

# PANINI GAMES TOURNAMENT GUIDE

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## Panini Games Tournament Guide

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This document contains guidelines for Panini Games tournament play. All events sponsored by Panini America will be run in accordance with these tenets. It is the responsibility of every tournament organizer, judge, and tournament player to be familiar with both the Panini Games Tournament Guide and any Current Rulings Documents (CRD) for a given game.

Rulebooks and CRDs are available [here](#) on [PaniniGames.com](http://PaniniGames.com). For any rulings inquiries, contact [OP@paniniamerica.net](mailto:OP@paniniamerica.net).

## Event Types

Tournaments can have either a *casual* or *competitive* level of rules enforcement. It is the role of the tournament organizer to inform players of the event type. All events should have a copy of the game's CRD available for reference.

### CASUAL

A more relaxed environment with an emphasis on attracting players of all experience levels. Leagues, open play, or weekly tournaments are all examples of Casual level events. Gameplay of this nature should have light rules enforcement, with an emphasis on learning. The format (and prize support) for these events is entirely up to the host, and no official judge is required. Local tournaments can receive Tournament Kits with promo cards by contacting [OP@paniniamerica.net](mailto:OP@paniniamerica.net).

*Example - a mistake is made, such as accidentally revealing the top card of your Play deck. The player would be warned, and the card would be shuffled into the Play deck.*

### COMPETITIVE

A serious event, usually with a higher number of entrants. All tournaments sponsored by Panini Games should be run in accordance with these guidelines. For large scale tournament support, contact [op@paniniamerica.net](mailto:op@paniniamerica.net) to apply for a Convention Kit.

***“Panini Gaming Club” Tier*** - These are similar to casual tournaments held at local venues, but maintain a higher level of rules enforcement. The presence of a judge is required, but judges may participate in the event if another judge is present to assist.

***“Division Championship” Tier*** - Thoughtful enforcement of all rulings and play procedures. Judges may not participate in the event, and deck registration is optional. Events at this tier may optionally modify the number of players that qualify for Top Cut (see below).

***“Regional Championship” Tier*** - Strict enforcement of all rulings and play procedures. Approved judge(s) required. Deck registration is mandatory, and players are subject to random deck checks.

***“Panini Prix” Tier*** - The highest level open tournament, with a strict enforcement of all rulings and play procedures. Panini Games staff will be present to judge. Deck registration is mandatory, and players are subject to random deck checks.

***“World Championship” Tier*** - The highest level tournament (qualification invite required), with a strict enforcement of all rulings and play procedures. Panini Games staff/judges will be present. Deck registration is mandatory, and players will undergo random deck checks.

## Tournament Formats

Local and casual events may use a variety of different formats. Examples include single elimination tournaments, double elimination tournaments, round robin, sealed, draft, and so on. “Swiss” rounds are recommended as the default for local events. Competitive events sponsored by Panini Games must use “Swiss” rounds, followed by a top cut to single elimination.

**Swiss** - The Swiss system consists of several rounds of competition, with pairings determined by each player’s performance and score. Rounds must be exactly 35 minutes, and the outcome is determined by a “best of 1” match. The first player to win one game is the winner of the match.

For the first round, randomly determine the pairings. Each round after that, pair each player against an opponent with the same score. In some instances, a higher ranked player may need to pair down. Similarly, a tournament with an odd number of entrants will need to issue a BYE to the lowest ranked player. No player may receive more than one BYE in an event, and a first round BYE may be determined randomly. *(See Panini Games Tournament Software for more information).*

**Scoring** - After each round, update each player’s score based on the following match outcomes:

Win: 3 points	Draw: 1 point	Loss: 0 points	BYE: 3 points
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After the Swiss rounds are complete, the highest scoring players will advance to the top cut. Determine each player’s total score, then finalize the rankings with the following tiebreakers:

**Rankings Tiebreakers** - (1) total score of the player > (2) total score of the opponents that defeated the player > (3) total score of opponents defeated by the player > (4) fewest game losses > (5) latest round of first defeat > (6) head to head outcome (if applicable)

*Example - two players finish a tournament with a record of four match wins, two match losses, and one draw (4-2-1). They each have a total score of 13, so move on to Tiebreaker (2). Player A was defeated by two players, and their total score is 15. Player B was defeated by two players, with a total score of 14. Player A wins the tiebreaker over player B, and thus would be the higher ranked player. If Tiebreaker (2) had resulted in a tie, you would move on to Tiebreaker (3).*

The number of rounds and the size of the top cut is determined by the amount of entrants:

