

How to start with G-Volleyball

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1. What is G-volleyball

1.1 "Volleyball for Everyone"

Society is increasingly focused on integrating people with disabilities into today's society as much as possible. This involves education, housing, work and leisure. This integration is also receiving increasing attention in sport because of its importance for everyone: sport gives pleasure and personal satisfaction, and promotes health and social contact. Sport increases self-confidence and independence, both for people with and without disabilities. In short, sport is an excellent tool for acceptance by the environment and is a positive stimulus for social integration.

Previously, we saw people with disabilities playing sports in a special association. Nowadays, we increasingly see regular associations also organizing offers for people with disabilities. Within volleyball, too, a growing number of clubs are taking the initiative in this regard.

1.2 G-volleyball

This manual is intended to provide targeted information to those who want to get involved in, or are closely involved with, G-volleyball. Successively, various topics such as the target group, coaching, membership and practical matters are discussed.

NB: where it mentions G-volleyball, G-beachvolleyball can also be read.

The volleyball federation's objective

The goal of a volleyball federation is to enable as many people as possible to enjoy volleyball. To achieve this, it is important to also organize offers for people who cannot participate in regular volleyball offers. The volleyball association, therefore, encourages and supports clubs with the ambition to offer volleyball to people with disabilities. To make volleyball accessible to as many people as possible.

2. Who is G-volleyball intended for?

With G-volleyball, we focus on players, not wheelchair-dependent, whose mental disability is such that they cannot keep up cognitively and socially emotionally with their peers in regular volleyball.

2.1 Characteristics of people with intellectual disabilities (G-volleyball)

To describe the group of people with intellectual disabilities, three aspects are considered:

- Cognitive aspect (intellectual functioning);
- Social affective aspect (cooperation, feelings);
- Motorical aspect (movement skill).

Of course, these aspects are not separate and each person is unique. It, therefore, requires specialism to ascertain a person's ability to participate in sports activities.



3. Engagement of clubs

3.1 Acceptance, Integration and Engagement

It is important for the G-volleyball players that the association considers them to be full members and that they experience them as such. Besides training and match facilities, it is also important to involve players in other activities within the association. In addition, involve the parents and supervisors of this group, just as all other parents are normally involved in the club's activities. By seeing the G-volleyball players as regular members, they will become part of the association more and faster.

3.2 Volleyball Association membership

All G-volleyball players who participate in activities (training sessions, tournaments, etc.), organized by the volleyball association or its associations and are therefore members of a regular association, can also become members of the volleyball association. If a special competition is organized for this target group, additional team fees may of course apply.

3.3 Visibility G-volleyball

It is important to highlight G-volleyball on the association's website. Using social media, such as having your own Facebook page or Instagram account, can help raise awareness of G-volleyball in the region.



4. Practicalities

People with disabilities want to play their sport as normally as possible and want to be approached in the most normal way possible. In recent years, a positive trend can be seen that more and more associations are open to including people with disabilities as full members in the association. This trend of *Organisational Integration*, setting up a department, training or team within the regular sports association, is therefore encouraged by the government and the volleyball federation.

4.1 Activities G-volleyball

When teaching volleyball skills, the emphasis should be on what is within the players' capabilities. In G-volleyball, we initially assume the techniques and tactics that also apply in regular volleyball. If necessary, they are adapted to the players' capabilities and needs. The starting point for every activity offered is: safe + inviting + playable.

4.2 Rules of play G-volleyball and G-beachvolleyball

For every player, having fun in the training/game and safety is paramount. So adapt the rules to the level of the group. For example, the ball may/ may not bounce on the ground.

4.3 Materials

Different balls can be played with depending on the level. You can also vary in net height. Balls you can use (depending on level) are beach balls, youth balls, junior balls, big balls and the official balls.

4.4 Guidance

In principle, the methodical structure of the practice material does not differ from that used in regular volleyball. In general, volleyball players will be very heterogeneous. It is therefore a good idea to describe a starting situation with objectives for each training member at the beginning of the season and tailor the exercise material to the individual (im)possibilities. Depending on the limitation, the individual (im)possibilities can vary greatly, both in terms of motorical skills, cognition and the ability to act independently or not. The trainer should always choose the exercise material and organization in such a way that it is always a challenge for everyone.

The heterogeneity of this group requires a lot of creativity, adaptability and an individual approach from the trainer. Experience shows that the ratio of the number of trainers/coaches to the number of players is, for example, on average 1 to 4 for young and starting players. For older players, it is usually 1 to 8. Furthermore, it is important to have a good head coach with trainer training, especially with the knowledge of/experience with the

target group. This head coach is responsible for organizing training sessions and coordinating with the other trainers. The head coach can also guide the other trainers in training, coaching and dealing with the target group.

4.5 Load and load capacity

Preventing overload in training/competition is a major concern in this target group. A disturbance in the balance of load-bearing capacity can have a greater and longer-lasting adverse effect on people with disabilities. Both mental and physical capacity can be improved through training. A responsible training load is tailored to the athlete's load capacity.

