# A Rookie's Guide to

# Tournament Organizing

Written by Ink.Jordan

# Table of contents

# Preface

As of the writing of this guide (September 2017), there have been many new tournaments and several new tournament organizers (TOs) who have started their own projects in the community.  These TOs lack the experience that veterans such as myself have, and this lack of knowhow is very apparent when putting their first few tournaments into practice.  It is because of this and how I remember the feelings of being confused, unsure, and even scared when running my first tournament that I wanted to write this guide with the hope that amateur TOs would have an outline and take away a lot of the first-time TO jitters.  Special thanks goes to Marsh of Deep Blues (Splat and a Half) and Flarablitz of Spicy Kraken Rolls (Young Ink) for encouraging me to make this guide, as well as Amy (SCL), Kbot (what hasn't he TOed?), Flara and Bob (also of Young Ink) for proofreading and making suggestions to better this guide's content.

# Section 1:  So you want to be a TO

Before you get started, there are several questions to consider, such as:

- What type of idea do I want for my tournament?
- What does my tournament offer that other tournaments currently do not offer?
- Who do I ask to help me run my tournament?
- What type of bracket platform (such as Challonge, Battlefy, etc.) do I want to use and what format do I want my tournament to have (single elim, double elim, etc.)?
- How do I set up my tournament Discord server?
- How do I advertise for my tournament?
- What do I need to do when tournament day comes?
- What should I do if I want to run a sequel for my tournament?

Don't worry, we will get to each of these concerns and more in the following sections.  Keep in mind that this guide is not all encompassing and intended to cover every possible scenario that you could face while creating your tournament, but this guide will provide you with is a basic walkthrough for setting up a successful tournament.  Should you have additional questions after reading the information provided in the following sections, feel free to contact me on Discord (**@Ink.Jordan#2816**) or on Twitter (**@TBDizMcFly017**) and I will do my best to help you with any questions you may have.

# Section 2:  A TO's traits and qualities

Before we dive into the nitty gritty of building a tournament idea, it is important to understand some of the qualities that a TO should have.  Not everyone is cut out to run events.  Good TOs have certain character traits that help make their tournaments and the work they do "good".  While there is no universal skillset for making an event like this work, here are some general traits that allow some of the more successful TOs to stand out:

- **Patience**:
    - Remain calm in tough situations.
    - Answer any player's/team's/spectator's concerns to the best of your abilities, especially for newer teams that are not familiar with how tournaments are run yet.
    - Be courteous and polite when someone may not understand your answers right away, and consider rewording what you said to make it easier for them.
- **Professionalism**:
    - Act in a respectful and mature manner to better represent the work you do for your tournament, and especially during your tournament.
    - Invest enough time into your tournament to make you appear prepared
    - Be respectful in all situations!
    - This can be hard at times, but it is worth it!
- **Punctuality**:
    - Make sure you are on time for the events you run, especially as head TO.
    - If you cannot make it to your event on time, make sure to let everyone know that and tell them to whom you are delegating your duties.
- **Time Management and Organization**:

- ○ If your tournament is multifaceted (such as having a tourney stream, prizes, held over multiple days, etc.), make sure you provide sufficient time to get each of these parts completed.
- ○ Keep your tournament on track while it is going on (meaning do not let a best of three set drag on for 40 minutes). If teams do not manage their time well, do not be afraid to penalize them.
- ○ Have every part of your event organized to where you can find any part that you may need with ease on the date of the event. This should be done BEFORE the event starts to avoid scrambling last minute.
- ○ Doing this will make it easier to access anything you may need and will make you appear more organized to the general public.
- **Unbiased**:
  - ○ You created your ruleset for a reason, so follow it! For more information on rulesets, feel free to observe those set out by those such as SCL, InkTV events, Squidboards, or if you want tips on creating a ruleset, see Section 6.
  - ○ A TO needs to be able to remain neutral in all situations and disputes that may arise during their tournament.
  - ○ Your goal is to fairly enforce the rules and be as objective as possible when resolving conflicts. You also cannot be afraid to enforce the rules that you created, even if this may go against friends you have playing in the tournament because you have to separate your personal life from your professional life.
  - ○ Being unbiased also means that TOs need to avoid playing in their own tournaments, as doing so clouds your judgment and occupies you with playing Splatoon 2 when you are needed to help resolve an issue.
- **Curiosity**:
  - ○ Consider all serious feedback that players and observers give you during and after your tournament.

- ○ Do not be afraid to ask other TOs who have run successful tournaments for tips on what you can do to improve or what you should do in a certain situation if you are unsure how to handle it.
- ○ Consider observing other tournaments that have had success in the past (such as the ones mentioned in "Firm but Fair"), and see what they do that make them successful, as well as things you could implement or even improve on!
- **Adaptability (Think on your Feet)**:
  - ○ There will be times that something comes up that is not covered in the rules, or maybe a situation that you could not have reasonably foreseen has happened.  This is where being able to adapt and think creatively come into play.
  - ○ Be flexible in situations that are not written into the rules explicitly, and then consider making changes to your tournament documents after the event is over to keep things updated.
  - ○ A good TO also needs to be able to think quickly and come up with a reasonable solution so that the problem they want to solve does not take an unnecessary amount of time.
  - ○ Simply put, you cannot come up with every possible situation that could arise when creating a tournament, ruleset, etc.  So getting creative can help you reasonably solve issues in a way that teams accept.
- **Communication**:
  - ○ Be a good communicator, in both written documents such as rulesets and when giving answers in real time.
  - ○ The importance of communicating effectively cannot be understated, as you do this throughout the tournament process, from talking to captains, other members of the Discord server, and other members of tournament staff.  Answering questions, posting deadlines, creating rules for teams to follow, and much more.

- ○ Your clarity and conciseness will help teams better understand what to do in a given situation.  Avoiding ambiguity in situations that require clear answers is very important here.
- **Understand the Community as a Whole**:
  - ○ Know the community as well as you can, specifically by understanding which teams are capable of what and how much experience they may have in a tournament setting.
  - ○ Understanding community customs is also important, especially for outsiders, as how Splatoon tournaments are run may differ from what other games do.
  - ○ This will help with different aspects of your tournament, such as figuring out if your idea is feasible (such as not running a weapon restriction tournament early in a game's lifespan), how you set up your tournament, and especially how you seed the eventual bracket.

