

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is volunteering?***

Volunteering is “any activity that involves spending time, unpaid, doing something that aims to benefit the environment or someone (individuals or groups) other than, or in addition to, close relatives.”

### ***Who are volunteers?***

Anyone can volunteer in sport. You don't have to be a player or a parent to get involved in helping out. Nor do you even have to have an interest in a specific sport. There are a large number of different roles that you can get involved in, so whether you want a new challenge or want to use the skills you have developed at work or school, there is something for everyone.

### ***What do volunteers in sport do?***

Volunteers in sport are the largest contributor to the voluntary sector, with almost 6 million individuals giving over a billion hours a year.

Sports volunteers give their time at over 100,000 affiliated sports clubs nationwide, contributing the equivalent of £14bn to the economy.

The variety of volunteering roles is enormous. Although there are lots of technical posts such as coaching and officiating where you need at least some previous knowledge of the sport, and usually require specific training and qualifications, there are a host of other positions available where previous sporting knowledge is by no means essential. Sport needs volunteers to help with looking after the finances, creating publicity, attracting sponsorship, designing web sites, helping get players to fixtures, making lunches and teas or just being on hand to provide support at one-off events.

### ***How much time does it take?***

The time varies according to the role you choose. Being honest with yourself and others about the level of commitment you can give will help you find the right role for you (even if you can give just 1 or 2 hours a month).

You'll find that there are many opportunities to volunteer that require only occasional involvement and a minimal amount time, as well as a large number of opportunities that you can dip in and dip out of. Most sports clubs, teams or community organisations that provide sports participation would welcome any contribution in terms of time and effort you can give. Of course there are some roles and responsibilities that require a larger or more regular commitment.

Whatever your contribution, it is an invaluable part of the making sport happen.

Many sports clubs and organisations, produce role outlines so that you, as a volunteer, know exactly what your role and contribution will be. We recommend that you discuss with a local club what roles they have and what time commitment they expect - websites such as [www.do-it.org](http://www.do-it.org) may also provide a useful indication of the length of time required for particular roles.

## ***Why should I volunteer?***

Volunteering is a two way process with the organisation AND the volunteer gaining from the relationship.

As a volunteer you could benefit from:

- ❑ A sense of pride and achievement  
The opportunity to refine skills and develop new skills
- ❑ Being able to effectively show your commitment and your skills for your CV
- ❑ Real participation in the community
- ❑ Enjoyment, satisfaction and meeting new people (having fun!)
- ❑ As a club/organisation they can benefit from:
- ❑ An enthusiastic source of support
- ❑ You injecting new ideas and energy
- ❑ You helping them to do things not otherwise possible

Volunteering is a tremendously rewarding experience and within sport you get to see the enjoyment gained by the participants, and in some cases contribute to the development of a young athlete into an international competitor - indeed Olympic and Paralympic Champions such as Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson, Denise Lewis and Sir Steven Redgrave have all hailed the contribution of volunteers in their career successes.

## ***Is there room for me to volunteer?***

There is always room for volunteers! You may just need to be pro-active in finding your ideal volunteering role.

Whether you want to be a netball coach or newsletter writer, a club secretary or event organiser the volunteer role is out there. Whatever you can contribute in terms of time and expertise will make a huge difference and ensure that we can continue to offer such a broad range of sport opportunities in this country.

## ***What if I can't play any sport?***

First and foremost, sport is for everyone and whatever your past experiences there is definitely an avenue for you to help develop sport in this country.

In fact there is a huge demand for volunteers to help clubs, organisations, counties and leagues develop in countless ways, from securing sponsorship and developing websites, to arranging fixtures and improving administration. Volunteering in sport is not just about active participation – it is about developing and using the skills that you have to assist with the development of sport.

## ***Do I need to get a Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check?***

A CRB check (disclosure) is a mechanism for organisations to ensure that individuals working with young adults and vulnerable adults are appropriate to do so.

It is one part of an organisation's overall recruitment and selection process. Each week more than eight million UK young people in the UK take part in sport. They do so in a range of situations, from local groups to national competitions. While most young people enjoy themselves in a safe environment, a small number are at risk of abuse from individuals who choose sports work to gain access to them.

The NSPCC Child Protection in Sport Unit works with the UK Sports Councils, governing bodies and other organisations to help them minimise the risk of child abuse during sporting activities. Some sporting organisations already require CRB checks on those involved in sport with young people and the Child Protection in Sport Unit encourages all sport and leisure providers to adopt this practice as part of an overall child protection policy.

If it is felt that the volunteering position you are applying for requires a check, then you will be informed by the club, county or organisation you are volunteering for. All checks are now at an enhanced level and, as the process centres on stringent data protection, both you and the organisation will receive a disclosure certificate. Of course the majority of checks come back clear. However, if you have any specific concerns or would like more information on CRB disclosures visit [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk) or specifically for Child Protection in Sport, [www.thecpsu.org.uk](http://www.thecpsu.org.uk)

## ***What can I do?***

What you do depends on where your interests or talents lie but you may also prefer to take on a new challenge or work in an area that is different to your previous experience. You can work on a one-to-one basis with a disadvantaged individual or in a team or group.

## ***What type of training will I receive?***

This depends on your placement. Training that is offered can vary to meet the needs of the role.

## ***What are my chances of getting a job through volunteering?***

By volunteering you can up-date your CV and gain valuable work experience such as communication, inter-personal and organisational skills. Volunteering can also provide a useful stepping stone into paid work if you have not been working for some time.

## ***How long will it take to start volunteering from registering?***

This again depends on the placement you choose. Some are simple to set up and you can start straight away and others can take longer because the nature of the role requires training or police checks.

***How much time will I be required to give?***

Opportunities on our database range from jobs that will take an occasional hour to a regular weekly commitment.

***Will I be paid expenses?***

Most organisations will pay your out of pocket travel expenses.

***Will volunteering affect my benefits?***

If you are on Job Seekers Allowance you can volunteer as long as you are still actively looking for work. If you are on incapacity benefit you will have to check whether volunteering will affect your entitlement.