

How to Run a League



Welcome to the **Pokémon** Trainer Challenge League cycle! We are very happy that you have elected to run this new league cycle. The Pokémon League is a great way for players to get together in a causal setting and make new friends, tune decks, and earn cool prizes. *The contents of this document discuss the changes made since the Energy League cycle. Please read it carefully before your first league session.*

Scheduling and Advertising your League:

Pokémon Leagues must be run in a clean, safe, public location. While we prefer leagues to be run in a game store, we realize that it is not always possible. Libraries, community centers, and malls all make great alternate locations. The most important thing to ask yourself when selecting a league location is, “Will my players feel comfortable playing here?”

It is important to make your league sessions accessible to as many players as possible. Picking appropriate dates and times is critical. Weekday evenings or weekends are ideal for running your League sessions. We recommend one 2-4 hour session per week. If another location in your area is also running a Pokémon League, we suggest getting together with the League Owner or Leader to ensure that league sessions don't conflict. Remember, the idea is to provide a fun place for people to play, not to “compete” with other league locations. We encourage players to participate at more than one league location so that they can earn more rewards for playing Pokémon. You never know—working with other league locations in your area may even increase your attendance!

The posters that are provided should be placed in a manner that is visible to the general public. Be sure to write down the date and time of each league session so that your players know when to show up. If your league is held at a location that does not allow you to put up your poster or cling, you can find downloadable league flyer in the League Leader/Owner section of your My Pokémon account. We recommend making copies of this flyer and, with your location's permission, leaving them where potential league members can find them.

Kit Contents:

Every six weeks or so, new Trainer Challenge League materials become available. Any materials that are intended for players come in increments of 10. If this is your very first season your maximum kit order will be determined by your estimated attendance. If you've run any previous League seasons, your maximum kit order will be based on the number of players at your venue with My Pokémon accounts plus a maximum of 50%. (i.e., if your league reports 70 players at the end of the Rival Season, and only 30 of those players have My Pokémon accounts, you will

be shipped supplies for those 30 players, plus another 15 players (50%). Because league supplies are shipped in increments of 10, your maximum order for the Cyrus Season would be for 5 kits, rather than 7 kits.). Providing this additional 50% should allow you to temporarily accommodate players whose parents are unwilling to allow them to sign up for My Pokémon accounts, or new players who have not had the opportunity to sign up yet. If you require more materials, please contact organizedplay@go-pokemon.com to request additional support.

You will be able to order kits for each league season approximately two weeks before the start of that season. Do note that unlike previous cycles, Trainer Challenge will no longer allow league kits to be back ordered so be sure to sign up early and play often!

Lay out all of the league materials you received to familiarize yourself with them. This will make the rest of this document much easier to understand.

If this is your first Trainer Challenge season, you should have received 1 Pokémon League generic advertising poster. This poster should be used throughout the Trainer Challenge league cycle to let players know that a Pokémon League is held at that location.

Each season features items themed for that season. Some are intended as marketing materials and some are prizes for your players. These items are:

- 1 Season-specific Poster
- Season-specific Score Cards (1 per player)
- 2 Promotional foil cards(4 of each per player)
- 1 Promotional Nintendo DS skin (1 per player every other season)

Each season players will receive a new Score Card, which will be used to track their progress during that season. For safety's sake, it is recommended that you hold on to each player's Score Card until they have earned all of their prizes for that season. For your convenience, we recommend using a 4" x 6" index card container. These are relatively inexpensive and can be obtained at any office supply store. Should a player decide to keep their Score Card, you should remind them that you may not be able to replace it if they lose it.

Additionally, a league roster can be found in the League Downloads section of your My Pokémon account. This downloadable PDF will help you track your players during a season, and will assist greatly in speeding up your reporting.

Pokémon Organized Play offers league kits to League Owners and Leaders at no cost, despite the fact that the league materials do cost us money to produce. These kits are offered with the understanding that they will be used as directed. Leagues Owners and Leaders that are found to be misusing league kits will lose the ability to host future Pokémon events and may be suspended from Pokémon Organized Play entirely.

