



## **FF-TCG Floor rules ver.2.0**

03/2024

These rules will be used for Final Fantasy Trading Card Game (FF-TCG) in-store tournaments and official tournaments.

### **1. Basic tournament rules**

#### **1-1. Tournament types**

FF-TCG tournaments can be broadly divided into the following two categories:

##### **In-store tournaments**

These are tournaments held in card game shops and other retailers, and the objective is usually to promote interaction and socializing between players. The hosts of these events are card game shops that have received authorization from Hobby Japan, Square Enix and partners etc.

##### **Official tournaments**

These are large scale tournaments held by Square Enix, Hobby Japan, regional distributors, etc.

#### **1-2. Entry criteria**

As a general rule, anyone can participate in a tournament. However, some tournaments such as the world championships, the European championships, and the North American championships can only be entered by players who fulfil the set entry criteria. In addition, players who have been banned from participating in tournaments by the organizer will not be permitted to enter.

#### **1-3. Tournament levels**

FF-TCG tournaments can be divided into the following three levels:

### **Grade 3**

This grade is applied to in-store tournaments and the sub-events for official tournaments. As the main objective of these events is for players to have fun and interact with each other, it is envisaged that many different types of player will participate in them. There is a need to deal harshly with cheating and unsportsmanlike behavior, but severe penalties need not be levied against unintentional mistakes or rule misinterpretations.

### **Grade 2**

This grade is applied to tournaments such as Regional Qualifiers which relate to larger events (National Championship...). Players must have a reasonable level of familiarity with the general game rules and floor rules. The penalties for this grade will be harsher than those for Grade 3.

### **Grade 1**

This grade is applied to events such as World Championships, National Championships and the European Championship, where the prestige and rewards given to winners - as well as the competition - are of a higher level. Players are expected to have a thorough understanding of the rules, and judge's decisions will be stricter than in lower grade events.

## **2. Detailed tournament regulations**

### **2-1. Required number of players**

A tournament is deemed to be possible as long as there is even a single player participating. If there is only one player then that person will automatically be given the rights of the tournament victor.

### **2-2. Tournament structure**

If there are 4 or fewer participants, it is recommended that a tournament is held as a round-robin (with everyone playing everyone). If there are 5 or more players, then it will be held as a Swiss-round system where players face off against those with a similar score.

Some tournaments are held with a qualifiers stage held as a Swiss-round, followed by single-elimination or double-elimination style finals between the players who finished highest in the qualifying rounds (top cut). Matches can be played as best of one or best of three.

### 2-3. Numbers of rounds

The number of rounds set for a Swiss-style tournament will vary by the number of participants as below:

5 to 8 players	: 3 rounds
9 to 16 players	: 4 rounds
17 to 32 players	: 5 rounds
33 to 64 players	: 6 rounds
65 to 128 players	: 7 rounds
129 to 256 players	: 8 rounds
257 to 512 players	: 9 rounds

### 2-4. Victory points

Round winners are awarded 3 points. Losses and draws score no points.

### 2-5. Deciding the player ranking

For in-store tournaments the player with the most victory points is deemed the winner. If two or more players have the same score, then the ranking order should be decided by a random method or following the official OP software tiebreakers depending on the scale of the tournament.

For official tournaments, Players are ranked in order of the number of victory points they have earned. If two or more players have the same score then the order amongst them is decided using their opponent's match win percentage\* and subsequent tiebreakers logged into the official OP software.

\*This is a calculation of the average number of victory points that a player's opponents have earned.

## 3. Regulations regarding round times

### 3-1. Match times

For single game rounds, one game will be held over 30 minutes. For best of three rounds, all games will be held over a duration of 70 minutes, **or 30 minutes per game over a duration of 90 minutes for 2-deck games.**

### 3-2. Extensions

Once the allotted time has elapsed, three more "overtime" turns will be played, with the current turn considered as "turn 0". The game is concluded when one player earns victory, but if no conclusion is reached within the three turns then the situation is handled as below in the "Handling situations where the allotted time is exceeded" section.

