

Get Active!

Sports Directory for Illawarra and Shoalhaven



Acknowledgement of Country

Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we work and live. We celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that contributed to the development of this Directory.

We advise this resource may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or historical content.

Get Active!

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1.1 The importance of sport and active recreation

Sports and active recreation are important in our communities, connecting people of all ages and backgrounds. Whether you're playing casually or at a high level, sports and activities help build community pride, strengthen friendships and create a sense of belonging.

When children, teens, and adults take part in sports and active activities, they are more likely to stay healthy and active throughout their lives. These activities can help people live longer and manage mental health issues. Studies also show that being active can improve thinking skills and school performance.





This Get Active! Directory lists sporting opportunities within the Illawarra and Shoalhaven.

Use this resource to explore what is available in your local area for the children, young people and/or adults you support. Encouraging engagement in an activity can bring physical, mental, social and emotional health benefits.



Advice for health and education professionals

2.1 Health benefits of being active

Physical health

While some activities are more physical than others, simply getting out of the house and breaking up the amount of time sitting can have important health benefits.

Any type of physical activity can help:

- build strength and fitness
- · improve coordination and balance
- boost energy and vitality
- enhance sleep
- support brain health, memory, and learning.

Mental health

Staying active and connecting with others are important for mental health. Regularly doing fun activities can:

- lift mood
- boost self-esteem and confidence
- distract from negative thoughts
- help you stay mindful and motivated.

Building social networks

Participating in activities helps people connect with others, make friends, and feel like they belong. It also teaches them to understand different views, appreciate diversity, and respect others.

Stronger social engagement can also lead to the development of skills such as:

- improving verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- learning active listening and interpreting social cues
- developing skills in compromising, empathy, conflict resolution
- learning teamwork skills including sharing, supporting, and relying on others.

Engaging in activities can help participants learn to build trusting relationships, with fellow participants and adults in coaching or mentoring roles.



2.2 Encouraging parents and carers

Any professional working with families can suggest that parents or carers check out the options in this resource. Parents and carers will likely have three questions about any suggested activity:

- Will it be good for my child?
- Can it easily fit into our lives?
- Do I feel like my child and I can do it?

Will it be good for my child?

Almost any activity run by a friendly and supportive group can be good for children and young people. Here's how to choose:

- Find activities that match their current interests
- Talk about how meeting new people and making friends can improve social health
- Consider how getting out of the house and trying new things can boost physical and mental health and challenge yourself out of your comfort zone
- Look for activities that offer adjustments for disabilities or other special needs.

Can it easily fit into our lives?

Any activity should be easy to manage, affordable, and flexible enough to fit into the lives of children, young people, and their families.

- Check if the location, times, and transportation work for the family
- Consider the costs. Refer to the "Cost of Living Pressures" section for more details.

Do I feel my child and I can do it?

To overcome barriers to participation:

- Some activities allow parents and children to join together or let parents take on leadership or support roles. This can make children feel more comfortable and benefit parents too
- For children or young people with additional needs, talk to activity providers about what adjustments they can make
- If the child is on an NDIS package, funding might be available to suppprt some activities
- Look for services that can help with transportation to activities, like community centres, youth clubs, or specialised support services. Checking with local support services might provide useful options.



2.2 Motivating children and young people

Some children and young people might be hesitant to try new activities. This advice can help parents and carers encourage their child to join out-of-school activities.

Start early

Start exposing your child to different activities early on. Provide toys and equipment that promote movement, like balls, bikes, and jump ropes. Regularly take your child to various places, such as playgrounds, parks, and libraries, to help them get used to being around other people.

Lead by example

Children and young people are more likely to join in if they see their parents or carers taking part in activities. Be a role model by trying different things yourself and showing a positive attitude toward new experiences.

Support their choices

Let your child choose from a range of affordable activities that you can manage. Allow them to explore and try new things. Discuss their interests, goals, and concerns, and offer support and encouragement no matter what they choose.

Keep it fun and positive

Celebrate achievements by highlighting the fun and social aspects of the activity, rather than focusing on competition results or comparing to others. Emphasise personal growth and offer constructive feedback respectfully.

Emphasise the benefits

Teach children and young people that being active outside the home is important for their health and well-being. It helps them make friends, get fit, boost confidence, and most importantly, have fun!

Be flexible

Some children and young people might need to try a few activities before finding one they really enjoy. Even if they try several and decide not to continue, keep being supportive. Each experience helps them learn what they like and don't like, so they can make better choices later.



2.3 Addressing cost of living

Many families and individuals can find themselves excluded from sporting participation due to the costs involved. Below are a few supports and ideas that may help.

Financial and practical support

There are some financial supports available for sports activities:

- Active Kids Vouchers: Parents on Family Tax Benefits may access \$50 every six months to help with sports club fees. Check eligibility through your MyServiceNSW account and confirm if the club is a registered activity provider.
- National Disability Insurance Scheme
 (NDIS):

People with a NDIS package may be able to use funds for sporting equipment modification and transport if unable travel on their own. Ask your NDIS Provider about your options.

• Kit Bag for Kids:

A charity that collects and distributes highquality second-hand, surplus and unwanted sporting goods and



equipment to underprivileged children across Australia. Visit <u>kitbagforkids.org</u> for more information.

Support from clubs

To help with cost-of-living pressures sporting clubs may provide option such as:

- Concession rates for groups such as children, university students or seniors
- Family rates
- Come and try days

- Free or lower cost trial periods
- Pay-by-lesson options vs upfront payments
- Payment plans
- Loyalty programs
- Sponsorships.

Other options

There are many free self-directed activities you can enjoy. Bushwalking, going to the beach, bike riding, or playing ball at the park offer similar benefits to organised activities but are more flexible and cost less.

