

EASY ADAPTED PE

What Can This Student Do?

5 Adapted PE Activity Cards

FOR DIFFERENT ABILITY PROFILES

Start with what the student can do.

Use the movement goal to modify the task, extend the challenge, and offer meaningful choices across grade levels.

Inside

Wheelchair user and limited upper body function

Sensory needs and autism

Visual impairment and low vision

Limited grasp and hand function

Limited verbal communication

Practical ideas for elementary, middle, and high school PE

HOW TO USE THESE CARDS

Adapt by ability and movement goal

Each card begins with a functional profile, then shows how one movement goal can remain meaningful across ages and ability levels.

1	Identify abilities Observe how the student moves, communicates, attends, and accesses equipment.
2	Name the movement goal Separate the purpose of the activity from one traditional way of performing it.
3	Adapt the task Change the action, rules, time, distance, repetitions, or support.
4	Adapt equipment and environment Change size, weight, contrast, sound, placement, boundaries, or distractions
5	Keep it age appropriate Preserve dignity and relevance while changing access—not expectations for belonging.
6	Modify or extend Make entry easier, then identify a clear next challenge.
7	Offer choice Let the student choose equipment, target, distance, partner, or challenge level.

Use professional judgment.

These profiles are starting points, not prescriptions. Observe the individual student and align decisions with the IEP, safety needs, student preferences, and input from the educational team. Do not assume that students with the same diagnosis need the same adaptations.

ACTIVITY CARD 1

Wheelchair User and Limited Upper Body Function

STUDENT MAY BE ABLE TO	MOVEMENT GOAL
• push, tap, swipe, or release • move one arm through a small range • track a large target • choose equipment or targets	Propel an object toward a target with direction and control.

TARGET ROLL

Place a lightweight ball on a tray, table, or ramp. The student uses an available movement to send it toward a target.

TASK ADAPTATIONS	EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
• Allow pushing instead of throwing • Place the object within available range • Use a ramp or partner assisted release • Allow multiple attempts	• Beach, foam, or textured ball • Cardboard or commercial ramp • Large cones, pins, blocks, or cups • Stable seated position and clear pathway

ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Knock Down the Castle Send the ball toward cups, blocks, or pins.	Target Challenge Choose among targets worth 1, 3, or 5 points.	Boccia Style Play Aim close to a target ball; add teams, rounds, and strategy.

MODIFY / MAKE IT EASIER	EXTEND / PROGRESS IT	UDL / CHOICE
• Move target closer • Use larger or lighter ball • Use ramp • Stabilize ball	• Increase distance • Reduce target size • Add directional targets • Add strategy	• Ball or target • Ramp or direct push • Distance • Partner or individual

ACTIVITY CARD 2

Sensory Needs and Autism

STUDENT MAY BENEFIT FROM	MOVEMENT GOAL
• predictable routines • clearly defined spaces • visual directions • reduced sensory load • movement or regulation options	Move through space while controlling speed, direction, and body position.

PATHWAY CHALLENGE

Create a clear movement route with floor markers, cones, lines, hoops, or visual cards. The student follows an agreed movement pattern.

TASK ADAPTATIONS	EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
• Give one direction at a time • Use a visual sequence or first then support • Reduce waiting and preview transitions • Allow repetition	• Floor spots, arrows, cones, and picture cards • Clear start, finish, and boundaries • Reduced clutter or quieter area • Headphones when appropriate

ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Animal Path Move between pictures by walking, marching, crawling, or another accessible action.	Fitness Route Follow a short sequence such as walk, step, carry, wall push, return.	Personal Circuit Choose age appropriate cardio, resistance, balance, or target stations.

MODIFY / MAKE IT EASIER	EXTEND / PROGRESS IT	UDL / CHOICE
• Use fewer stations • Repeat same route • Provide model • Reduce distractions	• Add stations • Fade prompts • Use visual checklist • Design part of route	• Movement • Equipment • Station order • Location or level

ACTIVITY CARD 3

Visual Impairment and Low Vision

STUDENT MAY BE ABLE TO	MOVEMENT GOAL
• track high contrast objects • locate objects by sound • follow tactile or auditory cues • move through familiar spaces • orient toward a voice	Send an object toward a target using auditory, tactile, or visual information.

SOUND TARGET

Provide an audible or high contrast target. The student rolls or sends a ball from a consistent starting position toward the cue.

