

Step 1 Tutorial: Figuring out the Tournament Format:

Please print this Tutorial NOW and read from the printed copy. It will be much easier to go back and forth between this tutorial and the website.

Note: Whenever you click a link on the website, it will either bring you to a different page of the website or it will open up a file with a new window. If it brings you to a new page, all you have to do is click the “back” button on your browser until you are at the page that you wish to be. If it opens up a file with a new window, simply “x out” or close the open window by clicking the “x” in the upper right corner of your screen when you are finished with it. To enlarge the open window, click the middle button in the upper right corner of your screen. The button on the left in the upper right corner will shrink the file and place it on the bottom of your screen to be viewed whenever you wish. It will not close the file.

1) Figuring out the Tournament Format

How many days do you want to hold the Tournament? How many tables do you have? Do you want to have the event start at 10:00am and finish at 10:00pm, or do you want it finished by 6:00pm every day? These are the questions you need to ask yourself. Once you decide that, you can then think about the format of the event and how many players you can have.

Let’s say that you want to hold the event from 10:00am until 10:00pm every day for 3 days (Friday, Saturday and Sunday). Let’s assume that you have 3 tables. You can now figure out the MAXIMUM number of games that you can have for the event.

The next variable is the length of each game. Are the games going to be 15 points, 20 points, 25 points, 30 points? This is, of course, completely up to you. Are the players going to be top players or are they going to be “B” players (less than .800 average) or “C” players (less than .500 average). This will make a big difference in the length of each game. I will give you my suggestions for how to figure out the average length of each game, but this is simply my opinion. You can change it if you wish. If you use my suggestions, then you should be okay time-wise.

Average Time per game for Top Players (Open Tournaments):

15 points: 40 minutes
20 points: 50 minutes
25 points: 1 hour
30 points: 1 hour 15 minutes
35 points: 1 hour 30 minutes
40 points: 1 hour 40 minutes
45 points: 1 hour 50 minutes
50 points: 2 hours

Average Time per game for “B” Players:

15 points: 50 minutes
20 points: 1 hour
25 points: 1 hour 15 minutes
30 points: 1 hour 30 minutes
35 points: 1 hour 45 minutes
40 points: 2 hours
45 points: 2 hours 15 minutes
50 points: 2 hours 30 minutes

Average Time per game for “C” Players:

15 points: 1 hour
20 points: 1 hour 20 minutes
25 points: 1 hour 40 minutes
30 points: 2 hours
35 points: 2 hour 20 minutes
40 points: 2 hours 40 minutes
45 points: 3 hours
50 points: 3 hours 20 minutes

These are just estimations on the safe side. Hopefully, it will go faster. Obviously, try not to have a “C” tournament with the matches going to 50 points, please.

OK, let’s continue to create our make-believe Tournament format. Let’s say that you want to have a “B” event. If you make it 20 point games, then you need to allow 1 hour average for each match. Since you have 12 hours per day for 3 days, the maximum number of matches you can play per day is 36 matches (3 tables=3 matches at a time, 1 hour per match average for 12 hours).

Since you have 3 days for the tournament, it is customary to have the Finals on the last day (Sunday in this case). That only leaves you 2 days for the Preliminaries. The maximum number of matches you can have for 2 days would be 72 (36 x 2).

Now let’s see how many players we can have at this event. If you had 24 players and divided them into 3 groups of 8 players each, here is the formula to find out the number of matches that it will take:

The number of players in each flight/group (8)
Times (x) the number of players in each flight minus 1 (7)
Divided by 2.
Times (x) the number of flights (groups).

So you would take the number of players in each flight (8)
Multiply by the same number minus 1 ($8 \times 7 = 56$)
Divided by 2 = 28
Times the number of flights (3) = 84 matches

It would take 84 matches to complete 3 groups (flights) of 8 players each (round-robin).
But we only have room for 72 matches, so we need to find a different scenario.

Let's try this one: 21 players: 3 groups of 7 players each

Using the formula, we would get:
 $7 \text{ players} \times 6 = 42$ divided by 2 = 21 times 3 groups = 63 matches
This is therefore a possibility.

Let's try 24 players: 4 groups of 6 players each

With the formula, we would get:
 $6 \text{ players} \times 5 = 30$ divided by 2 = 15 times 4 groups = 60 matches
This is also a possibility.

OK, so let's say we decide on having 21 players, 3 groups of 7 players each. That would take 63 matches. Since there are 3 tables, it will take 21 rounds to complete the preliminaries (63 matches divided by 3 tables). Since each round is 1 hour average, the preliminaries should be finished by 7:00pm on Saturday night (21 hours of play starting at 10:00am on Friday morning, ending at 10:00pm Friday night, and 9 more hours of play on Saturday 10:00am-7:00pm).

