

World Cup! Stage Rules

	Group Stage (8 games)	Group Stage (6 games)	Round of 16	Quarter finals	Semifinals	Final/ 3rd Place	Extra Time
Deck Size	32 + 16	24 + 12	40 + 20	20 + 10	12 + 6	12 + 6 or 6 + 3 (Final Only)	4 + 2 per game
Hand Size	3	3	4	4	5	5	—
Maximum Goals	3	3	2	2	1	1	1
Maximum Discard	3	3	2	2	1	1	1

World Cup!

Created by Mark Bates
Based on original design by Shaun Derrick

Number of Players: 2-16

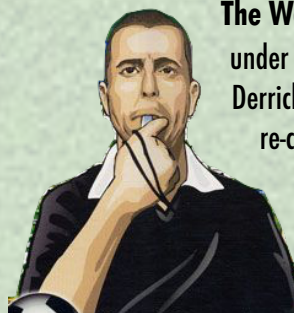
Ages: 10 and up

Contents: 222 Cards, consisting of the following:
100 Game Cards, 112 Team Cards
8 Filler/Reference Cards, and 2 Full Time Cards.

Object: To have one of your teams win the *World Cup!*

Introduction: *World Cup!* is more than just a game—it's a game system. With just the base set, anyone can replay the 2018 Men's World Cup or the 2019 Women's World Cup. Using expansions, you can play previous World Cups, other tournaments, or even your own fantasy tournament!

Outline: In *World Cup!*, a tournament is played over a number of **match days**. Each match day consists of multiple matches in which all players compete simultaneously. For most tournaments, multiple match days make up the **group stage**, which determines what teams advance to the **knockout stage**. Further match days are then played for each round of elimination, eventually determining the *World Cup!* champion!



The *World Cup Game* was published in 2006 by Games for the World, under the brilliant design of Shaun Derrick, and with Jan Derrick, Shaun Derrick, and Martin Whelan as artists. The game revolutionized the re-creation of famous soccer tournaments by combining a clever mix of simulation and simple game play. With the inspiration of a game which can be appreciated by sports fans, yet played by anybody, Infinite Pi Games is honored to re-design this "instant classic" so that it continues to appeal to game players around the world.

To Begin Game:

1. Determine which tournament you wish to play, and remove the team cards for that World Cup. There will be two identical sets of team cards, which should be separated. One set will be used to create the matches, while the other set will be distributed among the players. Use the printed sheet for the tournament match days, or download your own from worldcupcardgame.com.
2. Using one of the sets of team cards, distribute the teams among the players—this can be done by drafting, random assignment, or some other method. Make sure that every player has at least one team in each “half” of the groups (ABCD and EFGH for the Men’s World Cup, ABC and DEF for the Women’s World Cup).
3. Decide whether to play the Basic Game (teams only) or the Advanced Game (teams with abilities).
4. Deal three cards to each player.
5. Set up the matches for first match day by placing opposing teams next to each other horizontally, and by placing each successive game below the previous game. (See **Figure 1: Match Day Setup** on page 3.)
6. Create the Draw Deck (using the Draw Deck Instructions on page 5) and place at one end of the table.
7. At the other end of the table, place the Stoppage Time card. From the remaining game cards not in the draw deck, place one game card (without looking) face down beneath the Stoppage Time card, and place three cards face up in front of it. These cards are the **substitutes**, to be used throughout the match day.

Your table should look roughly like Figure 1. Each player’s active teams should be in front of them, face up, with their inactive teams off to the side.

Draw Deck

Team Cards

Stoppage Time

Discard Pile

Match

Substitutes

Figure 1: Match Day Setup

Team Cards:

Each team card represents a country's national team, and is represented by two characteristics, the team's Power and Skill.



The Power is a measure of the team's general depth and ability to create scoring opportunities during a match. This is always represented by a number on the card which defines how many **events** are available to that team during a match day. A team with higher Power will thus have more potential opportunities to score in a given game.

Its Skill is a measure of the team's ability to score in special situations, perhaps due to one or two stronger players. This is represented by the color of the border of the team card, with black being the highest, followed in order by red, blue, green, yellow, and gray. A team with higher Skill will have more opportunities to score during Stoppage Time.

While a team with a high Power may naturally have a higher Skill level, this is not always the case. A team with much depth, but weak finishing ability, may have a high Power with low Skill (for example, a 4-Green), while a weaker team with one strong finisher may have a lower Power with higher Skill (say, a 3-Red).

A team with gold stars has won World Cup titles prior to the tournament depicted on the card. While this is mostly informational, the gold stars may be referenced by team abilities or other cards.