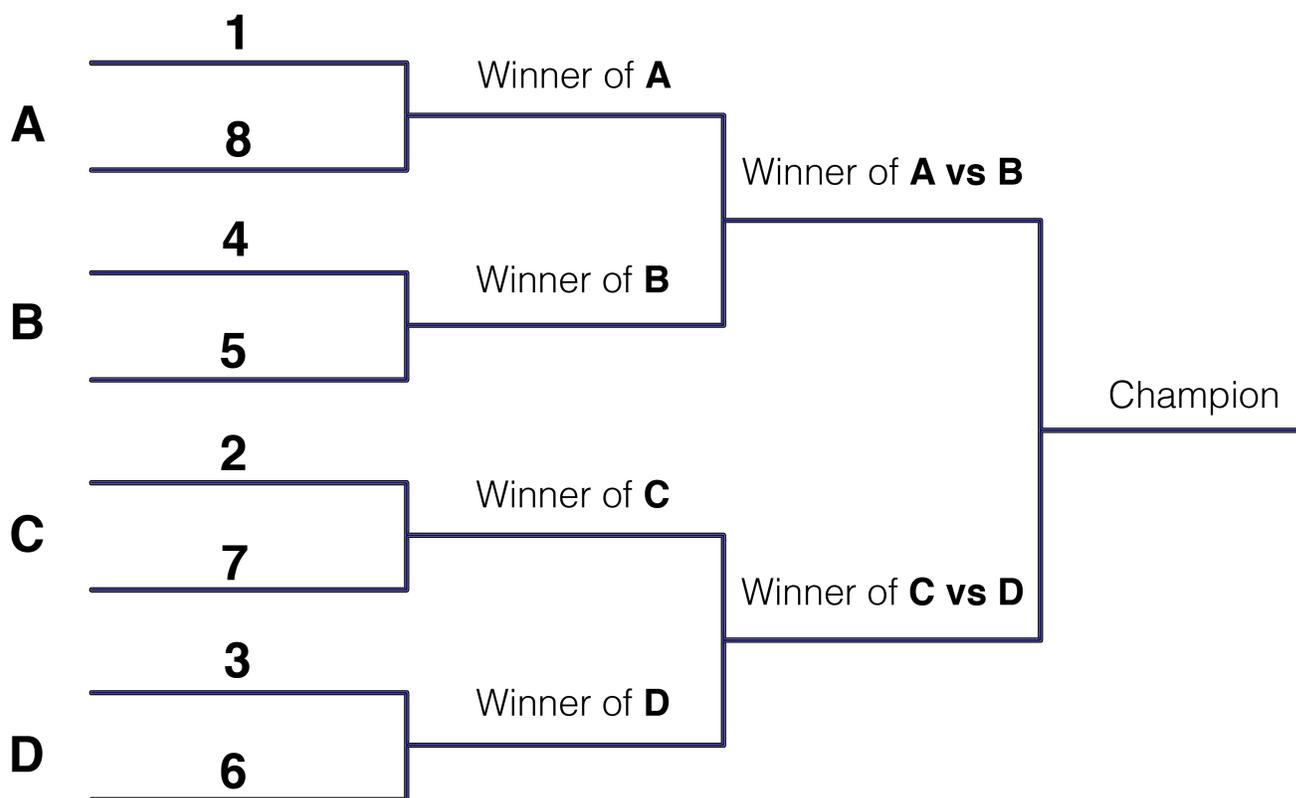
Players	Rounds	Top Cut
8	3	0
9-16	4	4
17-32	5	8
33-64	6	8
65-127	7	16
128-256	8	16
257+	9	32

**Top Cut** - After finalizing the rankings, announce which players qualified for the top cut. The top cut is a single elimination format, with 40 minute “best of 1” matches. The final match has the option of running as a “best of 3” series (with or without a time limit).

*Note: Championship Level events do not use a time limit throughout Top Cut.*

Pair top cut matches by seeding the highest ranked player against the lowest, then the next highest remaining player against the lowest remaining, and so on. Pairings continue in a bracketed advancement, and they are not reseeded after each round.

*Example - In a top cut of eight players: 1 vs 8, 2 vs 7, 3 vs 6, 4 vs 5.*



## Tournament Rules

### GAMEPLAY

**Start Procedure** - In the first game of each match, randomly determine which player takes the first turn. At the start of the second and third game of a “best of 3” match, the loser of the previous game may choose which player takes the first turn. Players must thoroughly randomize their decks with sufficient shuffling, and any time a deck is shuffled it must be presented to the opponent to be cut or shuffled. If requested, your opponent may have a judge shuffle your deck. If your deck is shuffled by an opponent or judge, you may cut it before resuming play. Gameplay continues under normal rules, and players may call the judge for clarifications.

