

2016 VGC Rules, Format, and Penalty Guidelines

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1. Team Construction

Players are responsible for ensuring that their team adheres to any restrictions set forth by the tournament format and this document. The rules and restrictions that follow are considered the “Standard format.”

1.1. Battle Box Setup

- A player’s team must be placed in the Battle Box and remain in the Battle Box unchanged from the beginning to the end of the event.
- Teams must have a minimum of 4 Pokémon.

1.2. Nicknames

- A player’s team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same nickname.
- A player’s team cannot contain a Pokémon nicknamed with the name of another Pokémon (for example, an Unfezant named “Pidove”).
- Players must avoid the use of potentially inappropriate, obscene, or otherwise offensive words or phrases when naming their Trainer or their Pokémon.

1.3. Items

- Each Pokémon may hold an item, though no two Pokémon may hold the same item.
- Players may only use items that have been officially released via *Pokémon X*, *Pokémon Y*, *Pokémon Omega Ruby*, *Pokémon Alpha Sapphire*, the Pokémon Global Link, or an official event or promotion.
 - The item Soul Dew cannot be used

1.4. Pokémon

- A player’s team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same Pokédex number.
- Pokémon may only use moves that have been learned through normal gameplay or from an official Pokémon event or promotion.
- Pokémon may have Hidden Abilities
- Pokémon may Mega Evolve and use Primal Reversion.
- Pokémon must have the blue pentagon on their summary screen.
- Pokémon above Level 50 are permitted, but will be auto-leveled down to Level 50 during battle.
- Pokémon below Level 50 are permitted, but will not be auto-leveled up to Level 50 during battle.
- Players may use Pokémon from the National Pokédex, from No. 001–720, that are caught in the game, transferred from a previous Pokémon title, or received at an official event or distribution.
- The following Pokémon are banned:

Pokédex #	Species	Pokédex #	Species	Pokédex #	Species
151	Mew	490	Manaphy	647	Keldeo
251	Celebi	491	Darkrai	648	Meloetta
385	Jirachi	492	Shaymin	649	Genesect
386	Deoxys	493	Arceus	719	Diancie
489	Phione	494	Victini	720	Hoopla

- Teams may have no more than two of the following Pokémon in the Battle Box:

Pokédex #	Species	Pokédex #	Species	Pokédex #	Species
150	Mewtwo	384	Rayquaza	644	Zekrom
249	Lugia	483	Dialga	646	Kyurem
250	Ho-Oh	484	Palkia	716	Xerneas
382	Kyogre	487	Giratina	717	Yveltal
383	Groudon	643	Reshiram	718	Zygarde

2. Equipment Rules

2.1. Game Cards

- Only legitimate versions of *Pokémon Omega Ruby* or *Pokémon Alpha Sapphire* can be used in Play! Pokémon tournaments. This includes Game Cards and downloadable versions of *Pokémon Omega Ruby* or *Pokémon Alpha Sapphire*. Players are restricted on which region Game Cards they can use, based on the country where they are playing.
 - Players at European events may only use European Game Cards.
 - Players at North American events may only use North American Game Cards.
 - Players in APAC and Latin America may only use Game Cards distributed in their local market.
 - Players at the World Championships may only use Game Cards that are distributed in their local markets.

2.2. Game systems

- Players may use any system in the Nintendo 3DS™ family of systems during the competition. This includes the New Nintendo 3DS™, New Nintendo 3DS XL™, Nintendo 3DS™, Nintendo 3DS XL™, and Nintendo 2DS™. Players are responsible for bringing a charger that is compatible with their system.
- Players at European events may only use systems in the European Nintendo 3DS™ family.
- Players at North American events may only use systems in the North American Nintendo 3DS™ family.
- Players at APAC and Latin America events may only use systems distributed in their local market.

- Players at the World Championships may only use Game Cards and systems that are distributed in their local markets.

2.3. Game Patches and Updates

- Players are responsible for ensuring their version of *Pokémon Omega Ruby* or *Pokémon Alpha Sapphire* has the latest game update downloaded prior to the start of the tournament. Players may be penalized, including disqualification, in the event their game does not have the latest update.

