

Pokémon Trading Card Game Floor Rules

Ver.Asia -1.0

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Preface

These Pokémon Trading Card Game Floor Rules detail the set of rules shared across all official Pokémon Trading Card Game events and meant to offer all participants a pleasant tournament experience.

Let us all take these rules at heart to make enjoyable events that are not just about the outcome of the game, but also, and most importantly, about sharing our love for the Pokémon Trading Card Game!

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Section 1: To all event attendees

Anyone attending a Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program event, either as a player or spectator, is expected to understand and adhere to the information in this section.

This section will explain the following main points:

1. Player ID
2. Conditions for participation and exceptions
3. Prohibited behavior in Pokémon Events

1-1. Player ID

Players who wish to participate in any official Pokémon Trading Card Game competition and/or Gym event must first sign up on the Pokémon Trading Card Game Players Website and be issued a Player ID number.

When registering as a player, please keep in mind the following rules:

- One single Player ID number per player.
- A player can only register on the Trainers Website of their region of residence, in the language of the cards officially distributed in that region (they must also be able to prove their residence).
- If a player is found out to have registered duplicate accounts, they may face penalties such as removal of duplicate IDs or a ban from participating in any Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program event.

1-2. Eligibility

The ability to participate in Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program events is open to all who have a Player ID number, with the following exceptions:

- Those who have an active suspension from Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program events, issued by the Pokémon Company.
- Tournament staff members, including the Organizer, judges, and scorekeepers.
- Current employees of The Pokémon Company and its subsidiary companies.
- Contractors of any of the aforementioned companies who are involved in the support and sales of the Pokémon Trading Card Game, or whose role affords them early access to products supported by Pokémon programs.

1-3. Expectations and prohibited behavior

Attendees at Pokémon Trading Card Game events are expected to understand and adhere to the rules outlined in this document, as well as any other accompanying documents that are applicable to their roles.

1-3-1. Duties as an attendee

All attendees are expected to:

- Meet the registration and/or entry requirements of the event, wherever necessary.

- Be free from the influence of alcohol and/or other mind-altering substances.
- Refrain from the use of inappropriate language and/or the discussion of inflammatory topics.
- Maintain a socially acceptable level of personal hygiene.
- Follow the direction of event staff.
- Be respectful and courteous to all.

1-3-2. Prohibited behavior

It is important that all participants are made to feel welcome and comfortable within the environment of a Pokémon Trading Card Game event. In support of this, the Pokémon Organized Play program prohibits the following behaviors:

- The sale or consumption of alcoholic beverages and/or any mind-altering substance.
- Wagering or gambling on the results of a game, portion of a game, match, or number of matches.
- Offering any form of compensation with intent to alter the result of a game, portion of a game, match, or number of matches; bribery.
- Bringing any firearm (including mock weapons that could reasonably be mistaken for such), knife, or any other items that could be used as a weapon.
- Wearing attire and accessories that display inappropriate or inflammatory language, or that are otherwise determined by the Organizer to be unsuitable for such an environment.

Section 2: To all Players

A player is any active participant in a Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program tournament. Players who drop from the tournament become spectators.

2-1. Player Responsibilities

All players must:

- Follow the tournament schedule and present themselves for play in a timely manner.
- Double-check their match record and standings as pairings are posted each round, and report any discrepancies to the appropriate event staff immediately.

Players are also responsible for the provision of the following:

- A valid Player ID.
- A deck that meets the format restrictions for the tournament.
- A legible and accurate list of the cards that comprise the player's deck (deck list).
- Any implements necessary to play, track, and maintain game information. This includes but is not limited to items such as:
 - Damage counters

- Special Condition markers
- A randomizer such as a coin or dice.

2-2. Match Etiquette

To allow for a pleasant playing experience for all, players are expected to always uphold the rules of the game, and show consideration and integrity towards their opponents.

