the Games.

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The Games were first held in London in 2014 and have been held in Orlando 2016, Toronto 2017, Sydney 2018, The Hague 2022, and Dusseldorf 2023. Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, is Patron of the Invictus Games Foundation and founder of the Invictus Games.

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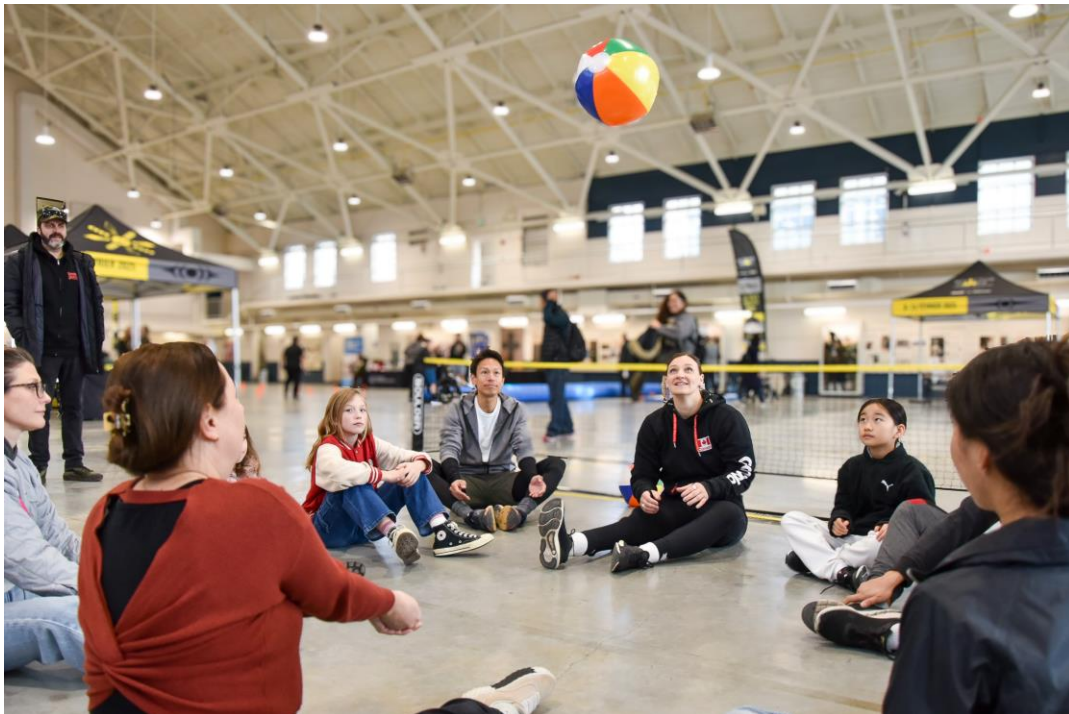
Sitting Volleyball Evolution

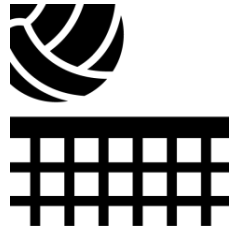
Sitting Volleyball originated in the Netherlands in 1956 as a rehabilitative sport for WWII Veterans and individuals with physical disabilities. The game blends elements of traditional volleyball with adaptations to suit players who are sitting on the floor, including a smaller court (6m x 10m) and a lower net. This adaptation helped make the game more accessible to people with lower limb impairments.

Sitting volleyball was a demonstration sport at the 1976 Paralympics in Toronto. It was included as a recognized sport in the 1980 Paralympic Games in Arnhem, Netherlands. Canada's National Sitting Volleyball teams started in 2007 (men's) and 2008 (women's) are overseen by Volleyball Canada.

The Women's National sitting volleyball team qualified for the Paralympic Games for the first time in Rio 2016. They competed at the Tokyo Paralympics and, most recently at the Paris Paralympics in September 2024.

These national teams are inspiring future generations of athletes.