Active Outdoor Ideas



https://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/servicesclinics/health-promotion/healthy-kids/activeoutdoor-ideas

Healthy Kids - Resources for Parents



https://www.islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/servicesclinics/health-promotion/healthy-kids/munchmove/resources-parents

2.4 Addressing other concerns

There are many additional benefits to participation in out of school activities. These include:

Discouraging excessive screen time

Too much online time can lead to less physical activity, poor sleep, social isolation, and negative effects on mental health. It also carries risks like online bullying and inappropriate content.

Australian guidelines suggest that kids aged 5–17 should spend no more than 2 hours a day on recreational screen time, not including schoolwork. It's better to have less screen time and include other activities to balance it out.

Supporting adequate sleep

Being more active during the day can improve sleep and reduce stress. Sleep needs vary by age:

- Ages 3 to 5: 10 to 13 hours
- Ages 6 to 12: 9 to 12 hours
- Ages 13 to 18: 8 to 10 hours
- Adults: 7 or more hours

Sleep helps your mind recharge and process information. Without enough sleep, children and young people may struggle with thinking, focusing, memory, and mood. To improve sleep, try setting a regular bedtime, avoiding naps, turning off devices 30 minutes before bed, and staying active during the day.

Supporting school attendance

Don't use participation in activities as a threat if your child is reluctant to go to school. Consider it a positive sign if they are willing to do something. Attending these activities helps them build social skills and confidence. If they're not attending school, participating in out-of-school activities can be a step toward returning to school.

Engaging those with additional needs

If your child has a disability, mental health, or behavioural concern, let activity organisers know. Most will be happy to make adjustments to help. Including children with disabilities in activities benefits everyone as it helps others learn to be more accepting.





Local sporting associations

Sporting associations in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven

- <u>Athletics</u>
- Australian Rules Football
- <u>Badminton</u>
- <u>Basketball</u>
- Beach Volleyball
- <u>BMX</u>
- Boxing
- Bowls
- <u>Canoe Polo</u>
- <u>Cricket</u>
- <u>Croquet</u>
- Dragon Boat
- Football
- <u>Golf</u>
- Gymnastics
- <u>Hockey</u>
- <u>laido</u>
- Indoor Rowing
- Jodo
- Judo
- Karate
- Kendo
- Kung Fu
- Mountain Bike
- Netball

- Nippers Surf Life Saving
- Orienteering
- Road Cycling
- Rowing
- Rugby League
- Rugby Union
- Sailing
- Snooker
- <u>Softball</u>
- <u>Squash</u>
- Surf Life Saving
- <u>Surfing</u>
- <u>Swimming</u>
- Table Tennis
- <u>Taekwondo</u>
- <u>Tennis</u>
- Touch Football
- Track Cycling
- <u>Triathlon</u>
- <u>Ultimate</u>
- Underwater Hockey
- Volleyball
- Water Polo
- Wrestling Freestyle

3.1 Athletics



(Image supplied by: NSW Athletics)

Athletics offers a wide range of activities that cater to all ages and skill levels, making it an ideal way for families to spend time together while staying active. Athletics events include sprints, distance running, relays, walks, hurdles, steeple chase, cross country, long jump, triple jump, high jump, pole vault, shot put, discus, hammer and javelin.

Little Athletics offers a program designed for children aged 3 to 16 years, making it a fantastic way for children to stay active and develop valuable transferable skills.

Participating in athletics is great for improving focus, mental clarity and reducing stress. The health benefits include cardio health, improved strength, endurance, and weight management.

Participants can compete at local, state, national, and even international levels, with the Illawarra Track Challenge being a key event held annually in January in your local area.

Incorporating athletics into your routine — whether as an individual pursuit, a family activity, or part of a team — promotes a healthier, happier, and more balanced lifestyle. It's an excellent way to engage with the community and build lifelong friendships!





- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 3 years and over (check with your local club)

3.2 Australian Rules Football



(Image supplied by: AFL Auskick)

AFL Auskick is an intro to Australian Football and invaluable life skills. With game-based activities kids love, learning is disguised as playing. Aussie Rules experience is not required, children can start Auskick in the calendar year they turn 5 to 12 years of age.

Whether you're a kid starting out, an up-and-coming star, or just casually keeping fit, local footy will grow your game and your friend group. Local footy (from age 7 through to masters age 35+) will help foster a deep connection to Australia's favourite game, while also strengthening connections between your family and new friends.

Find a club: https://play.afl/play/auskick

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.3 Badminton



(Image supplied by: Badminton NSW)

Badminton is one of the world's fastest racquet sports. The combination of physical exercise, strategic thinking, and social interaction makes it popular for people of all ages and fitness levels. It is typically played indoors but can also be played outdoors. Whether you are an experienced player or just starting out, badminton welcomes players of all skill levels and various ages and fitness backgrounds.

Ready to experience the thrill? Grab a racquet, step onto the court, and discover why millions worldwide are falling in love with this dynamic sport.

Find a club: https://www.badmintonnsw.org.au/affiliated-clubs

- 🗸 Illawarra
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.4 Basketball



(Photo supplied by: The Shoalhaven Basketball Association)

Playing basketball helps to improve motor coordination, flexibility, and endurance. It also encourages speed, agility, and strength. As well as being a great way to stay fit, basketball can also help you build self-confidence, increase your focus and concentration and learn teamwork and leadership skills.

From the Aussie Hoops junior development program through to walking basketball and highperformance programs basketball can be played by people of all ages and abilities. If you enjoy casual pickup games, or the challenges of competition basketball, this game offers something for everyone.

Find a club: https://www.bnsw.com.au

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 3 years and over (check with your local club)



3.5 Beach Volleyball



(Image supplied by: Volleyball Imagery - Brian)

Beach volleyball is a team sport played by two teams, each consisting of two players. The objective is to score points by grounding a ball on the opposing team's court. Beach volleyball is a sport that can be played by all ages and skill levels. It is a competitive and physically demanding sport, players need agility, speed, strength, and endurance to excel in the game. In practice a wide range of skills are learnt to serve, pass, set, attack, block and dig the ball.

