

IAPS Online Q & A 2026/2027

Here are answers to some questions you may have about the chess tournament. Most questions will be answered by reading the rules for each age group:

If you have a question that isn't answered here, you should ask the teacher who is supervising your team.

Q) Is there an upper age limit?

A) There are two age groups.

1. Under 13: Players must be under 13 on 31st August 2026 and therefore be born no earlier than 1st September 2013.
2. Under 9: Players must be under 9 on 31st August 2026 and therefore be born no earlier than 1st September 2017.

Q) Is there a lower age limit?

A) Players will usually be in Yr3 or Yr4 when they play in the Under 9 competition (younger players may compete at the discretion of the teacher) , or in Yr5 – Yr8 when they play in the Under 13 competition.

Q) Can we mix the ages of players in our team?

A) All players in the team should meet the criteria for the age group.

Q) Where are the games played?

A) The IAPS Online Schools Chess Competition is played on the Lichess website – <http://www.lichess.org>.

Q) How will the tournament be conducted?

A) The tournament will be conducted as a 'Team Battle' on Lichess. This is a type of 'Arena' tournament where you cannot play other players from your own team.

Q) I'm the only chess player in my school - can I still take part?

A) Yes - there is no minimum team size. You can still participate in the training tournaments and will have the chance to win the individual competition. You will still need a teacher in your school to register you for the competition.

Q) Is there a minimum number of players per team?

A) No - there is no minimum. However to stand a good chance of winning the team title you would want to have at least 4 players as it is the top 4 scores for each team that will count. If you have fewer players (or are the only chess player in your school), you can still participate and stand a chance of winning the individual title.

Q) Is there a maximum number of players per team?

A) No - an unlimited number of players may play for each school team, but only the top four scores for each team will count towards your team score.

Q) How long will the tournament take?

A) The duration of the tournament will be 60 minutes and only games that finish within this time will count.

Q) How long is each game?

A) The time limit for each game is five minutes plus three seconds per move.

Q) What happens if I have a problem logging in?

A) If you aren't logged in and ready to play by the time a battle starts, then unfortunately you will not be able to participate. We strongly recommend players join at least one training tournament in advance to sort out any technical/access issues. Your teacher can also set up as many practise tournaments as they wish for your team.

Q) How many scores count towards the team title?

A) A team's score will be determined by the total of its four highest-scoring players.

Q) What happens if someone cheats?

A) A player whose account has been flagged by Lichess for using external assistance will not be permitted to participate in the remainder of the competition; whether the assistance happened in this competition or in any other games or activity on Lichess. If Lichess grants permission for a "second chance" account on the website, this is not a reversal of their initial fair play decision, and this account will not be permitted to play in this competition. Make sure you have read and understood the 'Fair Play' guidance, which can be found within the rules for each age group category.