Player Registration:

Player registration is fast and easy. When a player comes to your league for the first time, record his or her name, POP ID, and date of birth on the downloadable roster. If that player does not have an existing POP ID, assign him or her a POP ID card. Write the player's name on the POP ID card and remove it from the attached parental consent form, and give it to the player.

If the player is under the age of 13, the parental consent form should be given to the player's parent. This form should be filled out completely and returned to TPCi so that a My Pokémon account can be created for the player. If you wish, you can collect completed parental consent forms and return them to TPCi on the parent's behalf. Incomplete forms will not be processed.

If the player is 13 or older, the player should be encouraged to visit www.go-pokemon.com to register for a My Pokémon account online. Parental consent forms that are mailed in for players 13 or older are not processed, and are destroyed instead.

Please be aware that a player cannot create a My Pokémon account until you have uploaded the POP ID by adding the player to your league roster online.

If you do not have any POP ID cards to issue to new players, you can order them from your My Pokémon account. Each player then receives their Score Card for that season, and any previous Trainer Challenge seasons that you have materials for.

It is acceptable to charge players a small fee to participate in your league, if necessary. Whether you collect this fee on a weekly basis or up front is entirely up to you. This fee should go toward covering the cost of venue fees or any additional prize support that you want to provide for your league. Since fees will vary from location to location, we recommend informing players what their money is going toward to aid in heading off complaints.

Should you decide that you would like to participate in the Pokémon League as a player, you may play in your own league. If you choose to do this, your League Leader responsibilities **must** take priority over your role as a player.

Once a player has been entered on your roster and has his or her Score Card, that player's ready to play!

League Play:

The Pokémon League is not run like a sanctioned tournament. Players are responsible for finding someone to play as they will not be paired by the person running the event. There are no rounds like in a tournament. Players can play as many or as few matches as they want. Players may not play the same opponent twice in a row, if attendance allows. Prizes are based on the number of games that are played earns, not the number of games that a player wins.

The Trainer Challenge seasons can be run using any deck format you choose, though players' decks must meet standard deck construction rules. It is a good idea to survey your players to determine their interest in formats before deciding. You should choose a format that is interesting to your players. If you have mostly new players, you should run your league using the

Modified format, which allows decks to contain only cards from recent Pokémon sets. For more information on different formats, check the Pokémon Organized Play Rules & Resources section of your My Pokémon account.

The use of counterfeit cards is strictly prohibited when participating in a Pokémon League. Counterfeit cards are never allowed at POP-supported events. If you find a player using counterfeit cards during a league session, those players are not to receive credit for the games they play while they are using those cards.

During the Trainer Challenge season players may not only battle other attendees with one of the Pokémon video games (such as *Pokémon Diamond*, *Pokémon Pearl*, or *Pokémon Platinum*), the scorecard will actually have a dedicated track for just that purpose! When battling using one of the Pokémon video games, players should agree ahead of time what rules they will play by. Players should be discouraged from working the system to earn additional stamps. If you feel that players are abusing the system, you may opt to not award them League stamps for their match.

Tournaments During League Sessions:

It is very important to Pokémon Organized Play that players understand the difference between league play and sanctioned tournament play. Leagues are casual play environments, whereas tournaments are a more competitive setting. Leagues reward players for playing games, win or lose. Tournaments reward players for winning. We are determined to provide events for players of all competition levels, from casual league settings to the competitive Championship series. However, we do realize that some players would rather participate in a more structured format, such as a tournament, while still earning league stamps.

Should your players decide that they would like to participate in a tournament, but earn league stamps for their matches, you may hold any non-sanctioned tournament during a league session. Players who do not want to participate in a tournament run during a league session should still be allowed to participate in the standard league format during that session.

Tournaments run during league sessions may not be sanctioned. This will prevent your tournaments from appearing in the tournament locator, creating confusion for players looking for a tournament who are not members of your league. Additionally, prize support has already been received for your event via your league kits. Should you decide to reward additional prizes above and beyond the stamps that players earn on their score cards, these prizes are to be provided by the League Owner or League Leader, not POP. You should *never* award league stamps for matches played in a sanctioned event!