### **3-3. Handling situations where the allotted time is exceeded**

If the game has not concluded within the three overtime turns, the match is ended after the third turn finishes and both players are deemed to have lost. This means both players will earn no victory points for that match.

In swiss round style best of 3, if time runs out after two games have passed and the score is 1-0, the player with one win is declared the winner.

### **3-4. Sudden Death**

In a single elimination match, if the winner has not been determined when time has run out, then the winner is determined by sudden death. If one game has been completed, the player who has dealt the most damage at the end of the additional three (3) turns is the winner. At this point if they are still tied, the same game continues, and the player who is first to deal more damage is the winner.

If two games have been completed and the score is 1-1 or 0-0, the player who has dealt the most damage at the end of the additional three (3) turns in game 3 is the winner. If the score is one win & no loss (1-0), then the second game will be extended for an additional three (3) turns. If the winner is not determined within those turns, then the player with one win will be deemed the winner. If the score becomes one win & one loss in the three (3) turns during game two, then play will proceed to a third game. This game will be played in sudden death, with the first person to take a point of damage losing the match, and the opposing player declared the winner.

## **4. Special tournament rules**

### **4-1. Limited**

Special rules are used for tournaments held under the “limited” rules, such as “sealed” and “booster draft.”

#### **4-1-1. Number of cards in a deck**

The number of cards in a “limited” rules **main deck** is 40 or more. **An LB deck can contain up to 8 cards. Any card can be used in an LB deck, but only LB cards can be cast from an LB deck.** There is no upper limit to the number. In addition, there is no upper limit to the number of cards of the same serial number that can be included.

#### **4-1-2. Changes to the maximum damage limit**

Under the “limited” rules the game ends once a player has inflicted 6 points of damage on their opponent.

#### **4-1-3. Booster packs used**

Under the limited rules, tournament organizers will prepare sealed booster packs and distribute these to the participating players. Players will not be allowed to use packs or cards that they have brought themselves.

#### **4-2. Team matches**

Special rules are used for tournaments held as team events.

##### **4-2-1. Size of teams**

The basic rule for team matches is that one team consists of three players. If there are insufficient players to make up this number, then a team will not be allowed to enter the tournament.

##### **4-2-2. Deciding victory**

All three players on each team will play against the opposing team simultaneously and the team that have achieved the most total victories is deemed to be the winner.

##### **4-2-3. Deck composition rules**

For team matches, only one player may use up to three copies of a given card. It is not possible to split copies of the same card between team members. (i.e. 1 card to player A and 2 cards to player B)

##### **4-2-4. Conversation between team members**

During a team match, not just conversation but all forms of communication between players are prohibited. Players must also adhere to a suitable play time limit.

#### **4-3. Constructed Formats that use multiple decks**

In tournaments where 2 or more decks are prepared, such as 2-deck Constructed, special rules are applied.

##### **4-3-1. Deciding victory**

The basic rules are best of three rounds for 2-deck games and best of five rounds for 3-deck games.

##### **4-3-2. Deck composition rules**

If the decks are being prepared are in the same format, cards of the same number can only be included in one deck. The same card cannot be divided into separate decks, such as 1 card and 2 cards. If the decks are being prepared are in different formats, 3 cards of the same number can be

included in each deck (6 cards in total for 2-deck games)

## 5. Players

### 5-1. Duties and rights of the players

The players entering the tournament have the following duties:

- Follow the instruction of judges and tournament staff and ensure the tournament proceeds smoothly.
  - Communicate appropriately with competitors and ensure the game proceeds smoothly.
  - Follow general etiquette and avoid causing any nuisance to other players.
  - Players are responsible for bringing essential items to the tournament, like their deck, etc.
- Joining a tournament with an online name (team name) is acceptable, however any names that are not appropriate for public use will be prohibited.