Now why are these traits important?  Because as a TO, you should want to get the most out of your event as possible, and that includes giving the players a fun event for them to participate in.  If you have multiple of the above traits missing, then it will create holes in how you TO or how your tournament is run, which could lead to unnecessary problems arising and cause teams to become disinterested in playing in your events moving forward.  This is why practicing these traits until they describe you is a key to becoming a good TO.

# Section 3:  Getting started

The first place to start is to formulate the type of idea that you want for your tournament.  There are several different ways that you can approach this.  Splatoon's competitive history has seen many different types of tourneys.  Some of these themes and examples of each include:

- No restrictions tournament (the most common)
  - These tournaments are the simplest to set up and run, so it would be recommended that new TOs start out here.
- Ones that limit or outright ban certain weapons or abilities
  - An example of this would be the Bleck n Spoon tournament from Splatoon 1, as it banned Quick Respawn and limited teams to one kraken and one bubble per team
- Ones that require a team to play certain weapons
  - A few examples of these:
    - Spyke It Up!:  Required teams to use predetermined weapons
    - Locked n Loaded:  Required teams to stick to a comp that they sign up with
- Tournaments that emphasize speed
  - An example of this is one of the recent Supernova tournaments, meant to emulate Japanese tourneys through setting up a single elimination bracket where every set except grand finals is a best of three format, with grand finals taking on a best of five format.  They also set up strict time limits for each round, penalizing teams that did not finish within the time allotted.
- Tournaments with an entry fee
  - Tournaments like this include InkTV tournaments and several installations of the InkStorm series by EGtv

○ These types of tournaments use the entry fee money to go towards some type of prize pool, where the prizes can range from art by one of the Splatoon community's artists, a cash prize, or other cool items. The entry fees should NOT go towards paying the TOs to run the tournament

○ It is usually advised that new TOs stay away from pay-to-play events until they are more established and have proven they can run tournaments

These are just some of the types of tournament formats you can consider, and if your tournament idea does not align with any of these, that is okay! Feel free to pursue the endeavor. Ultimately, the type of tournament you run depends on what idea you have. If you want some simple experience before going into more complex tournaments, I would suggest doing a simple no restrictions tournament (an example of this is SCL, which takes place bi-weekly on Saturdays). There are many different ways to approach what you want to do, and you are the only one that can truly figure that out.

Something that I challenge **all** TOs to think when coming up with a new tournament idea is "What do I do if I want my tournament to offer if I want it to be seen as unique or different?" While your new tournament does not have to have a lot of variables to it (such as a cast, which is where a group independent of the TOs runs a stream for others to watch gameplay from the tournament with commentary discussing what is happening, or weapon/gear restrictions), I do believe that the community can benefit from tournaments that cater to different interests or even different groups. One specific example that, at the time of writing this was suggested on Twitter recently, people seem to want is the implementation of tournaments that give more of the spotlight to teams that are considered new, inexperienced, or mid-tier. A perfect example of this is the tournament Young Ink, where only new and inexperienced teams were allowed to enter so they could gain some tournament experience without immediately being bounced by the top teams in the community. More support for this tournament, or something like this could benefit the community greatly by allowing teams that we may not know as well a chance to succeed. It would be especially helpful if events like this were casted (which I will discuss in a later section).

# Section 4:  Setting up a Discord server

Now that you have developed an idea for how you want your tournament to run, the next thing you should consider doing is setting up a Discord server to host your tournament.  This may seem intimidating at first, but once you gain experience, doing this is a lot easier.

## Creating the Discord server

### Step 1:  text and voice channels

This is the basis of any Discord server, and for tournament servers, several channels are essential for a tournament to be functional:

- **Announcements**:
  - Where you post important info, such as:
    - Alerting people to sign up
    - When the tournament is released (especially relevant for subsequent tournaments of the same type)
    - Any restrictions you are placing on the tournament
    - Tournament time limits, when it begins, etc.
- **Rules and bracket** (aka **Important Info**):
  - Provides access to the important information teams need, such as the ruleset and bracket
- **Maps**:
  - Where you place the maplist that teams will play on for the tournament
  - I will discuss this further in section 6
- **General**:
  - Where general discussion happens, the social part of the tourney server
- **Helpdesk**:
  - Where people ask questions about the tournament itself, such as:
    - Any problems they have registering

- ■ Basic details about the tournament (teams do not read the rules)
- ■ Issues that arise during the tournament
- **Captains chat**:
  - ○ This channel allows captains to more easily contact each other instead of having messages get lost in general chat.
  - ○ Restricted to captains/tourney staff (permissions will be discussed later)
- **Check-in**:
  - ○ An optional channel where teams are able to state they are here for the tournament (usually through saying "Team X here")
  - ○ This allows the TOs to know that the team is ready to play in the tourney
  - ○ If a team does not check-in on time, you are free to remove them from the bracket and prevent them from playing
  - ○ This channel can also be merged with captains chat
- **Results**:
  - ○ Where teams report the scores of their matches during the tourney
    - ■ Example of a best of three set score:  Team Penguin 2-0 Team Eagle
    - ■ Teams do not always list the team they played when reporting results, and results should ALWAYS be:
      - ● "(Reporting team) X-Y"
        - ○ X = games reporting team won
        - ○ Y = games reporting team lost
  - ○ Can be restricted to captains/staff only, but this is not required
- **TO chat**:
  - ○ Allows for the coordination of the tourney staff at any point
  - ○ Discussion here is ESSENTIAL for a tournament to be run well, as it allows for staff to have a place to discuss any issues that arise, setting up the tournament, etc.
- A few optional text channels as well:

- ○ **Roles** (or **Role Request**):
    - ■ A place for captains to claim their role as captain and team
    - ■ Could also be done through helpdesk
- ○ **Disconnections/lag**:
    - ■ Where teams can report on any disconnects or lag they experienced
    - ■ The rules should cover disconnections and lag, even if replays for either are not permitted
    - ■ Can also be done through helpdesk
- ○ **Cast**:
    - ■ A place for the tourney staff to communicate with commentators
    - ■ Required if your tournament has a stream running
- ● Voice channels (VCs) that could prove helpful:
    - ○ **General**:
        - ■ Same purpose as the general text chat
        - ■ You can have it just in case you need it
    - ○ **TOs**:
        - ■ Where TOs can go to talk to other staff in VC
        - ■ Helps with urgent matters/immediate communication
    - ○ **Casters**:
        - ■ A VC for the casting team should you have one