Playing Beach volleyball teaches you to work well with others and pay attention to what your team members are doing, so you can work together to anticipate the moves of the opposing team. Beach volleyball is friendly and inclusive, there are opportunities to play both competitively and socially and it also gives you valuable opportunities to make new friends.

Find a club: https://www.illawarravolleyball.org.au

- ✓ Illawarra
- ✓ Ages 10 years and over (check with your local club)



3.6 BMX



(Image supplied by: Auscycling)

BMX riding is a great way for kids and adults to stay active, build confidence, develop important life skills, connect with others, and have fun.

BMX racing takes place on a 350-400m track. The riders begin from a start ramp that launches them at considerable speed as they ride through bumps, berms and flat sections. BMX freestyle is a discipline where riders are judged on their style and the difficulty of their program. BMX freestyle events happen in parks and flatland.

BMX is known for its high-energy, fast-paced action, and the impressive skills and tricks performed by riders. BMX riding combines athleticism, creativity, and a sense of adventure, making it thrilling for both participants and spectators. Many BMX clubs run come and try, training and event days.

Many cycling clubs include an Ausbike program. AusBike is Australia's national bike education program, designed to give kids aged 5 to 12 years the essential skills to experience the freedom, fun and adventure of life on two wheels! AusBike caters for kids with all levels of bike riding experience with a focus on developing fundamental skills, safety and confidence.

Find a club: https://www.auscycling.org.au/page/club-finder

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.7 Bowls



(Image supplied by: Bowls Australia)

A precision sport in which the aim is to roll bowls closest to a smaller ball called the jack, points are awarded for each competitor's bowl, which is closer than the opponent's closest bowl to the jack.

Bowls Australia has an exciting introductory product called Rookie Rollers, aimed at bringing the sport of bowls to varying ages and abilities, and has had considerable success with kids, elderly, people with a physical or mental impairment, and many beginners around the nation.

Rookie Rollers is designed to enable everyone to participate in an engaging format, which is both fun and inclusive. It can be conducted on a range of surfaces including greens, carpets, concrete, wooden floors and just about anything else that is flat.

Find a club: https://bowlsnsw.com.au

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.8 Boxing



(Image supplied by: Boxing Australia NSW)

Boxing is a life skill with building fitness, coordination and discipline. Boxing can cater to various fitness levels and personal goals, making it a popular choice for many people looking to improve their health, skills, and well-being.

Boxing gyms and classes are community-oriented, offering a chance to meet new people, make friends, and be part of a supportive group.

Boxing provides a platform to self-challenge and achieve personal goals, whether in practice, amateur matches (from the age of 14) or more competitive bouts. It can also foster a sense of accomplishment and personal growth as you see progress in skills and fitness over time.

Find a club: https://boxingnsw.org.au/club-finder

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.9 Canoe Polo



(Image supplied by: The Shoalhaven Canoe and Kayak Club)

Canoe Polo is a fast, exciting ball game played in kayaks, usually in a swimming pool. Teams are made up of five paddlers playing in special short kayaks.

A water polo ball is propelled by hand or paddle to score in goals suspended above the water at each end of the pool.

Canoe Polo is an international sport played by men and women of all ages and physical abilities.

Find a club: https://nsw.paddle.org.au/paddlesports/canoe-polo

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 12 years and over (check with your local club)



3.10 Cricket



(Image Supplied by: The Shoalhaven District Cricket Association)

As you grow up, cricket grows with you and it is fun, fast and action packed! It's time to join a team, make new friends and take your batting, bowling and fielding skills to the next level.

The Junior Blast program is for Kids aged up to 10 years old. Each game is 60-90 minutes of fun in a safe and inclusive environment. Make pals, catch skills, throw like a boss, and teamwork like a pro! Kids will be able to rock the colours of their favourite Big Bash heroes with their own Cricket Blast pack. All the gear, no fear!

Junior (9-18), Senior and Veterans (40+) Club Cricket is fun, social and active. Games can range from two to six hours. Join your local cricket club and make friends!

Find a club: https://play.cricket.com.au/play

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.11 Croquet



(Image supplied by: Nowra Croquet Club)

A game for all ages and abilities

Croquet, a mallet and ball participation sport, is an activity that provides non-strenuous exercise that combines both mental and physical skills.

Croquet, while widely perceived as an older person's sport, is suitable as a school sport, as well as a sport for any social or business groups in the community.

The many benefits of engaging in croquet are: - that it is a sport played outdoors. It allows players to build new friendships and to participate at a social or competitive level. It can also build self-esteem. Importantly, it is accessible to all - from teens to people in their nineties and those with limited mobility.

Find a club: https://www.croquetnsw.org.au/clubs

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 10 years and over (check with your local club)



3.12 Dragon Boat



(Image supplied by: The Australian Dragon Boat Federation)

Dragon Boating is an exhilarating and fun sport that allows young people to be part of a team. It is one of the fastest growing sports in Australia with participation at an all-time high. Dragon Boating is a sport for all ages and abilities and allows people to grow not only their fitness, but to also develop new friendships and experience the fun of being out on the water.

Dragon Boating offers a whole-body but non-contact, safe sport. It is easy to learn as actions are repeated. It is a fun team environment where everyone works together

Young people begin their involvement at a club/school level and can go on to represent their state, or even represent Australia in the Auroras. There are local regattas in every state, and state championships. Each year, AusChamps are held, with many events to be involved in and experience the thrill of racing at a National Championship level.

Find a club: https://www.dbnsw.org.au/club-finder

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 10 years and over (check with your local club)



3.13 Football (soccer)



(Image supplied by: Football South Coast)

From MiniRoos to Over 45s, there is a football experience for you! Get started in grassroots football with your local club. In addition, there are development programs, school holiday clinics and term programs.

