

Pokémon Trading Card Game Floor Rules Ver.2.7

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Preface

This *Pokémon Trading Card Game Floor Rules* document details 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!

Table of contents

Section 1 - To all Event Attendees

Section 2 - To all Players

Section 3 - To all Spectators

Section 4 - Judges

Section 5 - Cards Legality

Section 6 - Card Sleeves

Section 7 - Shuffling and Deck Randomization

Section 8 - Match Conclusion and Resolution

Section 9 - Concessions, Intentional Draws, and Dropping from Tournament Play

Section 10 - Manipulation of Match Outcome through Illicit Means

Section 11 - Penalties

1. To all Event Attendees

All people attending a Pokémon Trading Card Game event are expected to be respectful and considerate of other attendees, whether they are players, spectators, judges or event staff.

2. To all Players

To allow 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.

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 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 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.

3. To all Spectators

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.

4. Judges

All judges are expected to adhere to and enforce the rules, and work together with the participants and staff members for a fair and smoothly-run tournament.

To serve as a trustworthy reference for players, judges are expected to perform their duties with integrity, and intervene in and correct any situation where they think rules aren't being upheld – be it because of players' mistakes or potential cheating attempts.

Depending on the tournament, a Head Judge may be assigned. The Head Judge and Event Organizers serve as the final arbiters of all rulings and rules interpretations for a tournament.

5. Card Legality

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

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.

Cards with slight damage such as indentations, blemishes 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 damaged card 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. 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.

7. 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 11.

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.
- 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.

- 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.

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.

8. 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.

9. Concessions, Intentional Draws, and Dropping from Tournament Play

① Concessions and 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.

② Dropping from Tournament Play

Players wishing to leave a tournament in progress must inform a judge (or staff member) and get the 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. 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 11.*

Section 11: Penalties

Players who fail to comply to 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.

Types of Penalties and their Applications

The penalties for ① to ⑤ below are presented as examples. Depending on 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.

11.1 Cautions

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.

11.2 Warnings

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.

In some cases, a player who was assigned a Warning may also be issued a Hand Penalty.

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.

11.3 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.

11.4 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.

11.5 Suspensions

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.

- **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.
- 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.

- **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, deliberately damage event equipment, and/or go against public order and morals, etc.