

WISCONSIN SCHOLASTIC CHESS FEDERATION TOURNAMENT FAQ

Is my child good enough to compete in a chess tournament?

Yes! WSCF tournaments always have many beginner players.

Why do I need to register for a tournament?

We ask that you register online so that we can enter names and teams into the computer and have them ready the day of the tournament. Online Registration saves a lot of time.

How do I register for a tournament?

You may register online for our tournaments at <http://www.wisconsinscholasticchess.org/> and go to our tournament registration page. You will have to create a log in and then you can register players for any upcoming tournament or camp listed.

What time do tournaments start?

You will need to arrive at the tournament site to check in between 8:00 and 8:45. This gives the Tournament Director time to finalize all the entries in the computer and have the first round ready to start playing by 9:30.

How do I pay the entry fee?

The fee for most WSCF tournaments is \$10 for online registration (online registration ends at 5:00 PM on the Friday before the tournament) and \$15 if you register at the tournament.

Will I be penalized if I register and then am not able to attend?

No.

What does “K-5” “K-8” and “K-12” mean?

K-5 is used to label the section of a tournament designated for kids in kindergarten through 5th grade (elementary section). The K-8 section is open to kindergarteners through 8th grade (middle school section) and K-12 is open to kindergarteners through 12th grade (high school section). This system allows stronger chess players to play up against older kids.

What if I find that my child is not paired in the first round after pairings are posted?

Not to worry. Sometimes names slip through or some students arrive late. We can pair students manually on the tournament floor before the first round begins.

What if my child has to leave the tournament?

Please notify a TD (tournament director) so we do not pair them in the next round.

Are players ever eliminated from chess tournaments?

No, players will play a game every round. Most WSCF tournaments are 4 - 6 rounds

How are pairings determined?

The highly popular software that WSCF uses for tournaments, WinTD, pairs students against each other based on score. A win is 1 point, draw ½ point, and a loss is 0 points. For example, after round one those who won have a point and the computer will pair those students against each other and will pair those who lost, who have no points, against each other. Every round the computer calculates pairings (who plays who) based on this system. Those who keep winning will theoretically be playing harder and harder opponents each round and the opposite happens to those with fewer points.

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How do tie breakers work?

At the end of a tournament, it is typical for many players to have the same score. The computer follows a formula for ranking these players. The first tie break used is called Modified Median. The computer will add the scores of 4 of each tied player's 6 opponents (hence the term "modified") and whoever played more difficult opponents will be ranked higher. In other words, if at the end of a six round tournament player A and player B have the same final score then the computer will add up four of their opponent's final scores. The reason the computer adds up 4 instead of all 6 opponents is because sometimes a player will receive a bye or a win by forfeit. Modified Median is designed to not consider these situations but rather games that have actually been played. If there is still a tie at this level then the computer uses other mathematical means to determine who gets the higher rank. It should be noted that this system also means that if player A defeats player B, and at the end of the tournament they have the same score, the computer will not necessarily give player A the higher ranking.

How does the chess clock work?

The chess clock consists of two timers. One for each player and only one is running at a time. In a G30 (game 30) match, each player has 30 minutes to use. After a player makes a move, they hit the button above their clock to stop their timer and start the opponent's timer. If a player runs out of time, they lose the game.

What if my child does not have a clock?

Often times a player's opponent will have a clock or a range of boards will have WSCF clocks. Some schools bring multiple clocks for others to use. Students can also play without a clock. However, if time becomes an issue, the floor TD will put a clock down in the middle of the game with each player having an equal amount of time.

Does my child have to take chess notation?

Chess notation (writing down the moves of the game using the coordinates on the side of the board) is required in all K-8 and K-12 divisions and on the top 10 boards in the K-5 division. We encourage notation because it is the only way a game in dispute can be fairly arbitrated and it is the only way students can learn from their game once it is over. Also, many research studies have shown that the learning and process of recording the game helps to increase students' reading test scores.

Can parents watch their children play their matches?

Sometimes. This is a decision of the host school. In some cases parents are not allowed in the playing room and in some cases they can watch from behind a barrier. In no situation can a parent, coach, or another player intervene in a tournament game in any way. Each player of the game has the responsibility to raise their hand and call over a floor TD if there is an illegal move or any other dispute.

How do the results of a match get recorded?

BOTH players of a game are to record the result of a game on the pairing sheet on the wall by marking a 1 by their name if they won or 0 if they lost. $\frac{1}{2}$ is used to report a draw.

What is a WSCF rating and why is it important?

Any participant in a WSCF tournament is given a rating upon entering a tournament. After each tournament their new rating is calculated in WinTD and their post tournament rating is posted along with the tournament results. A player's rating goes up or down based on how well they play.

What is a USCF rating and how is it different from a WSCF rating?

The United States Chess Federation (USCF) is the nation wide organization for chess. A USCF rating uses the same concept as WSCF. Players earn a rating only after they join the USCF and play in USCF certified tournaments. The K-12 division at WSCF tournaments is USCF rated and membership is required. Membership is available for purchase on site. However, the K-5 and K-8 sections just use the WSCF rating.

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When is the Awards Ceremony?

In most WSCF tournaments the awards are given between 4:00 and 5:00. However, this often depends on the size of the tournament.

How are team standings calculated?

The computer will add the scores of the top four players from a team to get that team's score. Teams who bring larger numbers have an advantage because there are more players to pool from to get the top scorers.

When do we break for lunch?

We don't. We find that in most WSCF tournaments most players finish well before the allotted 60 minutes per game. Sometimes players on higher boards and in the high school division take all of their time. In that case we will not start the next round for about 10 minutes so the players can grab some lunch. Because the K - 12 division is typically 4 rounds at G45, participants in those divisions will have more time for lunch and breaks.

Disclaimer!!

Tournaments are run by humans using software. Mistakes are possible. After each round, parents and coaches are encouraged to check the standings sheet to make sure it is correct