

A Game of Thrones: The Card Game **Tournament Regulations**

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Tournaments supported by the Organized Play (“OP”) program for *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game*, sponsored by Fantasy Flight Games (“FFG”) and its international partners, follow the rules provided in this document.

Introduction

A tournament is a competition between *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* players. After enrolling in the tournament, they are paired against one another in an organized fashion to play a game. After multiple games against different opponents, players are ranked according to their performance. Most tournaments conclude with the awarding of prizes to top finishers.

Tournaments are played using the rules provided in the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* Rules Reference, which may be downloaded from the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* page of our website at any time. Additional rules for playing games in a tournament are detailed in this document.

This document explains important tournament concepts and provides the details for Joust tournaments.

Table of Contents

- I. Tournament Participant Roles
 1. Organizer
 2. Marshal
 3. Judge
 4. Player
 5. Spectator
 6. Leader Participation
 7. Conduct
 - a. Unsporting Conduct

II. Tournament Materials

1. Organizer Materials
2. Player Materials
 - a. Deck Building
 - b. Card Sleeves
 - c. Legal Products

III. Tournament Play

1. Tournament Setup
2. Game Setup
3. Missed Opportunities

IV. Tournament Concepts

1. Definitions
2. Pairings
 - a. Swiss Rounds
 - b. Single Elimination Rounds
3. End of Round
4. Tournament Points
 - a. Intentional Draws
 - b. Tiebreakers

III. Tournament Structures

1. Basic Structure
2. Advanced Structure
3. Custom Structure

IV. Tournament Tiers

1. Relaxed
2. Formal
3. Premier

Tournament Participant Roles

Every person present at a tournament is a participant. Participants fulfill specific roles based on their responsibilities to the tournament. All participants share the responsibility of acting in a respectful manner toward one another. Please read the Fundamental Event Document for a detailed explanation of these roles. Participant leader roles are: organizer, judge, and marshal. Other roles include player and spectator.

Organizer

An event must have exactly one organizer. The organizer is responsible for the oversight of the entire event, including both planning and execution. If the organizer does not assign a marshal for the event, the organizer must perform the responsibilities of the marshal role.

Marshal

An event may have any number of marshals, including none. A marshal is an expert in the game's rules and regulations and is the final authority on questions about rules, regulations, and player disputes.

Judge

An event may have any number of judges, including none. A judge is well versed in the game's rules and regulations. A judge's responsibilities include assisting players to resolve disputes and answer questions regarding the game's rules.

Player

A player is an individual that plays *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* at the event. A player must bring all components they need to play a game of *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game*.

Spectator

A spectator is any individual at a tournament not actively engaging in another role. Spectators must not disturb an ongoing game, and cannot provide any input or assistance to players during their games.

Leader Participation

A leader may participate in a Relaxed tier tournament for which he or she is responsible only if there is a second leader present. The second leader must be announced at the beginning of the tournament and is responsible for all rulings for games in which the first leader is playing. If two leaders play one another, the marshal is responsible for any rulings during the game.

During Formal and Premier tier tournaments, leaders cannot participate. Leaders for Formal and Premier tournaments are expected to commit their full attention to organizing and overseeing the event.

Conduct

All tournament participants are expected to act in a respectful and professional manner during a tournament. If players have a dispute during a competition and cannot resolve it themselves, they must call for a judge to resolve it and provide any rulings that are needed. All card interpretations during a tournament are a marshal's responsibility, and he or she may overrule the rules documents when a mistake or error is discovered.

Unsporting Conduct

Players are expected to behave in a mature and considerate manner, and to play within the rules and not abuse them. This prohibits intentionally stalling a game for time, placing components with excessive force, inappropriate behavior, treating an opponent with a lack of courtesy or respect, cheating, etc. Collusion among players to manipulate scoring is expressly forbidden. Players cannot reference outside material or information during a match. However, players may reference official rule documents at any time or ask a judge for clarification from official rule documents.

The organizer, at his or her sole discretion, may remove players from the tournament for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Tournament Materials

There are many materials and game components needed to facilitate a tournament. The organizer and players are both responsible for supplying certain items.

