

2026 Men's World Cup

What Is the Men's World Cup?

The Men's World Cup is an international football tournament for male football teams that takes place every four years. The first official Men's World Cup was held in 1930, in Uruguay. The tournament has only been cancelled twice, which was due to the Second World War (in 1942 and 1946). Different countries take it in turns to host the Men's World Cup. Many people believe that this is a great opportunity for tourism for the host country because thousands of international visitors travel there to watch the football matches. The last Men's World Cup was held in Qatar in 2022 and was won by Argentina.

This year's tournament will take place between 11th June and 19th July and will be held in three host countries: Canada, Mexico and the United States. This is the first world cup tournament of its kind to take place across three host countries. The first game, between Mexico and South Africa, will be held in Mexico City, Mexico; the final match will take place in New Jersey, United States.

How Is the Men's World Cup Organised?

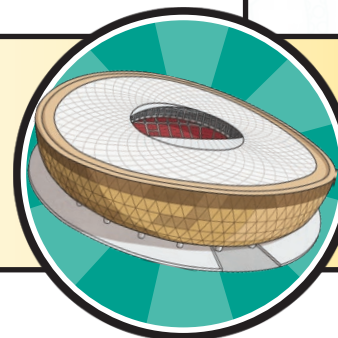
GROUP B



Following qualification, which is determined through qualifying matches, the tournament will include 48 national teams – the most ever in the tournament. The three host teams qualified automatically.

During the tournament, a total of 104 matches will be played in 16 cities across Canada, Mexico and the United States. The teams will be split into 12 groups of four, where each team in the groups plays against every other team. The full match schedule was revealed in December 2025 in Washington DC, United States.

Following the group stage matches, the top two teams from each group will be joined in a 32-team knockout stage by the eight best third-placed teams. Following that will be a second knockout stage of 16 teams, then the quarter-finals, the semi-finals and the final.



Disclaimer: Twinkl are not associated with FIFA and this resource is provided for informational and educational purposes only. If you would like more information on FIFA or the World Cup, please visit the official website at: [FIFA World Cup 2026](https://www.fifa.com/worldcup2026)

What Awards Are Given?

At the end of the tournament, the winning team is presented with the gold Men's World Cup trophy, which, due to its high value, is only kept by the team until the post-match celebrations are complete. Then, the winning team receives a gold-plated replica of the trophy to take away. All members of the top three teams, including players, coaches and managers, receive medals depicting the Men's World Cup trophy in gold (winners), silver (runners-up) and bronze (third place).

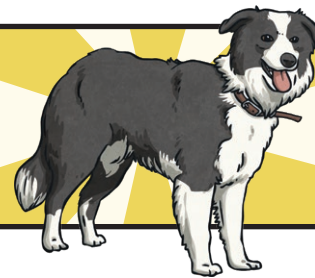


Although the Men's World Cup trophy is awarded to the winning team, it isn't the only award given. There are also awards given to individual players. The Golden Ball is awarded to the best player, the Golden Glove is presented to the top-performing goalkeeper and the Golden Boot is awarded to the highest goalscorer. The Best Young Player is awarded to someone who is 21 years of age or younger.



What Happened to the Original World Cup Trophy?

The original Men's World Cup trophy had quite an interesting history; it was stolen twice! The first time was in London in 1966, when the trophy was taken from an exhibition in Westminster Central Hall. A week later, a dog called Pickles found it wrapped in newspaper in a nearby garden; Pickles went on to attract international fame and his owner, David Corbett, received a cash reward.



In 1970, the Brazilian team was presented with the original trophy to keep (because they had won the tournament for the third time) and placed it on public display in Rio de Janeiro. A new trophy was made; it is still used in tournaments today. In 1983, the original trophy was stolen and it is widely believed that it was melted down and sold!

Questions



1. Which country won the Men's World Cup in 2022? Tick one.

- ☐ Argentina ☐ Canada ☐ Mexico ☐ Qatar

2. Fill in the missing word.

The Best Young Player is _____ to someone who is 21 years of age or younger.