A proper assessment of the starting situation of individual volleyball players within the training group must be made before the training period. This can be done partly with a Medical Data Registration Form.



Appendix 1: Roadmap

Before an association can make plans regarding starting a G-volleyball department concrete, its feasibility will have to be assessed.

Below are 4 phases to help your club start a G-volleyball department. The plan offers guidelines that can be adapted to the specific situation. The guidelines and recommendations below are based on practical experience.

1.1 Phase 1: Orientation and Preparation

1.1.1 Creating support

The initiative to start a G-volleyball department often lies with a member of the club who has a connection with the target group for various reasons; a parent of a player with a disability, a special education teacher or a rehabilitation doctor from the hospital.

G-volleyball working group

Set up a G-volleyball working group, which will commit to the plan, survey feasibility and ultimately be responsible for implementing the plans and maintaining the G-volleyball team. In the working group, which also acts as a kind of advisory group, it is ideal if it includes persons with knowledge from various backgrounds. The working group ideally consists of three to five people.

Advisory group/working group G-volleyball may consist of:

- A person with organizational skills
- Volleyball association board member
- Member of the technical committee
- Trainer (with sporting knowledge and experience)
- A person with a paramedical background with knowledge of the target group
- Parent/family member of a G-volleyball player

What is important is that the whole association bears the initiative. For example, by making this a subject of discussion at a General Assembly, support can be obtained from the board, executives and members.

1.1.2 Analysing the situation

Before proceeding to set up activities and recruit members, it is a good idea to map out the association's situation and environment.

Association analysis

- Does the association already have members who fall within the target group and what are their experiences?
- Are there people in the association who have an affinity with the target group?
- Are they willing to contribute to the realization of the plans?

Environmental analysis

- Is there a club in the area with G-volleyball or one that is planning to start it up? What are their experiences?
- What other sports clubs/organizations in the area are there that cater to people with intellectual/physical disabilities? What do they offer, how is the enthusiasm and what are the experiences?
- What is the municipality's policy on sports with disabilities? What can the municipality do for the association?

It may be useful to see if there are opportunities to set up certain partnerships with other associations regarding activity offerings for this target group.

1.1.3 Defining the target group and objective

It is up to the association to make it clear for itself for whom the activities are intended. This could be for people with physical or mental disabilities or both. The choice of age limit or no age limit is also important. Broadly, the guideline can be:

Guidelines for participation in G-volleyball

- For anyone who cannot play on a regular team and;
- Who is sufficiently mobile (not wheelchair-dependent).



1.2 Phase 2: Planning of activities (Go or No-Go moment)

If it appears that the goal of starting G-volleyball within the association is feasible, it is important to list the tasks involved. It is advisable to plan for the longer term (about 3-5 years). This chapter describes the steps the association can go through for each activity.

Tasks for the working group can be divided into, among others.

- Member recruitment
- Establishing and maintaining contacts with external bodies
- Publicity and communication
- Technical policy incl. framework and accommodation (tasks head coach/qualifications head coach)

Place the above tasks in an action plan to develop them further in concrete terms. **What** will be done by **Who** in **Which** way and **When**? What costs will the above plans entail and what financial resources are involved?

1.2.1 Member recruitment

Sports participation of people with disabilities lags behind the rest of the population, so there are plenty of opportunities for a volleyball club to capitalize on this. The club must be aware, however, that potential G-volleyball members will not be queuing at the door. The number of potential athletes with disabilities, especially at the local and regional levels, is small. When planning to recruit volleyball members, it is advisable to seek information from organizations already familiar with the target group.

The agencies below can play a role in recruiting G-volleyball members:

- Municipality - municipal guide often provides a good overview of schools and patient associations present
- (Assisted) living projects
- Newspapers (regional)
- Pediatricians, rehabilitation doctor
- Rehabilitation centres
- S(B)O (Special Basic Education) level clusters 3 and 4
- Mytyschools
- Physiotherapists
- GPs
- Regional patient and disability organizations
- Volleyball playing family members
- Other volleyball clubs

Tip: visiting your target audience in person is a good option. You can then make them a concrete offer right away. A clinic is a good tool for this.

There are several ways to generate publicity:

- Word-of-mouth advertising
- Leaflets and flyers
- Posters
- Theme issue club magazine/newsletter
- Club magazine/newsletter surrounding clubs
- Local or regional magazines
- Local or regional radio and TV stations
- School newspaper/newsletter

Tip: Check out other clubs with G-volleyball and have a chat with their coordinator.

Three trial training sessions

The three trial training sessions are designed to find out whether volleyball is a suitable sport for the newly recruited members. These trial training sessions are useful to introduce the player to the sport and see if it suits the player's abilities.

Based on an introductory interview, the working group will make arrangements with the player and parents. An introductory meeting will clarify the medical, social (behavioral) and physical (load-capacity) characteristics of the potential member.