Team abilities are used in the Advanced Game, as described on page 10. When players play the Basic Game, it may be easier to use the side of the team card without the ability. (If both sides show some ability, use the side marked "Back".)

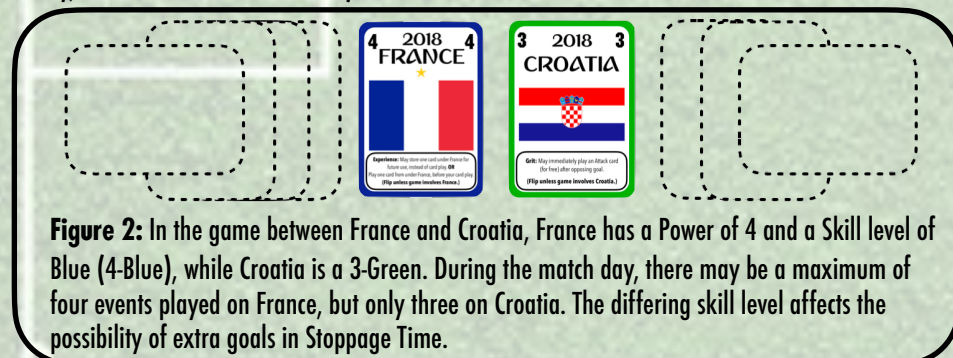


Figure 2: In the game between France and Croatia, France has a Power of 4 and a Skill level of Blue (4-Blue), while Croatia is a 3-Green. During the match day, there may be a maximum of four events played on France, but only three on Croatia. The differing skill level affects the possibility of extra goals in Stoppage Time.

Game Cards:

The Game Cards represent various actions that happen over the course of a match, and eventually determine the final score of each match. All game cards are described on pages 6 and 7, and are placed according to those descriptions. Cards are generally played in one of three ways:

- When a card is played as an event, it is placed next to the team card. As further events are played, the cards are placed outward so that the previous events can be seen.
- When a card is used to **nullify** an event, it is placed over the event completely, but remains to show that the event's space has still been occupied.
- When a Penalty card is played as an event, the two players involved in the game engage in a Penalty Kick. If the kick is blocked, the Penalty card is removed and does not count as an event—otherwise, the Penalty card remains.



When multiple events have been placed on a team, the most recently played event is considered **vulnerable**, and may be affected by other types of cards. All other events are considered **protected**, and are generally immune from other cards which may nullify them.

If the number of events played on a team equals its power, then we say their **Power is used**, and the last card is placed at a 90 degree angle to signify that no other events are to be played on that team. However, the last event is still considered to be vulnerable, and may be nullified by other cards.

Each game card also has a Game Ball in the upper left corner, in one of six colors corresponding to the Skill levels of the game. Game Balls are used for Penalty Kicks, Stoppage Time, and certain abilities, but do not affect the function of the game card itself.

Draw Deck Instructions:

At the beginning of each match day, players put together the draw deck, which acts as the game clock for all games. Each draw deck consists of two card piles of different sizes, with the Full Time card shuffled into the smaller pile. Then, the larger pile is placed on top to create the deck.

The size of the draw deck depends on the stage of the tournament, and the number of games being played. The World Cup! Stage Rules table on page 12 is a good reference for each round.

For example, in the Group Stage of the 2018 World Cup, the deck size is "32 + 16". After shuffling the game cards, 32 cards are placed in one pile, with 16 cards in the other. After the Full Time card is shuffled into the 16-card pile, the 32 card pile is placed on top. This guarantees that the Full Time card is revealed in the last third of the draw deck.

Types of Game Cards



Defense (25): May be played as an event **or** may be used to nullify an Attack or Corner card.

Defense cards can not be nullified.

Attack (25): Always played as an event. At the end of a match day, each Attack counts as 1/2 Goal.

Attack cards can be nullified by Defense or Foul cards.



Assist (4): May be played under a team card, giving +1 Power **or** in the card row, counting as 1/2 Goal.

May be played as its own event or used to nullify a Defense card.

Assist cards can not be nullified.

1 Goal (10): Always played as an event. If a 1 Goal card is needed (for example, when a 2 Goals card is nullified), a Filler Card is used and counts as a 1 Goal card.

1 Goal cards can be nullified by Foul or Offside cards.



2 Goals (8): Always played as an event.

2 Goals cards can be nullified by Foul or Offside cards. In this case, the 2 Goals card is covered by the nullifying card, and a 1 Goal Filler Card is placed on top.

Types of Game Cards

Corner (8): Always placed as an event. At the end of a match day, each Corner counts as a Goal.

Corner cards can be nullified by Defense or Foul cards.