When the server is properly set up, it should look something like this:
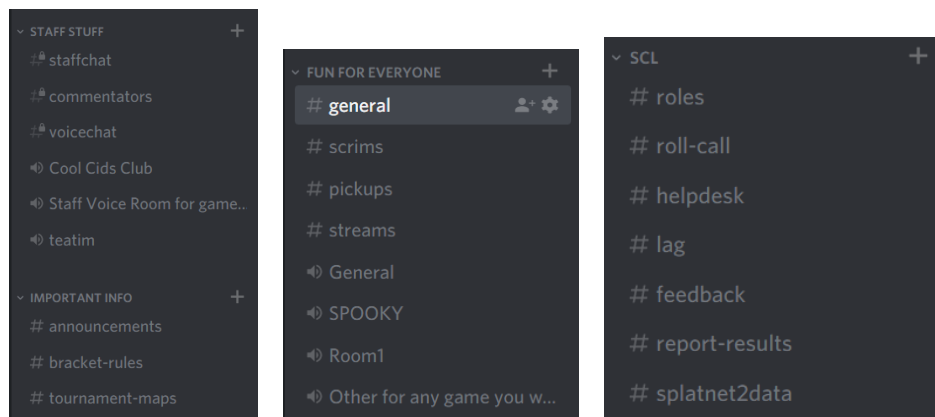
That should cover channels a typical tournament server needs, but you do not want people to freely use these channels for other than their intended purposes.  This is where Discord permissions comes into play.
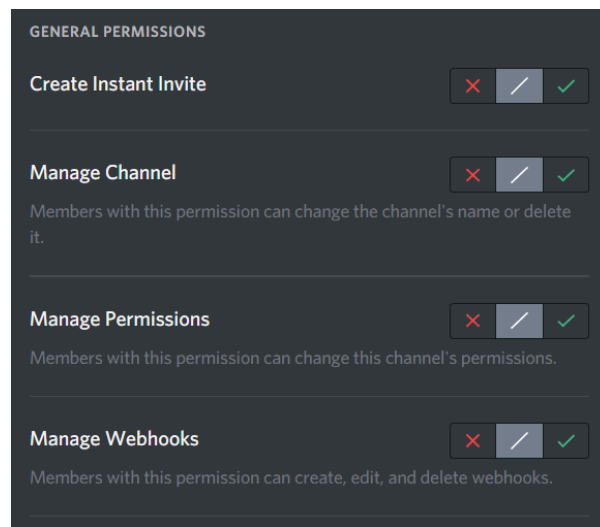
Step 2:  permissions

We will go over what permissions you want to grant to the three main groups of people (tourney staff, captains, everyone else) at the end.  For now, you want to familiarize yourself with Discord permissions.  Click on the gear icon next to a channel's name, a screen like this should appear:
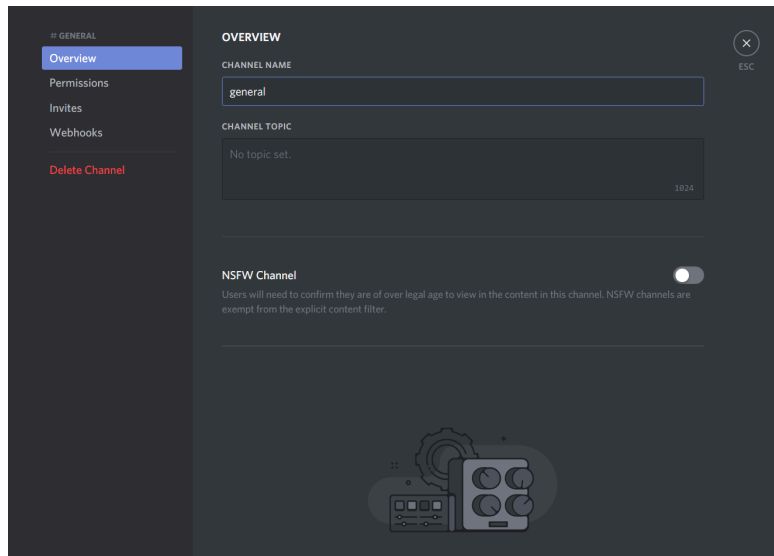


From here, click on permissions on the list on the left and get a screen like this:
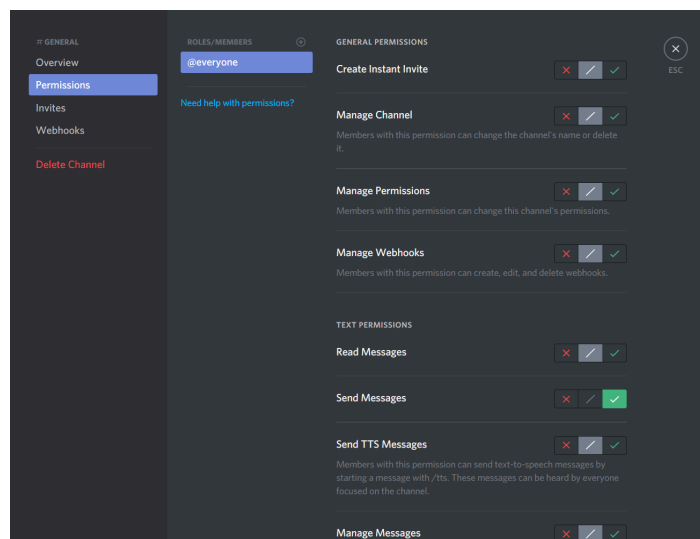
Once here, you will see that permissions for any given text channel are broken down into two parts: general and text permissions.



