



OVERWATCH
LEAGUE

Rules of Competition Summary

2018 Season

Introduction

This Overwatch League Official Rules Summary is made available to our fans to clarify the rules and standards of conduct that apply as a condition to participation in the League. The Overwatch League Rules are designed to ensure fair play of the Game, to preserve the integrity of the League, to protect the image and reputation of the League and to create a consistent and high-quality experience for our fans.

Player Eligibility

Age. Each Player must be at least eighteen (18) years old on or before April 5, 2018 to be eligible to compete in the Overwatch League in Season 1. No Player will be permitted to compete in a Regular Season match unless such Player is eighteen (18) on or before such match. The League Office reserves the right to modify this provision to reflect international standards applicable to international Players competing in the U.S. and/or to all Players competing or appearing in international events.

Maintaining Eligibility. In order to be eligible to compete in Overwatch League events, each Player must (a) be in good standing with the League Office and Blizzard Group, including by remaining in compliance with all applicable Overwatch League Rules, and by maintaining at all times in good standing any Battle.net account associated with the Player in compliance with all applicable terms and conditions of the Blizzard End User License Agreement; and (b) be in good standing with the Team of which he or she is a member, including by remaining in compliance with his or her Player Agreement.

League Format and Schedule

League Divisions. Teams competing in the League will be divided into two divisions:

- a. Pacific Division: Dallas Fuel, Los Angeles Gladiators, Los Angeles Valiant, San Francisco Shock, Seoul Dynasty, and Shanghai Dragons.
- b. Atlantic Division: Boston Uprising, Florida Mayhem, Houston Outlaws, London Spitfire, New York Excelsior, and Philadelphia Fusion.

Preseason Format and Schedule. The League Office will determine the format, schedule, and Player participation requirements for an official preseason tournament (the "Preseason Tournament"). There will be no performance bonus associated with the Preseason Tournament. Preseason Tournament results will not impact Regular Season scheduling or Playoff eligibility.

Regular Season Format and Schedule.

- a. The regular season of Overwatch League competition (the "Regular Season") will consist of four distinct competition segments (each a "Stage").
- b. Each Stage will consist of five weeks of competition followed by a two-match playoff among the three teams with the most match wins during that specific stage (each a "Stage Finals").
 - i. Each Stage Finals will follow the following format and schedule:
 1. In the first match the 3rd place finisher from the Stage will compete against the 2nd place finisher from the Stage. The winner of this match will go on to play the 1st place finisher from the Stage, with the resulting winner deemed the overall winner of the Stage Finals. In each case the higher seeded team will be the home team.
 2. Winners of Stage Finals will earn performance bonuses as follows:
 1. First Place Team: \$100,000
 2. Second Place Team: \$25,000

- ii. Stage Finals results will not count toward Playoff seeding or tiebreakers.
- c. Each Stage Finals will be followed by one week without competition, following which break the next Stage will begin.
- d. During each week of each Stage, three matches per day will be played on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays (with additional days for Stage Playoffs).
- e. The League Office will determine all match pairings, home and away teams, days, start times, and other scheduling details.
- f. Each Team will have 20 home matches and 20 away matches during the Regular Season, not including Stage Finals Matches.
- g. All home and away games will be played in the Blizzard Arena.

Match Structure. Each match will consist of four competitive maps selected by the League Office. The winner of each match will be the Team that has won more maps than the other Team. All four maps will be played, regardless of the outcome of the first three maps. The win/loss differential of all four maps will count toward the ranking of Teams in the event of ties.

- a. **Prevention of Match Ties.** In the event that neither Team has won a majority of maps at the conclusion of the fourth map (e.g., a 2-2 tie), a tiebreaker map will be played. This tiebreaker map will count towards the ranking of Teams in the event of ties.
- b. **Match Duration.** Each match will include scheduled breaks as determined by the League. Each match will include at a minimum 3-minute breaks between maps and an approximately 8-minute “Halftime” following the second map.

Map Selection. The League Office will determine the maps for all Preseason Tournament, Regular Season, Playoff, and World Championship matches. Each Stage of the Regular Season may include different maps and/or a different order of maps that Teams compete on in each individual match. The League will notify all Teams (and the general public) of the maps that will be played in advance of each Stage.

Game Settings. During each League match the game settings for Overwatch will conform to the following standards:

- a. Matches will be played on the “Competitive” ruleset.
- b. The League Office will designate each Team either the “Home” or “Away” team.
- c. Each Team will compete in its respective “Home” or “Away” skins.
- d. The Home Team will defend first for every map (as applicable) within the match.
- e. During the course of the season Overwatch may receive any number of patches or other changes that affect gameplay. The League Office will determine when to update the version of Overwatch used in official Overwatch League competition to take account of any such patches or other changes.

