

Blind Appendix

Safety and impairment specific considerations

- Eliminate noise distractions (e.g. when sharing a sports hall with another group of players in an adjoining area).
- Do not leave equipment on the floor where it can be a hazard.
- Ensure players know where the boundary ropes or cones are situated by allowing time for orientation by touch.
- Ensure players are familiar with other parts of the facility such as toilets. Allow time for orientation if required.
- Remember the coach is the main point of orientation for a blind player. As such, increased verbal contact is required when coaching blind players.

Effective communication

It is more difficult to include blind people in coaching groups of sighted players both for safety reasons and to retain the integrity of the game as played by blind players. B1 players have no vision and react to sound, echo and verbal instructions to play the game.

The following general advice applies when coaching blind players:

- Always address the player by name.
- Do not walk away without telling the player.
- You may need to use touch (always ask first).
- Use key words and avoid long complicated sentences. Focus on a few words that convey what you are trying to say.
- Be logical and sequential when presenting information.

If a blind player needs guidance, it may be useful initially to enlist the help of family and friends to assist in coaching sessions as they would be more familiar with guiding the individual. Eventually, it may be that sighted players or coaches in the group would be able to assist.

Rule adaptations

- The game is played on a solid surface.
- There are five players in each team.
- Outfield players are blind although some may have light perception (eye shields and blindfolds are worn during games to counter this).
- The goalkeeper is sighted.
- There are no offside rules.
- The football contains ball-bearings and makes a noise when it moves.

Competition structure

- The FA National Blind League represents England's competition structure for blind players.
- There are European and World Competitions which are held in a two-year cycle.
- Blind football has been recognised as a Paralympic event.