

# Everything We Know So Far About the 2026 FIFA World Cup



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Football fans all over the world are anticipating the 2026 World Cup for it'll be different from other such tournaments in many ways. Notably, this tournament marks the first time in the history of international football that three nations will join forces to host the prestigious competition.

Moreover, the inclusion of additional teams and matches will make it the biggest tournament in history.

## Host Countries and Cities

In a groundbreaking move, Canada, Mexico, and the United States will come together to co-host the [FIFA World Cup in](#)

[2026](#). These countries were announced as joint hosts in 2018 in a ballot among FIFA Congress members by beating Morocco 134 to 65 votes in their bids.

Mexico will hold the honor of hosting the men's World Cup three times: in 1970, 1986, and again in 2026. Meanwhile, the United States might secure its place in history by hosting both the men's and women's World Cups twice each, a feat unparalleled by any other nation. But we'll have to wait and see their bid results for 2031.

## Participating Teams

The tournament is set to expand from 32 to a record-breaking 48 teams, promising to be the biggest edition in the World Cup's history. This will change the tournament structure significantly, as it'll comprise 104 matches, 40 more than the 64 we're accustomed to.

The geographical delineation into continental confederations has been intricately laid out as follows:

**UEFA (Europe):** 16 direct spots

**AFC (Asia):** 8 direct spots + 1 inter-confederation play-off place

**Concacaf (North America, Central America, and the Caribbean):** 6 direct spots + 2 inter-confederation play-off places

**CAF (Africa):** 9 direct spots + 1 inter-confederation play-off place

**OFC (Oceania):** 1 direct spot + 1 inter-confederation play-off place

**CONMEBOL (South America):** 6 direct spots + 1 inter-confederation play-off place

The trio of host nations will enjoy automatic qualification

for the tournament, consequently filling three of the slots allocated for Concacaf teams.

## Venues

Below is a breakdown of the 16 vibrant cities in North America where the spirit of football will come alive.

### Canada

- Toronto
- Vancouver

### Mexico

- Guadalajara
- Mexico City
- Monterrey

### United States

- Atlanta
- Boston
- Dallas
- Houston
- Kansas City
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- New York/New Jersey
- Philadelphia
- San Francisco Bay Area
- Seattle

# Dates and Schedule

The World Cup 2026 will take place in [June and July 2026](#). The opening match of the tournament is scheduled for Mexico City's Azteca Stadium on June 11, 2026. The final match will take place on July 19, 2026, in The MetLife Stadium in New Jersey.

## Qualification

The group stage will feature 12 groups of four teams each. There will be 72 games to determine which will progress to the knockout stages. The top two teams from each group and the eight best third-place teams from each group will progress to the round of 32.

## What to Expect

Here are more things to expect from this monumental event.

## Infrastructure

With less than two years remaining until kick-off, the host countries are making significant investments in infrastructure to ensure a seamless tournament experience. Fans should expect state-of-the-art facilities as preparations are underway to accommodate the influx of fans and teams from around the world.

## Technology

The 2026 World Cup promises to improve fans' experiences of the great football game. Below are some cutting-edge technologies that highlight the role of technology in shaping the future of sports entertainment.

- **Smart City Features** such as autonomous vehicles for transportation

- **Virtual Tourism** through augmented reality will enable fans to explore host cities without leaving their homes.
- **Digital integration** – by harnessing the power of all digital platforms, fans will be able to [buy tickets](#) seamlessly for a connected experience worldwide.

## **The Bottom Line**

As the countdown to kickoff begins, the upcoming 2026 football competition represents the boundless possibilities of unity, innovation and a beautiful game.