

WARDOGS COMPETITIVE LEAGUE

RULES & REGULATIONS
RULEBOOK

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1. Introduction

The Wardogs Competitive League (WCL) is an independent, structured competitive league for organised seasonal play in Wardogs.

Each division consists of 12 teams, competing across a full season for the highest possible position in the standings. Promotion and relegation connect the divisions between seasons, giving teams a clear competitive progression and ensuring that each division remains contested by teams of comparable standing.

The WCL exists to provide a fair, consistent and competitive environment in which teams can test themselves against one another through preparation, teamwork, strategy and in-game performance.

Participating teams are also involved in the continued development of the league. Matters such as map rotations, competition formats and proposed rule changes are discussed with the teams wherever appropriate, allowing the league to evolve alongside the competitive community while maintaining a consistent structure across each season.

1.1. Competitive Philosophy

At the core of the WCL is a simple principle: competitive Wardogs should still feel like Wardogs.

The league therefore aims to preserve the game in its natural state as much as reasonably possible. Rather than heavily restricting vehicles, equipment, strategies or game mechanics in order to create an artificial style of competitive play, teams are expected to adapt to the systems provided by the game and develop their own answers to the strategies they encounter.

Different approaches, tactics and team compositions should be allowed to emerge organically through competition. Restrictions should only be introduced where they are necessary to protect competitive integrity, fairness or the practical operation of the league.

This principle does not extend to cheating, exploits or deliberate abuse of unintended game mechanics. Such behaviour may be restricted or prohibited where necessary to preserve fair competition, and violations may be subject to disciplinary action under the league rules.

The intention is not to redesign Wardogs for competitive play, but to provide a structure in which the game can be played competitively on its own terms.

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1.2. League Council

Each team participating in the WCL may designate one representative to the League Council.

The League Council provides participating teams with a formal voice in matters affecting the competition, including proposed rule changes, seasonal map rotations and other league-wide decisions submitted for consultation or vote.

Each participating team holds one representative vote.

League Administration remains responsible for the day-to-day operation and enforcement of the WCL rules.

The League Council does not determine individual disciplinary cases or referee decisions. These remain matters for impartial WCL officials and League Administration.

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2. Community Conduct

The Wardogs Competitive League maintains a set of conduct standards for participation in official WCL spaces, fixtures, broadcasts and events.

These standards exist to protect the proper operation of the league, maintain competitive integrity and establish clear expectations for players, team representatives, referees, casters and other participants.

2.1. Discord

The official WCL Discord serves as the primary communication platform for the league.

All members of the WCL Discord are required to comply with the **Discord Terms of Service and Community Guidelines**.

League administration reserves the right to moderate official WCL spaces where necessary to prevent behaviour that substantially disrupts league operations, interferes with competition or violates Discord's own rules.

These requirements apply equally to players, team representatives, referees, casters, staff and other users of WCL platforms.

2.2. Participants

All participants are expected to compete in good faith and with reasonable sportsmanship.

Cheating, the use of unauthorised third-party software, deliberate exploitation of prohibited bugs or unintended mechanics, match fixing, collusion, stream sniping or any other attempt to gain an illegitimate competitive advantage is prohibited.

Players and teams are expected to:

- Compete to the best of their reasonable ability throughout official fixtures;
- Respect legitimate decisions made by referees and league administration;
- Avoid deliberately disrupting, sabotaging or obstructing official matches;
- Treat opposing teams, officials and other participants with reasonable sportsmanship;
- Raise disputes through the appropriate league channels rather than interfering with the operation of a fixture.

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Competitive rivalry, criticism, disagreement and banter are not in themselves considered misconduct. The WCL does not require participants to be friendly with one another, but it does require them to compete fairly and refrain from behaviour that compromises the integrity of the competition.

2.3. Referees & Casters

Referees are responsible for overseeing official WCL fixtures and applying the league rules where necessary.

A referee must be independent of all clans participating in the WCL. Any individual who is a member of, represents, or is otherwise directly affiliated with a clan competing in the league may not ordinarily act as a WCL referee.

Where no independent referee is reasonably available, a WCL league administrator may act as referee out of necessity, provided that they have no direct stake in the fixture being played and are able to carry out the role impartially.

Referees are expected to:

- Apply WCL rules consistently and impartially;
- Intervene where required to maintain the proper operation of a fixture;
- Report significant incidents or suspected rule violations to league administration;

Where an immediate ruling is required during a fixture, the referee's decision applies for the purpose of allowing the match to continue. Decisions may subsequently be reviewed by league administration where appropriate.

A referee may declare a fixture invalid where cheating, severe server instability, a DDoS attack, technical failure or another exceptional circumstance has materially compromised the competitive integrity of the match.

Where a fixture is declared invalid, its result will not be recorded and the fixture will be rescheduled.

The referee may allow a result to stand where an interruption or technical issue is determined not to have materially affected the legitimacy of the fixture.

