

GMI Tournament Guide

Anyone wishing to play in the GMI Tournament should read this Guide carefully. If you sign up for the GMI Tournament, you agree with all the rules in this Guide.

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GMI Tournament Format and Rules

1. The purpose of GMI tournament is to create a safe and healthy environment for players to practice their chess skills. We don't pursue high prize and high profit. We strive to nurture the characters of chess players with playing fair, patience and persistence. So we set up the tournament with players' benefit in mind, and build in some flexibility to suit the needs of different families and time zones around the globe.
2. Each tournament has 4 rounds, 1 round per week (7-day period). There are 3 types of tournaments: (1) Tournament Alpha with entry fee and prize; (2) Tournament Beta no entry fee and no prize; (3) Tournament simul with titled players (GMs, IMs). You can choose one or multiple tournaments to play. GMI will post a pairing chart. You will reach out to your opponent to set up time and platform (chess.com or lichess) to play. You should report out your board's result on the google pairing sheet.
3. Zoom is required **with the exception of anonymous players (see 5.1)**. You can register for a free zoom account and set up zoom to play the game with your opponent. Physical board is acceptable but you need to set up dual cameras so that your opponent can see your whole body, your screen, your chess board if you set up one, and your surroundings. **Please reinforce cameras and zoom set up: side angle with full view of player and computer screen, and front view. Or you can set up dual cameras.** For any potential dispute, you should consider saving a recording. Free zoom account is in general sufficient for our tournament. Free zoom account has no time limit if there are only 2 participants.
4. When you play the game, all other windows on your computer/laptop should be closed, except the game window and zoom. No cell phone or any other electronic devices are allowed in the room that you play.

[Registration and Pairing Sheet](#)

5. Here is our tournament registration Google form: <https://forms.gle/u5pjWLoEbZ383PgU8>
Once you register, you can choose any tournament that you want to play each tournament or each time for simul. You don't need to register more than once. Here is how it works: we will put all registered players in a Google pairing sheet (we will email this to all registered players). You can go in the google sheet and choose which tournament you want to play and put down a "Yes". You have limited editing right, which allow you to choose a tournament, and report out board results. You cannot edit anything else. For tournament Alpha, in order to reduce the work of GMI staff, we only pair up the players who paid the entry fee upfront.

5.1 Anonymous players: GMI received some requests on allowing anonymous players. Since our tournament has built in a lot of flexibility, we decide to give this a try to help some players achieve their training goals. Anonymous player is a player whose real name and/or rating will not show up on the pairing sheet that we send to all registered players. The information shown for an anonymous player is a chess.com and/or lichess ID. Anonymous player can also choose to post his/her email or not. If not, GMI admin will help set up game time with the opponent. On the other hand, an anonymous player will pay a higher entry fee and waive the right to earn any prize. Anonymous player does not need to use zoom if he/her chooses not to. An anonymous player needs to register as everyone else. Once you register, you can email GMI to request to be anonymous. For the players who already registered, you can also email GMI to request to become anonymous. GMI admin will remove your information from the pairing sheet.

6. Pairing sheet: for simplicity, GMI will use google sheet as pairing sheet. In order for your opponent to reach out to you to set up the game, some of your information needs to be on the pairing sheet, such as your email, chess.com ID, lichess ID, time zone, etc. If you don't want any of your information to be published on google sheet, please email GMI to request to be an anonymous player. If you don't request, by registering, you agree that GMI can post your information on the google pairing sheet.

Pairing and Round Results

7. The first tournament pairing will be based on your USCF official rating, and if you don't have a USCF rating, it is just unrated. If you have FIDE or other federation rating, you can provide it and our TD will make a conversion into equivalent USCF rating. After the first tournament, each player will have a pseudo-USCF rating, which will be calculated in a similar way as the real OTB USCF rated tournament. From the 2nd tournament and on, our TD will use your pseudo-USCF rating to do the pairing. This applies to both Tournament Alpha and Beta. The purpose of doing so is that a player can see his/her rating change and it makes him/her work harder and play more seriously.

8. Our TD is USCF certified. He uses standard software to do the pairing based on Swiss rule. However, in order to maximize the opportunities for lower rated players to play against titled players, we will try our best not to pair up GMs and IMs with themselves.

9. Players are responsible to report out your board results right after the game. The pairing sheet is editable by everyone who signed up. So please report out the results on the pairing sheet yourself. If you have any technical difficulty, you can email TD (support@Grandmasterinstitute.com) with the results.

10. **Best Effort Rule:** we encourage everyone to reach out to your opponent as early as possible once the pairing is up. **if you reach out to your opponent twice by email during a 3-day period, but your opponent does not reply, you can claim a win. Please email TD. You must use email with all the email correspondences to show your effort.** We don't accept any other form of notification such as WeChat.