Find a club Illawarra https://footballsouthcoast.com/clubs/

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages: from under 6s (check with your local club)

Find a club Shoalhaven https://websites.mygameday.app/assoc_page.cg i?c=1-8373-0-0-0&sID=257835





3.14 Golf



(Image supplied by: Golf NSW)

Golf is a game of strategy, requiring concentration, patience, and focus. Each shot presents a new challenge. Golf is a sport for all ages providing lifelong learning in social and competitive play.

MyGolf is Australia's junior golf program initiative, which provides lessons to beginners with a focus on games-based activities and fun. There are beginner programs available across the country for juniors. The goal is to increase participation and engagement in golf by children. There is no experience required and it is a learning opportunity for everyone. Golf promotes the social and fun aspect of the sport to juniors and the wider community, whilst promoting skill development in a competitive environment under the guidance of skilled coaches.

Find a club: <u>https://www.golfnsw.org.au</u> https://www.golf.org.au/mygolf/program-search



- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.15 Gymnastics



(Image supplied by: The South Coast Gymnastics Academy)

Gymnastics is a sport that promotes whole body and mind development and can set up an athlete for whatever their future goals are in life. Because there is a vast range of types of gymnastics programs available to participate in you can have any ability level and still find a suitable program to join. From Kinder gym programs teaching fundamental movement, physical literacy to athletes as young as 6 months old right up to Fitter for Life gymnastics and movement programs targeted at senior athletes aged 55+ and everything in between.

There are also so many Gymsports to choose from with strengths to suit every ability. Kindergym, Gymnastics for all Recreation, Adult Gymnastics, Sporting Schools, Gym ability (inclusions), Freestyle Gymnastics (Free G), TeamGym, Performance and Display, Fitter for Life (55+ years), Grandergym, Competitive Artistic Gymnastics, Trampolining, Tumbling, Acrobatics, Aerobic gymnastics, and Rhythmic gymnastics, there are just so many to choose from. There is also the opportunity to progress from an entry level recreational athlete to a competitive athlete and represent your sport on a regional, state, national and international level.

You can develop amazing skills while getting strong and flexible in fun and challenging ways. Have fun with rolling, being upside-down and learning basic skills like landing to suit whatever kind of movement you love best.

Find a club: https://www.gymnsw.org.au/find-a-club

✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
 ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.16 Hockey



(Photo supplied by: Illawarra Hockey)

Hockey is an exciting combination of skill, speed, endurance and teamwork! As a striking sport, hockey provides opportunity for the development of gross motor skills which can translate to improved coordination and dexterity for children in both sport and school settings. For junior competitions in the region, boys and girls participate together. There are formats to suit all age groups, including: Minkey (mini-hockey) for 5 – 8 years, Kookaburra 8s for 9 - 12 years, full field age-based competitions for teenagers and graded competitions for adults.

For those looking to try the sport for the first time, clubs are more than happy to supply the essential equipment. While the main competitions take place in the winter months on synthetic pitches, indoor hockey is played in the summer. If you are looking for an inclusive, family-friendly sport, give hockey a try!

Find a club: https://www.revolutionise.com.au/isch/clubs

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.17 laido



(Image supplied by: The New South Wales Kendo Association)

laido is the Japanese art of drawing the sword and developed around the 15th century as laijutsu. Practitioners of laido learn 12 Kata techniques consisting of four main components: the smooth, controlled movements of drawing the sword from its scabbard (or saya), striking or cutting an opponent, shaking blood from the blade, and replacing the sword in the scabbard.

There is no sparring as you are doing the Katas on your own with the spiritual enemy.

Find a club: https://nswkendo.org/directory

/ Illawarra/ Ages 13 years and over (check with your local club)



3.18 Indoor Rowing



(Image supplied by: Rowing Australia)

An indoor rower, or rowing machine, is used to simulate the action of watercraft rowing. Modern indoor rowers are often known as ergometers (erg or ergo) as they measure work performed by the rower in ergs.

Indoor rowing is a full-body workout and low-impact making it gentle on the joints and suitable for all ages including those well into their 90s, showcasing the accessibility and lifelong benefits of the sport.

Many rowing clubs have several indoor rowing machines and club members compete in various indoor rowing competitions. When people join the Learn 2 Row course and School Summer Rowing, they get to experience indoor rowing.

The Row Nation app (https://www.rownation.co) makes using a rowing machine easy and fun. The app provides tailored workouts, tracks progress, and allows participants from the age of 6 to compete in virtual races. Row Nation transforms your rowing experience by making it more accessible and interactive.

Find a club: https://www.rowingnsw.asn.au/club/club-contacts

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 12 years and over (check with your local club)



3.19 Jodo



(Image supplied by: The New South Wales Kendo Association

Jodo is a traditional martial art of Japan practiced with the Jo (or short stick).

Jodo is aimed at self-defence against an attack from a sword, it enables you to suppress your enemy's offence and its spirit is to give the enemy a lesson without inflicting a wound.

The jo is simply a round stick, but it can be used in a great variety of ways. It provides an advantage in reach over a sword and can be held at both ends. The Jo may be used both to strike and to thrust, Jodo techniques take advantage of the Jo's strengths and the sword's weaknesses, allowing the Jo side to defeat what, at first glance, would seem to be a much more dangerous weapon.

Find a club: https://nswkendo.org/directory

- ✓ Illawarra
 ✓ Ages 14 years and over (check with your local club)

3.20 Judo



(Image supplied by: Judo Australia)

Judo is a traditional Japanese martial art and modern Olympic sport that offers fun, fitness and a welcoming community for people of all abilities, aged 5 to 95!

Judo is proven to be the safest martial art for children, the very name translating to The Gentle Way. Your sensei will introduce you to the Code, with respect, honour and friendship among the values set forth by our founder Jigoro Kano more than 100 years ago. Then you will learn how to fall safely, a skill useful in every sport, and at every stage of life.

Starting as a white belt and building new skills at every level, judoka embraces the principle of maximum efficiency for minimum effort – in life, as well as on the mat. Welcome to JUDO.

