

WHAT HAPPENS DURING BOCCIA CLASSIFICATION

What is classification?

Classification is done by a panel of trained medical and technical professionals as a way of grouping people together based on levels of functional ability in order to ensure that players compete on an even level. There are three parts to classification which help determine an athletes' grade:

1. Physical assessment
2. Functional movement tests
3. Observation during competition

1. Physical assessment

To begin, the classifiers will collect personal information about the athlete's such as name, contact details and date of birth. From here, the athlete is questioned about their medical history, including an overview of their diagnosis, a list of any medications used and an account of any surgeries had.

2. Functional movement tests

The classifiers then assess each limb for general reflexes, spasticity testing, muscle strength, coordination and range of movement, as well as general mobility and trunk function. The athlete is also required to perform some basic ball manipulation and throwing skills used to play boccia. Following this an athlete is usually assigned a grade.



3. Observation during competition

The athlete is then observed during competition to see if the results from functional testing are also evident during play. If an athlete performs in the same way during competition as during testing the grade is confirmed subject to review. After several reviews without any changes this is confirmed. Should an athlete display characteristics of falling in between two different classifications however, they will be placed in the higher of the two grades with additional observations to be done.

4. Changes to classification

Due to a number of reasons, the functional ability of an athlete may change over time. For this reason athletes may change grades over the course of their lifetime and are advised to notify of any noticeable changes in function. Similarly, classifiers monitor progress from year to year and advise of any reviews that need to be conducted.