11. However everyone's goal is to practice and improve. So no one intends to claim a win by Best Effort Rule. In order to increase your chance to schedule a game, we suggest that you **email your opponent with 3 different date/time options**. Please keep in mind your opponent's time zone and offer times that could possibly work for your opponent. Sometimes it might be difficult to receive a prompt response if your opponent is outside of the US. Please be patient and email more times.

11.1 We set up a Skype group for easy communication among players. Please join Skype group: <https://join.skype.com/woY1NGRKAv5E>. You will find it is much convenient to make an appointment with your opponent to set up the game, as well as contacting the organizer.

12. If two players don't schedule the game by the deadline (the last day of that round), and no one emails TD to provide evidence of Best Effort, **TD will give each ZERO point**. This will be effective on Jan 22, 2021. **Exceptions:** (a) if you and your opponent did make the effort to schedule the game but couldn't find a feasible time for both sides, and both you and your opponent agree for a draw, you can email TD to request a draw; (b) if you and your opponent couldn't find a feasible time for both sides before the deadline of that round, but managed to schedule it during the following week, that is totally fine. Please notify the TD that your board result will be reported out later. Under this situation, the TD will assign a "faked" result to your board to avoid delaying the next round pairing. But your total points will be updated based on the actual outcome of that game.

12.1 If you and your opponent agreed on a date/time/platform to play the game but your opponent didn't show up, you can email TD and claim a win.

13. If anyone didn't play two rounds in a row, TD will not pair him/her up for the following rounds, regardless whether he/she paid an entry fee. If a player consistently doesn't reply to emails from the opponents or from TD, TD has the right to ban him/her from GMI tournaments.

Appeal Process

14. The purpose of GMI tournament is to provide a healthy environment for players to practice and improve their chess skills. We hope we have zero appeal. However, we also have zero tolerance for cheating behavior. If you suspect that your opponent might cheat during the game with you, you can file an appeal (through email to TD)

15. If you file an appeal, we require: the pgn file of the game; date/time/platform of the game; the reasons why you have concern about your opponent; zoom recording and the time (e.g. 10:15) in the recording that the opponent may demonstrate some questionable behavior.

16. If you suspect your opponent due to the reasons that are not related with the game you played with this opponent, we don't accept the appeal case.

17. Once an appeal is accepted with all required documents, we will have TD and two GMs to conduct independent evaluations. Based on the evaluation results, GMI TD has the sole authority to make a decision. We don't disclose any personal information about players.

Tournament Alpha:

a. Entry fee: \$40 for each tournament (4 rounds in one section). **You must pay the entry fee upfront in order to be paired.** We accept late entry once you paid the entry fee and for the rounds you missed you can take a half point bye. **For an anonymous player, the entry fee is \$60.**

b. Free entry for GM, WGM, IM and WIM. For the titled players with free entry, TD will try not to pair you up with other free entry titled players. **However, if your purpose of participating in this tournament is to train yourself, you can choose to pay the regular entry fee and TD will pair you up based on your rating and your points. You can also request to become an anonymous player and pay a higher entry fee.**

c. Prize: Top 1-3 finishers could earn prizes in each section depending on how many players. The actual prize will be posted before the 1st round.

d. Time control: default G45/5. If both players agree, you can also choose either G60/5 or G30/5. But these are the only 3 choices you can choose. The final ranking will be based on each round result, regardless which time control you choose. If two players cannot settle on one time control, the default G45/5 should be used.

e. Sections: we will have different sections based on the number of registered players. For ≤ 20 players, only open section; between 20-40, open and one under section; between 40-60, open and two under sections, etc. The cut-off line for each section is solely decided by GMI TD (based on the median rating of the registered players). If we have more than 3 titled players (free entry), we will assign some to the under sections for lower rated players to have a chance to train with them.

f. We allow players who should play in the under section to play also in the open section. If you do choose to play multiple sections, you need to pay an entry fee for each section.

Tournament Beta:

- a. Entry fee: None
- b. Prize: None
- c. Time control: default G45/5. If both players agree, you can also choose either G60/5 or G30/5. But these are the only 3 choices you can choose. The final ranking will be based on each round result, regardless which time control you choose. If two players cannot settle on one time control, the default G45/5 should be used.
- e. Sections: we will have different sections based on the number of registered players. For ≤ 20 players, only open section; between 20-40, open and one under section; between 40-60, open and two under sections, etc. The cut-off line for each section is solely decided by GMI TD (based on the median rating of the registered players)

Tournament Simul:

- a. What is Simul?

A simultaneous exhibition is one player (GM) plays multiple games at the same time with a number of other players.

- b. Entry fee: \$20 for each Simul. **You must pay the entry fee upfront in order to participate.**
- c. Prize: No prize.
- d. Time control: G30+10
- e. You can request to review your game with the GM, but additional fee will apply.

12. Please share our tournament with your chess friends. Together we can build a solid chess practice community that will benefit all.