



 PARALYMPICS
NEW ZEALAND

 SPIRIT
OF GOLD

Introduction

Paralympics New Zealand (PNZ) has produced this terminology guide which is designed to assist with the language of Para sport.

We hope it proves valuable to you as we continue to raise the profile of New Zealand Paralympians and Para athletes and their outstanding sporting achievements, and achieve the Paralympics New Zealand vision of “through Para sport lives will be transformed”.

Use of the terms ‘Para sport’ and ‘Para athlete’ in New Zealand

Paralympics New Zealand is the National Paralympic Committee (NPC) for New Zealand and is the primary guardian of all International Paralympic Committee Intellectual Properties (IP) in New Zealand including all Paralympic Terminology, plus the symbol, Flag, Motto, Anthem, Identifications and Designations, emblems and the Flame and Torches.

Organisations that wish to use the Paralympic properties including use of terminology are encouraged to read this guide to gain an understanding of Para sport terminology.

To request consent to use Paralympic properties in relation to events, programmes, etc run by organisations please contact Paralympics New Zealand.

For a full list of Para sports refer to [summer Para sports](#) and [winter Para sports](#).

Para sport based terms

Use	Instead of	Description
<p>Para sport e.g. Para swimming, Para cycling (refer to page 6 for a full list of Para sports):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital P • Space (no hyphen), then the sport name in lower case <p>Note - the exception of Shooting Para sport where the sequence of the words is reversed.</p>	Para-Sport, para swim, disabled swimming etc	<p>Para sport refers to all sport for athletes with an eligible impairment, whether they feature on the Paralympic Games programme or not.</p> <p>The International Federation must be recognised by the IPC and therefore operate under the IPC Athlete Classification Code.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games 2. Tokyo 2020 Paralympics 3. Tokyo 2020 4. Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games 5. Beijing 2022 Paralympics 6. Beijing 2022 	<p>Paralympic Games Tokyo</p> <p>Paralympics Tokyo</p> <p>2020 Tokyo</p> <p>Paralympic Winter Games Beijing</p> <p>Paralympic Winter Games</p> <p>2022 Beijing</p>	<p>Option 1 - Formal full name of Paralympic Winter or Summer Games in the correct format.</p> <p>Option 2 & 3 - Informal name and format for Paralympic Winter or Summer Games. Not to be used in mass or formal communications.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paralympic Games 2. Paralympics 	<p>Para-Games</p> <p>Para-Olympics or Paraplegic Olympics</p> <p>Olympics</p>	<p>Option 1 - Non year specific games term. The Paralympic Games are separate to the Olympics.</p> <p>Option 2 - Informal abbreviation for Paralympic Games. Not to be used in formal communications.</p>
<p>London 2022 World Para Athletics Championships</p> <p>PNZ Para Cycling Programme</p> <p>Para Sport Manager</p>	<p>World Para Athletics 2022</p> <p>NZ Para cycling Programme</p> <p>PNZ Para Sport Manager</p>	<p>World Championship event names are all in upper case. They follow the format of city name, year, 'World', sport name, 'Championships'.</p> <p>Programme names are all in upper case.</p> <p>PNZ staff titles are all in upper case.</p>
<p>World Para Athletics</p> <p>World Para Alpine Skiing</p>	<p>IPC Athletics</p> <p>IPC Skiing</p>	<p>International Federations names are all in upper case. They follow the format of World, followed by the sport name.</p>
<p>Classification</p>	<p>Handicap, categorisation, etc</p>	<p>Athlete classification is a defining feature of Para sport. It is defined as grouping eligible athletes into sport classes according to how much their impairment affects fundamental activities for each specific sport or discipline.</p>
<p>Paralympics New Zealand</p> <p>PNZ</p>	<p>New Zealand Paralympics</p> <p>Para NZ</p> <p>Para Olympics NZ</p>	<p>The only acceptable abbreviation for Paralympics New Zealand is PNZ. Not to be used in headings to start sentences and only after a full version of the term has been used.</p>

Para athlete based terms

Use	Instead of	Description
Paralympian	Para olympian or Olympian Former Paralympian Ex-Paralympian	A Para athlete who has competed at the Paralympic Games Paralympian is a title for life, it is not removed after retirement
Para athlete Para swimmer Paralympic hopeful	Paralympian (if have not competed at the Paralympic Games)	A Para athlete is a person with an eligible impairment who participates in Para sport. Specifically, the term if used for athletes who have not yet competed at a Paralympic Games, or for amateur athletes. The International Federation of their sport must be recognised by the IPC.
Disabled athlete	Cripple, handicap, invalid, impaired, etc	These nouns all have negative connotations in the English language and should not be used
Able-bodied athlete or Olympic athlete	An athlete without a disability	As per the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) guidelines

Information on impairment is of secondary importance to a Para athlete's achievements, it is part of their story but it is not the only part and certainly not the main point. It should not be the focus of the item/article and must be a factual statement.