*The general permissions for a text channel*

Usually, the ones that you want to be concerned with are the text permissions, as general permissions are typically set with the creation of roles (which will be discussed later) and do not require any attention for a given channel.
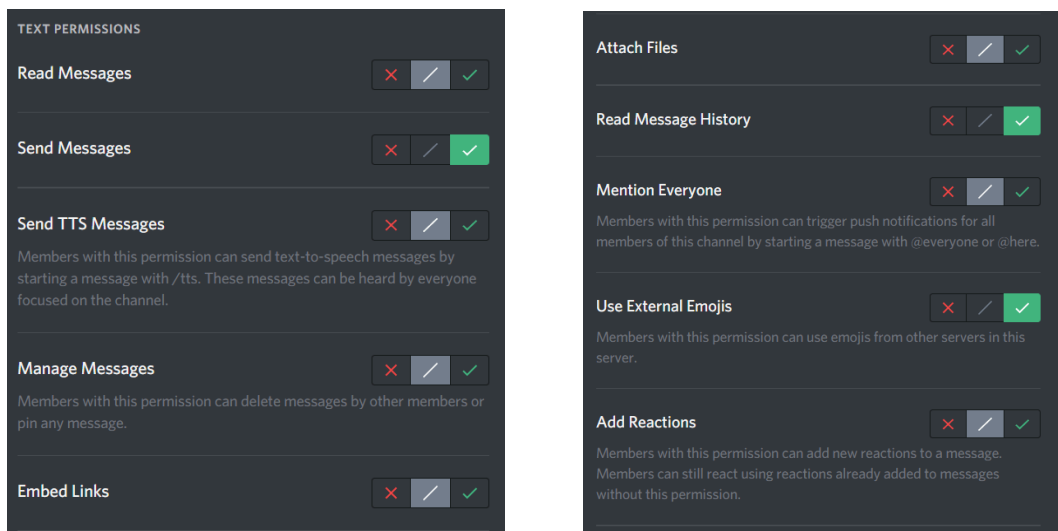


*The text permissions in a given channel*

As you can see from the example provided above, Discord permissions work on a check/neutral/x system, and while most of these are not something you will want to be concerned about, there are a few that you want to disable for all non-tourney staff in all channels. But to avoid any confusion, I will go down the list of these permissions.

- Read Messages:
  - A straightforward permission that should be enabled in all chats unless those chats are designed for specific people only.
- Send Messages:
  - Also fairly straightforward, but should be a bit more restricted in a tourney server as so:
- Send TTS Messages:
  - A TTS message is basically where Discord has an automated voice read out what a person types.
  - There is no need for something like this in a maturely run tournament server and should be denied to everyone (unless tourney staff is given admin permissions, but that will be discussed later).
- Manage Messages:
  - A permission that is not automatically granted to users normally, as it allows the deleting/pinning of any message, and should only be given to users who are moderators/tourney staff (this will be done in their role creation, as giving it to them in every channel is a tad tedious).
- Embed Links:
  - This permission allows users to post links in the text channels.
  - Ultimately, this permission is up to the discretion of the tourney staff on whether they want to permit it or not.  It can be helpful for channels such as helpdesk, which is why normal users can attach files and post links, but in channels such as general, it is generally discouraged to avoid spam.
- Attach Files:
  - Similar to Embed Links
  - This allows people to post pictures and other things in the chats.  Helpful for serious issues that could arise in helpdesk, but up to staff discretion for other channels.
- Read Message History:

- ○ Enabled by default
- ○ It allows users to read the message history in a given chat, and there is little reason to disable this for a tourney server.
- ● Mention Everyone:
  - ○ This enables the @everyone and @here pings, which should be restricted to tourney staff use only.
- ● Use External Emoji:
  - ○ As the description given by Discord says, it allows users to post emojis from other servers in this particular server.
  - ○ It is typically up to staff discretion on whether they want to allow this, but about the only reason to deny this permission is in case the emojis are being spammed.
- ● Add Reactions:
  - ○ As Discord's description states, this allows users to add new reactions to any given message if this permission is enabled.
  - ○ This is another permission that is up to staff discretion on whether they want to permit its use.

"Okay, I understand what these permissions do now, but how do I know what to allow and what to restrict for each channel?" you may be asking, and that is where roles come in, which is a nice segue into our third part of setting up a Discord server (I will get back to permissions for roles in each text channel).

Step 3:  roles

One of my personal favorite things in setting up a Discord server, roles allow you to give or restrict permissions from certain people, such as tourney staff and non-staff. There are four different sections in the permissions for a given role.

- ● Role settings
  - ○ 1:  Allows you to display role members separately from online member
  - ○ 2:  Allows users to @mention the role

- ○ Both should be enabled for tourney staff (with the role itself at the top of the role list so it is easy for users to figure out who is running the tourney)
- ○ These are also both enabled for captains, to make it easy to contact them.
- ○ If there is a casting role, you can enable the first setting for them if you want, but this is not required.
- General permissions
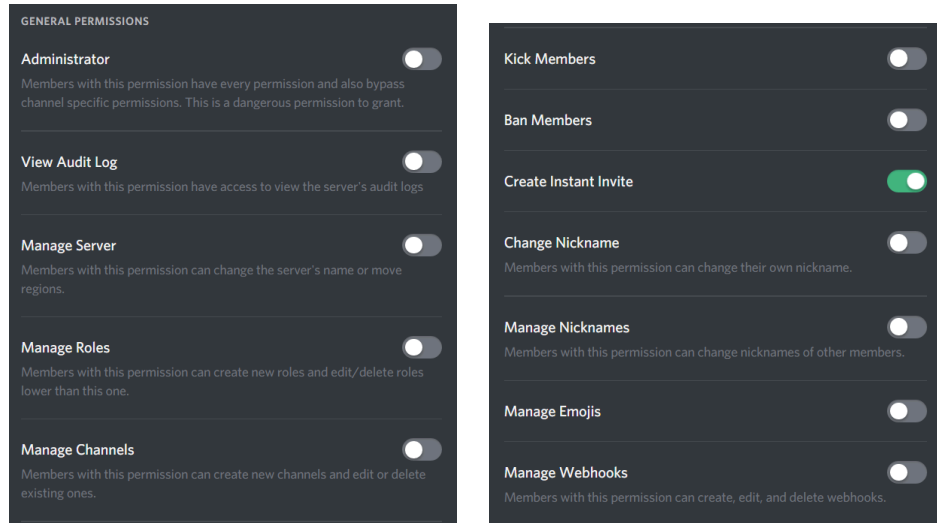


- ○ Most, if not all, of the permissions that are not self-explanatory are given an explanation, and typically just "Create Instant Invite" and "Change Nickname" are enabled for non-tourney staff.
- ○ For tourney staff, you can enable the "Administrator" permission (if you desire), and this will automatically enable all other permissions even if you do not select them for the role.
- ○ If you do not want other TOs to have the admin role, then Manage Server, Manage Roles, Manage Channels, Kick Members, Ban Members, Create Instant Invite, Change Nickname, and Manage Nicknames are good permissions to give (as well as the Manage Messages text permission).
- ○ If, for any reason, you want a tiered TO system (where some staff are "Head TO"s), then you can grant more permissions to the leading staff and fewer permissions to the assistant staff.
  - ■ Seeing this format is increasingly rare, but it has been done.

