

OPEN MASTERS GAMES

ABU DHABI 2026

FOOTBALL



Updated: November 28, 2025

1. General Information

The Football competition for Open Masters Games Abu Dhabi 2026 (OMGAD2026) offers Competitive and Recreational divisions for men and women in 11-a-side and 7-a-side Football.

1.1. Governance

The event will be conducted in accordance with the competition rules and provisions of the International Football Federation (FIFA) and the UAE Football Association (UAE FA).

1.2. Eligibility

- In line with the sport-specific rules, an athlete must compete in their designated age group, with their age determined as of 31 December 2026. For example, if you are 39 years old during the Games time but turn 40 by 31 December 2026, you would compete in the 40-44 age category.
- Determination of registration age group is based on the youngest member of the team (for example, if the youngest player is 54, the team should enter the 50+ age group).
- Players can only register for one group and one team.
- Each team must register at least 14 players (11v11) of which two must be goalkeepers, with no limit on the number of players (medals will only be awarded to 23 players).
- Each team must register at least 10 players (7v7) of which two must be goalkeepers, with no limit on the number of players (medals will only be awarded to 18 players).
- The organizers have the right to adjust age groups or ability grades to arrange a suitable schedule, however, medals will still be awarded in the groups or grades originally registered for.

Health Declaration

Athletes should carefully evaluate whether their physical condition is suitable for participating in the competition. If they suffer from cardiovascular or other diseases that make them not suitable to engage strenuous exercise, seeking doctor's advice is recommended to evaluate whether they can safely participate in OMGAD events.

1.3. Dates

Event	Feb 7 Saturday	Feb 8 Sunday	Feb 9 Monday	Feb 10 Tuesday	Feb 11 Wednesday	Feb 12 Thursday	Feb 13 Friday	Feb 14 Saturday
11 v 11								
7 v 7								

All dates and times are subject to change, pending final entries received. A detailed schedule of matches will be developed throughout 2025 and early 2026.

1.4. Venue¹

Abu Dhabi Cricket & Sports Hub, Khalifa City A



2. Competition Information

2.1. Disciplines, Events & Grading

Format	Grade	Category	
		Gender	Age
11 v 11	Competitive	Male	30+, 40+, 50+
		Female	
	Recreational	Male	30+, 40+, 50+, 60+, 70+
		Female	
7 v 7	Competitive	Male	30+, 35+, 40+, 45+, 50+, 55+
		Female	

¹ One venue only (28/11)

	Recreational	Male	30+, 35+, 40+, 45+, 50+,
		Female	55+, 60+, 65+, 70+

The following grade definitions have been determined for OMGAD2026 Football competition:

- **Competitive:** Teams that have three or more senior players with international, national or state representative open experience. Teams without international, national and state representatives are still encouraged to enter the competitive grade but should expect matches of a very competitive nature.
- **Recreational:** Open to everyone, including teams/individuals that participate or have participated, at a local competition level.

The Open Masters Games Football Organising Committee reserves the right to move teams between grades.

2.2. Format

The following format for play has been identified for the Open Masters Games Football competition:

- There will be a round robin tournament, with finals and playoff matches to determine final placings. Where sufficient entries are received, teams will be split into two groups of four teams for preliminary rounds.
- Final draw format will be determined once number of teams are confirmed. To produce a viable draw some grades and ages will be combined at the discretion of the Open Master Games Abu Dhabi 2026 Football Organising Committee.
- All pool matches, semi-final matches, and final matches will consist of 20-minute halves with a five-minute break at half time.
- All matches requiring a winner will proceed directly to kicks from the penalty spot. Each team will have five penalties, if scores are still tied then it will proceed to "sudden death" penalties.

2.3. Schedule

All dates and times are subject to change, pending final entries received. A detailed schedule of matches will be developed throughout 2025 and early 2026.

2.4. Rules

Substitutions

- Substitutions will be on a roll-on, roll-off basis. Substitutions can only take place during a break in play (free kick, corner, thrown-in or restarts)
- You must have permission from the referee or assistant to make the substitution
- Players being substituted out of the game can exit at the nearest sideline or end/goal line
- The player being substituted into the game **MUST** enter the field from the team's technical area and after the player being substituted out has left the field

Offside

- Offside will be in effect for the 11v11 format.
- Offside will be in effect for the 7v7 format.

Back Passes

The goalkeeper is **not** permitted to pick up the ball from a pass direct from his or her teammate in any format of football in the Open Masters Games.

3. Technical Details

3.1. Technical Delegate

The Technical Delegate, endorsed by UAE Football Association, will oversee the implementation of all sport specific rules and requirements at the Games.

3.2. Other Technical Details

Referees

- 11v11 games will have one central referee and two linesmen or lineswomen.
- 7v7 games will have one referee.
- All referees will be appointed by the UAE Football Association.

Team Sheets

All teams should present their match day team sheet prior to kick off. All players should have a first name and last name and their shirt number.

4. Equipment & Uniform

3.1. Equipment

OMGAD will provide size 5 footballs for all competitions.

3.2. Uniform

- All outfield players of the same team should wear a matching kit with unique numbers on the back.
- Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from all other players and match officials. A goalkeeper can wear a bib to differentiate them if necessary. If, in the opinion of the referee, two teams have the same or similar colours, the home team (first named team from left to right) shall wear bibs.
- Shinpads should be worn with socks covering the shin pad fully.
- All jewellery and fitness trackers must be removed prior to kick-off.
- Games will be played on firm ground grass and astro, so moulded studs are recommended.

5. Awarding

5.1. Medals

The top 3 athletes will be awarded the gold medal, silver medal and bronze medal respectively.

5.2. Ceremonies

- In OMGAD2026, athletes are individuals and represent themselves. National flags and anthems will not be included in medal ceremonies.
- The medal ceremony will be held after each final.
- The medal ceremony will be conducted in Arabic and English.

6. Protests and Appeals

6.1. Protests

- Competition-related disputes and protests shall be handled according to rules and related regulations of the international association of the sport. If there are no rules regarding such disputes and protests in place, the competitor may first make verbal protest and submit written protest to OMGAD within 30 minutes after the end of a contest.
- No protest can be lodged by any team members or staff against a judging (scoring) decision during the competition period.

6.2. Appeals

- Based on the principle of trust, the Organizer will not take the initiative to review the grade of athletes upon registration. Matters regarding athlete qualifications and grades should be submitted to the Organizer with relevant supporting materials before the Games or when the fact occurs. The complaint will be handled in accordance with the rules and relevant regulations of international sports federations and relevant regulations.
- Applications that are not submitted within the stipulated time or with incomplete materials will not be accepted.

7. Doping Control

7.1. Regulations

- Doping Control should be conducted in accordance with WADA World Anti-Doping Code (<https://www.wada-ama.org/en>) and International Masters Games Association (IMGA) Anti-Doping Rules (<https://imga.ch/masterssports/anti-doping>).
- Participants are deemed to have agreed to be subject to doping control procedures in accordance with the International Masters Games Association Anti-Doping Rules upon entry to the competition. Participants must obey antidoping rules and conduct themselves in a considerate manner.



8. Updates

The final version of the competition guide will be released by December 15th. Important additional information, including the sports schedule, will be available at that time. In the meantime, please address all inquiries to: sports@omgad2026.ae