



Pokémon Video Game Rules, Formats, and Penalty Guidelines

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NOTE: In the case of a discrepancy between the content of the English-language version of this document and that of any other version of this document, the English-language version shall take priority.

*NOTE: The changes introduced in this document will apply to the VGC Standard format from **1 January 2018**.*

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 Team Setup

- A player must designate a Battle Team and keep the Battle Team unchanged from the beginning to the end of the event. Note: Event staff may alter a Battle Team to apply a penalty earned by the player.
- Teams must have between four and six Pokémon, depending on the event format (please see [Events Tethered by Local Distribution](#) and [Events Tethered by QR Code](#) in Section 3).

1.2. Nicknames

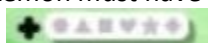
- A player’s team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same nickname.
- A player’s team cannot contain a Pokémon nicknamed with the name of another Pokémon (for example, a Raichu named “Pikachu”).
- Players must avoid the use of potentially inappropriate, obscene, or otherwise offensive words or phrases when naming their Trainer or their Pokémon.
- Any player found to be in breach of the above rules during an event may be subject to penalties up to and including Disqualification.

1.3. Items

- Each Pokémon may hold an item, though no two Pokémon may hold the same item.
- Players may only use items that can be obtained through regular gameplay (including the Pokémon Global Link and related functions of games released by The Pokémon Company and Nintendo) or that have been awarded as part of a distribution or special event.

1.4. Pokémon

- A player’s team cannot contain two Pokémon with the same National 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 use Z-Moves.
- Pokémon must have the black clover on their summary screen, shown below:



- Pokémon above and below Lv. 50 are permitted, but will be auto-leveled to Lv. 50 during battle.



- Players may use Pokémon with the following National Pokédex numbers, provided they are caught or hatched in the game, or received at an official event or distribution.
 - #001 - #149
 - #152 - #248
 - #252 - #381
 - #387 - #482
 - #485 - #486
 - #488
 - #495 - #642
 - #645
 - #650 - #715
 - #722 - #788
 - #793 - #799
 - #803 - #806
 - Ash-Greninja is prohibited from use.
- Where Pokémon have a regional variant, either form may be used.

2. Equipment Rules

2.1. Game Cards

- Only legitimate versions of *Pokémon Ultra Sun* or *Pokémon Ultra Moon* can be used in Play! Pokémon tournaments. This includes Game Cards and downloadable versions of *Pokémon Ultra Sun* or *Pokémon Ultra Moon*.
- Players are responsible for ensuring that their Game Card or downloadable game is fully functional.
 - 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 the Oceania, Latin America, South Africa, and Russia rating zones may only use Game Cards distributed in the player's local market.
- Players at the World Championships or International Championships may use Game Cards from any region or market.

2.2. Game Systems

- Players may use any system in the Nintendo 3DS™ family of systems during the competition. This includes—but is not restricted to—the New Nintendo 3DS™, New Nintendo 3DS XL™, Nintendo 3DS™, Nintendo 3DS XL™, New Nintendo 2DS XL™, and Nintendo 2DS™. Players are responsible for bringing an AC adapter that is compatible with their system.
- Players are responsible for keeping their system charged for the duration of the tournament.
 - At a Judge's discretion, a match may be moved to the designated charging station. Players must not move to the charging station without receiving permission from a Judge. A match may only be moved between games, and never while a game is in progress.
- Players are responsible for ensuring that their game system is fully functional.



- 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 in the Oceania, Latin America, South Africa, and Russia rating zones may only use systems distributed in the player's local market.
- Players should ensure that game systems with which they enter Play! Pokémon tournaments are unmodified. Players found to be using modified systems may be subject to Disqualification and subsequent disciplinary action.
- Players at the World Championships or International Championships may use systems from any region or market.

2.3. Game Patches, Updates, and Firmware

Players are responsible for ensuring their version of *Pokémon Ultra Sun* or *Pokémon Ultra Moon* has the latest game update downloaded prior to the start of the tournament and that the latest software update has been performed on their system. Players may be penalized, including Disqualification, if their game does not have the latest update, or if their system is not running on the latest firmware.

Tournament regulations are tethered to the player's registered Game Card, not to the system. If a player chooses to put their game into a new system, they are responsible for ensuring that this system also follows all the above requirements.

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 is 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.

