



# SPECIAL OLYMPICS MINNESOTA UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL SKILLS GUIDE

SPRING 2021

*Special  
Olympics*  
Minnesota



Special Olympics  
**Unified Schools**

# UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL SKILLS

This year, Unified Sports training and competition looks a little different due to COVID-19. The goal is for everyone to have fun and learn new skills, while following state and local guidelines around social distancing and safety.

The following Unified Flag Football Skills and suggestions for modifications are meant to be a guide, but are not exhaustive. Please feel free to be creative, adapt to each participant's needs and have fun!

The adaptive skills are meant to be developmental and are not scored. Other skills have scoring metrics, but you do not need to submit scores in order to participate this spring. Scoring is meant to be a tool for you to use as coaches to measure participants' improvements over time.

**All participants will be entered into a drawing for an Apple Watch at the conclusion of our spring sports season!** Please fill out the attached roster and final report, and return to shannon.murray@somn.org no later than May 13, 2021 to qualify for this giveaway.

Students may also sign up for a one-day GooseChase Challenge taking place on **Thursday, May 13, 2021**. In this challenge, participants will have the opportunity to show off their flag football skills and connect with other participants from across Minnesota!

## **Students can join the challenge by following these simple steps:**

1. Download the GooseChase [iOS](#) or [Android](#) app.
2. Choose to play as a guest, or register for a personal account with a username and password of your choice.
3. Search for and select the "Unified Flag Football Skills - Spring 2021" game, or search by game code B5ZG8R.
4. Follow the prompts to select or create your player profile.

***More details about how to download and use the GooseChase app can be found at the end of this guide.***

# UNIFIED ADAPTIVE FLAG FOOTBALL SKILLS

*Designed for participants of all ability levels.*

## 1. GRIP

Grip and hold the ball, bean bag or scarf. Then let go of or throw your ball or object of choice.

## 2. AGILITY & SPEED

Set up an obstacle course of cones in a zig zag pattern that will challenge each partner. Partner A will weave through the obstacle course while carrying football or other object. Partner A will complete a hand off to Partner B who will do the same. Adjust distances and number of cones as needed. This activity could also be done on a table top, rolling the ball through markers.

## 3. KICKING

Choose from any of the following activities:

- Touch your foot to the football of your choice.
- Kick football or ball of your choice at a fixed target or to your partner.
- Build your own device to assist with kicking the ball.
  - Visit this link for inspiration: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeDMLgyPy1jHzVUAwUPX1Qg>

## 4. THROW FOR ACCURACY

Throw or drop the ball, bean bag, scarf or other object of your choice inside a circle or to your partner.

## 5. THROW FOR DISTANCE

Using a ball, bean bag, flag or other object of your choice and choose from any of the following activities:

- Release and drop object into target area or to your partner.
- Using an underhand or overhand motion, toss the ball to a partner or at a fixed target.
- Build your own device to assist with throwing. One or both partners may use a device to assist in throwing.
  - Visit this link for inspiration: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCeDMLgyPy1jHzVUAwUPX1Qg>

## 6. CATCHING

Attempt a catch from any distance using a ball, bean bag, scarf or object of your choice. May be thrown overhand, underhand or dropped to partner.

## 7. FLAG DRILL

Choose from

- Attach a scarf to a stationary object. Then run, walk or roll by and try to grab the flag.
- Attach a scarf to the waist band of a partner. Then run, walk or roll by and try to grab the flag. Partner with the flag can be stationary or moving around to increase difficulty.

## 8. "WATER BALLOON" CONTEST

With a partner, face each other and drop, hand or toss the football or object to each other. Increase the distance between partners to increase difficulty. See how far you can go!