Since there are 3 groups (flights), the ideal situation would be to take the top 2 finishers in each flight and put them into the finals in a round-robin format. Since we have 6 players total for the finals and they will all be playing each other, each player will have 5 matches to play. In the preliminaries, it is customary to put the next match onto the very first available table when each match ends. This way, you keep things moving along and don't waste time by having tables sit around not being used. In the finals, it is usually different. You do not have the luxury of throwing the next match on the first open table because the players scheduled for the next match are usually still playing their match. So, in the finals, you do not play "first open table", you play "rounds". This is important, because with "rounds", you have to wait until the last match is finished before moving on to the next round. You will need to allow more time for each round, not like we did in the preliminaries. In the finals, I would allow 1 hour and 30 minutes for a 20 point match with "B" players, instead of the usual 1 hour in the preliminaries.

So, we need to have 5 rounds of the finals. If we make the finals 25 point games, I would allow 2 hours per match to be on the safe side, and also the players can get a rest between matches. Also, it is difficult to make the players play all 5 matches in one day. It can be done, if necessary, but 4 matches are probably ideal. So, let's play the first round of the

finals on Saturday night, say 8:00pm-10:00pm. This gives you 4 rounds of play to complete on Sunday. A good schedule for Sunday would be something like this:

10:00am: 2nd round of finals
12:00pm: 3rd round of finals
2:00pm: Lunch Break
3:00pm: 4th round of finals
5:00pm: 5th round of finals

And then you are done by around 7:00pm on Sunday night. Or you can start the day at 11:00am to give the players and yourself a little more time to sleep and end 1 hour later.

Obviously, there are a lot of different scenarios and listing them would take several books. Instead, you can be creative on your own and figure out what works best for your event. Remember one thing: if you expect players to travel to your event, most players appreciate it if they get to play a minimum of 6 matches in the preliminaries. So, your goal should be to have groups (flights) of at least 7 players each, if possible. I would not be too thrilled about traveling to an event where the flights were only 5 players each (4 matches per player). Too many things can go wrong if I lose even one match. Also, the number of points per match is important. Better players do not like to play short matches and prefer more points per match. The lesser player has a better chance of winning if the games are short. It is OK to give the lesser players a chance, but you can't overdo it, otherwise you will find many tournament players will not show up anymore. If all your matches are 50 points, then the top players will show up, but nobody else will. If the matches are 10 points, all the lesser players will show up, but none of the better players. My advice is this: "C" events: 15-20 points, "B" events: 20-25 points, "A" or "Open" events: 25-30 points. It is customary to have longer matches in the finals.

Using the files on the website to figure out the Format:

Click "Average time for each match will be 1 Hour". You would use this file if the average time per match will be one hour. First, how many days do we have for the Tournament? Let's say that we have 3 days. Next, how many hours per day do we have for the Tournament? I have given you 2 possibilities, either an 8-hour day or a 12-hour day. Let's say that we only have an 8-hour day. Next, on the left side is the number of billiard tables you are using for the Tournament. Let's use "2" tables as an example.

We would then start with "2" tables, then scroll to the right from there. The first row is for an 8-hour day and the one beneath it is for a 12-hour day. We are using the 8-hour day as an example. Next, go to the last list on the right which is for "3 Days". You will see that if you have 2 tables, 8-hours per day, 3 days and 1 hour matches, that you can have up to 48 total matches for the Tournament.

If the average time of each match will be 1 hour and 15 minutes, then click “Average time for each match will be 1 Hour 15 Minutes”, and use the same procedure. Click the remaining file if the average match time will be 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Please click “Formats based on Maximum Number of Matches”. Let’s say that the maximum number of matches we came up with by using the formula was 84 matches. You can use that number or any lesser number to come up with a tournament format. Scroll through the file until you locate 84 matches on the left side of the file. This means that you can use any format listed to the right of 84 matches or less. You will see that with 84 matches, you can use the following format: “27 players: 3 flights of 7 and 1 flight of 6: Top 1 to Finals”.

This means that you may have up to 27 players. Altogether you would have 4 flights. Three of them (Flights A, B and C) would have 7 players each and the 4th flight (Flight D) can have only 6 players. “Top 1 to Finals” means that one player from each flight would advance to the finals, making it a 4-man Round Robin in the finals. You may also use any format you wish which is listed ABOVE that, since that would require even less total matches to be played.

Click “Formats Based on Number of Players”. Suppose you plan on having a Tournament with 27 players, but one or more of them fail to show up for the tournament. You would then have 2 choices: either use the same format you originally planned and simply don’t play the matches that involve the missing players or you can change the tournament format. Let’s say that you only get 24 players. By using this file, you can look up possible formats for 24 players. Scroll through the list until you arrive at 24 players on the left side of the file. You will notice that there are a lot of different formats available with 24 players. Next, look on the extreme right side of the list which tells you the amount of matches that each format would require. Since we have only 84 matches available, you can choose any of the formats shown for 24 players that have 84 total matches or less. There are just 3 possibilities. Choose whichever you prefer.