### 5-2. Spectating

Regardless of whether you are part or not part of the tournament, coming to the games as a spectator will be permitted.

Spectators have the following duties:

- Giving advice to players' mid-game is not allowed. Please note that this includes gestures and facial expressions that can provide the players with additional information of any kind.
- In the case that an irregularity occurs in a game, please ensure to contact a judge asap. If this occurs, a spectator may halt the game, but has no other rights to intervene other than that.

## 6. Items used in the games

### 6-1. Deck

The players are responsible for bringing their own deck to the tournament. (This is not the case for a limited game.)

The number of cards in a **main deck** for a **constructed** game is exactly 50. **An LB deck can contain up to 8 cards. It does not need to be used.** A greater or lesser number of cards is not permitted. No more than three of the same numbered card may be included in a deck. It is not possible to change decks, cards, etc., between rounds in the tournament.

### 6-2. Cards that can be used

In store tournaments, all previously distributed promotion cards, and all sets on sale at the point of the tournament starting, will be usable.

In grade 2 tournaments, all previously distributed promotion cards, and all sets that have been on sale for at least one week at the point of the tournament starting, will be usable.

In grade 1 tournaments, all previously distributed promotion cards, and all sets that have been on sale for at least two weeks at the point of the tournament starting, will be usable.

### 6-3. Official Cards

All cards within a deck must be official FFTCG cards. This is true, regardless of the language of the card, and cards of several different languages may be present within the same deck. However, the organizer may put a limitation on which languages may be used. Any cards that are prohibited, or have a limit on the amount allowed, must follow the instructions exactly as they are.

The following cards will not be allowed in a deck:

- Duplicate, counterfeit or non-official cards
- Any cards damaged to an extent that it will affect gameplay
- Any cards where understanding of the card name or text is obscured by things like signatures, or graffiti.
- Anything else that the Tournament Organizer deems will cause an issue in the game.

### 6-4. Sleeves

Players must use sleeves for their main decks. There is no restriction on what type of sleeve is used, but all sleeves in the main deck must be the same colour and patterns, with cards facing the same way, and you should not be able to differentiate the cards in any way.

Sleeves are optional for LB decks. However, they must be a different colour and pattern to those of the main deck if they are used.

Sleeves should not have any effect on the game, and if the judge considers the sleeves inappropriate for public usage, they can be deemed as prohibited.

### 6-5. Playmats

Players can use playmats for the sake of preventing card damage.

Playmats should not have any effect on the game, and if the judge considers the playmat inappropriate for public usage, they can be deemed as prohibited.

### 6-6. Markers

To record temporary elements of the game, players can use things like tokens and dice that can be placed on the game table, but the below items are prohibited.

- FF-TCG cards (except those used as markers such as “Crystals”)
- Coins or currency

- Anything else deemed not appropriate by judges

## **6-7. Prohibited items**

No electronic devices, including smartphones and tablets, may be used. Additionally, any items not mentioned in section 6. "Items used in the games" above are prohibited as they may disturb the progression of the tournament.

## **7. Judge**

### **7-1. Definition of a judge**

Judges are there to ensure the appropriate progression of the tournament. This can be in the form of answering questions from the players and/or correcting any games that are not following correct procedure. Judges also have the authority to act on players that are not behaving appropriately.

### **7-2. Judge types**

#### **Floor Judge**

Floor judges can issue rulings to the players.

#### **Head Judge**

Head judges have the responsibility of having the final say in a tournament and may overturn the rulings of floor judges with sufficient reason. The head judge oversees all things to do with the tournament and has the right to make all final decisions. "Official warnings" and "Withdrawals/Disqualifications" are all decided by the head judge.

### **7-3. The right to ask for ruling**

All players participating in the tournament have the right to ask for a ruling from the judges. If this incurs a negative result onto yourself, you cannot withdraw the calling of the judge.

