

# Table Tennis

## Introduction

This information is intended to be generic guide to classification for Table Tennis. It is not to be used to make classification or athlete selection decisions. The classification of athletes in this sport is performed by authorised classifiers according to the classification rules of the sport, which are determined by the International Federation for the sport. Sport Classification Rules change from time to time, and this guide represents the classification system current at the date of publication.

## Which Disability groups can compete in this sport?

### Paralympic Categories

- Cerebral Palsy
- Amputees
- Wheelchair
- Other injuries and impairments

## What is the Minimal Disability?

In order to be eligible to compete in a sport as an athlete with a disability, it is not sufficient simply to have a disability. Specific and objective testing is used to determine whether a person's disability results in sufficient limitation of their ability to perform the core elements of the relevant sport. This is different for each sport and is termed the minimal disability criteria. Only authorised classifiers are able to determine whether a person meets the minimal disability criteria for a particular sport. Below is a rough guide to the criteria – it should not be used to provide athletes with advice regarding eligibility.

Disability Group	Minimal Disability – GUIDE ONLY
Cerebral Palsy	Cerebral Palsy or Acquired Brain Injury resulting in physical impairment such as spasticity, ataxia or athetosis in at least one limb. Sensory or speech involvement is not sufficient to meet the minimal disability.
Amputees	At least single below knee amputation; or proximal (top) third of non playing fore-arm.
Wheelchair Users	Level of spinal cord injury and residual muscle strength determines class.
Other impairments	Muscle weakness in the legs, trunk and/ or arms, as tested using a 5 point scale, is sufficient to limit the person's ability to play table tennis.

## Classification Information Sheet

**What things are taken into account when classifying athletes in this system?**

Disability group	Assessments
Cerebral Palsy	Diagnosis, a series of neurological tests, amount of spasticity, coordination testing
Amputees	Level and location of amputation, stump length
Wheelchair	Level of spinal cord injury, residual muscle strength
Other musculoskeletal injuries and impairments	Joint range of motion, muscle strength, other tests as appropriate
Sport Specific	Reaction times, athlete position when playing and use of equipment

**What are the classes for this sport?**

The list below contains examples of the type of disabilities found in each class for Table tennis, current at the date of publication. It is intended as a guide only. The list is not exhaustive and cannot be used for the classification of athletes, as this classification can only be performed by authorised classifiers. For more specific information, please use the resources on the last page of this information sheet.

Class	Examples (Guide Only)
<b>Sitting Classes</b>	
1	Generally athletes with a disability that affects all four limbs e.g. cerebral palsy, or spinal cord injury (tetraplegia with no triceps). Arm movement for hitting the ball is achieved by a swinging movement initiated from the shoulder. All trunk movements are secured by holding wheelchair or thigh with the hand or by holding the back of the chair with bent elbow.
2	Athletes with disabilities involving the trunk and lower limbs, with some limitation impairment in the upper limbs e.g. Cerebral palsy (Triplegia) or Spinal Cord injury (tetraplegia with upper limb function limited by hand and wrist strength). Similar chair supports/straps to Class 1 players.
3	This class of athletes has normal or near normal upper limb function. There is some limitation in trunk movements, with most significant limitation in lower limbs e.g. high level paraplegia, with minimal or no impairment in upper limbs. Athletes with Cerebral Palsy who have diplegia with significant trunk impairment and severe spasticity in legs or athletes with moderate trunk balance disorders (athetosis/ataxia).
4	Athletes where upper limbs are not affected. Trunk balance is good in an upright position. When reaching out to the sides to hit the ball these athletes use their free arm to prop, hold or push wheelchair or thigh. Examples of disability groups include Amputees (double above knee with short stumps), Paraplegia (affecting only lower limbs with normal trunk) and Cerebral Palsy (Moderate diplegia with balance problems, Moderate trunk balance disorders (athetosis/ataxia).

## Classification Information Sheet

5	Athletes with full trunk and upper limb movement. Impairment of lower limbs such that the person cannot play standing. Includes athletes who are lower limb amputees, low level Paraplegia, Cerebral palsy (moderate diplegia, athetosis/ataxia).
<b>Standing Classes</b>	
6	Combination of disabilities in the playing arm and legs with dynamic balance problems in standing e.g. athletes with double above knee amputee with prostheses, athletes with significant muscle power loss in the playing arm or legs, athletes with can stand and walk with moderate diplegia or Athetosis/ataxia.
7	Players where both upper limbs have limitations e.g. single (playing arm) or double above or below elbow amputation or combination of both. Or cerebral palsy (moderate athetosis/ataxia, mixed Triplegia).
8	Disability in one or both legs e.g. athletes with one above knee or double below knee amputation, cerebral palsy-moderate diplegia (both legs) with minimal balance problems or moderate hemiplegia (one side of body); other disabilities with decreased muscle strength in legs and poor balance.
9	Athletes with moderate disability in one leg or minimal disability in two legs e.g. athletes with single below knee amputation, athletes with leg length difference of 7cm, athletes meeting minimal disability of muscle power loss in legs; athletes with Cerebral palsy with mild hemiplegia/diplegia with good balance.
10	Athletes who meet minimal disability criteria e.g. athletes with amputation of the non playing arm up to the proximal 1/3 of the forearm with normal function in the playing arm. Athletes with Cerebral Palsy with non playing one arm affected or minimal balance disorders (athetosis/ataxia)

### Further Information

APC National Classification Manager

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**Australian Paralympic Committee Website:**

<http://www.paralympic.org.au/Sport/Classification/>

[International Paralympic Committee](#)

**International Table Tennis Federation**

<http://www.ittf.com/>

**Table Tennis Australia**

<http://www.tabletennis.org.au/>