You may appeal to the head judge at any time. Unless you appeal to the head judge of the event, any decision made by the floor judge will be final.

**End Procedure** - When the time limit for the round expires, notify all remaining matches. Finish the current turn, then play two extra turns. If a player has not won the match by the end of the extra turns in a “best of 1” series, the match is declared a draw. If a player has not won the match by the end of the extra turns in a “best of 3” series, the player with more game wins in the current round is declared the winner. If both players have the same number of game wins in a “best of 3” series (such as in “Game 1” or “Game 3”), the match is declared a draw.

*Example - After finishing two extra turns, neither player has won the match. Since the players are on “Game 2” in the “best of 3” match, the winner of “Game 1” is declared the winner.*

If a match ends in an elimination round, it cannot result in a draw - use the following tiebreaker:

**Tiebreaker** - the player with the highest score is declared the winner of the current game. If both players have scored an equal number of points, the player with possession of the ball is declared the winner.

### DECK CONSTRUCTION

**Physically Unable to Play (“PUP”) List** - Any card on the PUP list is temporarily ineligible for NFL Five tournament play, until removed from the list. There are no cards on the PUP list at this time.

**Franchise Tag List** - Any Player card on the Franchise Tag list may only use its effect if all of the Players in your deck are from the same printed team. There is currently one card on this list:

- R215 (2020) Ndamukong Suh

**Eligible Cards** - Any card that is not on the PUP list and officially released by Panini America is legal for tournament play, including promotional cards. At Regional Level and Championship Level events, new releases are not eligible for tournament play until seven days after their official launch. Refer to the CRD for a complete list of cards with updates/clarifications.

Sanctioned NFL Five events allow each entrant to include a maximum of one Unique card (amongst Players, Action Deck, and Play Deck).

For the 2022 season, the Minnesota Vikings Synergy card may be played with only four Defensive Player cards.

**Card Condition** - All cards in a deck must be covered by opaque protective sleeves. Sleeves must be clean and unmarked, with no discernible difference between any cards. Your Play deck and Action deck may not use the same sleeves.

**Deck Registration** - In events that require deck registration, there are penalties for an incorrect deck list (see below).

## **PLAYER CONDUCT**

**“Intentional Draws”** - Players may not intentionally end a match in a draw, and doing so is considered collusion (see penalties below).

**Note Taking** - Each game, players may use a blank sheet of paper to take minor notes. (see *Slow Play*)

**Spectating** - Participants in the event may spectate matches in the playing area, unless requested otherwise. Spectators may never interfere in another player’s game, and any player interfering in a match will be disqualified. Spectators that notice an error in gameplay may notify a judge in a manner that does not draw any attention. Top cut matches may be spectated by anyone, and all matches subject to video streaming.

**Infractions** - Players in the event are expected to act with a reasonable level of courtesy and honor. The tournament organizer or judge may issue *warnings* for certain infractions. Repeated *warnings* or other actions can cause a player to become *disqualified*.

### **Warning**

• Forgetting to use one of your mandatory effects	
• Misrepresentation of information (a game loss may be issued in egregious cases of deceitful intent)	
<b>Cheating</b>	If a judge determines a player has cheated, that player is disqualified and forfeits all prizes.
<b>Collusion</b>	This includes things like agreeing to intentionally draw a match, or any form of bribery/influence that causes a player to intentionally lose (or drop from the tournament).
<b>Unsporting Behavior</b>	Throwing cards, causing a disturbance, use of profanity, threats, general belligerence, failure to follow instructions of judge/tournament organizer, etc.
<b>Kibitzing</b>	Any form of communication that impedes on a match in progress, including advice or rulings.
<b>Repeated Warnings</b>	Receiving an excessive amount of warnings may be grounds for disqualification at the discretion of the judge.
<b>Improper Deck Registration*</b>	A deck registration list with an incorrect number of cards can result in disqualification.

In the elimination rounds, infractions will be highly scrutinized and more severely penalized - especially in cases where the game state is irreparable.

**Improper Deck Registration** - Find the Deck Registration Form [here](#). Deck checks may be performed at random during the Swiss rounds, and some events might require mandatory deck checks for the top cut. When a list has been chosen for a deck check, do not inform the player until immediately before the round begins. Upon completion of the deck check, award the chosen players with an appropriate time extension to finish the round. If a player’s deck does not contain the exact cards on the deck registration list, that player receives a game loss. Presenting a deck/deck box with any cards that are not listed on your deck registration form will result in a game loss. In the case of substantially advantageous differences, disqualification may be issued at the judge’s discretion.