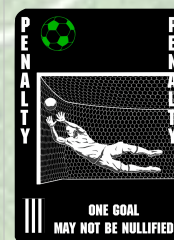
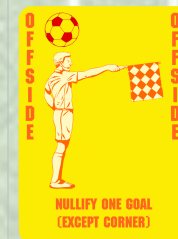


Foul (6): Is only played to nullify a 2 Goals, 1 Goal, 1 Goal+, Corner, or Attack card. When used to nullify a 2 Goals card, a 1 Goal Filler Card is placed on top of the Foul card.

Foul cards can not be nullified.

Offside (6): Is only played to nullify a 2 Goals, 1 Goal, or 1 Goal+ card. When used to nullify a 2 Goals card, a 1 Goal Filler Card is placed on top of the Offside card.

Offside cards can not be nullified.



Penalty (6): Always played as an event. When played in a game, the two teams engage in a *penalty kick*. (**See Penalty Kicks, p. 8**) If the Penalty Kick is scored, then the Penalty remains and counts as a Goal. If the Penalty Kick is blocked, then the Penalty is removed and does not count as an event.

Once a Penalty is scored, it can not be nullified.

Own Goal (2): Always played as an event, and represents a Goal for **the other team**.

Own Goal cards can not be nullified.



Game Play:

At the start of the game, the player with the host team has the first play. In succeeding match days, the player **after** the person to reveal the Full Time card on the previous match day will start.

Beginning with the first player of the match day, each player takes turns in clockwise order. If a player does not have any teams playing on a particular match day, but not all of their teams are eliminated, then they do not play on this match day. They do, however, keep their cards for the next match day in which they have one or more teams playing.

On a player's turn, they must conduct one of the following actions:

- **Play a Card:** They may play a card from their hand on any team, subject to the type of card and conditions on pages 4 and 5.
- **Make a Substitution:** They may place one card from their hand under the Stoppage Time card, and take a card from in front of the Stoppage Time card into their hand.
- **Dribble Out the Clock:** They may discard any number of cards from their hand and draw an equivalent number of cards from the draw deck, subject to the "Max Discard" amount on the Stage Rules.

Furthermore, if the players are playing the Advanced game, they may also use one of their team's abilities, either before or after their regular action.

At the end of their turn, the player must draw cards up to the hand size determined by the table. If they are already at or above the hand size, they do not draw any cards, and their turn ends. Players do not need to discard if they are above the hand size.

Players only draw cards at the end of their turn, unless an ability allows them to draw otherwise.

Penalty Kicks:

When a player plays a Penalty card on a team, the players in that match engage in a penalty kick. Both players in the match places one of the remaining cards in their hand face down, and then they simultaneously reveal their cards.

- If the Game Balls on the cards are the same color, then the kick is **blocked**. The Penalty card is **removed**, and the player finishes their turn.
- If the Game Balls are different colors, then the kick is **scored**. The Penalty card **remains** on the team as an event and counts as 1 Goal.

In the event that either player does not have a card to play on a penalty kick, then they will reveal the top card of the draw deck as their card and check the color of the game ball to determine if the kick is successful.

Concluding a Match Day:

On a match day, the players' turns end when the Full Time card is revealed, and the matches proceed to Stoppage Time. This will happen after a player has drawn a card to end their turn, but if they are supposed to draw more cards (due to using abilities, and so on), then those draws are forfeited. At the end of a match day, players keep their cards to use in the next match day, unless all of their teams have been eliminated from play.

Stoppage Time: Every match day also includes Stoppage Time, the period of time after 90 minutes which the referee adds at their discretion, based on delays and stoppages throughout the match. This is represented by the cards that are under Stoppage Time when Full Time is revealed—this could be anywhere from one to four cards, depending on the number of substitutions throughout the match day. Any cards still remaining in front of Stoppage Time are not included (and are discarded, unless there is Extra Time, explained below).

In Stoppage Time, the cards are revealed individually, and the Game Balls are examined. Each Game Ball represents 1/2 goal added to the total of each team with a Skill level that matches the color of the ball. This is cumulative, so 2 Red Game Balls would add 1 Goal to each team with a Red Skill level, and so on.

Resolving Matches: Goals are counted for each team based on the remaining cards which have not been nullified for each side. Goal cards are counted for the number of cards they represent, with Penalty and Corner cards each counting as 1 Goal. Each Attack counts as 1/2 goal, along with each Game Ball revealed during Stoppage Time. An Own Goal card counts as a goal for the opposing team.

Final goal totals are never rounded up.

Scores are recorded in the relevant match day on the scoresheet for the tournament in question. If the match day is in the Knockout Stage of a tournament and if after Stoppage Time, any of the games have concluded in a tie, then those games proceed to Extra Time.

