



Selection Process for USA or World Games Competition

Special Olympics offers higher level competitions in almost all sports on a rotating schedule.

USA Games are held every four years and typically offer competition in all summer sports. Winter sports are not offered at USA Games. USA Games began in 2006.

World Games are held in summer and winter sports, alternating every two years. For World Games, Minnesota is part of the larger USA delegation and only selects athletes to represent the state. Coaches are selected through an application process managed by the SOUSA Management Team.

Regardless of the level of competition, the timelines and selection process is fairly standard. It does involve many steps and different levels of the Special Olympics organization, however. Below are the general timelines for higher levels of competition.

Two Years in Advance:	Host location determines sports and numbers of athletes it can host in each sport. Countries and/or states then request quota based on various factors including participation levels in available sports, when sports were last represented at a higher level of competition and financial resources to support their quota request.
One to two years in Advance:	<p>Countries or states are notified what their quota allocation will be, including sports, number of athletes, gender and sometimes an ability level within the sport.</p> <p>State programs then select who will represent them. For athletes, typically they must train and compete in a sport in which we receive quota and earn a gold medal in the qualifying event. Typically, the qualifying event is the state competition one year prior to the USA or World Games, although sometimes registration deadlines may change this.</p> <p>Athletes who are eligible to apply to a higher level of competition will be notified of the opportunity and process through their Head of Delegation. There will be application forms and deadlines which must be completed and met. Once the deadline passes, Special Olympics Minnesota staff will follow up with all applicants.</p> <p>Final selection is done through a random draw in each sport from all athletes who applied and met the necessary qualifications outlined in the application process.</p>
Year Leading Into Games:	Athletes commit to a training program as outlined by their higher-level coach. Athletes must train locally in the applicable sport and attend the state level competition for which they have been drawn.