Disability based terms

Use	Instead of	Description
Disability or specific impairment e.g. has an intellectual impairment, has cerebral palsy, has a spinal injury, is an amputee, has tetraplegia, etc	Suffers from cerebral palsy, handicap, etc Inflicted with cerebral palsy, handicap, etc	Disability is a statement of fact or refers to a medical condition. 'Suffering' portrays the individual as being in a weak, frail or tragic position.
A Para athlete who has a spinal cord injury or a Para athlete with paraplegia	A spinal injury athlete or a paraplegic	A person might have a disability or impairment but it does not define them as a person.
Wheelchair user	Is wheelchair bound	Terms like 'bound' or 'confined' should be avoided as they infer entrapment. Instead a wheelchair is an aid or tool, which a person uses.
Amputation or amputee	Stumps	Someone 'with an amputation' or is an 'amputee' are both correct terms. However, bear in mind that sometimes people have a similar impairment but not from amputation, it may be present from birth.

FULL LIST OF PARA SPORTS

Para sports - Summer	Para sports - Winter
Para archery	Para alpine skiing
Para athletics	Para biathlon
Para badminton	Para cross-country skiing
Boccia	Para ice hockey
Para canoe	Para snowboard
Para cycling	Wheelchair curling
Para dance sport	
Para equestrian	
Football 5-a-side	
Football 7-a-side	
Goalball	
Para judo	
Para powerlifting	
Para rowing	
Para sailing	
Shooting Para sport	
Sitting volleyball	
Para swimming	
Para table tennis	
Para taekwondo	
Para triathlon	
Wheelchair basketball	
Wheelchair fencing	
Wheelchair rugby	
Wheelchair tennis	

Behaviour: Being with and around disabled people

Assistance: If you see a situation that you think requires it, offer assistance, but remember it will not always be accepted. You should always ask if an individual would like assistance before rushing in and imposing yourself on them. Your help may not be required. However, don't feel awkward about offering to help, it is perfectly polite and acceptable to do so. Also, if your assistance is declined on one occasion, do not be offended or put off asking in the future. It is the same as if you were asking an able-bodied person if they want help – they might not.

Communication: Always speak directly with the person rather than their companion, assistant or interpreter. Remember to use your usual manner and speak in your normal tone – a physically disabled person does not necessarily have a hearing or intellectual impairment so be aware that you could sound condescending.

Behave naturally: For example, shake hands with a disabled person as you would any other person, even if they are wearing a prosthesis or have limited movement of their hand or arm.

Everyday phrases: There is no need to feel self-conscious about using everyday phrases. Some everyday phrases are perfectly acceptable; i.e. some people who use wheelchairs will state themselves 'I'm going for a walk'. It is also perfectly acceptable to say to a visually impaired person 'I will see you later'. Using common sense, everyday phrases of this kind are most unlikely to cause any offence.

Behaviour related to impairment groups

Communication impairment:

- Be aware that some disabled people may have additional preferred methods of communicating and respect their requirements. They may need more time, use electronic devices, and require Braille or other tools to assist them in communication
- For specific information, ask the individual (if this is unsuccessful) ask their permission to speak with their sport assistant, parent or carer.
- Demonstrate what you mean if you are not getting the message across successfully verbally
- Do not interrupt, correct, speak for the athlete or finish sentences for them.

Intellectual impairment:

- If you are talking to someone with an intellectual impairment, always use simple, plain language and give them time to answer your questions. Tell the person if you did not quite understand what was said and ask them to repeat what they have said, rather than letting them believe that you have understood them
- Do not interrupt, correct, speak for the athlete or finish sentences for them
- You may need to use more gestures/pictures if you are not getting the message across successfully verbally.

Visual impairment:

- When talking to a person who has visual impairment, always identify yourself and others in your group
- It is very important to provide verbal descriptions of visual things that are happening
- Never pat or touch a guide dog while it is in the harness – just ignore it. The animal is working when it is in the harness. It has a very important job to do and distracting it may harm its owner
- Announce both your entrance and departure or exit from a room
- Let the person know if an obstacle is present that cannot be detected with their stick
- When you offer to guide a person with visual impairment allow him/her to take your arm
- If you assist a person to find a seat, guide him/her there and place the person's hand on the back or arm of the chair.

Wheelchairs users:

- Be aware that a wheelchair is part of a person's personal space so do not lean on it or hold on to it unless of course offered permission to do so
- Place yourself at eye level with the wheelchair user, by sitting down next to them
- Do not patronise a person who uses a wheelchair by patting him/her on the head or shoulders
- It is perfectly acceptable to offer to help guide the wheelchair or negotiate obstacles such as doors or steep inclines. But only push someone's wheelchair if they have requested your help

If in doubt, ask. If you are unsure of what to do in a particular situation, ask.