2-2-1. Basic match etiquette:

Please keep the following match etiquette in mind:

- Greet your opponent at the start and end of each match.
- Clearly announce your actions and the effects of your cards during play, and clearly respond to your opponent whenever needed.
- Keep your board and belongings tidy to avoid any confusion for your opponent, judges and staff.
- Handle your opponent's cards with care. When you need to check your opponent's cards (be it their Active, Benched Pokémon or their discard pile), please ask for their permission first. Unless explicitly allowed to do so through a card's effect, do not try to look at the cards in your opponent's hand.
- Refrain from any behavior that would make your opponent uncomfortable (such as raising your voice, insulting them, playing slowly on purpose, etc.).
- If you need to leave your seat for any reason, first ask for permission from your opponent and from a judge or staff member.
- If there is any confusion regarding the rules during a match, players may call a judge or event staff to ask for confirmation. Players are expected to follow the judge's decision on that matter.
- However, if a player disagrees with that decision, they are allowed to appeal to a different judge to review the decision.
- Judges get to make the final decision regarding any demands from the players.

2-3. Prohibited behavior during matches

Unless given explicit permission from an event staff member, players participating in a tournament should refrain from any of the behaviors below during their matches:

- Receiving any information from an outside source regarding their match or another match.
- Making phone calls or using any mobile device.
- Having earphones or headphones on.

Additionally, players are prohibited from bringing the following items to the play table:

- Food or beverages (drinking in reasonable amounts for rehydration is however allowed and encouraged).
- Notes or documents with any pre-written information or text.
- In addition to the above, all items other than those designated as competition belongings.

Section 3: To all Spectators

Spectators are those who are present at a Pokémon Card Game event but who are not actively participating in the tournament. This includes legal guardians, companions, and players who have dropped from the tournament.

Spectators should stay within the designated watching areas and observe proper etiquette when watching a match, so as not to interfere with the tournament and the matches. Spectators who fail to observe these rules may be asked to leave the premises by a judge or event staff.

3-1. Spectator Responsibilities

All spectators must adhere to the following rules:

- Do not interfere with a match or players in any way.
- Maintain a reasonable distance from matches in progress to avoid distracting the players.
- Refrain from discussing matches in progress within earshot of the table.
- Should a disruptive spectator be responsible for a player currently engaged in tournament play, that player may earn penalties as though they had engaged in disruptive behavior.
- This may ultimately result in that player's disqualification from the tournament, should it become necessary to remove the associated spectator from the event.

Section 4: Judges

Judges are expected to administer impartial rulings and assist the Organizer and Head Judge in running a fun, fast, and fair tournament. The Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program supports the rulings of its judges, where those rulings are made impartially and are in the best interests of the Spirit of the Game.

4-1. Judges

All judges must:

- Be free from bias toward or against any player.
- Avoid ruling on games where family members or close friends are involved, where possible.
- Exemplify and encourage good sporting behavior.
- Work together with other event staff and participants to enforce the rules of the game and create a fair and smooth tournament experience for all.
- All judges have the power and responsibility to intervene and correct any situation or behavior they witness and that is, or could be thought as, going against the rules or spirit of the game.

4-2. Head Judge

The Head Judge serves as the final arbiter of all rulings and rules interpretations for a tournament, and is ultimately responsible for making sure that all participants abide by the rules set forth in this document.

The Head Judge must:

- Ensure that judges remain active and on task.
- Complete and submit the Penalty Summary form for the tournament in a timely and accurate manner.
- Complete and submit a Disqualification Report for each disqualification (with the exception of no-shows).

Some events may also have a Master Judge assigned. The Master Judge and Organizer have the final say in any rule decision for that event.

Section 5: About the Tournament Organization

This section will detail important information about how events are run.

5-1. Tardiness

Players are responsible for making sure they have completed all steps required for participation and that they are present in the venue before the announced Player Meeting time.

Depending on the tournament policies, tardiness may incur penalties up to a disqualification from the event.

Policies on tardiness for each type of event:

5-1-1. Events with on-the-day registration

First Qualification Round

Players who have not completed all steps required for participation within the designated check-in time will get an automatic loss for the first round of the event and won't get to play in the event.

If such a player wishes to rejoin the event and start playing from Round 2, they must complete the necessary procedures at the Event Management main desk before the end of the first round.

Second

Round

Onwards

From Round 2 onwards, if a player is not seated at their designated table and able to start playing when the round starts, they will be considered as having lost that Round and will not be able to keep playing in the tournament.

If a player wishes to drop from the tournament, they must go to the Judge Station and formally declare they are dropping from the event.

If a player failed to declare they were dropping from the event before leaving, they will be disqualified and lose any records and benefits they would have gotten from that event.