2.7. Team Lists

Players are required to provide a legible and accurate list of the Pokémon that comprise their team. It is recommended that players make use of the official [Play! Pokémon Team List](#) document for this purpose.

Team lists should be completed using the language to which the player's game is set.

As long as the team list records the player's name, Player ID and date of birth, alongside the following information for each Pokémon, it will be accepted:

- Pokémon species (including whether that Pokémon is a regional variant, such as Alolan Form)
- Gender



- Nature
- Ability
- Level
- All known moves
 - If the move Hidden Power is included, Hidden Power's type must be included.
- All stats (HP / Attack / Defense / Special Attack / Special Defense / Speed)
 - Stats should be recorded at the Pokémon's actual level—the level it is when viewed in the player's in-game PC.

3. Match Play

3.1. Double Battle Format

Each player selects four Pokémon from their Battle 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, until one player's time limit has expired, or until time is called on the round.

3.2. Events Tethered by Local Distribution

An event that is tethered by local distribution is a tournament where the Battle Team is locked electronically via infrared distribution of tournament regulations.

- Teams must contain a minimum of four Pokémon to participate in these events.
- Selecting Cancel Participation after the Battle Team is locked may result in Disqualification.
- Players must submit a team list at the start of the tournament that matches the player's Pokémon, items, and moves exactly as they appear in the Battle Team.
 - They must use this team during the entire tournament.
- When requested, players must permit a Judge to review gameplay of their last match through the View Previous Match function on the Live Competition menu.

3.2.1. Game Time Limits

- Tournaments tethered by local distribution will automatically enforce the following time limits:
 - Team preview: 90 seconds
 - Move time limit: 45 seconds
 - Player time ("Your Time") limit: 5 minutes
 - In the interest of maintaining an enjoyable tournament environment, Pokémon Organized Play may decide to make revisions to this limit during the season based on feedback from Organizers.
- Players may take notes at any time during a turn, and during Team Preview.
- Players may use as much time as allowed each turn.



3.2.2. Match Time Limits

There is a match time limit of 50 minutes for best-of-three games and 20 minutes for best-of-one games. When match time is called, players will have three additional full turns to complete the current game.

3.2.2.1 Definition of a Full Turn

- A turn begins when the Run/Fight menu is displayed for both players, and lasts until all battle animations have completed and the Run/Fight menu is displayed once again.
- If time is called at any point in the current turn other than when the Run/Fight menu is displayed for both players, the current turn does not constitute a full turn.
 - In this situation, the turn must be completed, and the three additional full turns will begin when the Run/Fight menu is once again displayed for both players.

3.3. Events Tethered by QR Code

An event that is tethered by QR Code is a tournament where the Battle Team is locked electronically via the use of a QR Code generated by the organizer.

All Premier Events must be tethered by QR Code unless they are operated by, or in conjunction with, The Pokémon Company International. If the event is operated by or with TPCi, then it may be tethered by local distribution, provided this method is available.

- Battle Teams must contain six Pokémon to participate in these events.
- Players must submit a team list at the start of the tournament that matches the player's Pokémon, items, and moves exactly as they appear in the Battle Team.
 - Players must use this Battle Team during the entire tournament.
- After a match, players must select the option to save video of the last battle.
- Players are prohibited from using the Live Competition feature to play friendly games in between rounds. If a player runs out of the 30 available playable games at a QR Code tournament, they will be unable to continue playing in the event.

3.3.1. QR Code Time Limits

- Tournaments tethered by QR Code will automatically enforce time limits:
 - Team preview: 90 seconds
 - Move time limit: 45 seconds
 - Player time ("Your Time") limit: 5 minutes
 - In the interest of maintaining an enjoyable tournament environment, Pokémon Organized Play may decide to make revisions to this limit during the season based on feedback from Organizers.
- Players may take notes at any time during a turn, and during Team Preview.
- Players may use as much 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.
- Players are unable to resolve a match with an intentional draw (ID).

3.4.1. Resolving Time Outs

- Each player's personal "Your Time" timer will automatically count down the time left in the game available to that player.
- A player who runs out of "Your Time" will lose at the end of the turn.
- If both players run out of "Your Time" on the same turn, the game will automatically determine the winner using the following conditions in hierarchical order. This should also be applied by the tournament staff for any game that is not finished when match time is called and the final turn has resolved:
 - Whoever has the most Pokémon remaining wins.
 - If both players have the same number of Pokémon remaining, the player with the highest ratio of total HP remaining / total maximum HP for all Pokémon in their party wins.
 - This is found using the following equation: (Current HP of remaining Pokémon) / (Maximum HP of all Pokémon brought to battle). If performing this calculation manually, the Professor performing the calculation should round the resulting figure to three decimal places.
- If there is no clear winner from conditions 1 or 2, then the player with the highest total HP remaining wins.
- If there is still no clear winner, the game will be a tie.