Find a club: https://www.judonsw.com.au/find-club

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.21 Karate



(Photo supplied by: Samurai Dojo)

Karate is a traditional Japanese martial art that focuses on strikes, kicks and general self-defence.

Karate is an inclusive sport that offers numerous benefits for participants of all ages. It promotes physical fitness, mental resilience, and personal growth. By practicing karate, individuals develop discipline, confidence, and respect, which can positively impact their daily lives. Additionally, the social aspects of regular training in a dojo foster a sense of community and belonging.



https://www.shotokankarate.com.au/club-finder

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages: check with club (check with your local club)



3.22 Kendo



(Image supplied by: The New South Wales Kendo Association)

Kendo translates as 'The Way of the Sword' and can best be described as Japanese Fencing.

Kendo is a martial art in which both opponents aim to strike one of the 4 target areas. These targets are the men (head), kote (wrist), do (torso) or tsuki (a thrust to the throat).

Kendo's origins are closely associated with the feudal Japanese Samurai and many dojos still reflect this cultural tradition. Kendo aims to unify the mind, body and spirit to develop self-confidence and respect for self and others.

Find a club: https://nswkendo.org/directory

- ✓ Illawarra
- ✓ Ages 6 years and over (check with your local club)



3.23 Kung Fu



(Image supplied by: The Illawarra Ving Tsun School)

Kung Fu is a way of life, guiding practitioners in their personal development, ethical behaviour, and pursuit of harmony with the world around them.

'Kung Fu' which translates literally as 'Hard Work' is the term in Southern China and the western world that refers to the Chinese Martial Arts. The term Kung Fu is now used more often to relate to the traditional style of the Chinese Martial Arts and the competitive style is known as 'Wushu'.

Traditional Kung Fu was created and taught through the generations by family clans and schools. There are hundreds of styles and thousands of lineages within each branch of Kung Fu.

Each style within Kung Fu emphasises different techniques and philosophies, making Kung Fu a rich and diverse martial art. Kung Fu styles draw from a large number of different techniques including; punches, palm strikes and kicks, grappling and throws, joint locks and pressure points, blocks, escapes and counters. Some styles include the use of weapons. Breathing exercises, meditation and channelling internal energy (Chi) are used to enhance the physical techniques.

Find a club: https://www.kwnsw.com/classes

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 12 and over (check with your local club)



3.24 Mountain Bike



(Image supplied by: AusCycling)

Mountain biking is the activity of riding a bicycle on different kinds of off-road trails.

Mountain biking can generally be broken down into distinct categories: cross country, trail, all mountain, enduro, downhill and freeride.

Mountain biking is a high-adrenaline and exciting sport. The challenge of navigating the terrain at high speeds requires skills, quick reflexes, and a good sense of balance. The physical demands and the natural settings also add to the excitement and adventure of mountain biking.

Many mountain bike clubs run social rides on the trails and event days. Joining a cycling club provides opportunities to build friendships and connect with your community.

Many cycling clubs include an Ausbike program. AusBike is Australia's national bike education program, designed to give kids aged 5 to 12 years the essential skills to experience the freedom, fun and adventure of life on two wheels! AusBike caters for kids with all levels of bike riding experience with a focus on developing fundamental skills, safety and confidence.





- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages starts at under 9s (check with your local club)

3.25 Netball



(Photo supplied by: The Kiama Netball Association)

Netball is more than just a fast-paced sport; it's a vibrant community and a fantastic way to stay active and healthy. By getting involved in netball, you not only boost your physical fitness but also develop crucial skills like teamwork, communication, and strategic thinking. The game fosters a sense of camaraderie and belonging, whether you're joining a local league or just playing for fun with friends. Plus, netball is accessible to all ages and skill levels, making it a great way to meet new people and enjoy the thrill of competition. Dive into netball and experience the excitement, energy, and friendships that come with it!

With programs suitable for girls and boys of all ages (Net Set Go all the way through to Opens Senior Competitions), and all levels (beginner, social and competitive). Why not make a new group of friends and give it a try?

Find a club: https://nsw.netball.com.au

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.26 Nippers Surf Life Saving



(Image supplied by: North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club)

The Surf Live Saving Nippers Program is a junior activity program designed to introduce children to surf lifesaving. It focuses on developing surf safety knowledge and surf lifesaving techniques in a fun and educational environment. Through a combination of beach activities, water-based exercises, and team-building games, Nippers learn valuable life skills, including teamwork, leadership, and the importance of community service. The program aims to foster a love for the ocean while equipping young participants with the skills and confidence to safely enjoy the beach and potentially become future lifesavers.

Find a club: https://www.surflifesaving.com.au/getinvolved/our-clubs-and-branches/

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 14 years (check with your local club)



3.27 Orienteering



(Photo supplied by: The Illawarra Kareelah Orienteering Club)

Orienteering is a foot race against the clock requiring the competitor to run and navigate a course shown on a special orienteering map. The competitor is required to visit the each of the check points (known as controls) shown on the course.

A special timing device known as an 'e' stick attached to the finger is used to record the time of arrival at each control and the unique identification number of the control at that location.

Competitors are required to have a certain ability to read and interpret a paper map and navigate accordingly. Events can be held urban and appropriate parkland for beginners but bush events like state forests and private land are for more experienced competitors.

Find a club: https://onsw.asn.au/membership/nsw-club-info



- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 10 years and over (check with your local club)

3.28 Road cycling



(Image supplied by: AusCycling)

Road cycling is the most widespread form of cycling which includes recreational, racing, commuting, and utility cycling. As users of the road, road cyclists are generally expected to obey the same laws as motorists.

Road races take place on either roads or closed circuits and include races such as mass start road races, handicaps, time trials, team time trials and criteriums, run over a variety of distances and terrains.

Road cycling is a versatile activity that offers a wide range of benefits including cardiovascular fitness, increased stamina and weight management. Joining a cycling club provides opportunities to build friendships and connect with your community.