Sitting Volleyball at the Invictus Games Vancouver Whistler 2025

- Teams are mixed with men and women on the same team
- Each team has six players on the court at a time, with a maximum of 17 categorization points on court at any time (see below)
- Each player is categorized based on their level of disability. Categorization is done by the Invictus Games Foundation and is **functional** versus **medical**, meaning the main factors that determine category are not diagnosis and medical evaluation, but how much the functional impairment of a person impacts upon sports performance. Thus, each competitor will have a different category for each sport
- For instance, a person could have a below knee amputation (medical diagnosis) however, when playing sitting volleyball, they will have more function than in swimming. In sitting volleyball, the sport is predominantly upper limb based, legs are used more for balance and moving positions, compared to swimming where both arms and legs are used for propulsion. Having a below knee amputation will functionally impact a competitor more for swimming than sitting volleyball, hence they would have different categorizations for each sport
 - Minimum: 3 points
 - Moderate: 2 points
 - Maximum: 1 point
 - Women have a -1 applied to their categorization to encourage more female participation within teams
- Matches are played to the best of three sets
- Sets one and two are played to 21 points, the third set is a tie-break set to 15 points (with a 2-point advantage)
- In the third set, teams switch sides of the court when the first team reaches 8 points

How-To For School Activity

Set-up:

- Can activate sitting volleyball in a regular gym; requires a flat, even surface. Make it safe by playing on a smooth surface that is free from anything sharp or likely to cause irritation to the skin; also ensure no breakable objects nearby as the ball can go anywhere!
- Official dimension for a youth court is 4m x 8; create mini games of 2v2, 3v3, etc. to get more kids playing and touching the ball
- Movement is challenging in sitting volleyball, so the smaller the court and less movement required, the more enjoyable

Equipment:

- Net height for youth is 1.00m high, but doesn't need to be perfect
- Lowering badminton nets to a comfortable height or using portable tennis/pickleball nets is an easy way to get a game going
- Can also use a length of rope or strong ribbon between two posts, allowing the ball to be played over it; (feet and legs are allowed to go under the net)
- For youth or introduction to game, it is easier to start by using beach balls or lighter volleyballs – a lighter ball stays in the air longer and gives participants more time to move and play the ball; this helps with longer rallies and gets more participants engaged in the rallies

Rules:

- Players must be seated on the floor; and are permitted to move around the court while seated
- Ball can be touched a maximum of three times before being sent over the net, but can also be sent over on any of the three contacts
- Rallies continue until the ball touches the ground, the ball goes out, or the opponents fail to return it
- Players are allowed to block or attempt to block the opponent's serve; if a block touches the ball on serve (or attack) it does not count as one of the three contacts
- When serving, the server's buttocks must stay behind the serving line and cannot go over the baseline until after the ball is contacted (serving location can be adapted for beginners)
- Front row players can attack the ball from any height as long as they are still making contact with the court with their buttocks
- Try different skills before jumping into a game i.e. teams sit in a circle on their side of the net and pass the ball to each other while trying to keep it in the air, like setting in regular volleyball

HAVE FUN!!



What is sitting volleyball?

Sitting Volleyball is an adapted version of Indoor Volleyball.

Rule similarities are:

- ✓ Games are best of 5 and played to 25 points (except the 5th game that is played to 15)
- ✓ 6 players are on the court at a time
- ✓ Each team can have up to 2 liberos
- ✓ Serve, pass and attack rules remain the same

Rule differences are:

- ✓ The net is lower to the ground (Women - 1.05m, Men - 1.15m) and the court is smaller (6m wide by 5m long)
- ✓ Sitting volleyball is played on the ground without prosthetics or mobility aids
- ✓ Player's buttock or torso must remain in contact with the ground when in the front row
- ✓ Players can block the opponents serve



Who can play?

Anyone can play sitting volleyball recreationally! In order to play on a national team, athletes must be eligible based on classification requirements; athletes will have varying physical disabilities and impairments.



What is classification?

Athletes are evaluated and placed into the categories of VS1 or VS2. Disabilities and impairments that are eligible for sitting volleyball include, but are not limited to:

- Limb deficiency - amputation or limb dysmelia
- Leg length difference
- Limb deficiency
- Hypertonia
- Ataxia
- Athetosis
- Spinal cord injuries
- Loss of range of motion
- Loss of muscle strength

There is a wide range of athletes who are eligible to play. If you have a disability or physical impairment, it is very likely you can classify for sitting volleyball.

[More Info](#)

Get Involved

Contact the Sitting Volleyball Head Coaches:

Women's: Nicole Ban
nban@volleyball.ca

Men's: Jeff Smith
jsmith@volleyball.ca

Follow our teams on Instagram:

📷 Women's: @canadawsittingvb

📷 Men's: @sittingcanucks

Web: www.volleyball.ca