3.4.2. Resolving Best-of-Three Matches in Swiss Rounds

Refer to the following charts to determine at which point the winner of the match is decided.

Example	Player	Game 1 Outcome	Game 2 Outcome	Game 3 Outcome	Sudden Death	Match Outcome
A	Player 1	Win	Win	Unnecessary	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss	Loss			
B	Player 1	Win	Loss	Win	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss	Win	Loss		
C	Player 1	Win	Tie	Win	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss		Loss		
D	Player 1	Tie	Win	Tie	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2		Loss			
E	Player 1	Tie	Win	Win	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2		Loss	Loss		
F	Player 1	Tie	Tie	Tie	Win	Player 1 wins
	Player 2				Loss	
G	Player 1	Tie	Win	Loss	Win	Player 1 wins
	Player 2		Loss	Win	Loss	



If round time is called and both players have each won one game following the resolution of Game 2, then players will proceed to Sudden Death instead. In this case, it is appropriate to use the following solution:

Example	Player	Game 1 Outcome	Game 2 Outcome	Game 3 Outcome	Sudden Death	Match Outcome
H	Player 1	Win	Loss	Unnecessary	Win	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss	Win		Loss	

If Sudden Death resolves in a tie during Swiss rounds, a tie is given for the match.

3.4.3. Resolving Best-of-Three Matches in Single Elimination Rounds

Refer to the following charts to determine at which point the winner of the match is decided.

Example	Player	Game 1 Outcome	Game 2 Outcome	Game 3 Outcome	Sudden Death	Match Outcome
A	Player 1	Win	Win	Unnecessary	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss	Loss			
B	Player 1	Win	Loss	Win	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss	Win	Loss		
C	Player 1	Win	Tie	Win	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss		Loss		
D	Player 1	Tie	Win	Tie	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2		Loss			
E	Player 1	Tie	Win	Win	Unnecessary	Player 1 wins
	Player 2		Loss	Loss		
F	Player 1	Tie	Tie	Tie	Win	Player 1 wins
	Player 2				Loss	
G	Player 1	Tie	Win	Loss	Win	Player 1 wins
	Player 2		Loss	Win	Loss	

If round time is called and both players have each won one game following the resolution of Game 2 or Game 3, then players will proceed to Sudden Death instead.

Example	Player	Game 1 Outcome	Game 2 Outcome	Game 3 Outcome	Sudden Death	Match Outcome
H	Player 1	Win	Loss	Unnecessary	Win	Player 1 wins
	Player 2	Loss	Win		Loss	
I	Player 1	Win	Tie	Loss	Win	



	Player 2	Loss		Win	Loss	Player 1 wins
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If Sudden Death resolves in a tie during Single Elimination rounds, a second Sudden Death game will be played.

3.4.4. Sudden Death

During Sudden Death, players begin a new game. Players are required to gain an advantage in number of remaining Pokémon over their opponent. After each turn has been completed, tournament staff will determine the number of Pokémon that each player has remaining to determine if an advantage has been gained.

- If both players have the same number of Pokémon remaining at the end of the turn, the game continues for another turn.
- If either player has more remaining Pokémon than their opponent at the end of the turn, that player wins the game.

If both players' final Pokémon faint on the same turn, the game will end naturally. In this case, the game will utilize in-built match resolution to determine the result of the game.

3.4.5. Double Game Freeze

In some rare circumstances, players may experience a situation where both games freeze, and it is not clear which player is at fault. In this situation, the game cannot progress any further by organic means and must be resolved as outlined below.

The point in the game at which the double game freeze happens has an impact on how the resolution should occur.

Pokémon Remaining in Team	Game Resolution
4-4 (including during Team Preview)	Game void, restart from the beginning
4-3	Tie
4-2	Tie
4-1	Win for player with most remaining Pokémon
3-3	Tie
3-2	Tie
3-1	Win for player with most remaining Pokémon
2-2	Tie
2-1	Tie
1-1	Tie



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 Team is expressly forbidden. Players found to have Pokémon or items that have been tampered with may receive a Disqualification, regardless of whether the Pokémon or items belong to that player or were traded for.