- For head TOs, they would typically be given administrator, while the TO role would just have Manage Roles, Manage Channels, Kick Members, and the Manage Messages text permission.
- Text permissions
  - The same as the text permissions covered in the permissions section.
- Voice permissions
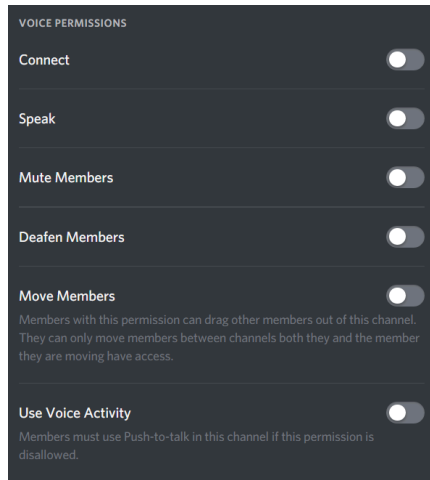


- The Connect, Speak, and Use Voice Activity permissions are safe to grant everyone, while tourney staff can have all voice permissions.

Roles also have the ability to be different colors, and these can be whatever the staff desires. You can also make a role clear so that the next role a person has below it is the color their name appears on Discord. One note on this, however, is that Discord does not allow any user (except the server owner) to change their highest role even if they have the admin permission, and they cannot give another person that role or anything higher than their highest role on the role hierarchy. This is why role placement is essential in running a tourney server, and why staff should be at the top.

A note on captains and their respective roles: to make it easier to find the captain of a given team, you usually have them notify staff before the tournament starts by having them say "I'm captain of (insert team name here)" and you would give them the team name role (with standard permissions). You want to make this role pingable as well so opposing captains can find them easily. They should notify you through either the helpdesk or roles/role request channel (covered earlier in this section).

19

The last note on roles that TOs want to consider is that spaces are not readable for Discord, so instead of putting a role such as "Team Purple", you would want to put "Team_Purple" or "TeamPurple".  This goes for any role that has a space in it.

One thing of note, now that we have covered typical text channel permissions and the permissions roles have, is that VCs have permissions too.  They have the general permissions that are seen in text channels and the voice permissions seen in roles.

Part 4:  combining permissions and roles

Now that we have gone over what everything means and the basics of setting up permissions for certain roles, how do we know what to allow and restrict for given channels?  It depends on what the channel's purpose is.  If it is for general purposes (such as general chat), then not much needs to be changed, though staff may restrict the attachment of files in general as that typically is not needed.  For other channels:

- Announcements, maps, rules/bracket:  You want everyone to have Read Messages enabled, but only staff should have Send Messages here
- Helpdesk:  You can restrict Send Messages here to just captains and staff, but typically that is only done when helpdesk is seeing spam or getting overly hectic.
- Captains chat:  This should only be viewable by captains and staff members, as nobody else needs to see the captains ping each other to set up their matches.
- Results:  This can be set to captains and staff only in terms of sending messages, but there is little to no harm in allowing everyone to at least read what is sent in here.
- TO chat:  This should be restricted to just tourney staff eyes.
- If there is a streamer chat for the tourney cast, restrict this to only tourney staff and the casting team (both read and send messages).
- TO and stream VCs should be restricted to their respective groups, and staff can be allowed in the stream VC but such actions are discouraged when it is live.

Note that anyone given the administrator role will override any and all restrictions on text and voice channels.

Also, before making a tournament Discord server public, you will want to go into server settings and at the bottom of Overview, you should see this:
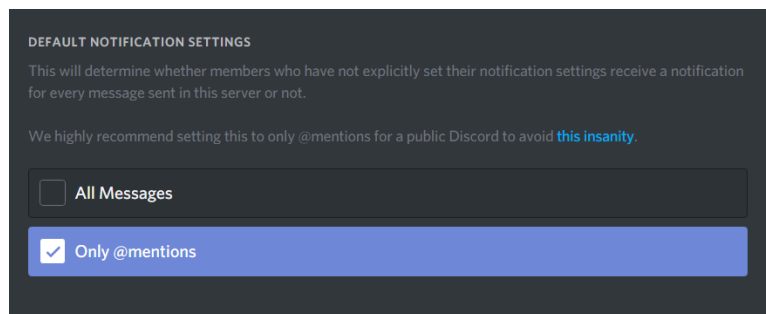


Once here, you want to MAKE SURE that the checkmark is on "Only @mentions" so as to avoid potential chaos of new users getting notified for each message. Discord also provides a video as to show what could happen when all messages is selected.

The last note on setting up your Discord server is aesthetics, which means you will want to find an appropriate server icon as part of the finishing touches. This can be anything related to Splatoon, such as a commission you have, Splatoon art, or anything you deem appropriate. Aesthetics also include setting up a new feature for Discord called "channel categories" which can be seen in the screenshots at the end of part 1. These allow you to organize both text and voice channels in any way you please, including putting both text channels and VCs into the same group. You can do this how you please, though I do suggest you put all the tournament channels together.

# Section 5:  Setting up the actual tournament

Idea for a tourney?  Check.  Discord server properly set up?  Check.  Next up is the tournament itself.  Like the last section, this also gets broken up into different areas: who you want on staff, the type of bracket you want, the type of bracket platform you want to use, and advertising your tournament.

## Choosing your staff

This is arguably one of the most important things in creating a new tournament, choosing who will help run it.  Not everyone in this community desires to run tourneys as they would rather play in them.  Specifically, people that hold traits discussed in section 2 are the ones you ideally want to consider for your staff.  Keep in mind there is a server called the "Splatoon Tourney Server" where you can join and ask others for help.  Here's an invite to this server:  https://discord.gg/zhJfCSw.

My biggest piece of advice here is this:  try to get at least one TO with experience if you are the lead and have no idea what you are doing.  That way, there is a greater chance that unforeseen problems can be handled swiftly and not bog down the tournament.  This is exactly what I did when I first started TOing.  I turned to people such as Chimer, Bleck, Spoon, and Slimy for advice or even help running my tournaments, as they showed they could run successful tournaments.