### **7-4. Primary ruling from a judge**

Please pause the game and call a judge if a rule is unclear between players or if a game has proceeded in an inappropriate way. The judge will carry out a ruling.

### **7-5. Reporting to a head judge**

In the case that you are unhappy with a judge's ruling, you can raise the issue to a head judge. If this occurs, the head judge will make a further ruling, and this will be the final decision. This ruling cannot be overturned.



## **7-6. Extension time for ruling**

If the time taken for the judge to make a ruling takes over 1 minute, the amount of time taken will be added back to the game. The judge must record this time and inform the players of this.

## **8. Penalty rules**

### **8-1. General**

All players have a duty to respect their opponents and base the game on the correct rule system. This penalty rule system will be referred to when the correct rules of the game are broken, regardless whether or not the fault was intentional, or the player was aware of this.

This ruling system is applied to all tournaments. Judges can solve any issues when a problem occurs within the tournament. The penalty type given is up to the judge. In the case that the problem cannot be solved by following the penalty ruling system, it falls to the judgment of the head judge.

Judges should be fully aware that as they can issue penalties following the penalty ruling system, any misjudgment can have a huge negative impact on players, therefore they should really pay attention and think thoroughly before making their call.

### **8-2. Types of penalties**

#### **【Caution】**

This penalty can be applied against illegal actions that are not serious enough to affect tournament progression or illegal actions that can be easily rectified, such as mistakenly deploying two characters of the same name to the field at once or mistaking the resource cost of a card and realizing this promptly etc. In cases where the same illegal action is repeatedly performed, the judges may, at their discretion, escalate the penalty to an “Official warning”.

#### **【Official warning】**

This penalty can be applied against illegal actions that can be rectified but have a level of influence on the outcome of the game, such as drawing too many cards, turning over two cards when taking damage or dropping a card and seeing its face when shuffling an opponent’s deck etc. This can also be applied in cases where multiple “Cautions” for the same offence are incurred by a player. If several “Official warnings” for the same offence are incurred by a player repeatedly, the head judge may, at their discretion, escalate the penalty to “Instant defeat”. If several "Official warnings" are incurred by a player for different offences, the penalty may also be escalated to "Instant defeat" at the discretion of the head judge.

#### **【Instant defeat】**

This penalty can be applied against illegal actions that make continuing a game impossible, such as playing with an illegal deck that has four or more of the same card in it or playing with a deck made up of an incorrect number of cards. A player who has been subjected to an "Instant defeat" ruling and doesn't improve on the problematic points or behaviour may be "Withdrawn".

If a player commits an offence of a level that would normally constitute "Instant Defeat," but which interferes considerably with the tournament progress, the head judge may "Withdraw" the player at their discretion.

#### **【Withdrawal】**

If a player, even unwittingly, receives several "Official warnings" and causes considerable problems during the tournament, the head judge may choose to "Withdraw" them. While the player may still receive any awards acquired prior to this, they lose any right to appear in other tournaments that might be gained from participation in the tournament at hand. This type of penalty is for the current tournament only.

#### **【Disqualification】**

All acts of deliberate deception (cheating) are grounds for "Disqualification". In addition, all criminal actions involving endangering or hurting other players or staff or damaging the tournament venue and equipment, or corresponding behavior will incur a "Disqualification" upon the offending player. Players subject to a "Disqualification" will be immediately removed from the tournament in progress and asked to leave the venue. Depending on the nature of the offence, there is a possibility that the offender will be "Suspended" from future official FF-TCG events held by Square Enix or Hobby Japan.

#### **【Forfeiting the right to receive a reward】**

This is given at the same time as when a player is "Disqualified". That player will no longer be able to receive any form of a prize or authority from that tournament.