2.4. Headphone Use

- Headphones may be worn by players only if they are wired and plugged directly into their game system. The headphone wire must be clearly visible.

2.5. Notes

- Players may take notes at any time during their match but must begin each match with a blank sheet. Lined, ruled, or grid paper are permitted. No written or printed aids, including type charts, are permitted in the play space.

2.6. Objects in Play Area

- Players are permitted to have good luck charms or objects in the play space but must keep the play space neat. Players must avoid objects obstructing the IR port connection between game systems.

3. Match Play

3.1. Double Battle Format

- Each player selects four Pokémon from their Battle Box team to battle with. At the start of the battle, players send out the first two Pokémon in their party, making a total of four Pokémon on the battlefield. Gameplay continues until a player makes all four of their opponent's Pokémon faint or the game time limit has expired.

3.2. Tethered Tournaments

- A tethered tournament is a tournament where the Battle Box is locked electronically.
- "Cancelling Participation" after the Battle Box is locked may result in disqualification.

3.2.1. Tethered Time Limits

- Tethered tournaments will automatically enforce the following time limits:
 - Team preview: 90 seconds
 - Turn time limit: 45 seconds
 - Game time limit: 15 minutes
- Players may take notes at any time during a turn.
- Players may use as much time as allowed each turn.

3.3. Untethered Tournaments

- An untethered tournament is a tournament where the Battle Box is not locked electronically. Players must select Normal rules when setting up a battle and all Pokémon will be leveled to 50.
- Players must submit Team Sheets at the start of the tournament that matches the player's Pokémon, items, and moves as they appear in the Battle Box.

3.3.1. Untethered Time Limits

- Untethered tournaments should use the following time limits:
 - Game Enforced
 - Team Preview: 99 seconds
 - Organizer or Judge Enforced
 - Turn time limit: 45 seconds
 - Game time limit: 20 minutes
- Players may take notes at any time during a turn.
- Players may use as much organizer- or judge-enforced time as allowed each turn.

3.4. Match Resolution

- A player wins by making their opponent's final Pokémon faint.
- If both players' Pokémon faint during the last turn of a match, the player whose Pokémon faints last wins the game.

3.4.1. Time outs

- Should the time limit expire before a player makes his or her opponent's final Pokémon faint, the winner of the game is determined based on the criteria listed below. The game will automatically perform the below calculations at tethered tournaments. At untethered tournaments, the organizer or judge must perform the below calculations after time is called *and* the current turn is resolved.
 - Remaining Pokémon
 - If one player has more remaining Pokémon than the other, that player wins the game.
 - If both players have the same number of Pokémon remaining, the result of the game is determined by average percentage of HP remaining, as described below.
 - Average percentage of HP remaining
 - If one player's team has a higher average percentage of HP remaining, using the following formula, that player wins the game.
 - $(\text{Current HP of remaining Pokémon}) / (\text{Maximum HP of all four Pokémon brought to battle})$
 - If both players' teams have the same average percentage of HP remaining, the result of the game is determined by the amount of HP remaining, as described below.
 - Amount of total HP remaining
 - If one player's team has a higher total HP remaining, that player wins the game.
 - If both players' teams have the same total HP remaining, the result of the game is a tie.

3.4.2. Tie Breakers

- Best-of-Three Matches

- Use the following criteria, in order, to determine the outcome of a match that is unresolved after any given game has ended. After one of the criteria has been met, none of the others are applied.
 - GAME 1:
 - The players proceed to game 2.
 - GAME 2:
 - If the winner of game 2 also won game 1, that player wins the match. If the winner of game 2 did not win game 1, or either game ended in a tie, players proceed to game 3.
 - GAME 3:
 - The winner of game 3 wins the match if there were no ties. If there was a tie in one game continue to play games until one player has more wins than their opponent. If there was a tie in two games the player who won the single game wins the match. If all three games ended in a tie, continue to play games until one player wins a game.

4. Illegal Pokémon

4.1. Illegally Manipulated Pokémon

- The use of external devices, such as a mobile app, to modify or create items or Pokémon in a player's Battle Box is expressly forbidden. Players found to have Pokémon or items that have been tampered with may be disqualified from competition, regardless of whether the Pokémon or items belong to that player or were traded for.