TASK ADAPTATIONS	EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
• Let the student explore the space first • Use consistent target placement • Give verbal orientation and extra time • Use tactile start markers	• Bell or audible ball • High contrast ball and target • Contrasting tape or textured marker • Reduce unnecessary background noise

ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Roll to the Sound A teacher or partner sounds a cue beside or behind the target.	Accuracy Zone Aim for accessible zones and score based on the zone reached.	Goalball Inspired Play Send an audible ball toward a defined target area using modified rules.

MODIFY / MAKE IT EASIER	EXTEND / PROGRESS IT	UDL / CHOICE
• Move target closer • Increase target size • Strengthen cue • Keep placement fixed	• Vary target location • Increase distance • Fade prompts • Add strategy	• Auditory or visual cue • Ball type • Distance • Individual or partner

ACTIVITY CARD 4

Limited Grasp and Hand Function

STUDENT MAY BE ABLE TO	MOVEMENT GOAL
• push with palm or forearm • tap or contact a large surface • use two hands together • release more easily than grasp • use an adapted implement	Strike or propel an object using controlled contact.

PUSH TAP OR STRIKE

Place a lightweight object in an accessible position. The student contacts it with a hand, forearm, adapted implement, or another functional movement.

TASK ADAPTATIONS	EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
• Remove the need to grip • Enlarge the striking surface • Stabilize or suspend the object • Slow the object and allow repeated contacts	• Balloon, beach ball, or foam ball • Paddle with enlarged handle or strap • Pool noodle or lightweight racquet • Table or low accessible surface

ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Balloon Tap Keep a balloon moving or tap it toward a large target.	Tabletop Target Strike Send a ball across a low surface toward scoring zones.	Adapted Paddle Challenge Send an object over a line or toward a target; add rallies or points.

MODIFY / MAKE IT EASIER	EXTEND / PROGRESS IT	UDL / CHOICE
• Use larger object • Suspend or stabilize • Reduce distance • Slow movement	• Use smaller object • Increase distance • Add moving target • Build partner rally	• Hand or forearm • Adapted implement • Ball type • Stationary or moving

ACTIVITY CARD 5

Limited Verbal Communication

STUDENT MAY BE ABLE TO	MOVEMENT GOAL
- choose by pointing, gaze, gesture, symbol, or AAC - follow visual directions - respond to demonstrations - show preferences without speech - participate with communication supports	Make movement decisions and participate actively in physical activity.

CHOOSE YOUR CHALLENGE

Present two or three movement options. The student chooses the activity, equipment, target, or challenge through their preferred communication method.

TASK ADAPTATIONS	EQUIPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
- Offer two or three clear options - Use short concrete language and visuals - Model each option - Allow response time and honor nonverbal responses	- Picture cards or choice board - AAC device or yes no cards - Color coded equipment - Consistent symbols in an accessible position

ELEMENTARY	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Pick and Play Choose between two options such as roll or kick, then complete it.	Challenge Menu Choose an accuracy, partner, or fitness task and a level.	Personal Activity Plan Select age appropriate recreation or fitness, equipment, partner, and level.

MODIFY / MAKE IT EASIER	EXTEND / PROGRESS IT	UDL / CHOICE
- Offer two choices - Use clear pictures - Model options - Keep symbols consistent	- Sequence activities - Select challenge level - Self monitor - Increase independence	- Speech, gesture, or gaze - Pictures or AAC - Activity - Partner or level

Target Roll

Functional access focus

wheelchair access

Limited upper body movement

STATION CARD 1

Easy Adapted PE

MOVEMENT GOAL

Propel an object toward a target with direction and control.

EQUIPMENT AND SETUP

Lightweight ball; tray, table, or ramp; large target. Place the ball within reach and keep the travel path clear.

STUDENT ACTION

Push, tap, swipe, or release the ball toward the selected target.

PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE

- Name the target and demonstrate once.
- Position equipment within reach.
- Wait and ask before physical assistance.
- Reset materials and record the result if requested.

MODIFY MAKE IT EASIER

- Move target closer
- Use larger or lighter ball
- Add a ramp

EXTEND PROGRESS IT

- Increase distance
- Reduce target size
- Add points or strategy

OFFER CHOICE

- Ball
- Target
- Ramp or direct push

CUT CUT

Pathway Challenge

Functional access focus

Predictability, sensory regulation and clear boundaries

STATION CARD 2

Easy Adapted PE

MOVEMENT GOAL

Move through space while controlling speed, direction, and body position.