#### **【Suspension of the right to enter tournaments】**

A player who has been "Disqualified" may be forbidden from entering any future FF-TCG tournaments and events held by Square Enix or Hobby Japan. If a "Disqualification" is reported to Square Enix or Hobby Japan then an investigation will be undertaken by the tournament operating committee and additional penalties will be decided upon.

The length of duration of the "Suspension" will be determined based on the details of the

offences. Additionally, based on the circumstances of the "Disqualification", as "Suspension" of indeterminate length may be enacted.

### **8-3. Lateness**

Players have a responsibility to be in their seats by the start of a round.

If a player is more than 5 minutes late in reporting to their play area when a round commences, they will forfeit the match and be deemed to have lost. Play will commence and continue normally if the player arrives within 5 minutes of the round start time, but the late player will incur an official warning. If the game then goes on to exceed the play time limit, an overtime period equivalent to the delay in the late player arriving will be allowed. In addition, if a late player is not present in the tournament venue before the start of the subsequent round, they are automatically deemed to have withdrawn from the game.

### **8-4. Rewinding the game**

In the case that a rule of card has not been dealt with in the correct way and the game has continued without this being noticed, as per the ruling of the judge, it is possible to rewind the game.

If the game has not progressed that far and the issue is noticed relatively quickly then this action is not permitted. The card that was used is returned to the player's hand and the cost paid is returned.

If the game has already progressed so far that it is impossible to rewind, the game will continue as it is. The player that caused the issue will receive an "Official warning", and the player opposite that did not notice will be issued a "Caution".

If, within the same tournament, multiple similar "Cautions" are issued to a player, the head judge should consider whether or not this should be escalated to an "Official warning" or "Instant defeat."

### **8-5. Incorrect game progression**

There are cases in which the game can progress incorrectly, without deliberate intention on the part of the players, but just down to their inadequacy. The appropriate action for these cases is detailed below:

(The player is issued an "Official warning." If multiple issues occur due to player ineptitude, the head judge may declare an "Instant defeat.")

**When characters the rules forbid from being deployed to the field at the same time are deployed illegally together**

In situations where two characters that the rules forbid from existing at the same time are placed on the field and the game continues then both of the offending cards are placed in the break zone. This applies when named, non-general unit cards are deployed together or when multiple cards with the light or darkness element are deployed. In situations where 6 or more backup cards are deployed, the excess cards are moved to the break zone one at a time, starting with the last to be placed down and working backwards until only 5 remain. All auto-abilities that are usually triggered by cards being placed into the break zone are not triggered when they are moved in this manner.

**When a player has 6 or more cards in their hand but play has passed over to the opponent and the game progressed since**

If this is realized immediately after the turn has been passed over, the player should discard one card as normal. If it would be difficult to rewind, one card should be randomly chosen from the player's hand and placed into the Break Zone.

**If a player's hand of cards is too large when the game begins**

Return all hand cards to the bottom of the player's deck and re-draw the whole hand. A situation where a player draws too many cards on the first turn is handled in the same way. However, if this follows a mulligan, one random card will be returned to the deck and it will be shuffled.

**Seeing cards in the card deck**

If the deck falls apart or the cards are seen in some other way, the deck should be reshuffled. In the case this happens during a mulligan or the execution of an ability that would make the location of certain cards clear (e.g return the cards to the bottom of the deck), these cards should be dis-included from the shuffle, and kept in the same place once the shuffling has finished.

**When taking too many cards**

In the case that the extra card drawn is clear, that card is made public and placed back on top of the pile. If unclear, a judge will take a card from the player's hand at random, reveal it, and place it back in the deck and shuffle.

**Forgetting to initiate an auto-ability**

If it is still possible to rewind play and carry out the correct procedures at the time the player realizes they have forgotten to initiate the ability, then that should be done. If the game has proceeded too far and it is no longer possible to work this out however, then the game does not rewind and proceeds as normal with the ability unused.