4.2. Electronic Hack Checking

- A player's Battle Box may be checked at any time for illegal Pokémon using an electronic hack check.
- If you are unable to connect to the Internet due to device error or are blacklisted from game online functionality you will not be able to participate in the event.

4.3. Manual Hack Checking

- A player's Battle Box may be manually checked by an organizer or a judge for known hacks as outlined in the appendix below. Only hacks outlined in the Manual Hack Checking Appendix or uncovered through the electronic hack check may be penalized.

4.4. Reporting Suspected Hacks

- Suspected new hacks should be reported to Pokémon Organized Play (POP) through Customer Support – support.pokemon.com

5. Manual Hack Checking Appendix

This appendix outlines known hacks which are not currently caught by the electronic hack check.

5.1. Case 1 – Severe Tier 2

- Any of the following Pokémon (with the blue pentagon) that has the listed Hidden Ability
 - Landorus: Sheer Force

- Thundurus: Defiant
- Tornadus: Defiant
- Dialga: Telepathy (unless in a Cherish Ball with Modest Nature)
- Palkia: Telepathy (unless in a Cherish Ball with Timid Nature)
- Giratina: Telepathy (unless in a Cherish Ball with Brave Nature)

5.2. Case 2 – Severe Tier 2

- Any Legendary or Mythical Pokémon (with the blue pentagon) that has Hidden Power as a Fighting-type move

5.3. Case 3 – Severe Tier 1

- Any of these Pokémon (with the blue pentagon) that is also shiny
 - Articuno
 - Zapdos
 - Moltres
 - Mewtwo
 - Zygarde
 - Groudon
 - Kyogre
 - Yveltal (unless in Cherish Ball)
 - Xerneas (unless in Cherish Ball)
 - Rayquaza (unless in Cherish Ball)

5.4. Case 4 – Severe Tier 1

- Any Pokémon that lists “From: Day Care helpers” on its summary screen and that is contained in a Master Ball or a Cherish Ball

5.5. Case 5 – Severe Tier 1

- Any of these Pokémon (with the blue pentagon) that has the following real level
- Volcarona under Lv. 59
- Hydreigon under Lv. 64
 - Under level 59 if obtained on Victory Road
- Dragonite under Lv. 55
- Mandibuzz under Lv. 54
- Braviary under Lv. 54
 - Under Lv. 45 if obtained while using Soar
- Bisharp under level 52
 - Under Lv. 50 if traded for in Snowbelle City

6. Penalty Guidelines

6.1. Penalty types

- Caution
 - Verbal warning to inform the player that they did something wrong.
- Warning

- Must be reported to POP by the Head Judge or Tournament Organizer of the event in which they occur.
- Game Loss
 - Game loss for the current game (or next immediate game in best of three). If the penalty is issued between rounds, the penalty will be applied to the player's next game.
- Disqualification
 - Players who receive this penalty are removed from the tournament and become ineligible to receive any prizes.

6.2. Game Play Error

- Minor
 - Holding/Moving your game system in a way that results in a fixable frozen match delay)
 - Attempting to view your opponents screen to gain an advantage
 - Recommended Penalty
 - Tier 1 – Caution
 - Tier 2 – Warning
 - Tier 3 – Game Loss for the current game (or next game in best of three)
- Major
 - Removal of Game Card mid-game
 - Loss of power to game system
 - Holding/Moving your game system in a way that results in an unfixable frozen game state
 - Recommended penalty
 - Tier 1 – Game loss for the current game.
- Severe
 - Pokémon or item that does not match the team list.
 - Recommended Penalty
 - Tier 1 – Remove incorrect Pokémon or item from party and apply a game loss. Also use if Manual Hack Checking Appendix Case 3, 4 or 5 apply.
 - Tier 2 – If fewer than 4 Pokémon remain, apply a game loss and disqualify player from event. Also use if Manual Hack Checking Appendix Case 1 or 2 apply.

All rules in this document take precedence over the General Event Rules document. General Event Rules still apply where there is no contradicting information.