## Brackets

On the title page of this guide, I posted three logos for different bracket platforms, but we will get to that in a second.  First, you have to determine what type of tournament form you want to run, and in the Splatoon community, we typically choose from the following:

- Single elimination
  - Often the fastest, and this is the recommended choice for tournaments that emphasize speed and want to finish quickly
  - Entrant amount suggested:  Any number of teams is acceptable

- ○ Example: http://splatooncommunityleague.challonge.com/SCL44
- ● Double elimination
  - ○ Typically used when there is more time allotted to the tournament, but I would personally advise against using this format if there are a lot of teams entered (this number is ultimately up to TO discretion)
  - ○ Entrant amount suggested: 16 teams or fewer
  - ○ Example: http://challonge.com/fridaynightsplatdown20
- ● Groups to single elimination
  - ○ This format allows all teams a set amount of matches played no matter how well or poorly they do, as with single and double elimination, there will inevitably be some teams that play one or two sets, respectively, and they are out.
  - ○ The single elimination bracket is the second part of this format, where the teams that made top cut play to determine the tourney champion.
  - ○ I typically choose this format when there are more than 16 teams entered to play, but 16 is NOT a required threshold or magic number.
  - ○ Entrant amount suggested: 16 teams or more
  - ○ Example: http://challonge.com/LockedNLoaded3
- ● Groups to double elimination
  - ○ Similar to the groups to single elimination format, except the second stage includes a double elimination bracket instead of a single elimination bracket.
  - ○ This format does not usually appear except for big tournaments (defined for the purposes of this guide as "tournaments with high production value, a high number of teams, prizes, an entry fee, taking place over multiple days, and given prominence by the rest of the community") such as InkStorm+ run by EGtv, mainly because of how long it takes to complete.
  - ○ Teams are often exhausted towards the end of this type of format, so a tournament of this nature is almost always held over multiple days.

- - Entrant amount suggested:  16 teams or more
  - Example:  https://smash.gg/tournament/inkstorm/events
- Round robin
  - Basically groups to single elimination without the bracket stage afterwards, as every team will play each other.
  - Not seen that often in the Splatoon community
  - Entrant amount suggested:  10 teams or fewer
  - Example:  http://challonge.com/SCAQ2
- Swiss
  - A format not seen often in the Splatoon community, but has been highlighted in Monsoon Splat and the Booyah Battle series, where a predetermined number of rounds happen and you face a team with a similar record to you, regardless of the potential skill gap.  Matchups in round 1 are typically random.
  - Entrant amount suggested:  Any number of teams is acceptable
  - Example:  http://monsoon.challonge.com/20sw

If you are a new TO, I would consider staying away from Swiss as it can get a bit messy or confusing for some people (especially if you have never run a Swiss tournament before).  I assisted with much of the second iteration of Monsoon Splat in late 2016/early 2017 and I saw both the pros and the cons to this format.  Of the other formats, that is largely dependent on what you feel most comfortable with, but I would advise new TOs to take tourney size (aka number of teams) into consideration before settling on a final format.

<center>Bracket Platforms</center>

Next, a word about the bracket platforms mentioned earlier.  The three logos on page 1 of this document are of Challonge, Battlefy, and Smash.gg, respectively.  The simplest and easiest to learn of these three is Challonge, and this would be what I would recommend new TOs run their first few tournaments on, to get a handle on setting up a bracket from start to finish before they consider tackling the more in-depth
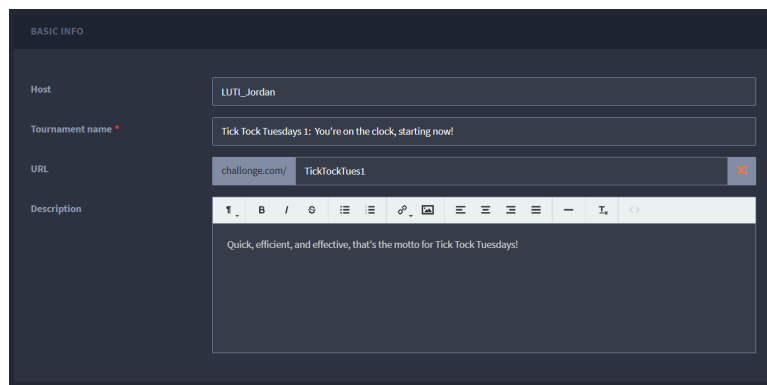
Battlefy and Smash.gg systems. From what I have seen, those two are typically reserved for bigger and more well-known tournaments.

Here's a quick breakdown to setting up a Challonge bracket:

- First and foremost, you will want to create an account on Challonge.
- Second, you should see a big orange button that says "Create tournament"
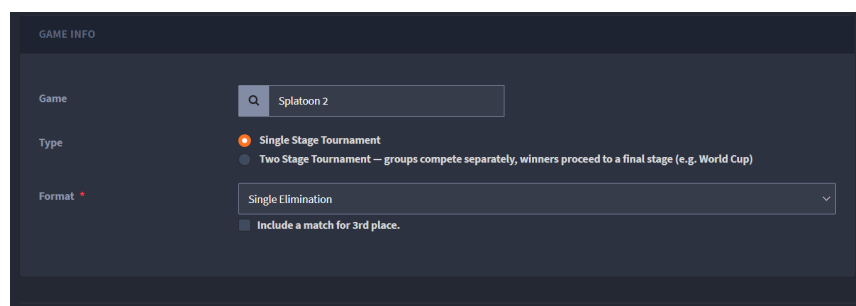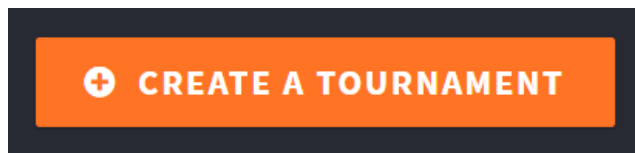


- Once you create your bracket, go to the settings tab and you will see three areas: Basic info, game info, and registration
  - Basic info



    - Host is you, your Challonge account name
    - Tournament name is the name of the tournament you are running
    - URL can be anything you desire as long as it is not taken
    - Description is optional
  - Game info

- - Game should be Splatoon 2 (it may not appear, but it is available)
  - Type is either single stage or two stage
    - Single stage is any of the formats mentioned earlier that do not involve groups (single elimination, double elimination, round robin, swiss)
    - Two stage is a groups to elimination bracket type tourney
  - Format is the type of format you desire (example:  single elim)
  - Registration



- - This part is CRUCIAL
  - For ease of use, you will want to check the box that says "Host a sign-up page" as well as "Make your sign-up page publicly visible"
  - You ALSO want to check the box that says "Require participants to register as a team"
  - The start time is whatever you desire and I would suggest you do NOT check the box requiring participants to check in
- Once you do all that, your bracket should be set up!