Cycling can be done almost anywhere at any time making it an excellent choice for improving health, well-being, and quality of life.

Many cycling clubs include an Ausbike program. AusBike is Australia's national bike education program, designed to give kids aged 5 to 12 years the essential skills to experience the freedom, fun and adventure of life on two wheels! AusBike caters for kids with all levels of bike riding experience with a focus on developing fundamental skills, safety and confidence.



3.29 Rowing



(Image supplied by: The Shoalhaven Rowing Club)

Rowing is the sport of racing boats using oars. Rowing differs from paddling sports in that rowing oars are attached to the boat using rowlocks, while paddles are not connected to the boat. And in rowing you go backwards down the river.

Rowing is divided into two disciplines: sculling and sweep rowing. In sculling, each rower holds two oars, one in each hand, while in sweep rowing each rower holds one oar with both hands.

There are several boat classes in which athletes may compete, ranging from single sculls, occupied by one person, to shells with eight rowers and a coxswain, called eights. There is a wide variety of course types and formats of racing, but most elite and championship level racing is conducted on calm water courses 2km long or 1km for masters with several lanes marked using buoys. There are also long rows which are usually time trialled and conducted on rivers and estuaries.

To participate you must be able to swim 100m.



3.30 Rugby League



(Photo supplied by: St George Illawarra Dragons)

Whether you're a seasoned athlete or a newcomer, joining a junior, senior or masters Rugby League team promises an exhilarating and fulfilling experience.

Junior footy is a modified version of Rugby League tailored specifically for young players. It serves as an introduction to the sport, focusing on skill development, teamwork, and fostering a love for the game.

Rugby League enhances discipline, self-confidence, and resilience, instilling valuable life skills that extend beyond the rugby league field. Find your local footy team and get started on your rugby league journey!

Find a club: http://www.playrugbyleague.com

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.31 Rugby Union



(Photo supplied by: Shoalhaven Rugby)

Rugby Union (Rugby) is a global game for all ages, genders, sizes and backgrounds.

There are many varying formats for all to enjoy, from non-contact Sevens (7s) to Fifteen-a-side (XVs) with elite and social competitions available.

Playing Rugby delivers significant social and health benefits. Rugby is rich in life lessons and life skills. It plays a unique role in the development of vital life skills which contribute to a person's social, emotional and physical wellbeing.

Get into Rugby is an introductory program recommended for girls and boys starting their rugby journey aged 5-8 and suitable for up to 12 years of age. Get into Rugby focuses on kids' skill development and building confidence and provides a fun, safe, inclusive environment for kids and parents to experience and enjoy Rugby. Get into Rugby provides the perfect stepping stone into junior competition.

Find a club: https://nsw.rugby/participate/play



- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)

3.32 Sailing



(Image supplied by: NSW Sailing)

Sailing is a fun, safe, accessible and affordable sport that welcomes participation from people of all backgrounds, ages and abilities. There are many ways to get started in sailing through Discover Sailing and a range of opportunities for you to continue sailing at clubs as you develop your skills, experience and confidence.

Sailing clubs can be found on the coast, rivers and inland lakes in some spectacular locations around the country. There are nearly 400 sailing clubs around Australia with more than 60,000 registered club members and 100,000 people regularly participating in the sport.

You don't need to own a boat to enjoy sailing. There are clubs that provide boats and boat owners looking for crew. You don't need to be a member to get started in sailing because all the Discover Sailing Programs are accessible for people who are not members of clubs.

Clubs offer the perfect platform and infrastructure to get you out on the water to discover sailing. Most clubs have a Discover Sailing Host who will welcome you to the club, answer any questions, and explain the various sailing activities that are available.

Find a club: https://www.sailing.org.au/club-finder

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)

3.33 Snooker



(Image supplied by: Snooker and Billiards NSW)

Snooker is played on a rectangular table with pockets at each of the four corners and in the middle of each long side. Using a cue and 22 coloured balls, players must strike the white ball to pot the remaining balls, accumulating points for each pot. An individual game, or frame, is won by the player who scores the most points. A match is won when a player wins a predetermined number of frames.

Snooker requires sustained attention and patience, strategic thinking, planning, and concentration, skills that are beneficial in everyday life. Although not a high-intensity sport, playing snooker involves walking around the table, bending, and stretching, which can contribute to a healthier lifestyle.

Playing snooker can be a great social activity, allowing players to interact, compete, and bond with others. Many clubs host events and leagues, which can help players feel more connected to their local community.

Snooker can be played socially at your local club or hotel, or you may join a snooker club to access coaching. Championships start at under 12's!





Illawarra and Shoalhaven

Find a club:

Ages 6 years and over (check with your local club)

3.34 Softball



(Images supplied by: Softball NSW)

Softball and Tee ball are exciting sports which teaches players the skills of batting off a tee or a pitched ball, catching, throwing and working as a team.

Games are usually all over in 90 minutes. Players use a glove to help with catching and a helmet to protect from injuries. Beginners play with a softer ball which helps players develop confidence and prevents injuries.

Players can go on to represent at state, national and international championships.

People of all ages play Softball/ Tee ball, from Benny Ball for ages 3 to 6 years old, Sub Junior 7 to 12 years old, up to Masters over 45s.

Currently Illawarra Softball runs competitions on a Sunday morning during April to September at Gainsborough Oval, Minnamurra. Older ages are played at night from October to March.

Find a club: https://www.nsw.softball.org.au/getinvolved/get-involved-find-a-club



🗸 Illawarra

✓ Ages 3 years and over (check with your local club)

3.35 Squash



(Image supplied by: Dapto Squash)

Squash is a fast-paced racquet sport played by two or four players on an enclosed court. The game involves hitting a small, hollow rubber ball against the front wall of the court, making it bounce in such a way that the opponent is unable to return it before it bounces twice on the floor.