5-1-2. Events without on-the-day registration

First Qualification Round

Players who are not seated at their designated table and able to start playing when the first round starts will be considered as having lost that Round and will not be able to keep playing in the tournament.

If such a player wishes to rejoin the event and start playing from Round 2, they must complete the necessary procedures at the Event Management main desk before the end of the first round.

Second Round Onwards

From Round 2 onwards, if a player is not seated at their designated table and able to start playing when the round starts, they will be considered as having lost that Round and will not be able to keep playing in the tournament.

If a player wishes to drop from the tournament, they must go to the Judge Station and formally declare they are dropping from the event.

If a player failed to declare they were dropping from the event before leaving, they will be disqualified and lose any records and benefits they would have gotten from that event.

5-2. Match Results

Players and event staff must both make sure match result details are accurate and properly submitted and recorded. Depending on the event, players may need to submit the match results themselves online, or fill a paper match slip and submit it to the event staff who will record the results.

5-2-1. Paper records

Paper records, such as standings, pairings, and match slips, may be retained until the end of a tournament to aid with solving any potential discrepancies that may arise. They should then be immediately destroyed.

5-2-2. Submitting and recording match results

A match slip serves as a written record of the result from any one match. Match slips must always be used at official Pokémon TCG events.

At the end of each match, the players should record the result, either on the match slip or online, as instructed by the event organizer.

Then, even if results are submitted online, both players should record the result on the match slip and sign it to indicate that they agree with the result.

Once a match slip has been signed, that result is considered final. It is then the responsibility of the winner of the match to turn in the slip as directed by the Organizer.

* Depending on the event, organizational details may differ from the above. Please make sure you always check the details in the event information and rules for the event you're attending.

5-2-3. Double-Checking results

In swiss-round tournaments, players have a responsibility to double-check their match points (records from previous rounds) in pairings and provisional standings.

If you have any doubts or if you notice any discrepancy in your match points or records, please make sure to report to a staff member or judge before the start of the next match.

Once the next match has started, match results and pairings will be considered correct and final.

5-2-4. Correcting results

It is at the Organizer's discretion to re-pair a round if a player's match record is found to be incorrect before the next match begins.

The Organizer can fix the error before the round starts and re-pair the minimum number of players to have a valid pairing, or wait until the round starts before fixing the match record. In either case, the player's pairing in the next round will be correct.

5-3. Tempo of Play

The pace of a Pokémon TCG match should be lively without being excessively fast, and each player should receive approximately half of the allotted time for the game.

Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play has set forth the below guidelines by which to assess whether a game action is completed in a reasonable time frame.

- Shuffling and setup, game start: 2 minutes
- Shuffling and deck search, mid-game: 15 seconds
- Performing the actions of a card or attack: 15 seconds
- Considering the game position before playing a card: 10 seconds
- Starting the turn after opponent's "end of turn" announcement: 5 seconds

These are guidelines only, and should be considered within the context of normal gameplay.

Players attempting to compartmentalize their turn in order to consistently use every second of the time allowed for these actions will be subject to penalties associated with stalling or "Slow Play".

5-4. Time Extensions

Judges may issue time extensions of a length corresponding to the time taken to resolve any issue. The extra time allotted must be clearly communicated to both players, and recorded immediately by the judge.

That judge should also leave a note on that table with the duration of the time extension, as a reference to other judges.

Section 6: Card Legality

Players must ensure that all cards they wish to use are legal for the format in which the tournament is held.

6-1. Proxy cards

Fake or proxy cards (photocopies, printouts or handmade cards used in place of an actual card) are not allowed in any tournament. However, a judge may decide that a card that was accidentally damaged needs to be replaced with a proxy to allow the match to continue without giving either player an unfair advantage.

In that case only, proxies made or approved by a judge may be allowed.

6-2. Damage, stains, markings, and warping

Cards with damage such as indentations, stains, warping, or markings on the card's face, back or sides that could distinguish them from other cards in a deck, may not be allowed for use in the tournament, by the discretion of a judge.

However, if card sleeves are used and make those cards indistinguishable from other cards, then those cards can be used.

*Depending on the event, specific rules may apply regarding which card sleeves are allowed for play.

6-3. Deck Checks

Deck checks must be performed in all official tournaments.

Pokémon Organized Play expects that legality checks will be performed on at least 10% of decks or teams, but recommends that tournament staff strive to complete as many as is reasonable.