If you have questions on this, Battlefy, or Smash.gg, feel free to contact me!  My information is found in Section 1.

<div align="center">Advertisement</div>

Now that you have set all that up, and your tournament is ready to be released to the wild, how do you let other people know about it?  Unfortunately, right now there is

not really a "central hub" towards advertising tournaments, but rather several places that you can advertise your tournament, including but not limited to:

- https://squidboards.com/ (Note: You will need an account and it has to be approved by Squidboards staff first.)
- Twitter
    - You could consider making a tournament Twitter instead of just advertising it on your personal account. This way, you can tweet out tourney announcements on one account and retweet it on your other account.
- Reddit: https://www.reddit.com/r/splatoon/
- Several Discord servers
    - LUTI: https://discord.gg/89FVvJm
    - Squid Colosseum: https://discord.gg/GDGYxUu (Ask for permission to post in the #tournaments channel in #support first..)
    - Inkademy: https://discord.gg/9YYw842
    - Splatournaments: https://discord.gg/0w6fILrtAhx2N40h (The link is for access, you'll have to ask Bleck to post your tournament and it is recommended that you have a Squidboards post to go along with it.)
    - There are also several tournament servers floating out there, but you should ask permission from their respective staff before posting anything.

# Section 6:  Final preparation and tourney day

The last little bit of pre-tourney day preparation should be the creation of a ruleset (which can be done at any point prior to this in the tournament process) and a maplist for the actual tournament.  Also, there are several examples of tournaments that have a "tournament stream", or a place where people can tune in to see all the action that the casting team chooses to highlight during the course of the tournament.

<u>Creating a ruleset</u>

Each tournament offers something different here.  There is no "cookie cutter" format that works for everything.  I will not go into great detail about what a ruleset should or should not contain, but instead offer suggestions.

- Typically, a ruleset contains the following:
  - Date and time for the tournament (if it is a recurring tournament, such as bi-weekly or weekly, this is stated here)
  - General code of conduct (respect the TOs, other server members, etc.)
  - How teams can register for the tournament (including any process required for obtaining a captain role on Discord)
  - Rules explaining the policy of lag
    - These will vary from tournament to tournament, some may be lenient while others will not have rules on this at all
    - It is typically up to TO discretion on how this should be handled
    - My advice:  If you want to test for lag (which I have been told is very hard to test for), ask for video evidence and multiple perspectives.
  - Rules explaining the policy on disconnections (DCs)
    - For DC rulings, you can go from DCing in the first minute to usually 2 minutes, 30 seconds in where the objective has not been pushed passed 50 by either side.  Keep in mind, 50 is not a set in stone benchmark and you may adjust it as you deem necessary.

- For DC replays, these are usually limited to one per team per set or one per team for the whole tournament.
  - ○ Guidelines on how long sets should take and how strict you may be on this time limit
    - Best of three sets can be allotted 25 to 30 minutes
    - Best of five sets can be allotted 35 to 40 minutes
    - Best of seven sets, if used for sets other than grand finals/bracket resets, can be allotted 45 to 50 minutes
    - Typically, grand finals/bracket resets do not require time limits because other sets are not dependent on them, but you can enforce time limits here if the teams are taking too long/delaying.
  - ○ Something stating that if problems arise, it is the responsibility of the teams to notify staff immediately and NOT the other way around
  - ○ A clause that I like to add that says the rules are not intended to be all-encompassing and staff has discretion on whether additional rules need to be added or rules need to be changed/reworded for clarity
- My advice here would be to look at rulesets for other tournaments that have been a success in the past, see what they did, and how you would change those rules to fit your own tournament and TOing style.

<u>Making a maplist</u>

If you are going to run a tournament, you need to provide gametypes (aka map/mode combos) for the teams to play on.  This can be done a few ways, either manually as I like to do, or through the usage of random map generators available online.  One such random map generator is the Discord bot R. Danny, where it can produce a best of 3/5/7 set using the command "!scrim X" (where the X = 3, 5, 7, whatever you desire up to a certain point).

A few tips on maplists in general:
- Unless it is a restriction imposed by your tournament (for example, your tournament is banning Moray Towers), you should use every gametype

(remember, "gametype" means map/mode combination, such as Tower Control on Sturgeon Shipyard) if possible for max variety and to avoid repetition.

- You want to avoid using the same gametype in consecutive rounds (example, not using Splat Zones on The Reef in winners round 1 and winners round 2 of a double elimination bracket).

- You want to try and spread out the usage of maps evenly, and rotate through the modes on a consistent basis, as to avoid showing bias to one gametype.

- For group stages, unless it is a two day tournament, and the losers bracket of a double elimination tournament, sets are usually a best of three, while the bracket of a groups to single elimination, winners side of a double elimination tournament, and a single elimination bracket are usually best of five. Grand finals (and a bracket reset, if applicable) can be best of five or best of seven.

### The Tourney Cast

I have alluded to this several times throughout this document, but now it is time to discuss the tourney cast! I am sure anyone who has seen an event run by EGtv or an event run/casted by InkTV understands the basics of a tournament cast. It is typically where a group independent of the tournament TOs broadcasts matches throughout the tournament, either on an official channel (such as https://www.twitch.tv/inktvsplat for InkTV casted events) or someone's personal channel. This comes with overlays created by outside parties, usually one or more of the wonderful artists we have in this community, commentators, and someone to either select the stream that they commentate over or to spectate in the matches and broadcast their perspective (this person may also be a commentator for the match). While I advise against including a tournament cast when you are just starting out, once you have experience and feel comfortable with how tournaments are run, then you can add this element if you can get someone to agree to help out. The key here is to make sure that someone acts as a go-between for the stream and the tournament staff, to make sure that matches the broadcaster would like to cast start on time or to hold up

matches that could be about to start until the stream itself is ready for them (usually caused by the currently streamed set still going on).