Organizer Materials

In addition to arranging a location, the organizer is responsible for securing tables and chairs for each player. The organizer should have table numbers on hand or some other method of demarcation so players can easily find their seats at the beginning of each tournament round. The organizer is responsible for having blank deck lists and pens available if they are required for the event.

Finally, the organizer is also responsible for having all required rules documents on hand for reference during the event. This includes the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* Rules Reference, *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* Tournament Regulations (this document), any Event Outline relevant to the event, and any other relevant document for the event. Most of these documents can be found on the *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* page of our website at www.fantasyflightgames.com.

Player Materials

Players are responsible for bringing all of the game components they need to play a game of *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game*. This includes all cards, sleeves, and tokens. They should make sure that they have a legal deck. When a deck list is required, players should bring a completed list or arrive at the venue early to fill one out.

Deck Building

Each draw deck must contain one faction card and a minimum of 60 other cards. **A player may also include one agenda card that does not count toward the 60-card minimum.** There is no maximum size. However, players must be able to shuffle their deck without assistance and within a reasonable amount of time.

Each plot deck must contain exactly seven cards.

Card Sleeves

Players are required to sleeve each draw deck and plot deck in identical opaque card sleeves for Formal and Premier events. Players may use different sleeves between decks, but all cards within a single draw or **plot** deck must be identical in size, color, texture, and condition. At Relaxed events, if a player is not using opaque card sleeves, he or she must make sure that all card backs in each of their decks have a uniform appearance.

Legal Products

Players may use only official *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* components in tournament play. Proxies of cards cannot be used. Determining the legality of third-party tokens is the marshal's responsibility.

In North America, products are legal upon their release date. Players outside North America should check with their organizer to determine which products are tournament legal.

Tournament Play

This section provides information and considerations for playing a game of *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* at a tournament.

Tournament Setup

Before the tournament begins, the organizer must set up tables suitable for tournament play. Each seat should be arranged so that players have enough space on the table to comfortably place all of their cards and tokens over the course of a game.

Game Setup

The following steps must be performed before players can begin their first game each tournament round.

1. Players determine who is first player. This should be done by flipping a coin, rolling a die, or another random process.
2. Each player reveals their faction card and agenda card—if they have one—in player order, placing them prominently in their play area.
3. Players prepare the tokens they will need over the course of the game, placing them in piles within easy reach.
4. Each player places their plot deck facedown next to their faction card.
5. Each player shuffles their deck thoroughly and presents it to their opponent. The opponent may shuffle and cut the deck if desired. After the opponent has had a chance to shuffle the deck, each player places it within easy reach in their play area.
6. Each player draws the top seven cards of their deck. Each player, in player order, may decide to return those seven cards to their deck, shuffling the deck and presenting it to their opponent again before drawing a new hand of seven cards. Players must keep their second hand.
7. Each player, in player order, may place up to 8 **gold** worth of character, location, and attachment cards from their hand as setup cards. Setup cards are placed facedown in a player's play area.
8. Players turn all setup cards faceup simultaneously. Then, in player order, each player attaches their attachments and places any duplicates.
9. Each player draws cards until they have seven cards in their hand.

Once players complete setup, they should wait for a leader to announce the start of the round before beginning their game. If the round has already begun, players may begin playing immediately upon completing these steps.

Missed Opportunities

Players are expected to follow the game's rules, remembering to perform actions and use card effects when indicated. If a player forgets to use an effect during the timing specified by that effect, he or she cannot retroactively use it without the consent of his or her opponent. Players are expected to act with respect and not intentionally distract or rush an opponent with the intent of forcing a missed opportunity.

Tournament Concepts

The tournament concepts together create the framework for any *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournament.

Definitions

These words/phrases are important terms used when describing *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournaments.

- **Swiss Rounds:** *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournaments use a Swiss pairing system that awards tournament points to the winner of each game. Each Swiss round pairs players in head-to-head games, attempting to match players with the same number of tournament points together while preventing players from playing the same opponent more than once. At the end of Swiss rounds, the winner of the tournament is the player with most tournament points unless there are single elimination rounds (see “Single Elimination Rounds” on page 8).
- **Bye:** Occasionally, tournaments involve an odd number of competitors, resulting in one competitor having no opponent for the round and immediately being transferred to the following round. This is called “getting a bye.” When a player receives a bye, he or she receives a win and no addition to his or her strength of schedule for the round.
- **Progression Cut:** In some tournaments, the organizer may “make a cut” after a predetermined number of rounds. This cut eliminates all but a predetermined number of the highest-ranked players from the tournament. The remaining players continue in additional Swiss rounds or **single** elimination rounds.
- **Single Elimination Rounds:** A series of single-elimination rounds in which the winner of each pairing remains in the tournament and the losing player is eliminated and dropped from the tournament. Elimination rounds are usually used after a progression cut and continue until only one player remains and is named the winner.