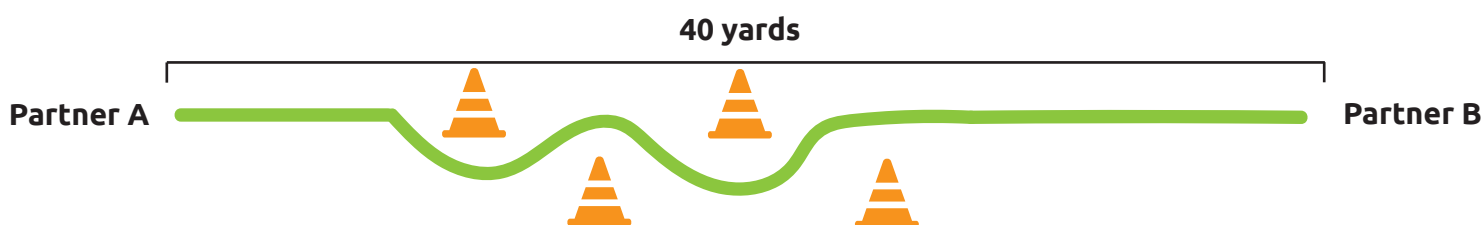
# UNIFIED FLAG FOOTBALL SKILLS

*Designed for participants who have some experience with playing flag football.*

## 1. RELAY FOR AGILITY & SPEED

Set up a course that is 40 yards long. Place four cones in a zig zag pattern 3 yards wide, starting at 15 yards and ending at 25 yards.

One partner, Partner A, should start on either end facing Partner B. Carrying a football, Partner A will sprint to the cones, weave through, and sprint to the end and hand off the ball to Partner B. Partner B will repeat the same process, traveling back to the start line.



## 2. PUNT FOR DISTANCE

Partners should practice punting the football as far as they can with good form. Track progress and work on increasing the distance punted.

## 3. THROW FOR ACCURACY

Choose a distance of 5, 10 or 30 yards (or try them all!). Partners should stand facing each other. Each partner will complete five attempts to throw the ball with accuracy to their partner.

Throws are accurate if the partner can easily catch it without moving more than one step in any direction. If the partner drops the ball after an accurate throw, you should still count it as a success. Partners should work to increase the number of successful throws.

## 4. THROW FOR DISTANCE

Partners should practice throwing the football as far as they can with good form. Track progress and work on increasing the distance.

## 5. CATCHING

Partners should attempt catching the ball from 5, 10 or 20 yards (or try them all!). Track progress and work on improving the number of successful catches and increasing distance over time.

## 6. "WATER BALLOON" CONTEST

With a partner, start 6 feet apart and throw the football to each other. Each time you or your partner catch the ball, take one step back. See how far you can make it before dropping it!

# ADDITIONAL TRAINING IDEAS

## 1. JUMP ROPE CHALLENGE

Use a jump rope for 60 seconds and count the number of rotations completed. Click here for modification ideas:

[https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@global/documents/downloadable/ucm\\_429498.pdf](https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@global/documents/downloadable/ucm_429498.pdf)

## 2. STABILITY & MOBILITY CHALLENGE

Participants may choose to do any of the following activities:

- Hold head off of mat while laying on abdomen
- Roll to back while laying on abdomen
- Roll from stomach to back, and back to stomach
- Hold the plank position for 60 seconds

## 3. 40-YARD DASH

Run, walk or roll 40 yards. If you don't have a way to measure 40 yards, just use your best guess! Forty yards is about 48 steps, or 120 feet. Track times and work toward improving speed.

# IDEAS FOR AT-HOME MODIFICATIONS

Students who are training and practicing from home can use any type of "ball" that they already have access to. Please encourage creativity and stress that there are no wrong ways to practice skills. Correct form should still be used whenever possible, but any equipment can be used!

Here are a few suggestions for at-home alternatives.

## THROWING

- "Ghost ball" - practice correct form without a ball.
- Use a stuffed animal or other soft object with someone in your household.

## CATCHING

- Use a stuffed animal or other soft object with someone in your household.

## AGILITY

- Set up an obstacle course outside with any objects found in your home or in nature. If you don't have a ball, pretend you are carrying a "ghost ball," or other object from your house.

## KICKING

- Any ball can be used. Focus on correct form.
- "Ghost ball" - practice the motion of kicking without a ball.

# TEAM ROSTER & FINAL REPORT

Please fill out this page and return to Special Olympics Minnesota staff. There are no minimum practice requirements, this info is only for Special Olympics Minnesota to measure the reach of Unified Sports in 2021.

## Players

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ATHLETE OR UNIFIED PARTNER	GRADE LEVEL	# OF UNIFIED SKILLS ATTEMPTED

## Coaches

TOTAL # OF COACHES	
ESTIMATED # OF PRACTICES HELD THROUGHOUT SEASON	
ESTIMATED # OF MINUTES PER PRACTICE	