

Fact Sheet

Sport Modifications

Deaf athletes participate in all sports, with very little if any modifications. The following simple modifications can easily be incorporated into an integrated setting.

1. Use lights to start and end a race

In sports such as swimming lights will be used to start the race. The lights can be found on the side of the pool directly under the swimmer which is connected to the starters' gun. When the gun is fired, the lights go on to indicate the start of the race. This system can be used for other sports to substitute for the traditional starters gun / siren. Another alternative if lights are not available would be to simply raise/drop arm to start a race.

2. Referees to use visual signs to gain attention

Referees can use visual signals to gain the attention of an athlete during competition using flags or basic gesturing such as waving.

3. Use a tap on the shoulder to gain attention

A deaf captain might need attention from the referee when requesting an explanation about a rule during the play. It is more likely the captain will touch the referee on his/her shoulder for attention. It is an acceptable thing for deaf people to tap people for attention.

4. Visual aids for scoring

Visual aids for scoring should be used at all times such as electronic scoreboards or whiteboards / blackboards.

5. A few seconds to explain

A deaf athlete playing sport with hearing players will usually stop if everyone else around them has stopped, such as when a referee has stopped play. A few extra seconds should be taken, where practical, to explain the referee's decisions to the deaf athlete.

6. Contact Deaf Sports Australia for further info