4.2. Electronic Hack Checking

A player's Battle Team may be checked at any time for illegal Pokémon using an electronic hack check. If a player is unable to connect to the internet due to device error or is blacklisted from game online functionality, the player will not be able to participate in the event. If it is discovered during an event that staff are unable to perform a hack check for the above reasons, the player may receive Disqualification from the event.

4.3. Manual Hack Checking

A player's Battle Team may be manually checked by an organizer or a Judge for known hacks as outlined in the Manual Hack Checking appendix. 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 the Pokémon Organized Play team through Customer Support at support.pokemon.com.

5. Pokémon Video Game Penalty Guidelines

5.1. Introduction

Play! Pokémon protocols and procedures are intended to foster a spirit of friendly competition at all Play! Pokémon events. However, situations occasionally arise—whether intentionally or unintentionally—in which players and spectators do not abide by the Play! Pokémon rules or the spirit of the game. In these cases, penalties can be earned, ranging from Cautions and Warnings that do not represent substantial corrective action to more lasting forms of penalties, including Disqualification from an event.

This section of the document is intended to provide organizers and Judges with guidelines by which they can assign and report penalties in a fair, even, and logical way.

5.2. Assigning Penalties

Play! Pokémon Professors should seek to create fun, safe, and non-stressful play experiences for our players. For this reason, the application of penalties should be handled in the most polite and discreet manner possible.

Every time a penalty is assigned, it should be accompanied by an explanation of specifically how the player's actions are disallowed by the Play! Pokémon Tournament Rules documents, and by a clear description of what penalty will result from a repeated infraction. The application of penalties should be



handled in a way that is positive and that moves the player toward a better overall understanding of the rules. To avoid singling players out or making a spectacle of an incident, organizers and Judges may want to assign penalties in private.

In some cases, a player may choose to drop from the event in an attempt to avoid receiving a serious penalty. This tactic is unacceptable. The Head Judge should notify the player that the penalty will still be assessed and reported to Pokémon Organized Play accordingly.

5.2.1. Deviating from Recommended Penalties

The penalties for infractions are simply recommendations and may be increased or decreased in severity based on circumstances. As a general rule, Judges should take an especially easy approach with the Junior age division. Younger players are often prone to make mistakes due to lack of experience or from the intimidation of playing in a competitive environment. Pokémon Organized Play recommends starting with a Caution for most penalties applied to players in the Junior age division. Younger or less-experienced players should always be given the benefit of the doubt, as they are often learning the game and most of the mistakes they make are accidental. These players may be given additional Caution penalties before a Warning is issued.

The final word on what penalties should be applied to which players and at what time is up to the Head Judge of the event. The Professor organizing the tournament and other Judges may assign penalties, but they should always check with the Head Judge before assigning a penalty more severe than a Warning. All Cautions and Warnings assigned by any Judge or organizer should be reported to the Head Judge of the event. The Head Judge is required to report any penalty above a Caution to Pokémon Organized Play.

5.2.2. Reporting Penalties to Pokémon Organized Play

Simple Cautions do not need to be reported to Pokémon Organized Play; however, penalties at the Warning level and above must be reported. Pokémon Organized Play tracks each player's penalty history to differentiate intentional repetition of infractions from unintentional occurrences and to determine if long-term action is necessary.

Penalties that require reporting must be submitted to playercoordinator@pokemon.com within seven days of the event date. A penalty-reporting form can be found on the Tournament Rules and Resources page for your convenience.

If you cannot access the penalty reporting form, please email the information below to playercoordinator@pokemon.com:

- Tournament sanctioning number
- Player IDs and names of the relevant players
- Player ID and name of the Judge issuing the penalty
- A detailed account of the relevant proceedings of the event, up to and including the infraction, the response from the Judges and organizer, and the reaction, if any, of the involved players

In the event of a Disqualification, it is also the responsibility of the Head Judge to submit a full and thorough report of the incident to Pokémon Organized Play. This report should detail all factors



that contributed to the decision to issue this penalty, as well as the names and Player ID numbers of all Professors who were present at the time of the incident.