3. **After a series of qualifying matches, it was determined that a total of 48 teams will compete for the cup.**

Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word 'determined' in this sentence?
Tick one.

- ☐ focused and driven ☐ quickly ☐ decided ☐ in charge of

4. Why do you think that Pickles went on to attract international fame?

5. Can you predict what might happen with future tournaments if this year's tournament is a success?

6. Four paragraphs in the text have been summarised below. Number them from 1 to 4 in the order they appear in the text.

- ☐ An explanation of where and when the 2026 Men's World Cup will be held.
- ☐ An explanation of the awards given at the Men's World Cup.
- ☐ An introductory paragraph explaining what the Men's World Cup is.
- ☐ A paragraph explaining how the 2026 Men's World Cup will be organised.

7. How does the organisation of this text help us to better understand the information?

8. Look at the paragraphs under the sub-heading **What Happened to the Original World Cup Trophy?**

In what way are these paragraphs different from the rest of the text?

9. Complete the table below with one piece of evidence from the text to support each statement.

	Evidence
The 2026 Men's World Cup will be the most exciting tournament yet.	
The Men's World Cup trophy is valuable.	

Dig Deeper

Discuss with a partner: How could the main idea of the text be turned into a different type of text/outcome, e.g. a poem, a news report, a podcast?

Answers



1. Which country won the Men's World Cup in 2022? Tick one.

- ☒ **Argentina** ☐ Canada ☐ Mexico ☐ Qatar

2. Fill in the missing word.

The Best Young Player is **awarded** to someone who is 21 years of age or younger.

3. **After a series of qualifying matches, it was determined that a total of 48 teams will compete for the cup.**

Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word **determined** in this sentence?
Tick one.

- ☐ focused and driven ☐ quickly ☒ **decided** ☐ in charge of

4. Why do you think that Pickles went on to attract international fame?

Learners' own responses, such as: I think Pickles received international fame because he was considered a hero for finding the stolen trophy and his picture would have appeared in many newspapers around the world.

5. Can you predict what might happen with future tournaments if this year's tournament is a success?

Learners' own responses, such as: I predict that if this tournament is a success it will influence future tournaments to have more than one host city.

6. Four paragraphs in the text have been summarised below. Number them from 1 to 4 in the order they appear in the text.

2 An explanation of where and when the 2026 Men's World Cup will be held.

4 An explanation of the awards given at the Men's World Cup.

1 An introductory paragraph explaining what the Men's World Cup is.

3 A paragraph explaining how the 2026 Men's World Cup will be organised.

7. How does the organisation of this text help us to better understand the information?

Learners' own responses, such as: The use of sub-headings helps us to understand what information will appear in each paragraph. The first paragraph gives us a general idea of the 2026 Men's World Cup before going into more detail about how the tournament is organised. Stories from the tournament's history are saved until the end of the text.

8. Look at the paragraphs under the sub-heading **What Happened to the Original World Cup Trophy?**

In what way are these paragraphs different from the rest of the text?

Learners' own responses, such as: The paragraphs under the heading 'What Happened to the Original World Cup Trophy' describe interesting stories from the history of the Men's World Cup, while the rest of the text focuses mainly on facts about the 2026 Men's World Cup.

9. Complete the table below with one piece of evidence from the text to support each statement.

	Evidence
The 2026 Men's World Cup will be the most exciting tournament yet.	- The number of host countries, e.g. - The tournament takes place across three host countries: Canada, Mexico and the United States. - This is the first tournament of its kind to take place across three host countries. - The number of teams taking part, e.g. - The tournament includes 48 teams. - The tournament includes the most number of teams to date.
The Men's World Cup trophy is valuable.	- The trophy has been stolen, e.g. - The trophy has been stolen twice. - Its monetary value, e.g. - David Corbett received a cash reward for its return. - It is widely believed that the original trophy was melted down and sold. - The winning team is given a gold-plated replica, e.g. - The winning team is only given the real trophy until the post-match celebrations are complete. - The winning team gets a replica to take away.