EQUIPMENT AND SETUP

Floor spots, cones, arrows, or picture cards. Create three to five steps with a clear start and finish.

STUDENT ACTION

Follow the pathway using an accessible movement such as walking, wheeling, stepping, or carrying.

PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE

- Preview the route and show the visual sequence.
- Use the same short direction at each step.
- Reduce waiting and unnecessary talking.
- Watch for overload and offer the planned regulation option.

MODIFY MAKE IT EASIER

- Use fewer steps
- Model each action
- Move to quieter space

EXTEND PROGRESS IT

- Add a station
- Fade prompts
- Let student design a step

OFFER CHOICE

- Movement
- Order
- Equipment or location

Sound Target

STATION CARD 3

Easy Adapted PE

Functional access focus

Visual impairment low vision or auditory access

MOVEMENT GOAL

Send an object toward a target using auditory tactile or high contrast information.

EQUIPMENT AND SETUP

Audible or high contrast ball; sound or contrast target; tactile start marker. Orient the student to the target and keep the starting area consistent.

STUDENT ACTION

Roll or send the ball from the marked position toward the target cue.

PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE

- Identify yourself and describe the space.
- Provide the agreed sound or visual cue.
- Keep background noise low.
- Ask before guiding; warn before moving equipment.

MODIFY MAKE IT EASIER

- Move target closer
- Strengthen the cue
- Keep target fixed

EXTEND PROGRESS IT

- Increase distance
- Vary target location
- Add zones or scoring

OFFER CHOICE

- Cue type
- Ball
- Distance or partner

CUT ······ CUT

Push Tap or Strike

STATION CARD 4

Easy Adapted PE

Functional access focus

Limited grasp hand function or reduced grip strength

MOVEMENT GOAL

Strike or propel an object using controlled contact.

EQUIPMENT AND SETUP

Balloon, beach ball, foam ball, or adapted implement. Stabilize or suspend the object at an accessible height and distance.

STUDENT ACTION

Contact the object with a hand, forearm, two hands, or an adapted implement.

PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE

- Place equipment within the available range.
- Stabilize equipment only as needed.
- Allow repeated contacts and extra time.
- Do not force a grip or use unauthorized hand over hand.

MODIFY MAKE IT EASIER

- Use larger object
- Suspend or stabilize
- Slow the movement

EXTEND PROGRESS IT

- Increase distance
- Use smaller target
- Build a partner rally

OFFER CHOICE

- Body part
- Implement
- Ball or target

Choose Your Challenge

STATION CARD 5
Easy Adapted PE

Functional access focus
Limited verbal communication or use of
AAC gestures or eye gaze

MOVEMENT GOAL Make movement decisions and participate actively in physical activity.		EQUIPMENT AND SETUP Two or three activity pictures, choice board, AAC, or color coded equipment. Place choices where the student can see, reach, point, or direct eye gaze.	
STUDENT ACTION Select an activity, equipment option, target, partner, or challenge level and complete the choice.		PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE • Present two or three clear options. • Model each option using short language. • Allow enough time; do not answer for the student. • Honor speech, gesture, gaze, symbol, AAC, or body movement.	
MODIFY MAKE IT EASIER • Offer two choices • Use clear pictures • Keep symbols consistent	EXTEND PROGRESS IT • Sequence activities • Choose challenge level • Self monitor results	OFFER CHOICE • Activity • Equipment • Partner or level	

CUT · · · · · CUT

Create Your Own Station Card

Use this editable template for another activity or student access need.

ACTIVITY/MOVEMENT GOAL	EQUIPMENT AND SETUP
MODIFY/MAKE IT EASIER	PARAPROFESSIONAL ROLE
EXTEND/PROGRESS	STUDENT SAFETY/REMINDERS
OFFER CHOICE	

Keep Adapting With Confidence

You do not need a separate activity for every disability. You need a flexible way to identify what the student can do and preserve the movement goal.

Keep asking What can this student do? <i>and</i> What is the movement goal?	Then decide how to Adapt the task Modify or extend the challenge Offer meaningful choices
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Find more practical Adapted PE support

Visit Easy Adapted PE for resources and videos designed to make planning, teaching, adapting, and assessing easier.

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The goal is not to make the student fit the activity.

It is to make the activity fit the student.