Scoring:

Players earn one stamp for playing any Pokémon TCG or video game match. Stamps are tracked on each player's Score Card. Stamps are only accumulated for the current season and any additional stamps may not be added to the upcoming season's scorecard.

Because video games matches can often be resolved faster than TCG matches, players will be required to complete more matches in order to earn prizes.

If you find that your players are having a hard time earning their prizes, you may want to consider varying the rewards structure to keep your players interested. Any variation in the rewards structure should be done in a fair and consistent manner for all of your players. Some examples include:

- Hold a “Double Stamps” session the last week of a season.
- Award bonus stamps for playing against someone who has already earned all of their Promotional Foil Cards.

Awarding Prizes:

Promotional Foil Cards:

Players have the opportunity to earn up to four each of two different promo cards. One of these custom foil cards will fit into the theme for that season while the other card will be a recognizable staple of competitive TCG decks. These cards are exclusive to Pokémon Organized Play and will only be available via the Trainer Challenge cycle.

Players can earn these promo cards by earning stamps on their score card. Once a player earns enough stamps on his or her Score Card to reach the image of the PokéBall, that player earns one of each of the promo cards. **While each score card will have a total of eight PokéBalls (four on the TCG track and four on the video game track), a player can only earn a maximum of four of each promo card.** These are earned regardless of whether the player reaches a PokéBall on the TCG track or the video game track.

Promotional Nintendo DS Skin

Players will also be able to earn these sleek looking adhesive skins designed to decorate their Nintendo DS. Every other season of the Trainer Challenge cycle will contain a skin which will be match one of the league themes. In addition to the promo cards earned for reaching a single Pokéball, those who go a step further and actually reach all four PokéBalls on a single side of their scorecard two seasons in a row will also earn one of these exclusive skins!

Earning Previous Seasons' Prizes:

As new players join your league, they should be given the opportunity to earn promo cards and Nintendo DS skins from previous seasons, should you still have supplies remaining.

Additionally, any of your regular players who have not earned all of their prizes for previous seasons should be given the opportunity to earn them. Be sure that you keep previous seasons' supplies in a safe place so that they can be awarded to new players as they earn them.

Stamps earned during the current season are awarded to players on a one-for-one basis for each previous season, until that player earns his or her Nintendo DS skin for a previous season, or until you run out of supplies.

Any leftover promo cards or Nintendo DS skins that you have remaining from previous seasons should be earned on a first-come, first-served basis to players earning previous seasons' prizes.

Reporting:

Pokémon Organized Play is always looking at ways to improve our programs. To this end, we require a certain degree of reporting at the end of each season. The only mandatory information that we request is a POP ID, name, and date of birth for each player participating in your league, as well as which seasons these players have participated in. Collecting this information is beneficial to your league players, as they will earn additional prizes through the Player Rewards Program by participating in the league. Be sure you make it clear to your players that, though they are collecting POP IDs for playing in the Pokémon League, league matches **do not** count toward their Premier Rating.

Reporting is done online through the League box in your My Pokémon account. You cannot order league kits for a forthcoming season until you have reported the current season's results. This means that you need to report each season's results one week prior to the end of that season if you want to receive your kits in time for the start of the following league season. The maximum number of kits that you can order is equal to the number of players with My Pokémon accounts that you report for the most recent season plus a maximum of an additional 50%. To ensure that you have enough supplies for your league attendees, be sure that you accurately report the results of each season, and that as many of your players as possible get signed up for their My Pokémon accounts

For more information on how to report your league results, check out the League Reporting Instructions document in the League box of your My Pokémon account.

Ordering Future Seasons:

The store for each new season will open two weeks before the start of that season. To ensure that you get your kits in time for the new season, be sure to order them as early as possible. Failure to report previous seasons' results may have adverse effects on your ability to order future seasons.

We are very excited about the Trainer Challenge seasons and know that, with your help, they will be very successful. If you have any questions, concerns or comments, please feel free to contact us at organizedplay@go-pokemon.com.

Thank you,

Pokémon Organized Play