Pairings

Each round, players are paired with an opponent, against whom they play a game of *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game*. The method of pairing may change based on what type of rounds are being used. No matter what method is used, rounds are 55 minutes long.

The organizer must announce the number of rounds, if there will be single elimination rounds, and what size the cut will be before the start of the tournament.

Swiss Rounds

For the first round of Swiss pairings, players are matched randomly against an opponent. For each round after the first, players are paired at random against another player with the same number of tournament points.

To determine pairings, take the group of players with the most tournament points and pair them at random. If there is an odd number of players in that group, pair the remaining player with a random player from the group of players with the next most tournament points. Then, pair all remaining players in the second group at random. Continue this until all players are paired.

If there is an odd number of players remaining in the tournament, a player at random receives the bye in the first round. In later rounds, the bye is given to the lowest ranked player who has not yet received a bye.

No player should be paired against the same opponent more than once during Swiss rounds.

Pairing example: *John, Stella, and Laramy all have 15 tournament points, the most out of any player in the tournament. Kyle is the next highest-ranked player and the only player with 10 tournament points. John is paired against Stella. Because there are no other players with 15 tournament points, Laramy is paired against Kyle.*

Single Elimination Rounds

Many *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournaments use single elimination after a cut is made for the top 4, 8, 16, or 32 players. In single elimination rounds, once one player remains, he or she is declared the winner of the tournament. The game between the two finalists is untimed.

For the first round of single elimination which follows a progression cut, pair the highest ranked player against the lowest ranked player who made the cut. This is Game #1. Pair the second-highest player against the second-lowest player who made the cut. This is Game #2. Continue in this manner until all players are paired.

For tournaments which begin with single elimination rounds, byes will need to be utilized for the first round if there are a number of players not equal to an exponential power of 2 (4, 8, 16, 32, and so on). Randomly assign byes to a number of players equal to the difference between the actual player count and the next-highest exponential power of 2. Then pair all remaining players against each other at random. Assign each pairing and player with a bye a game number in a random order, starting with Game #1.

For additional elimination rounds, pair the winner of Game #1 against the winner of the last pairing (the game with the highest number). This pairing is the new Game #1. If there are more than two players remaining, pair the winner of Game #2 against the winner of the second-to-last pairing (the game with the second highest number). This pairing is the new Game #2. Continue in this manner until all players are paired for the round.

In further single elimination rounds, follow the same method until all players are paired.

End of Round

Each **tournament round** ends in one of the following ways:

- **Victory Condition:** One player meets their deck's victory condition. The player who meets their victory condition earns a win and their opponent receives a loss.
- **Empty Draw Deck:** If a player's draw deck contains no cards, that player immediately receives a loss and their opponent receives a win.
- **Time:** When time is called at the end of a tournament round, players must play through the taxation phase of the current game round. If neither player has won, the player closest to their victory total in power earns a modified win and their opponent receives a modified loss. If both players are equally close to their victory total, both players receive a draw.
- **Concession:** A player voluntarily concedes defeat at any point during the game. The conceding player receives a loss and the opponent receives a win.

End of Round Example: *Time is called for the round. Dan and Emily are currently in the challenges phase, so they finish the game round. At the end of the round, Dan has 11 power and Emily has 13 power. Emily only needs 2 more power for a victory, while Dan needs 4 more power. Since Emily is closer to victory, she receives a modified win and Dan receives a modified loss.*

Tournament Points

Players earn tournament points at the end of each round as follows:

- Win = 5 tournament points
- Modified Win = 4 tournament points
- Draw = 2 tournament points
- Modified Loss = 1 tournament point
- Loss = 0 tournament points

These points are used to determine the winner of the tournament. In the case of a larger event, they are instead used to determine who makes the cut to **single** elimination rounds.

