



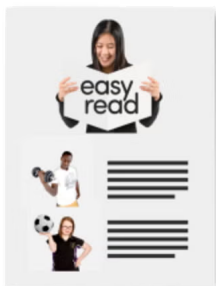
Easy
read

Let's get active

A guide to physical activity and sport for
people with a learning disability

mencap

Let's get active



Introduction

This is a guide to physical activity and sport for people with a learning disability.



In this guide there will be information about:

- What is physical activity and sport?
[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/what-physical-activity-and-sport>]



- Why is being active important? [<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/what-physical-activity-and-sport>]



- Ideas of activities and sports you can try
[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/ideas-activities-and-sports>]



- Other ways of taking part in physical activity and sport
[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/top-tips-take-part-physical-activity-and-sport>]



- Useful contacts about physical activity and sport
[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/useful-contacts-about-physical-activity-and-sport>].



Who is the guide for?

- People with a learning disability



- Families, friends and carers of someone with a learning disability



- Support workers. Support workers are paid staff who support people with a learning disability at home and to go out in the **community**.



- Sports coaches and volunteers from sports clubs and sessions.



The next part of our guide to physical activity and sport for people with a learning disability is What is physical activity and sport?

[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/what-physical-activity-and-sport>]



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What is physical activity and sport?



Physical activity means taking part in exercise to keep healthy. For example:

- walking
- cycling
- yoga.



Sport is a type of physical activity. There are usually rules you have to follow and you might play against other people to see who wins.



For example:

- football
- tennis
- boccia.



Why is being active important?

Physical activity and sport is good for your physical and mental health.



It is good for you because:

- It makes your heart beat faster.

This can help you feel happier and keeps your heart strong and healthy.



- It can help you lose weight.

This lowers the chance of you getting health problems like diabetes and heart disease. Being active helps you to live longer.



- It can help your mental health.

Being active helps you to control how you feel. When you are active, your brain makes chemicals that make you feel happy.



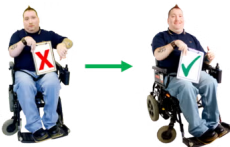
- It can make you feel more confident and help you to make new friends.



- You can learn new skills.



- It can help you sleep better.



- It gives you something to look forward to and can make you feel better if you are having a bad day.



Physical activity and sport is for everyone. Anyone can take part.



Taking part in physical activity and sport does not mean you have to compete against other people.



You can do activities and sport for fun at your local sports club or **leisure centre**.



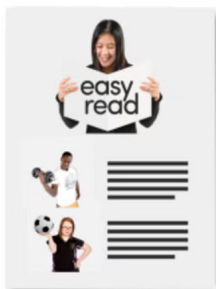
A **leisure centre** is a place where people get together and take part in activities.



Anyone can take part in physical activity but you can speak to your doctor if you are worried about your health.



The next part of our guide to physical activity and sport for people with a **learning disability** is Ideas for activities and sports [<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/ideas-activities-and-sports>].



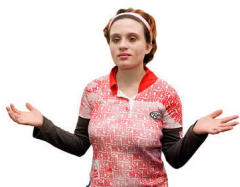
Or you can go back to the introduction to choose to go to a different part of the Let's get active guide [<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/lets-get-active>].



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Ideas for activities and sports



If you do not know what activity or sport you want to do, you could think about why you want to do an activity.



- Do you want to meet new people?



If you want to meet new people, you could try a team sport.
For example football, basketball or netball.



- Do you want to exercise on your own?



If you want to exercise on your own, you could try an activity or sport you can do on your own.

For example walking, running or swimming.



- Do you want to try something new?



If you want to try something new, you could think about activities you might enjoy and try them.

For example rowing or golf.



- You could go to multisports sessions. Multisports sessions let you try out lots of different activities and sports.



Try lots of different activities. Then keep doing the ones you enjoy the most.



- Think about any activities and sports you have done before that you enjoyed.

For example, was there anything you liked doing in PE lessons at school?



Physical activities and sports you could try:

- **Walking**

It is very easy to fit walking into your life. You could walk instead of driving, getting the bus or a taxi.



- **Running**

You can run on your own or with family and friends. There might be a local running group you could join. All you need is a pair of trainers.



- **Cycling**

You can cycle for fun or as a way of getting somewhere instead of getting the bus or driving. If you do not have a bike you could find a local cycling session or bike hire near you.



- **Football**

You can play with friends and family in your local park. There might be a local football club you could join.



- **Swimming**

You can swim in your local public swimming pool. You can do it for fun or you can have lessons to help you get better. There might be a local swimming club you could join.



- **Badminton**

You can play badminton at lots of **leisure** centres. There might be a local badminton club you could join.



- **Exercise in the gym**

There are lots of activities you can do in the gym. You could try an exercise class or use the equipment. For example lifting weights or using the rowing machine.