5.3. Types of Penalties in the Pokémon Video Game

The following list details the various levels of penalty in order of severity. Only Pokémon Organized Play (POP) is authorized to add to or alter any of the penalties below. Organizers and Judges may not issue any penalties other than those listed below. In addition to the below penalties, the Judge or organizer may need to take further corrective action, such as removing an illegal Pokémon from a player's team.

5.3.1. Caution

A Caution is the most basic of assigned penalties. In essence, the Judge or Tournament Organizer assigning the Caution is merely notifying the player that they did something wrong. The Caution should be followed with an explanation to the player about the correct procedure as well as notification to the player that a repeated offense may result in a higher penalty.

5.3.2. Warning

A Warning is similar to a Caution in that both are minor penalties. They differ in that Warnings must be reported to POP by the Head Judge or organizer of the event in which they occur. If younger or less-experienced players commit a second offense that was penalized the first time with a Caution, a second Caution is a suitable second penalty, but a Warning may need to be issued on a third offense. Judges should always use discretion when escalating a penalty in the Junior age division, as this group is often still learning the game.

After a Warning has been issued, the issuing TO or Judge should confirm that the erring player is aware of the proper rules and procedures as set forth in the Play! Pokémon VG Rules, Formats, and Penalty Guidelines document. The player should be informed that a repeat offense may result in an escalated penalty.

5.3.3. Game Loss

The Game Loss penalty is generally used when a mistake has been made that has a severe impact to the point where the game is irreparably broken and unable to continue. This penalty is also used for other major procedural errors or problems.

When issuing a Game Loss penalty during an active game, the game is recorded as a loss for the player receiving the penalty. In extreme cases where significant errors have been made by both players in a game, a Game Loss penalty may be issued to both players simultaneously. A game terminated in this manner is not a tie; it is recorded as having no winner.

If a Game Loss penalty is issued between rounds, the penalty is applied to the player's next game.

5.3.4. Disqualification

Disqualification is the most serious penalty that can be issued at a tournament. Its use should be strictly reserved for the most extreme cases, where a player's actions (whether intentional or unintentional) have significantly and negatively impacted the integrity or operation of the entire event. Players who receive this penalty are removed from the tournament and become ineligible to receive any prizes. It is important that the removal be enacted in such a way so as not to inflame, extend, or call any more attention to the situation than is absolutely necessary.



The timing of a player's Disqualification has an impact on the remainder of the tournament.

- If disqualified after pairings are posted or during an active match, the player is given a loss for that round, and then dropped from the event.
- If disqualified after their match is completed but before pairings for the next round are posted, the player is simply dropped from the event.
- If disqualified at any point during a Single Elimination cut, the player is dropped from the event, and their opponent receives a win for that round.

If the player's actions warrant it, asking the player to leave the tournament site may be necessary. The player receiving the penalty should be given time to collect their belongings and to make arrangements with any other players they may have traveled with.

5.4. Types of Infractions

There are several categories of infraction, and each should be treated slightly differently based on the age and experience level of the involved players. Each infraction lists two penalties.

The **Tier 1 Penalty** is the first penalty that should be assigned to a player committing this type of infraction at an event such as a Premier Challenge or Midseason Showdown.

The **Tier 2 Penalty** should be assigned at events such as Regional Championships, International Championships, or World Championships events, as players at these events are held to a higher standard of gameplay.

5.4.1. Gameplay Error

This infraction covers general mistakes made during a game. These mistakes can have very little impact on a game, or they can bring a game to an abrupt halt. This category defines the levels of errors and outlines the appropriate penalties for each.

Minor

Examples of Gameplay Error: Minor include:

- Holding or moving your game system in a way that results in a fixable frozen match delay

Recommended Penalty

- Tier 1 – **Caution** (first offense); **Warning** (second offense); **Game Loss** (third offense)
- Tier 2 – **Warning** (first offense); **Game Loss** (second offense)

Major

Examples of Gameplay Error: Major include:

- Removal of Game Card mid-game
- Loss of power to game system
- Holding or moving your game system in a way that results in an unfixable frozen game state*
- Refusal to select View Previous Match when requested by a Judge
- Attempting to view your opponent's screen to gain an advantage (screen peeking)**



Recommended Penalty

- Tier 1 – **Game Loss**
- Tier 2 – **Game Loss**

** If both players are experiencing an unfixable frozen game state, and it is unclear which player is at fault, the problem should be resolved as outlined in [3.4.5. Double Game Freeze](#).*

*** Game Loss is recommended as the starting penalty for a first offense. If the player is confirmed to have engaged in a second offense, the penalty should be escalated to Disqualification.*

5.4.2. Team Error

This infraction encompasses problems found with a player's Battle Team.