Intentional Draws

During Swiss rounds, players may intentionally draw a game so long as a leader is present for any discussion between players prior to the agreement. The leader's presence is required to prevent any breach of the tournament's integrity. The leader will not intervene as long as players follow the "Unsporting Conduct" guidelines on page 4.

If two players intentionally draw a game, each player receives 2 tournament points just as if they were to arrive at a natural draw over the course of play.

Tiebreakers

If two or more players have the same number of tournament points, tiebreakers are used to determine each player's standing within that group. Tiebreakers are used in the following order until all players within that group have been given a standing.

- **Head-to-head:** Any player that has played and defeated all other players in the group is ranked above the other players in the group.
- **Strength of Schedule:** A player's strength of schedule is calculated by dividing each opponent's total tournament points by the number of rounds that opponent has played, adding the results of each opponent played, and then dividing that total by the number of opponents the player has played. The player with the highest strength of schedule is ranked above all other players in the group not yet ranked. The player with the second-highest strength of schedule is ranked second among all players in the group not yet ranked, and so on.

- **Extended Strength of Schedule:** A player’s extended strength of schedule is calculated by adding each opponent’s strength of schedule and then dividing by the number of opponents that player has played. The player with the highest extended strength of schedule is ranked above all other players in the group not yet ranked. The player with the second-highest extended strength of schedule is ranked second among all players in the group not yet ranked, and so on.
- **Random:** If any players are still tied after all other tiebreakers have been applied, then those players are ranked in a random order below any players already ranked in the group.

Tournament Structures

The structure of a tournament determines how many Swiss and single elimination rounds are used. All *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournaments must use one of the following three types.

Basic Structure

The basic tournament structure is designed to be very accessible, especially for newer participants. This structure provides a tournament experience that requires a modest commitment of time and resources from organizers and players.

Number of Registered Players	Number of Swiss Rounds	Size of Cut
4-8	3	No Cut
9-16	4	No Cut
17-24	4	Top 4
25-40	5	Top 4
41-44	5	Top 8
45-76	6	Top 8
77-148	6	Top 16
149 and Above	7	Top 16

Advanced Structure

The Advanced tournament structure caters to participants that enjoy competition. This structure provides a robust tournament experience that requires a substantial commitment of time and resources from organizers and players.

Number of Registered Players	Number of Swiss Rounds	Size of Cut
9-12	4	Top 4
13-24	4	Top 8
25-40	5	Top 8
41-76	6	Top 8
77-148	6	Top 16
149-288	6	Top 32
289-512	7	Top 32
513 and Above	8	Top 32

Custom Structure

The custom structure applies to all round structures other than the basic and advanced structures. Also included in the custom structure are tournaments that offer a number of rounds or size of cut that does not change based on attendance. The Event Outline of official custom tournaments will either include a specific structure tailored to that particular type of event or instruct the organizer to design a structure and communicate it to participants.

Tournament Tiers

FFG's OP events are broken into three tiers of play. These tiers serve to establish the expectations of a *A Game of Thrones: The Card Game* tournament. Expectations are not intended to exclude people from participating, but to communicate the experience that players can expect from an event. Organizers of unofficial tournaments are encouraged to utilize the Relaxed tier, unless their tournament is specifically aimed at competitive players.

Relaxed

Tournaments at this level are welcoming to all players, regardless of experience level. Players are encouraged to help each other improve and learn, so long as it does not significantly disrupt the game. The focus is on creating a fun and friendly environment.

Formal

This tournament level expects players to possess at least a minimal amount of experience. Players should be familiar with the game rules, and be prepared to exercise that knowledge to play at a reasonable pace. Players are expected to avoid confusion about their actions and refrain from other sloppy play mistakes. The focus is a friendly competitive environment.

Premier

Premier events are the highest level of competition for Fantasy Flight Games tournaments. At this top level of tournaments, players are expected to have a moderate amount of experience. Players should be familiar with not only the game rules, but also the FAQ and tournament regulations. The focus is on a competitive and fair environment.

This and other supported documents for FFG Organized Play can be accessed from the FFG Organized Play Support Page:

<http://www.fantasyflightgames.com/opsupport>