Extra Time:

Extra Time is conducted in the following manner:

- All cards played in regular time are removed and set aside. "Half goals" which remaining from Attack cards, Stoppage Time, etc. do not count for Extra Time.
- A new draw deck is created from "4 + 2" cards for each game which extends to Extra Time.
- One card is placed face down under Stoppage Time, and one face up card is placed in front. (Any face up cards not substituted in regular time remain.)
- Only players who have teams in Extra Time play, but cards may be played on any game.
- 2 Goal cards count only as 1 Goal (use a Filler Card).
- Only one card may be discarded to Dribble Out the Clock.
- Power applies to Extra Time as indicated on the team cards.

If any games end tied after Extra Time, then they proceed to a Penalty Shootout.

Penalty Shootout:

Games which proceed to a Penalty Shootout are resolved separately in the following manner:

- Players involved in a penalty shootout set aside their hands, as they are not used.
- All cards not in any player's hands are gathered and shuffled into a single deck.
- Two piles of five cards each are dealt, with two of the five cards in each pile dealt face up. By coin flip or random method, one player is selected, who chooses:
 - Which pile to use for the shootout, or
 - Whether to shoot first or second.

Players alternate penalty shots as described in the Penalty Kicks section on page 8. Cards used for each kick are discarded, and new cards are drawn, before each succeeding kick.

After five kicks, the player with the most goals wins the shootout. In the event that both players score the same number of goals, single shots are taken by each player until one player scores, and the other does not.

Team Abilities:

Each team comes with an ability which represents a unique quality or characteristic. Abilities generally come in one of the following types:

Standing: A standing ability does not need to be used by a player, but is always active. However, a standing ability may be nullified by another team's ability.

Normal: An ability which is not a standing ability, and which does not have the word **immediate**, can be used on a player's turn, either before or after their regular card play. Only one normal ability may be used on each turn.

Immediate: An ability with **immediate** in the text can only be used in response to another event. It is possible for multiple players to respond with an immediate ability after a card play or event; in that case, priority proceeds (in turn order) from the next player after the current player.

It is possible for a player to use an immediate ability in response to their own normal card play or ability, although they have the lowest priority in the event that other players wish to use their immediate abilities.

A player may use an immediate ability in response to another immediate ability.

Further explanation of team abilities are described on the Team Abilities Rules Supplement, included with the base game, or at worldcupcardgame.com.

Teams may also come with **conditions** which are noted in separate box. For example, the 2019 U.S. Women's team is labeled as a Target; if any team in the tournament defeats or ties the U.S., they gain one Power for their following game. Conditions are used in both the Basic and Advanced Games.

Completing the Tournament:

Each tournament consists of a number of match days in the Group Stage, followed by a knockout stage, where the champion is eventually determined.

During the Group Stage, teams are awarded three points for each win, and one point for each draw. The top teams in each group advance to the knockout stage, and their ranking within the group determines the matchups that take place in the knockout stage.

In the event that two or more teams have the same number of points at the end of the group stage, ranking is determined by the following tie-breakers, in order.

1. Goal difference in all group matches;
2. Number of goals scored in all group matches;
3. Points obtained in the matches played between the teams in question;
4. Goal difference in the matches played between the teams in question;
5. Number of goals scored in the matches played between the teams in question;
6. Fair play points in all group matches (only if the Referee Deck is being used):
 - Yellow card: -1 points;
 - Indirect red card (second yellow card): -3 points;
 - Direct red card: -4 points;
7. Drawing of lots.

In the 2018 Men's World Cup, there are 8 groups of 4 teams each. The top two teams in each group advance to the knockout stage. In the 2019 Women's World Cup, there are 6 groups of 4 teams each. The top two teams in each group advance, along with the top four third-place teams among the groups. After the rankings in each group are determined, rank the six third-place teams, along with any tie-breakers.

Knockout Stage Differences: During the knockout stage, match days proceed like the group stage, with the following changes. See the World Cup! Stage Rules for exact changes.

- The deck size decreases as the rounds progress, as there are fewer games each round.
- The maximum hand size increases as the rounds progress. Players do not increase their hand size at the beginning of a round, but rather when they draw cards at the end of their first turn.
- The maximum number of cards to Dribble Out the Clock decreases as the rounds progress.
- In the semifinals and final, all 2 Goals and Goal+ cards count as a maximum of 1 Goal. Goal+ cards do not allow a player to play an extra card or goal. When played during these rounds, a Filler Card should be used to denote the correct goal amount, and the original cards should be removed from the game.

Final/3rd Place Matches: The two winning semifinal teams advance to the World Cup Final, while the losing teams proceed to the 3rd Place match. These are similar to the semifinal matches, except:

- Players may only play cards in games where they have a team.
- Players' abilities only affect teams in games where they have a team.