Squash is a high-intensity sport that requires quick bursts of speed and agility, providing full-body exercise and an excellent cardiovascular workout. Squash requires quick reflexes, agility and hand-eye coordination. The fast pace of squash requires players to think quickly and strategically.

Squash can be a great way to meet new people and socialize. Many squash clubs offer leagues, tournaments, and social events where you can connect with others.

Find a club: https://www.squashaus.com.au/club-finder



- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 6 years and over (check with your local club)

3.36 Surf Life Saving



(Image supplied by: North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club)

Join a surf club as a lifeguard which promises an exhilarating experience filled with new friendships and exciting challenges. To become a volunteer lifeguard, you must be at least 15 years old and complete the SLSA Bronze Medallion course. This course is not just about learning essential surf awareness, survival skills, and rescue procedures, but also mastering emergency care techniques. Aspiring lifeguards must be able to swim 400 meters in under 9 minutes.

Dedicated volunteers patrol the beaches during weekends and public holidays from October to April, ensuring the safety of beachgoers, and having a blast doing it!

Find a club: https://www.surflifesaving.com.au/getinvolved/our-clubs-and-branches/

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 15 years and over (check with your local club)



3.37 Surfing



(Image supplied by: Surfing NSW)

Boardrider clubs are the foundation of surfing in Australia's coastal communities.

Club competitions are not only a way for the surf community to come together regularly, they help build confidence and skills in surfers of all ages. They are the place where competitive spirit is born and fostered, they are the place that plants the ideas and inspires surfers to pursue higher levels of competition. They are built on a history of healthy rivalry, support and lifelong friendships.

The boardriders club network is supported by SportAUS and is recognised as the most advanced in the surfing world. It is a vital link in the sport development pathway in Australia and is responsible for the success of many of our World Champions!

Find a club: https://surfingnsw.com.au/clubs

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.38 Swimming



(Image supplied by: Swimming NSW)

Dive in! Come and try for free. Swimming is a life-skill, a recreation, and a sport. From 3-year-olds to 100-year-old Masters Swimmers everyone loves to swim.

New to swimming and not sure which membership is for you? You can sign up for a free *Come and Try* membership with your local club!

- Up to 60-day membership just for NEW members
- Injury insurance cover for up to 60 days
- One session per week to try club activities

Find a club: https://nsw.swimming.org.au/swim/join

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 3 years and over (check with your local club)

3.39 Table Tennis



(Photo supplied by: The Illawarra Table Tennis Association)

Two or four players hit a light, hollow ball back and forth across a net stretched across the centre of a table tennis table.

The goal of the game is for each player to strike the ball in such a way that his or her opponent cannot lawfully return it. With each game being first too 11 points and winning by 2.

Play is fast, requiring quick reaction and constant attention, and is characterized by an emphasis on spin relative to other ball sports, which can heavily affect the ball's trajectory.

Find a club: https://www.ttnsw.org.au/clubs

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 7 years and over (check with your local club)



3.40 Taekwondo



(Image supplied by: AUS TKD)

Taekwondo is a Korean martial art that emphasizes powerful and high-speed kicks, making it distinct from other martial arts that may focus more on hand techniques or grappling.

Taekwondo is, at its core, a martial art about respect, discipline and self-control. Taekwondo students learn to be respectful of others, be patient in stressful situations and defuse situations before they escalate to a physical confrontation.

Taekwondo is an ideal sport for people of all ages, fitness levels, and abilities. Not only does it foster a strong body, increased fitness, and improved coordination, but it also promotes focus, confidence, and friendship. The principles of taekwondo extend into all aspects of life, with the discipline and mindfulness developed in the dojang also helping us to live purposefully and respectfully in all parts of our lives.

Find a club: https://www.revolutionise.com.au/ australiantaekwondo/club-finder

- ✓ Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



3.41 Tennis



(Image supplied by: Tennis NSW)

Whether you're looking for a fresh challenge, a social outing, or a fun family activity, we've got you covered. Explore a variety of exciting play options that match your interests and skill level.

Hot Shots Tennis is a fun way for children ages 3-10+ to play and learn tennis. Our Play to Learn philosophy recognizes the importance of combining play with appropriate challenge and skill learning to create the best possible tennis experience for your kids.

Cardio Tennis is the energised way to learn and play tennis for people of all ages and abilities. Sessions are run by qualified coaches who personalise activities to suit the motivations and abilities of each individual, so you feel comfortable to progress at your own pace.

Court Hire is a great way to line up a hit with family or friends at your local tennis club. All you need to do is search for your nearest club and book online - then the court is yours!

Find a club: https://play.tennis.com.au

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 3 years and over (check with your local club)

3.42 Touch Football



(Image supplied by: NSW Touch)

Touch football, often referred to simply as "touch," is a fast-paced, minimal-contact sport derived from rugby league. The primary objective of touch football is to score tries by grounding the ball in the opponent's in-goal area. Unlike rugby league, tackles in touch football are replaced by a "touch," where a defender lightly touches the ball carrier with their hand. Once touched, the ball carrier must perform a rollball, stepping over or rolling the ball back between their legs to a teammate. This process continues for up to six touches before possession is handed over to the opposing team.

Touch is a sport that requires high levels of stamina, sprint speed, agility, tactical awareness and teamwork. The skills developed playing touch have led to many players gaining professional contracts in the men's and women's National Rugby League.

Find a club: https://nswtouch.com.au/getinvolved/play/find-a-competition

- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 8 years and over (check with your local club)



3.43 Track cycling



(Image supplied by: Chris Allen)

All track events take place at a velodrome. There are a variety of races which may be conducted as part of a track event, including: Points Race, Scratch Race, Time Trial, Handicap, Sprint, Team Pursuit, Madison and Team Sprint.

The smooth, consistent surface of a velodrome allows for a different kind of riding experience compared to road cycling, with less concern about road hazards and more focus on speed and precision.

