



Draw Procedures for the FIFA World Cup 2026™

Draw procedures for the FIFA World Cup 2026™

The Final Draw for the FIFA World Cup 2026™ will determine how the hosts – Canada, Mexico and the USA – the 39 qualified teams, two FIFA World Cup 2026™ Play-Off Tournament placeholders and four European play-off placeholders will be divided into 12 groups of four teams each for the final competition.

The information below sets out the procedures for the draw.

The following draw principles have been established to ensure a competitive balance – both in the group stage and, depending on sporting results, into the knockout stage – while retaining, insofar as possible, the random element inherent in tournament draws. The information below sets out the procedures for the draw.

1. SLOT ALLOCATION

The final slot allocation per confederation is as follows:

CONFEDERATION	NUMBER OF TEAMS	QUALIFIED TEAM(S)
AFC	8	Australia, IR Iran, Japan, Jordan, Korea Republic, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Uzbekistan
CAF	9	Algeria, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia
Concacaf	6*	*Canada, Mexico, USA as hosts Curaçao, Haiti, Panama
CONMEBOL	6	Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Uruguay
OFC	1	New Zealand
UEFA	16	Austria, Belgium, Croatia, England, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Spain, Switzerland 4 teams TBC
Winners of the FIFA World Cup 2026™ Play-Off Tournament	2	Qualified for the play-off tournament: Iraq (AFC), Congo DR (CAF), Jamaica (Concacaf), Suriname (Concacaf), Bolivia (CONMEBOL), New Caledonia (OFC)

2. SEEDING AND POT ALLOCATION

The hosts – Canada, Mexico and the USA – will be allocated to pot 1, and the 39 qualified teams will be allocated to the pots according to the FIFA/Coca-Cola Men's World Ranking issued on 19 November 2025. Lastly, the two FIFA World Cup 2026 Play-off Tournament placeholders as well as the four European play-off placeholders will be allocated to pot 4.

Based on the ranking, the top nine teams will be allocated to pot 1, along with the hosts, Canada, Mexico and the USA. The next 12 highest-ranked teams will be allocated to pot 2, followed by the next 12 highest-ranked teams in pot 3. Pot 4 will include the next six highest-ranked teams along with the six placeholders for the FIFA and European play-offs scheduled to be played during the 23-31 March 2026 International Match Window.

POT 1	POT 2	POT 3	POT 4
Canada	Croatia	Norway	Jordan
Mexico	Morocco	Panama	Cabo Verde
USA	Colombia	Egypt	Ghana
Spain	Uruguay	Algeria	Curaçao
Argentina	Switzerland	Scotland	Haiti
France	Japan	Paraguay	New Zealand
England	Senegal	Tunisia	UEFA Play-Off A (ITA/NIR/WAL/BIH)
Brazil	IR Iran	Côte d'Ivoire	UEFA Play-Off B (UKR/SWE/POL/ALB)
Portugal	Korea Republic	Uzbekistan	UEFA Play-Off C (TUR/ROU/SVK/KOS)
Netherlands	Ecuador	Qatar	UEFA Play-Off D (DEN/MKD/CZE/IRL)
Belgium	Austria	Saudi Arabia	FIFA Play-Off 1 (NCL/JAM/COD)
Germany	Australia	South Africa	FIFA Play-Off 2 (BOL/SUR/IRQ)

3. DRAW CONSTRAINTS

- FIFA's general principle, whenever possible, is to ensure that no group has more than one team from the same confederation drawn into it. This is applicable to all confederations except UEFA, which is represented by 16 teams.

- Each group must have at least one, but no more than two UEFA teams drawn into it. Thus, four out of the 12 groups will contain two of the 16 UEFA teams (including the four play-off placeholders).