Playoffs Format and Schedule.

- a. The winning Team of each Stage Finals will not earn special consideration toward qualifying for or participating in the Playoffs.
- b. Six Teams will participate in the Playoffs. The top finisher from each Division will earn a number one seed in the Playoffs, which is rewarded with a bye in the first round of competition. The remaining four slots will be filled by the four Teams with the best win/loss records during the Regular Season (not including the Preseason Tournament or any Stage Finals Match).
- c. Playoffs will be structured as follows:

- i. The winner of each round of the Playoffs will be the Team that prevails in a best-of-five series (a "Series") against its opponent.
 - ii. Each Series will take place over the course of three days, with one match played on each of the first two days and up to three matches played on the third day if necessary.
 - iii. Individual matches will be best-of-five; provided, however, that once a Team wins three maps in any match, that match is over and no additional maps will be played. Map differentials are not taken into account during the Playoffs.
 - iv. The first place Team from each Division will earn a first-round bye in the Playoffs.
 - v. In the quarterfinal Series, the 3rd place Team will compete against the 6th place Team (Series A), and the 4th place Team will compete against the 5th place Team (Series B).
 - vi. In the semifinal Series, the Teams will be reseeded to reflect their records during the Regular Season. The Team with the best Regular Season record will play the Team with the worst Regular Season record (Series C), and the Team with the second-best Regular Season record will play the Team with the third-best Regular Season record (Series D).
 - vii. In the Overwatch World Championship, the winner of Series C will compete against the winner of Series D.
- d. The League Office will determine all match pairings, home and away teams, days, start times, and other Playoff scheduling details.

Breaking Ties. In the event two or more Teams are tied in the overall standings at the end of a Stage (for determination of the Stage Finals seeding) or at the end of the Regular Season (for determination of Playoff seeding and Performance bonuses), such ties will be broken as follows (in order):

- i. First, the Team that has the better overall map differential (i.e., maps won less maps lost) over the course of the entire Regular Season (not including Stage Finals) will prevail.
- ii. Second, the head-to-head map differential records of the Teams will be compared. The Team that has won the most maps against the other will prevail.
- iii. Third, the head-to-head full match (not map) win/loss records of the Teams will be compared. The Team that has won the most matches against the other will prevail.
- iv. Fourth, if a tie between two or more Teams remains, the Teams will play a tie-breaking match pursuant to the Regular Season match rules, with all other format and scheduling details to be determined by the League Office.

Performance Bonuses. Performance bonuses are available to Teams as follows:

- a. Best win/loss record during the Regular Season:
 - i. 1st Place Finisher: \$300,000
 - ii. 2nd Place Finisher: \$200,000
 - iii. 3rd Place Finisher: \$150,000
 - iv. 4th Place Finisher: \$150,000
 - v. 5th Place Finisher: \$100,000
 - vi. 6th Place Finisher: \$100,000
 - vii. 7th Place Finisher: \$75,000
 - viii. 8th Place Finisher: \$75,000
 - ix. 9th Place Finisher: \$50,000
 - x. 10th Place Finisher: \$50,000
 - xi. 11th Place Finisher: \$25,000
 - xii. 12th Place Finisher: \$25,000
- b. Best win/loss record during the Playoffs:
 - i. World Champion: \$1,000,000

- ii. Runner Up: \$400,000
- iii. 3rd Place: \$100,000
- iv. 4th Place: \$100,000
- v. 5th Place: \$50,000
- vi. 6th Place: \$50,000

Equipment Rules. All Teams and Players must comply with the following equipment rules for each League match:

- a. *League-Provided Equipment.* The League will provide the following hardware for each Player for each match:
 - i. Gaming PC
 - ii. Monitor
 - iii. Keyboard
 - iv. Mouse
 - v. Noise-cancelling headset with microphone
 - vi. Competition “desk”
 - vii. Chair
 - viii. Mousepad
 - ix. Upon request: mouse bungee.
- b. *Player-Provided Equipment.* Players have the option of using their own keyboard, mouse, mousepad and mouse bungee (the “Peripherals”) during each match. Players may request the use of additional personalized equipment under special circumstances only. The League Office will decide any such requests on a case-by-case basis. Player-owned equipment must be compatible with League Office-provided competition equipment. The League Office is not responsible for ensuring Player-owned equipment is in working condition. The League Office reserves the right to inspect all Player-Owned equipment to ensure compliance with these League Rules.
- c. *External Hard Drives for Player Settings.* Each Player will compete using a League Office-owned and managed removable solid state drive, or “SSD”. This SSD will be copied from the Player’s League Office-provided practice hardware and will contain critical competition elements such as the Overwatch game client and peripheral drivers, and settings as configured by the Player.