Minor

Take the following into account when penalties fall into this category:

- In events tethered by local distribution, the offending Pokémon should be removed from the player's Battle Team in addition to applying the appropriate penalty as described below.
- In events tethered by QR Code, the offending Pokémon should instead be prohibited from use for the remainder of the tournament rather than removed. A Judge should check that players in receipt of such a penalty are not using the offending Pokémon at regular intervals throughout the remainder of the tournament.
- If either of the above scenarios results in a player having fewer than four usable Pokémon remaining in their team, the infraction should be escalated to **Team Error: Major**.

Examples of Team Error: Minor include:

- A Pokémon or item in the player's Battle Team does not match the team list*
- A Pokémon in the player's Battle Team has an inappropriate nickname**
- A Pokémon on the player's team also appears in [Section 1 of the Manual Hack Checking Appendix](#)

Recommended Penalty:

- Tier 1 – **Game Loss**
- Tier 2 – **Game Loss**

*This example does not include discrepancies between the battle team and the team list in move or Pokémon order, unless this discrepancy could result in the player gaining a competitive advantage.

Should the nickname in question be deliberately meant to cause offense, re-classification to **Unsporting Conduct: Severe may be necessary.



Major

Examples of Team Error: Major include:

- A player has fewer than four usable Pokémon remaining after receiving earlier penalties
- A Pokémon on the player's team also appears in [Section 2 of the Manual Hack Checking Appendix](#)
- Any indication via official tools that a Pokémon has been illegally manipulated, such as a player's team failing an electronic hack check

Recommended Penalty

- Tier 1 – **Disqualification**
- Tier 2 – **Disqualification**

5.4.3. Procedural Error

A player who causes an error in the operation of an event, such as misreporting a match, playing the wrong opponent, failing to notify a Judge or TO that they are dropping from the event, or other such errors, needs to be reminded of the procedural rules of a Play! Pokémon event. As with Gameplay Errors or other accidental infractions, this reminder is customarily given with a **Caution** penalty. Repeated infractions may result in higher penalties.

Minor

This category covers smaller errors that do not have a serious impact on the operation of the event. If the situation can be corrected before any delay or disruption occurs, the correction should always be made and no higher penalty than a **Caution** should be dispensed for a first infraction. If the situation goes unreported until delay or disruption is caused, a **Warning** is a suitable first penalty.

Examples of Procedural Error: Minor include:

- Walking away from a match before both players' game systems have recognized the results of the final game
- Forgetting to sign the match slip
- Entering marked or announced staff-only areas
- Interrupting staff during announcements to players or rulings in progress

Recommended Penalty:

- Tier 1 – **Caution**
- Tier 2 – **Caution**

Major

Occasionally errors are made that have a much larger impact on the tournament's operation. Some can cause a major delay in the timeliness of the event; others can cause a significant inconvenience for the players around you. In some extreme cases, the penalty for this infraction can be escalated to a **Game Loss** for a first offense.

Examples of Procedural Error: Major include:



- Incorrectly filling out a match slip
- Showing up to a match late (less than 5 minutes)

Recommended Penalty:

- Tier 1 – **Warning**
- Tier 2 – **Warning**

Severe

This category is typically reserved for an infraction that has a significant impact on the event, or is the result of a breakdown in event protocol.

Examples of Procedural Error: Severe include:

- Reporting the incorrect result of a match
 - Showing up late to a match (5 minutes or more)
- Failure to report that you are dropping from an event before leaving the venue (This penalty should still be issued, regardless of whether the player is there to receive it or not.)
- Playing the incorrect opponent (In this case, the player sitting at the wrong table receives the penalty.)

Recommended Penalty:

- Tier 1 – **Game Loss**
- Tier 2 – **Game Loss**

5.4.4. Unsporting Conduct

This group of penalties covers the inappropriate actions taken by players or spectators at an event. This category always assumes that the offending actions are intentional. A player does not have to be actively involved in a match to receive an Unsporting Conduct penalty. While players and spectators should enjoy their tournament experience, they also need to remember that their actions can have a negative impact on fellow participants.