- **Dancing**

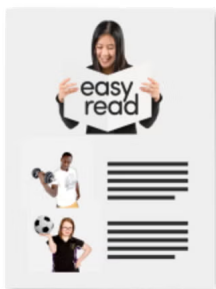
You can try dancing to music on your own or with friends. There might be a local club you could join.



There are lots of other activities and sports you can try. Look on the internet for more ideas and use the Useful Contacts [<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/useful-contacts-about-physical-activity-and-sport>], page at the end of this guide to find activities where you live.



The next part of our guide to physical activity and sport for people with a **learning disability** is Top tips to take part in physical activity and sport [<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/top-tips-take-part-physical-activity-and-sport>].



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Top tips to take part in physical activity and sport



Take part with a friend, family member or carer.



Visit the place a few days before the session so you know what it looks like and how to get there.



Try activities that do not cost a lot of money.

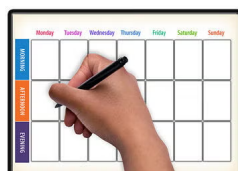
For example walking, running, cycling or football.



Do not worry about what other people think. It is more important to have a good time.



If you are not sure if an activity is right for you, talk to the session leader first.



Try and plan to go to your activity at the same time every week. This will make a routine and keep you active.



Do not worry if you try something and do not like it. There are lots of different activities you can try to find what you enjoy the most.



Next time you visit your doctor you can ask them for advice about physical activity and sport and talk about things you might want to try.



Some doctors have an exercise referral scheme. An exercise referral scheme is when a doctor or medical expert helps someone exercise safely to help them to be more healthy.



Other ways to be part of activities or sports

You can be part of activities and sports even if you do not take part.



You could buy tickets to go and watch a sport you like.

For example you could watch your favourite football team.



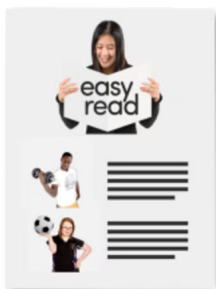
You could **volunteer** and help out at a sports club or event. You might set up equipment or help to lead activities.



The next part of our guide to physical activity and sport for people with a

learning disability is Useful contacts about physical activity and sport

[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/easyread/useful-contacts-about-physical-activity-and-sport>].



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Useful contacts about physical activity and sport



This page has some organisations you can contact to find out about physical activity and sport where you live.

Mencap Sport



Mencap Sport can tell you how to find out about activities and sports where you live.

Website: <https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/mencap-sport>
[<https://www.mencap.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/mencap-sport>]

Email: sport@mencap.org.uk [[mailto: sport@mencap.org.uk](mailto:sport@mencap.org.uk)]

Mencap Network Partners



Some local Mencap groups organise physical activity and sport sessions. Or they may know about activities where you live.

Website: Search for your local group at <https://www.mencap.org.uk/what-we-do/network-partners> [<https://www.mencap.org.uk/what-we-do/network-partners>]

Special Olympics GB



There are lots of Special Olympics GB clubs that have a range of sports for people with a **learning disability**.

Website: Search for your local club at
<https://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/clubs/find-a-club/east-midlands>
[<https://www.specialolympicsgb.org.uk/clubs/find-a-club/east-midlands>]

Email: info@sogb.org.uk [<mailto:info@sogb.org.uk>]

Active Partnerships



Active Partnerships work with local groups and organisations to make more ways that people can be physically active. You can contact your local Active Partnership to find out about activities and volunteering where you live.

Website: <https://activepartnerships.org/the-network/>
[<https://activepartnerships.org/the-network/>]

Email: info@activepartnerships.org [<mailto:info@activepartnerships.org>]



Local councils

Contact the **Leisure** or Public Health teams in your local council to find out what activities they offer.



Leisure centres and swimming pools

Contact your local leisure centre or swimming pool to find out what activities they do and how you can take part.



National Governing Bodies (NGBs)

NGBs want more people to do their sport. If you know what sport you want to do, you can contact the NGB of that sport.

Website: <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/national-governing-bodies> [<https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/national-governing-bodies>]

Activity Alliance



Activity Alliance want to make sure disabled people can have active lives.

Website: <https://www.activityalliance.org.uk/>
[<https://www.activityalliance.org.uk/>]

Phone: 0808 175 6991

Every Body Moves

You can search for disability sport and physical activity where you live.

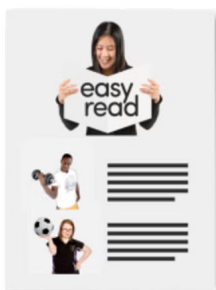
Website: <https://everybodymoves.org.uk/> [<https://everybodymoves.org.uk/>].

Volunteering



You can get **involved** in physical activity and sport by helping at events and sessions where you live.

Website: <https://www.getvolunteering.co.uk/>
[<https://www.getvolunteering.co.uk/>].



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