Deck checks can be performed at any point during the tournament, from registration to the final round.

When performing a Deck check, tournament staff must check the following:

- If the deck list was submitted in paper format, ensure all the necessary information is present and legible.
- Make sure all cards in the deck list are legal in the tournament's format.
- Make sure the contents of the deck match the contents of the deck list.
- Make sure no card or sleeve has any form of marking or alteration.

Section 7: Card Sleeves

Players may use card sleeves in accordance with the rules of the event they're attending. However, card sleeves are not mandatory in order to play.

In the tournament, if a judge deems that a player's card sleeves are not fit to be used, the player has the option to either replace the card sleeves with more appropriate ones, or play without card sleeves.

* Depending on the event, the Organizer may sometimes require specific types of card sleeves to be used.

Section 8: Shuffling and Deck Randomization

Shuffling a deck means making it sufficiently randomized so that neither player can tell the order of its cards.

At the start of each game, as well as whenever a player has been instructed to "shuffle their deck" by an effect during the game, decks must be sufficiently randomized.

Strict penalties will be implemented if a player were to perform illegal deck manipulation when shuffling.

* For more details on penalties, refer to Section 12.

8-1. Shuffling by Players

A player may shuffle their own deck until they deem the cards to be sufficiently randomized.

However, players must shuffle their deck where their opponent can see it and within a reasonable amount of time; they should also make sure not to damage the cards nor peek inside their deck while shuffling.

1. Once a player's deck is shuffled, their opponent may shuffle it once more or cut* it. Cutting or shuffling the opponent's deck should be brief, and done while taking care not to damage the opponent's deck nor peek at its contents.

* Cutting the deck consists of creating two separate stacks of cards by removing a portion of the top of the deck, and then placing it under the remaining portion. Cutting into more than two stacks is considered a shuffle.

2. Once a player is done shuffling their deck, they should offer their opponent to shuffle it once more or cut it (if not offered, their opponent can also request to do so). Once a player's deck has been cut or shuffled by their opponent, they cannot cut or shuffle it again.

8-2. Shuffling by a Judge

Judges are allowed to cut a player's deck, be it at a player's request or at their own discretion.

- If a player feels that a deck (either theirs or their opponent's) may not be sufficiently randomized or properly shuffled, they may request a judge to shuffle that deck.
- Once a deck has been shuffled by a judge, players cannot shuffle or cut that deck.

Section 9: Match Conclusion and Outcome

A match's conclusion and outcome are determined according to the rules of the event.

When rules require match results to be written down and signed by players, once a result has been signed by both players, it cannot be reversed.

However, even after a match has concluded, if a player's actions were found out to be in violation of the rules, and/or if there is a concern that it would significantly impact the rest of the tournament or future ones, the Organizers may amend a match result and withhold all privileges derived from the match result prior to the amendment.

Moreover, if a situation arises where a match's outcome cannot be determined, the Head Judge and Event Organizer reserve the right to decide the result.

Section 10: Concessions, Intentional Draws, and Dropping from Tournament Play

The result of a match should be decided by gameplay above all else.

However, players are permitted to concede to their opponent, or to make a single offer to draw the game.

A player may decide to concede for any reason. However, Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play does not recognize any informal agreements made between players regarding the outcome of a match prior to the signing of the match slip. Players should be aware that any such agreements will not be enforced by tournament staff.

Once a match result has been recorded on a signed match slip, that result is considered final and cannot be changed.

10-1. Intentional Draws

So long as the game or match has not yet ended, any player may decide to concede the game, or both players may agree to conclude the match as a draw.

When proposing an Intentional Draw to their opponent, players should never offer any compensation – monetary or otherwise. Such behavior would be treated as “manipulation of match outcome through illicit means” and would at the very least result in a disqualification. Players who receive such an offer from their opponent should call a judge immediately.

10-2. Dropping from Tournament Play

Players wishing to leave a tournament in progress must inform a judge (or staff member)

and get permission to drop from the tournament.

If a player drops after pairings for the next round have already been announced and before the start of their next match, that match will be registered as a no-show loss for them, and they will be recorded as having dropped after that match.