In addition, the following constraints have been established:

Pot 1:

- In pot 1, Canada, Mexico and the USA, as the host countries, will be identified by different coloured balls and, when drawn, will be assigned to position A1 for Mexico (green ball), B1 for Canada (red ball) and D1 for the USA (blue ball), as already established per the match schedule released on 4 February 2024.
- The remaining nine top-ranked teams in pot 1 will be identified by nine balls of the same colour (white) and will be automatically allocated to position 1 of the group into which they are drawn.
- In the interest of ensuring competitive balance, two separate pathways to the semi-finals have been established, as per Appendix A below. In accordance with this and in order to have a balanced distribution of the teams, the four highest-ranked teams in the FIFA/Coca-Cola Men's World Ranking, when drawn, will have the following constraints. The highest-ranked team and the second highest-ranked team will be randomly drawn into groups in opposite pathways, and the same principle will also apply to the third and fourth highest-ranked teams. This will ensure that, should they win their groups, the two highest-ranked teams would not meet before the final.

Pots 2 to 4:

- For pots 2, 3 and 4, a predetermined pattern has been established to define the group position that teams are drawn into, depending on which pot they come from (Appendix B).

Pot 4:

- Pot 4 includes the two placeholders for the FIFA World Cup 2026 Play-Off Tournament winners and four placeholders for the European play-off winners.
- The FIFA World Cup 2026 Play-Off Tournament will consist of two pathways in order to determine the winners of the two remaining slots at the FIFA World Cup 2026. Both pathways will include three teams, with only one seeded team per pathway. Each pathway will be composed of teams from three different confederations, with no pathway having more than one team from the same confederation. In order to comply with FIFA's general principle to ensure that no group has more than one team from the same confederation

drawn into it, the Confederation constraint will be applied to all three teams within each pathway of the two Play-Off Tournament placeholders in pot 4.

4. DRAW PROCEDURES

1. The four pots representing the teams will be labelled 1 to 4. In each pot, there will be 12 balls with the country name of each qualified team.
2. The draw will start by drawing the three host country teams, with the green ball representing Mexico to be drawn first. Mexico will be placed in Group A as team A1. Next, the red ball representing Canada will be drawn and placed in Group B as team B1. The blue ball representing the USA will then be drawn and placed in Group D as team D1.
3. Following the drawing of the three host country teams, the draw will continue by drawing all of the remaining nine teams from pot 1.
4. After all of the teams from pot 1 have been drawn into their respective groups, the draw will continue by drawing all of the teams from pots 2, 3 and 4, in that order, with each pot being emptied before moving on to the next one.
5. The draw will conclude once all teams from pot 4 have been drawn into a group.

5. PLAY-OFFS

FIFA World Cup 2026™ Play-Off Tournament

Play-off pathway	Match 1	Play-off final 1
Play-off pathway 1	New Caledonia (Play-off Team 1)	Congo DR (team seeded first) v. Winner of Match 1
	Jamaica (Play-off Team 2)	
Play-off pathway	Match 2	Play-off final 2
Play-off pathway 2	Bolivia (Play-off Team 3)	Iraq (team seeded second) v. Winner of Match 2
	Suriname (Play-off Team 4)	

European play-offs

Play-off pathway A	Play-off semi-final 1 Italy v. Northern Ireland	Play-off final A Winner SF 2 v. Winner SF 1
	Play-off semi-final 2 Wales v. Bosnia and Herzegovina	
Play-off pathway B	Play-off semi-final 3 Ukraine v. Sweden	Play-off final B Winner SF 3 v. Winner SF 4
	Play-off semi-final 4 Poland v. Albania	
Play-off pathway C	Play-off semi-final 5 Türkiye v. Romania	Play-off final C Winner SF 6 v. Winner SF 5
	Play-off semi-final 6 Slovakia v. Kosovo	
Play-off pathway D	Play-off semi-final 7 Denmark v. North Macedonia	Play-off final D Winner SF 8 v. Winner SF 7
	Play-off semi-final 8 Czechia v. Republic of Ireland	

Appendix A



Appendix B

Group Position	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	MEX	CAN	1	USA	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2
3	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4
4	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	2	3

Legend

Pot	1
Pot	2
Pot	3
Pot	4