Referees. Each match will be regulated by two (2) referees selected by the League Office. Referees are League officials responsible for making judgments on every match-related question or situation which occurs before, during or immediately following a match. Their oversight includes, but is not limited to:

- a. Checking the Team’s Starting Roster before a match;
- b. Checking and monitoring Player-owned equipment and the Field of Play;
- c. Announcing the beginning of the match;
- d. Ordering a pause or restart of the game;
- e. Issuing penalties in response to rule violations during the match;
- f. Confirming the end of the match and its results.

Team Composition. A Team's roster for any competition may only contain the Players listed on the roster submitted by the Team pursuant to the following regulations:

- a. *Roster.* Teams must have six (6) starting Players (the “Starting Roster”) and may carry no more than six (6) substitute Players (the “Reserve Roster”) (individually or collectively, as the case may require, such Starting and Reserve Roster are referred to herein as the “Roster”). A Team will be

considered ineligible if it does not have six (6) Players on its Starting Roster at the start of any competition.

- b. *Player Agreements.* In order to be eligible to participate in the League, each Player must be retained as an employee of his or her respective Team using the then-current form player professional services agreement as specified by the League Office (the "Player Contract"). No Player Contract shall become valid or binding unless it complies with the Official Rules and has been approved by the League Office. No compensation or benefits may be directly or indirectly provided by or on behalf of a Team or any Owner to any Player other than as specified in the applicable Player Contract.
- c. *Roster Lock.* The League Office will determine a date by which all Player Agreements must be submitted to the League prior to the Regular Season (the "Roster Lock"). The League Office retains a final right of approval over the Roster submitted by each Team and may reject any Roster that does not comply with these League Rules.
- d. *Pre-Match Roster Submission.* Teams must submit their Starting Roster (including seating order) for each match no later than two (2) hours prior to the start of such match. Changes to the Starting Roster after that time are subject to rejection by the League Office.
- e. *Substitutions Generally.* Teams may make substitutions from their Reserve Roster during a match only between maps and at Halftime. Players who have been substituted out of a match may be substituted back in to the match at a later time, subject to this Section.
- f. *Substitution Notice.* Teams wishing to make a substitution must notify the League-appointed Team representative assigned to such Team (the "Team Rep") no later than the end of the first round of a given map for the substitution to take effect for the next map; provided, however, that a Team may notify the League of substitutions for the third map by the end of the second map.
- g. *Substitution Process.* When a Team has notified its Team Rep of a desired substitution in a timely manner as set forth above, the League Office will swap out the SSD and Peripherals of the replaced Player and swap in the SSD and Peripherals of the new Player during the break between the maps.
- h. *Press.* The League Office will publicize each Team's Starting Roster no less than one (1) hour before the match. The League Office will publicize any mid-match substitutions during the match broadcast. Teams will not make public their Starting Roster or any expected substitutions unless and until that information is first announced by the League Office.

Transfer Window.

- a. The "Transfer Window" is defined as the period of time in which Teams can complete trades involving other Teams and/or sign new Players to a Player Agreement. The Transfer Window is the only time in which these changes can occur during the period between Roster Lock and the final match of the season.
- b. The Transfer Window will open for free agent signings on the Monday following the second week of Stage 1 and for trades on the day following the last day of Stage 1 (including any Stage Finals matches associated therewith), and close at 5:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time three days preceding the first day of Stage 3.

Tampering

- a. The League Office will maintain and share with Teams a list of Team Rosters for all Teams in the Overwatch League. The League Office will update this list as Teams make approved changes to their Rosters.
- b. Teams may not contact or otherwise tamper with Players on the Roster of another Team.

- c. For purposes of these League Rules, “tamper” means any interference by a Team or its Representative(s) with the employer-employee relationship between a Player and another Team. The purpose of this policy is to protect each Team’s contract rights and, at the same time, to allow the intra-League competitive systems devised for the acquisition and retention of Player talent (e.g., the player selection process and Transfer Window) to operate efficiently.
- d. For purposes of these League Rules, “Representative” means any person who represents or purports to represent the interests of a Player, including without limit such Player’s manager, agent, attorney, friend or family member.
- e. Unless a Team has received written permission from a Player’s Team, entering discussions with that Player or his Representative concerning that Player’s transfer would constitute a violation of this Section. Under no circumstances should a new Team rely upon any representation by a Player or his Representative(s) that he or she has received permission to enter into discussions for a trade or contract negotiations.

Roster Updates. The League Office will issue a regular blog post on Overwatchleague.com that explains changes to the Rosters of all Teams in the League. This post will include trades, injuries/illnesses, terminations and Roster additions that occur over the course of the year.