10-3. Prohibited Behavior

Players must not:

- Ask their opponent to concede.
- Ask again for an intentional draw once their opponent has made it clear that they do not wish to do so.
- Bribe, coerce, or otherwise pressure their opponent into any match result.
- Refer to tournament standings or wait for other matches in progress to resolve before deciding to concede or draw.
- Decide the result of a match through random means (e.g., by coin flip), or through any other choosing method.

Section 11: Manipulation of Match Outcome Through Illicit Means

No matter the type of event, Players may not attempt to decide or manipulate the outcome of a match through alternate means – such as coercing, bribing or pressuring their opponent, or proposing other methods of choosing a winner.

Any such behavior would incur the most severe penalties.

* For more details on penalties, refer to Section 12.

Section 12: Penalties

Players who fail to comply with these Pokémon Trading Card Game Floor Rules and/or to the rules in the Player's Guide might receive penalties at the discretion of a Judge or Event Organizer.

Penalties are decided by the Judge or Event Organizer based on the type of event, and on the nature and context of the offense. Repeated offenses in spite of previous penalties may result in more severe penalties.

12-1. Types of Penalties and their Applications

* The penalties below are presented as examples. Depending on the context, and at the discretion of the Judge or Event Organizer, offenses similar to the ones described below may incur lighter or more severe penalties.

12-1-1. Caution

Cautions may be assigned for reversible mistakes that do not affect the game state nor give either player any advantage.

(Examples of infractions)

- Accidentally revealing the top card of the deck or a prize card.
- Continuing play without waiting for the opponent's confirmation.
- Letting the opponent forget to take a Prize card, etc.

12-1-2. Warning

Warnings may be assigned for mistakes that, although reversible, may have an impact on the outcome of the game.

They may also be assigned for repeated offenses that would normally incur a Caution, after a Caution has already been given.

(Examples of infractions)

- Accidentally drawing an extra card
- Continuously playing at a slow pace which would prevent the match from concluding within the allotted time.
- Forgetting to take Prize cards after Knocking Out a Pokémon, etc.

12-1-3. Prize Card Penalties

Prize Card penalties may be assigned when a mistake has been made that significantly affects the game state and there is no clear way to resolve the issue.

They may also be assigned for repeated offenses that would normally incur a Warning, after a Warning has already been given.

After a player receives a Prize Card penalty from a judge or Organizer, the offending player's opponent must take fewer Prize cards in order to win that game than would normally be necessary. The exact number of cards is decided by the judge or Organizer, after considering the context of the violation and its impact on the game state.

(Examples of infractions)

- Mistakenly shuffling cards from the hand or discard pile into the deck without being instructed to do so by a card's effect.
- Continuing play after mistakenly using a second Supporter card during a turn.
- Continuing play after mistaking or ignoring the effects of certain cards, etc.

12-1-4. Game Loss

A Game Loss may be issued when a judge or Event Organizer rules that a mistake has been made that has a severe impact on the game state, to the point where the game is irreparably broken and unable to continue. When a Game Loss penalty is issued, the game is recorded as a loss for the player receiving the penalty.

* If both players receive simultaneous Game Loss penalties, the game is recorded as a loss for both players.

(Examples of infractions)

- Trying to manipulate the outcome of the game by offering the opponent to decide the winner through alternative means.
- Using a different deck from the submitted deck list, etc.

12-1-5. Suspension

There are two kinds of Suspension penalties. Either or both may be issued in cases where a player's actions have significantly and negatively impacted the integrity or operation of the entire event.

12-1-5-1. Disqualification

Players who receive this penalty are removed from the tournament and become ineligible to receive any prizes.

(Examples of infractions)

- Intentionally drawing extra cards.
- Intentionally putting cards from the discard pile into the hand without being instructed to do so by a card effect.
- Manipulating pace of play to influence the outcome of the match.
- Using marked cards or stacking the deck (manipulating the order of cards in the deck) and/or other cheating behavior, etc.
- Any other rules violations that could severely impact match progress and results.

12-1-5-2. Ban

Players who receive this penalty are forbidden from attending or participating in any official event held by The Pokémon Company for the duration of the ban.

(Examples of infractions)

- Behavior that would endanger other participants, and/or any behavior that could be considered as harassing other participants.
- Behavior that would deliberately damage event equipment, and/or go against public order and morals, etc.
- Repeated behavior going against the fairness of the events and deemed by The Pokémon Company to have a negative influence on the Pokémon Trading Card Game Organized Play program.