

2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™

Preliminary Competition Format & Draw Procedures



ASIAN ZONE

BASIC CONDITIONS	
Member Associations (MA's):	46
Participating Member Associations (PMAs):	45
Qualification Slots:	4.5

MEMBER ASSOCIATIONS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Afghanistan • Australia • Bahrain • Bangladesh • Bhutan • Brunei Darussalam • Cambodia • China PR • Chinese Taipei • Guam • Hong Kong • India • <i>Indonesia*</i> • Iran • Iraq • Japan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jordan • Korea DPR • Korea Republic • Kuwait • Kyrgyzstan • Laos • Lebanon • Macau • Malaysia • Maldives • Mongolia • Myanmar • Nepal • Oman • Pakistan • Palestine 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philippines • Qatar • Saudi Arabia • Singapore • Sri Lanka • Syria • Tajikistan • Thailand • Timor-Leste • Turkmenistan • United Arab Emirates • Uzbekistan • Vietnam • Yemen
<p>*NB: Excluded from Preliminary Competition: Indonesia</p>		

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PRELIMINARY COMPETITION FORMAT & DRAW PROCEDURES

ROUND ONE:

- The 12 lowest-ranked PMAs, PMA Rank 35 through to PMA Rank 46 (based on the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Ranking of January 2015), will contest Round One.
- The 12 teams will be paired into six home-and-away series.
- The matches are foreseen to be played in the period 12-17 March 2015.
- The six series winners advance to Round Two.

THE PAIRINGS FOR ROUND ONE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. 12 March 2015 India vs. Nepal
17 March 2015 Nepal vs. India
2. 12 March 2015 Yemen vs. Pakistan
17 March 2015 Pakistan vs. Yemen
3. 12 March 2015 Timor-Leste vs. Mongolia
17 March 2015 Mongolia vs. Timor-Leste
4. 12 March 2015 Cambodia vs. Macau
17 March 2015 Macau vs. Cambodia
5. 12 March 2015 Chinese Taipei vs. Brunei DS
17 March 2015 Brunei DS vs. Chinese Taipei
6. 12 March 2015 Sri Lanka vs. Bhutan
17 March 2015 Bhutan vs. Sri Lanka

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ROUND TWO:

- The six Round One winners will then join the remaining 34 PMAs in Round Two.
- The 40 teams will be drawn into eight round-robin, home-and-away groups of 5 teams each.
- The matches are foreseen to be played in the period 11 June 2015 to 29 March 2016.
- The eight group winners and four best second placed teams will advance to Round Three.

THE GROUPINGS FOR ROUND TWO ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Group A <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. UAE2. Saudi Arabia3. Palestine4. Timor-Leste5. Malaysia	Group B <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Australia2. Jordan3. Tajikistan4. Kyrgyzstan5. Bangladesh	Group C <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. China PR2. Qatar3. Maldives4. Bhutan5. Hong Kong	Group D <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Iran2. Oman3. India4. Turkmenistan5. Guam
Group E <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Japan2. Syria3. Afghanistan4. Singapore5. Cambodia	Group F <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Iraq2. Vietnam3. Thailand4. <i>Indonesia*</i>5. Chinese Taipei	Group G <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Korea Republic2. Kuwait3. Lebanon4. Myanmar5. Laos	Group H <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Uzbekistan2. Bahrain3. Philippines4. Korea DPR5. Yemen

****NB: At the Executive Committee meeting on 30 May 2015 the Football Association of Indonesia were suspended and as a consequence the national team was disqualified from the Preliminary Competition for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™. All matches of Indonesia are thus deleted in Group F.***

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ROUND THREE:

- The 12 teams qualifying from Round Two will take part in Round Three.
- The 12 teams will be drawn into two round-robin, home-and-away groups of six teams each.
- The matches are foreseen to be played in the period 29 August 2016 to 5 September 2017.
- The third-placed teams of each group advance to Round Four.

- **The two group winners and two group runners-up will qualify for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™.**

DRAW PROCEDURE:

The draw date, location and procedure for Round Three will be confirmed by the end of Round Two by the Organising Committee for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™.

Round FOUR:

- The two third-placed teams from the two Round Three groups will contest Round Four.
- The teams will play one home-and-away series.
- The matches are foreseen to be played in the period 2-10 October 2017.

- **The Round Four winner advances to the intercontinental play-off.**

DRAW PROCEDURE:

The draw date, location and procedure for Round Four will be confirmed by the end of Round Three by the Organising Committee for the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia™.