Minor

Players are expected to behave in a respectful manner to all attendees and staff of a Pokémon event. Players who don't behave properly need to be reminded with the issuance of a penalty. Infractions in this category have no impact on the event operation itself.

Examples of Unsporting Conduct: Minor include:

- Swearing in the tournament area
- Leaving a small amount of garbage in the tournament area
- Roughhousing
- Disturbing a match in progress

Recommended Penalty:



- Tier 1 – **Warning**
- Tier 2 – **Warning**

Major

Infractions in this category have a direct impact on event operation or cause a small degree of emotional distress to those around them.

Examples of Unsporting Conduct: Major include:

- Leaving a large amount of garbage in the tournament area
- Failure to comply with the instructions of, or lying to, the event staff
- Attempting to manipulate a match through intimidation or distraction
- Refusal to sign a match slip

Recommended Penalty:

- Tier 1 – **Game Loss**
- Tier 2 – **Game Loss**

Severe

Infractions in this category have a serious impact on event operation or integrity, cause great emotional distress to those around them, or involve a physical altercation.

Examples of Unsporting Conduct: Severe include:

- Defacement of tournament area
- Determining the outcome of a match by random means, using bribery or coercion, or via other chosen methods/games
- Assault
- Use of profanity or physical threats to event staff
- Theft
- Use of slurs or insults

Recommended Penalty:

- Tier 1 – **Disqualification**
- Tier 2 – **Disqualification**



Appendix A Manual Hack Checking

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

Section 1

Any players found to have one of the Pokémon described below in their Battle Team have committed a **Team Error: Minor** infraction, and should be penalized appropriately as outlined in the Pokémon Video Game Penalty Guidelines.

The offending Pokémon should also be removed from the player's Battle Team or prohibited from use, depending on the [tournament type](#). Should this result in the player's having fewer than four Pokémon remaining in their Battle Team, that player no longer meets a minimum tournament entry requirement and must also receive **Disqualification** from the event.

- Any Pokémon that lists "From: Nursery Helpers" on its Summary screen and that is contained in a Master Ball or a Cherish Ball.
- Any of these Pokémon (with the black clover) that has the following true, in-game level.
 - #149 under Lv. 55
 - #248 under Lv. 55
 - #625 under Lv. 52
 - #628 under Lv. 54
 - #630 under Lv. 54
 - #635 under Lv. 64
 - #637 under Lv. 59

Section 2

Any players found to have one of the Pokémon described below in their Battle Team have committed a **Team Error: Major** infraction, and should be penalized appropriately as outlined in the Pokémon Video Game Penalty Guidelines.

- Any Pokémon with an attack, Ability, Nature, or other attribute that cannot be obtained through normal gameplay or official promotion.
- Any of the following Pokémon (with the black clover) that has Hidden Power as a Fighting-type move.
 - #772–773
 - #785–788
 - #793–799
 - #803–806



Appendix B Document Updates

Pokémon Organized Play reserves the right to alter these rules, as well as the right to interpret, modify, clarify, or otherwise issue official changes to these rules, with or without prior notice.

Document updates will be made available at www.pokemon.com.

Revisions made for latest publication (6 December, 2017)

NOTE: *The changes introduced in this document will apply to the VGC Standard format from 1 January 2018.*

- Section 1.3: Mega Stones are permitted for use.
- Section 1.4: Players may use Pokémon with the following National Pokédex numbers, provided they are caught or hatched in the game, or received at an official event or distribution.
 - #001 - #149
 - #152 - #248
 - #252 - #381
 - #387 - #482
 - #485 - #486
 - #488
 - #495 - #642
 - #645
 - #650 - #715
 - #722 - #788
 - #793 - #799
 - #803 - #806
 - Ash-Greninja is prohibited from use.
- Section 1.4: Where Pokémon have regional variants, either variant may be used.
- Section 2.1: Only legitimate versions of *Pokémon Ultra Sun* and *Pokémon Ultra Moon* may be used in competition.
- Section 2.7: Team lists should be completed using the language to which the player's game is set.
- Section 3.2.1: Player time is 5 minutes.
- Section 3.3.1: Player time is 5 minutes.
 - In the interest of maintaining an enjoyable tournament environment, Pokémon Organized Play may decide to make revisions to this limit during the season based on feedback from Organizers.
- Appendix A: Manual Hack Check considerations have been updated for the 2018 format.