A quick note here on stream/tourney staff independence. Some TOs in Splatoon's history have both run the tournament and run the cast, and while it is possible to do so, it is advised that new TOs do NOT do this as they could easily overwork themselves or have their attention focused on one area when the other area requires it. This is why the cast team does not typically TO and vice versa.

<p style="text-align:center">Tourney Day!</p>

Finally, it is tournament day! You have set up your event, your server, advertised like crazy and gotten a good number of sign-ups as teams are interested in seeing type of event you are capable of running. You may be surprised to find out that most of the work for this tournament is actually already done. Teams are signed up, captains have their roles, the maplist is ready to go, and the staff is here to help out, so what is left? First, you want to make sure that announcements during the tournament are timely and get to the required parties immediately (mainly captains, but there are times where @everyone is acceptable). Just make sure that you ONLY ping for really important things, as saying "@everyone Check-in opens in 5 minutes" is not necessary. That type of announcement is fine, just without the ping. You want to make sure teams check-in, start their matches on time, get through with their sets in a timely fashion, and that any questions they have during the tournament are answered swiftly by staff. A few things to keep in mind on the big day:

- Seeding the bracket as accurately as possible!
    - While no seeded bracket is going to be absolutely perfect, because the judgment of team skill can be based somewhat on subjective factors, you want to do the best you can to provide as accurate of a picture of team skill as possible and so you do not have a really good team seeded near the bottom of the bracket.
    - One suggestion here is to close signups **at least** one hour before the tournament starts to allow for adequate time to seed the bracket.

- ○ If you would like a general guide towards how you could seed the teams in your tourney, there is a handy server called Splat Stats with a lot of information on this topic! https://discord.gg/4Sa4sC
  - ■ What Splat Stats does is tracks how teams do from tournament to tournament, and the size and magnitude of the tourney itself will determine how much weight it carries when inputting how well teams did in it (for example: a 40 team tourney will likely have more weight than a 12 team event).
- ○ October 21st, 2017 update: Kbot, a strong contributor to this guide has also produced a helpful guide for seeding purposes: https://tinyurl.com/SSSeedTemplate
- I know I have already mentioned this, but have a tournament that is run swiftly and efficiently by properly answering questions as soon as you reasonably can and having sets moving along at a reasonable pace (meaning do not expect a best of 5 to be over in 10 minutes).
- I cannot emphasize this enough, but **DO NOT PLAY IN YOUR OWN TOURNAMENT**. The caps and bold formatting are necessary here, as all veteran TOs know this is a big no-no. It may sound cool, but you are the tournament organizer, so you should be running the tournament, not playing in it. Plus, running and playing in the same tournament causes a conflict of interest if your team has issues.
- Consider getting as much of staff as possible in the TO VC together so you can be proactive when it comes to solving problems, and if you feel short-handed, do not be afraid to ask other TOs for help.
- Once the tourney is done, you may desire to create a feedback channel so you can learn from the players what went right and what you can improve on.

The last thing I can offer here is the big secret amongst more experienced TOs: If you have set everything up correctly, then your tournament should, for the most part, run itself, especially as you get into the later rounds when teams who are more likely to

be experienced playing and know what they are doing.  The main thing you are needed for is to ensure things run as expected, to answer questions, and to keep things on track, such as making sure all teams complete their sets in a timely fashion.

# Section 7:  Planning the sequel

You have run your first tournament, it wound up being a success, and you want to know how to set up a sequel to what you have created.  The good news here is that a lot of what you have to do is already done thanks to the first tournament.  My main recommendations are this:

- Learn from the mistakes that you made in the first tournament and figure out what you can do to correct or minimize those in future installations.
- Use the feedback you got from the feedback channel and talking to other members of the server and see how you can incorporate it into the tourney.
- If you encountered problems that you are not sure how to fix, then ask experienced TOs for advice and I am sure they would be happy to help.

Ultimately, setting up the sequel is a lot easier than setting up your first tournament because now, you have a better understanding of the process and necessary steps you have to follow to make your dream a reality.  And if it makes it any easier, you can always follow the steps outlined in this guide to make sure you do not miss anything when constructing your sequel event!

# Section 8:  Conclusion and thanks

That concludes "A Rookie's Guide to Tournament Organizing", and I do truly hope that this has been able to help new TOs figure out the basics of running a tournament in the Splatoon community.  As I stated in the preface, I wanted to make this guide so that the new TOs would have a guideline they could follow if they desire so that they could produce quality tournaments and we can minimize the chances of TOs that have no idea what to do or where to turn for help.  This guide was never intended to get into detailed specifics on the various aspects of a tournament, but that is in part to make this guide a simple one to follow and to encourage other TOs to reach out in case they need help.  Hopefully through its creation we will be able to create more TOs that understand the ins and outs of what they are doing and we can continue to grow the community through its tournaments.  Again, I want to thank Marsh of Deep Blues (Splat and a Half) and Flarablitz of Spicy Kraken Rolls (Young Ink) for their encouragement in creating this, as well as all of the people who voted on my Twitter poll when I asked if they thought something like this would be helpful for our community and when asked what type of traits they believe a TO should have.  I also want to thank Amy (SCL), Kbot (seemingly everything), Flara and Bob (also of Young Ink) for helping me proofread this document and offering additional information so it can provide the most helpful info possible to aspiring TOs.

# About the Author

Jordan has been involved in the Splatoon community in some fashion since before the launch of the first game on the Wii U.  He got into TOing shortly after leaving Squids Next Door in late August 2016, and has helped run several of the bigger named tournaments in the Splatoon community such as Friday Night Splatdown, Monsoon Splat, SCL, the Splatoon Showdown Series by Nintendo of America, Fall of the Squids and Rise of the Sharks by InkTV, G7, the Squidboards monthlies, the event Leagues Under The Ink, and the local LAN series called Paint Louis.  He also has several non-tournament related Splatoon interests, such as Twitch clipping, live-tweeting for InkTV casted events, and hosting the InkTV interview series "Beyond the Ink".  After seeing several newer TOs struggle through their first few tournaments, he wanted to write a guide to help them gain a foundation before they even started running events, and thus "A Rookie's Guide to Tournament Organizing" was born.