



How to approach or get involved in a community group or club



Useful questions to ask when contacting clubs or facilities

When contacting groups or facilities you might find the following questions are useful to ask:

- > Are there any "come and try" days where the group specifically welcomes new people?
- > Can I attend to see if I like it before I pay any fees or buy equipment?
- > What fees and expenses are involved? Is there a concession rate?
- > Is there an expected level of competency?
- > Do I need to wear particular shoes or clothes?
- > Is there any special equipment needed?
- > What day and time are activities and how long do they last?
- > What is the address of the meeting place?
- > When I arrive is there someone I should introduce myself to?
- > Are there particular age groups and can I play down an age level?
- > Do you have regular social activities to get involved in?
- > Do the same people attend each week?
- > What else can I do at your club? Are there any non-playing roles?

Be prepared with a list of questions you would like to ask before you contact a group or club and be open and honest with what you would like to ask them.



Be honest and upfront

- > Explain what it is you're looking for e.g. I would like to improve my fitness or I would like to join a club/group to meet new people and learn new skills, I've never played tennis before but I would like to start, do you have any coaching lessons I could participate in?
- > If you feel it is necessary, inform the group leader/coach that you have a disability and explain to them the supports you may need to become involved in the activity.
- > Highlight the things that you are good at and what you can contribute to the club or group. e.g. I'm creative, I'm good with the internet, I like being on committees, I'm good with people etc.

Further information:
Remember you can contact
Australian Inclusion Network
for help finding and
contacting a club
or group!

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Be honest and upfront continued...

- > Encourage the club or group to treat you/ the participant the same as anyone else and role model this behaviour when you are there. This means explaining to the club or groups your intentions. For example, you may say that you are keen for mainstream involvement or that you would like to join the group to work on your social skills.
- > If you are attending a club/group and you need some assistance, ask the coach or the instructor of the group if you can bring someone to assist you, until you are comfortable to do it on your own.
- > Provide the coach or instructor with information that they may need to assist them in making the activity a success for you.
- > If inclusion is what you're after, explain that you want to be involved in a mainstream group.
- > Feel free to contact Australian Inclusion Network for advice.

Consider non-playing roles or pathways

- > If you are not at the required skill level to join your local club or group, ask them if there are other things that they can suggest that may build on this or if there is a pathway program. Remember that it is only a pathway program when there is a clear transition into mainstream.
- > We often rule out an activity (especially sports) simply because an individual can't play or doesn't want to. You could consider non-playing roles within clubs. There are many examples of non playing roles, such as umpiring, training, time-keeping, cheering, club committee member, coaching, volunteering, administration, water runner and many more.



“Having strong connections with friends, family and the wider community is an essential ingredient for a productive and fulfilling life... it's all about joining in and connecting with others.”

Act Belong Commit



Inclusion brings many benefits to us all:

Benefits for the community:

- * Positive influence on community attitudes such as cooperation, understanding and loyalty
- * Improved family and community connectedness
- * Safer communities

Benefits to individuals:

- * Improved self-esteem and confidence for individuals
- * Reduction in stress, anxiety and depression
- * Improved concentration, enhanced memory/learning and better performance at school and work