Success in velodrome racing often relies on tactics and strategy, such as drafting, positioning, and timing attacks, adding a layer of mental challenge to the physical demands. Velodrome racing is an excellent workout, building cardiovascular fitness, leg strength, and overall endurance, while also being a lot of fun.

Many cycling clubs include an Ausbike program. AusBike is Australia's national bike education program, designed to give kids aged 5 to 12 years the essential skills to experience the freedom, fun and adventure of life on two wheels! AusBike caters for kids with all levels of bike riding experience with a focus on developing fundamental skills, safety and confidence.

Find a club: https://www.auscycling.org.au/page/club-finder



- Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- Ages start at under 9s (check with your local club)

3.44 Triathlon



(Image supplied by: NSW Triathlon)

Triathlon is a multi-discipline sport combining swimming, cycling, and running stages in a single event. Event distances vary from short 'enticers' (ideal for kids) featuring a pool swim, through to long course and beyond containing an ocean swim.

Triathlon is enjoyed by people of all ages and fitness levels and has been an Olympic sport since 2000 and a Paralympic sport since 2016.

Triathlon clubs are a great way to meet other triathletes and coaches, get involved in a regular training programme, or sign up for a skills development course. Clubs will often keep their members updated on local or state races and events and provide a great social aspect to the sport. There are five clubs in the Illawarra and Shoalhaven region and the region is spoilt for choice with many quality triathlon events, ideal for beginners through to experienced athletes like!

Find a club: https://www.triathlon.org.au/club-finder

- / Illawarra and Shoalhaven
- ✓ Ages 6 years and over (check with your local club)



3.45 Ultimate



(Image supplied by: Wollongong Ultimate)

Are you looking to make friends, get strong, and develop a fascination with chasing plastic? Come play ultimate! Ultimate is a non-contact team sport full of challenging one-on-one matchups, feats of athleticism, graceful technique, and subtle strategy. Played on a rectangular field with endzones, the offensive team moves the disc up the field by throwing between them to catch the disc in an endzone and the defensive team tries to intercept the disc.

Ultimate is played in split gender (summer) and mixed seasons (winter) and has self-officiation, respect for your opponent, and spirit of the game as foundational principles. To play you only need to bring a pair of soccer or footy cleats as well as a light and dark shirt.

Find a club: https://gongultimate.org.au

✓ Illawarra
 ✓ Ages 14 years and over (check with your local club)



3.46 Underwater Hockey



(Photo supplied by: Wollongong Underwater Hockey Club)

Underwater hockey is a 3D water sport where two teams of six players compete to move a weighted puck across the bottom of the pool into opposing goal trays.

Pucks are moved using short hockey sticks, players wear snorkel, mask, fins and a glove. Underwater hockey is not just about breath holding, it's also about timing and positioning, where fitness and skills play part. Please ensure you can swim prior to trying this sport.

Find a club: https://nswunderwaterhockey.com

Illawarra
 Ages 10 years and over (check with your local club)



3.47 Volleyball



(Image supplied by: Illawarra Volleyball)

Volleyball is a team sport played by two teams, each consisting of six players. The objective is to score points by grounding a ball on the opposing team's court.

Volleyball is a sport that can be played by all ages and skill levels. Volleyball is a competitive and physically demanding sport, players need agility, speed, strength, and endurance to excel in the game. In practice a wide range of skills are learnt to serve, pass, set, attack, block and dig the ball.

Playing volleyball teaches you to work well with others and pay attention to what your team members are doing, so you can work together to anticipate the moves of the opposing team. Volleyball is friendly and inclusive, there are opportunities to play both competitively and socially and gives you valuable opportunities to make new friends.

Find a club: https://www.illawarravolleyball.org.au

- 🗸 Illawarra
- ✓ Ages 10 years and over (check with your local club)



3.48 Water Polo



(Image supplied by: Illawarra Water Polo)

Water polo is a sport played in water between two teams of seven players each. The game consists of four quarters in which the teams attempt to score goals by throwing the ball into the opposing team's goal. Players participate in both offensive and defensive roles. It is typically played in a deep pool where players cannot touch the bottom.

Water polo is a physically demanding sport that requires a combination of strength, endurance, speed, agility, great swimming skills, hand-eye coordination, steadiness, and teamwork.

Playing water polo is an excellent way to improve cardiovascular health, develop muscular strength and endurance, increase flexibility and coordination and improve mental focus and discipline. Whether playing competitively or just for fun, water polo is a fantastic sport that can help individuals lead a healthier, happier, and more fulfilling life.

Juniors can participate in our Shallow End program from the age of 7. It is a non-contact, modified version of the game played in the shallow end of the pool, designed to introduce kids to the sport in a fun and safe way.

Find a club: https://www.waterpolonsw.org.au/club-finder

✓ Illawarra
 ✓ Ages 7 years and over (check with your local club)

3.49 Wrestling - Freestyle



(Image supplied by: The Lake Illawarra PCYC)

Freestyle (Olympic) wrestling is a combat sport which confronts two competitors who try to gain control over their opponent using throws, locks, leg trips, and clinching techniques. Contrary to Greco-Roman which only allows the use of the upper body, all Freestyle holds can involve the legs to ultimately pin the opponent's shoulders to the mat. If a wrestler manages to do so, victory by "fall" is proclaimed, otherwise, the match pursues until the end of the regular time and the winner is decided according to the technical points scored.

Starting wrestling at a young age has many benefits including developing athleticism, physical strength and mental and emotional resilience. Wrestling promotes a healthy active lifestyle encourages a strong work ethic, respect for others and more!

Find a club: https://nsw.wrestling.com.au/clubs

✓ Illawarra
 ✓ Ages 5 years and over (check with your local club)



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Illawarra Shoalhaven School-Link

Office hours: Monday to Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm

T: 02 4254 1600E: david.bunder@health.nsw.gov.auW: islhd.health.nsw.gov.au/services-clinics/school-link-illawarra-shoalhaven