For abilities worded as “the player may”, where the player has the option to use an ability or not, it is treated as though the player had elected not to use the ability in this case and play proceeds as normal. In the case of abilities that allow the player to “select up to XX cards”, it is treated as though the player had selected zero cards and play proceeds as normal.

#### **8-6. Illegal actions**

See below for details of how to proceed in situations where it is realized that illegal actions have taken place.

##### **Insufficient shuffling**

When a deck is shuffled during play, it is necessary to ensure that the cards are suitably randomized.

Situations where either player is aware of the position of a specific card within the deck or where the deck is exposed so that the distribution of card types within the deck are evened out etc. are not considered “suitably shuffled”. This action will earn an “Official warning” and the judge will be present for the shuffling.

In order to ensure a suitable shuffle, the shuffler must employ multiple shuffling techniques in combination. It is also not permitted to only shuffle in a simplified manner in order to protect cards or card sleeves.

##### **A player’s deck does not follow the rules**

If it becomes clear during a match that one player’s deck does not follow the accepted deck composition rules, such as by having 4 or more of the same card in it, containing cards that are prohibited for the tournament etc., that game is deemed an “Instant defeat” for the player using the offending deck.

After the game is forfeited, the player is only permitted to proceed to play their next game if they have amended their deck so it is within the rules. If it is clear that a player is deliberately using an illegal deck then that player is immediately “Withdrawn” from the tournament and the head judge may escalate to a “Disqualification” depending on the seriousness of the offence.

### **Slow play**

Players participating in tournaments have a responsibility to progress through the game in a suitable manner. Judges are allowed enforce prompt play in situations where they feel a player is taking an unnecessarily long time. If players do not comply with a judge's prompting or instructions, then the judge is permitted to issue an "Official warning". Unnecessarily slow play will not be tolerated, even for time extension turns which do not have a set time limit.

### **Deliberate Slow taking of actions to delay play**

This refers to deliberate timewasting activities, such as the repeated performing of unnecessary actions during play. This kind of deliberate slow play is not to be condoned from the perspective of showing correct respect towards the tournament progression or the player's opponent. Players guilty of this kind of behavior should first be issued a caution and it is possible for this to be escalated to a judgement of "Instant defeat" or "Withdrawal" if the situation does not improve. The following actions are included in the definition of slow taking of actions:

- 1: Unnecessary/repeated checking of players hands, numbers of cards in the break zone or remaining in players decks when nothing has changed about the current play situation.
- 2: Taking an unnecessarily long time shuffling cards.
- 3: Leaving ones seat without the permission of judges or an urgent reason to do so.
- 4: Other circumstances where judges deem a player is deliberately wasting time.

### **Influencing the results of a match**

Players are not allowed to influence the results of a match in any manner other than FFTCG gameplay. The following actions are all deemed to be illegal and will result in "Withdrawal" or "Disqualification" procedures being applied.

- Playing using random decisions, such as drawing lots etc.
- Offering an opponent money etc. in return for deliberately throwing a match.

### **Falsification of information**

If a player is discovered to have falsified information relating to the tournament or match progression, this is deemed to be illegal and will result in "Withdrawal" or "Disqualification" procedures being applied.

The following are examples of falsification of information:

- Entering a tournament under a false identity.
- Deliberately not calling for a judge in order to gain an advantage in the game.
- Reporting an incorrect or falsified match result to the organizers or fiddling the scores.

- Deliberately giving false information in response to an opponent or judge's question.

#### **Ungentlemanly or antisocial conduct**

If ungentlemanly or antisocial behavior is shown, either during or outside of a match, this will result in "Withdrawal" or "Disqualification" procedures being applied.

The following are examples of ungentlemanly or antisocial behavior:

- Not following the instructions of judges or staff and repeatedly causing inconvenience on others.
- Using violence or threatening language against other players, judges or tournament staff.
- Persistently demanding for disciplinary action to be taken against ones opponent or other player.
- Actions that are in violation of national or local laws, such as theft or deliberate property damage.

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