If the interview and the three trial training sessions show that volleyball is a suitable sport for this player and if the player is enthusiastic, follow-up steps can be taken with the new player. As a club, think carefully about the possibilities of admitting new players.

1.2.2 External bodies

Organizations and institutions that the association can support and/or partner with are:

The Volleyball Federation

- Supports associations by providing guidance
- Promotes and encourages current offerings
- Supports G-volleyball tournaments

Foundations

Some foundations, such as in the Netherlands the [Johan Cruyff Foundation](#) and the [Dirk Kuyt Foundation, are committed to](#) further developing disabled sports in general and may support G-volleyball events.

Municipalities

Many regions and municipalities have their own sports organizations, whose objectives include maintaining the quality of sports and physical activity. They work in addition to the support offered to associations by the national sports federations.

1.2.3 Technical policy (incl. framework and accommodation)

The association's Technical Committee will be able to support the working group on several volleyball-technical issues. Topics that need to be well coordinated between them are training, recruitment and remuneration of cadre, and availability of accommodation and materials.

1.2.4 Financial policy: Income, expenditure, grants and sponsor acquisition

The plans regarding G-volleyball also require a budget. The income and cost items of the G-volleyball are not much different from those of a regular team. The G-volleyball players are members of the association and therefore it is also customary to include this branch within the budget of the overall association.

Revenue

- Set membership fees
- Possible contribution sponsors

Necessary costs to be incurred

- Organization, remuneration framework (trainers/coaches)
- Training materials, game materials, equipment, bag
- Room hire
- Publicity and communication



1.3 Phase 3: Implementation of activities

1.3.1 Organising introductory activities

Before joining a club, people with disabilities will often want to get acquainted with the sport and taste the atmosphere at the club.

The first meeting is very important and can be done in several ways:

- Open day/sports day for people with disabilities from the neighborhood: from institutes, schools and institutions and residential groups
- Providing guest lectures in special education, special schools and rehabilitation centers
- Organizing demonstration matches and clinics

Preconditions to be met by the introductory activities:

- Connecting to potential participants' capabilities and needs
- Introductory activities are usually free for participants
- The offer should also focus on promoting social contacts
- Encourage players and parents to bring acquaintances, family and friends. They must be also welcomed and well-informed about G-volleyball and club life.
- Not a one-off, but with a follow-up offer
- Non-binding: not committing to anything
- Presence of expert guidance
- Evaluate

1.3.2 Enrolling members

The ultimate goal of the introductory activities is to register the participants as members of the association. It is wise to appoint a permanent contact person within the association for the introductory talks, to whom the new member can turn from then on. In addition to the questions raised during an introductory interview, the points below can also be clarified during the interview:

- Contribution
- Membership rights and obligations
- Contact addresses and phone numbers
- Medical aspects (optional): seek explicit consent for this due to the AVG
- Ins and outs of the association, side activities
- Matches
- Training: dates, time, place

1.3.3 Retaining members

Once the association has recruited several new members, it is important to retain them too. People with disabilities join an association not only to play sports but also to belong. Acceptance and integration are very important factors for everyone (including their parents/guardians). This can be done in many different ways:

- Promoting social contacts by organizing activities with regular members of the association
- Maintaining contact with new members and their parents/carers
- Most importantly, *"Just what can be done simply and special what must be special!"*



1.4 Phase 4: Completion

Once members have registered and the first training sessions have started, it is good to review everything and check whether everything went according to plan. Moreover, a look ahead is good to discuss which issues need attention in the future. In this phase, the following points of attention come up:

- Evaluate
- Continue

Above all, keep talking to players and parents as an association, as they can provide very targeted feedback.

1.4.1 Continuing

Once the results are known, a plan for the future can be drawn up. The key now is to retain and possibly expand members. The process of full integration and acceptance will not be realized immediately and also needs continued attention.

Some items that may come up in the longer term are:

- Promoting participation within the association
- Ensure timely follow-up of key positions
- Regularly evaluate and exchange opinions with stakeholders of players their parents/carers and volunteers
- Maintain regular contact with external agencies, individuals and organizations

Critical success factors

- Sufficient participants and expert cadre
- Good preparation
- Security within the association
- Continued focus on acceptance and integration
- Eye for continuity
- Alignment with pre-existing alternatives
- The fun of the players/players
- Dealing of players with each other

1.4.2 Training/competition tips

- Make use of 3-3 or 4-4 matches on a smaller pitch at the start
- Play with net height
- Use different types of balls depending on the level
- Adapt current practice forms (smashball, mini volleyball or other) to the level of the group
- Ensure safety, fun and experiences of success!

1.4.3 Play Unified

If you start G-volleyball and want more people at the training sessions, it is also advisable to ask people from regular volleyball to join. Regular and G-players will then play in mixed teams. This can raise the level and enjoyment of both target groups. There are even international matches organized in this way through Special Olympics.