Casters representing the WCL are expected to maintain professional impartiality while covering official fixtures. Commentary may freely discuss strategies, mistakes, individual performances and the strengths or weaknesses of participating teams, but official broadcasts should not be used to deliberately favour, promote or disparage one competitor over another.

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Players, teams and other individuals may livestream their own perspective during official WCL fixtures, provided that the broadcast is subject to a minimum ten-minute delay.

The purpose of this delay is to prevent livestreams from providing opposing teams with real-time information regarding positions, tactics, communications or other information that would not otherwise be available to them.

Deliberately using another participant's livestream to obtain information during an active fixture, may be treated as a competitive-integrity violation.

2.4. Disciplinary Action

Violations of WCL rules may result in disciplinary action depending on the nature, severity and circumstances of the offence.

Available sanctions are:

- **Warning** — a formal notice that conduct has breached WCL rules and that further violations may result in more severe action.
- **Temporary Suspension** — temporary removal from WCL participation and official WCL spaces for a defined period.
- **Disqualification** — removal from an individual fixture or from the remainder of an active season, depending on the severity of the violation. A team disqualified from an individual fixture is recorded as finishing in third place with a Match Score of 0, and therefore receives 0 League Points from that fixture.
- **Permanent Ban** — permanent removal from the Wardogs Competitive League and its official platforms.

Where a participant is suspended or permanently banned from the WCL, that sanction also applies to access to official WCL platforms, including the league Discord and any league-managed systems.

When determining an appropriate sanction, league administration may consider the severity and intent of the violation, any competitive advantage gained, previous offences and the conduct of the participant or team following the incident.

Serious competitive-integrity violations, including cheating, deliberate exploitation or manipulation of match results, may result in immediate disqualification or permanent exclusion without requiring prior warnings.

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3. League Structure

The Wardogs Competitive League is organised into divisions, with each season providing a structured schedule of fixtures, promotion and relegation between divisions, and a cumulative league standings system.

Each division operates under the same competitive format to ensure that teams are assessed under consistent conditions throughout the season.

3.1. Divisions

Each WCL division consists of **12 teams**.

Teams compete exclusively within their assigned division during the regular season, with their accumulated League Points determining their final position in the divisional standings.

Where multiple divisions are active, they form a competitive hierarchy, with higher divisions representing progressively stronger levels of competition.

The number of active divisions is determined by the total number of teams participating in the WCL. Divisions may therefore be added or removed between seasons as participation increases or decreases.

Where the number of participating teams does not allow every division to contain exactly 12 teams, WCL administration may make reasonable structural adjustments for the following season.

3.2. Promotion & Relegation

At the conclusion of each season:

- The top two teams in each division are promoted to the division immediately above.
- The bottom two teams in each division are relegated to the division immediately below.

Promotion and relegation take effect for the following season.

The highest division has no promotion above it, and the lowest division has no relegation below it.

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3.3. Season Length

A regular WCL season consists of 12 match weeks.

Each team plays one fixture per match week, resulting in a total of 12 fixtures per team during the regular season.

With 12 teams in each division and three teams participating in each fixture, each division plays four fixtures per match week.

WCL fixtures are scheduled by League Administration within the league's Official Match Window: Friday and Saturday between 18:00 and 21:00 UK local time (GMT or BST as applicable).

The stated times refer to the scheduled start time of a fixture. A fixture beginning at 21:00 may continue beyond the Official Match Window until its normal conclusion.

Each fixture will be assigned a default date and start time within this window as part of the seasonal fixture schedule. This provides teams with a predictable availability requirement around which they can organise, prepare and recruit their rosters.

The three participating teams may unanimously agree to move their fixture to another date or time within the same match week.

Where an alternative time falls outside the Official Match Window, all three participating teams must agree to the arrangement and any required referee, server or broadcast arrangements must remain reasonably possible.

If the participating teams cannot unanimously agree to an alternative arrangement, the originally scheduled fixture time remains in force.

3.4. Fixtures

All WCL fixtures are played in the standard 1v1v1 format, with three teams competing simultaneously.

Each team plays 12 fixtures per season. The fixture schedule is arranged to provide balanced exposure to both opposing teams and the competitive map pool.

Across the course of a regular season:

- Each team faces every other team in its division at least twice;
- Each team plays each of the four competitive maps three times;
- On each map, each team plays as each of the three available factions exactly once.

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This creates a total of 12 unique map and faction assignments for each team across the season.

As each fixture contains two opposing teams, a team encounters opponents 24 times across its 12 fixtures. Facing each of the other 11 teams twice accounts for 22 of these encounters. Each team will therefore face two opponents for a third time during the season.

These additional pairings will be distributed as evenly as reasonably possible and, where practical, rotated between seasons.

Fixtures, map assignments and faction assignments are determined in advance as part of the official WCL schedule.

3.4.1. Team Absence

If a team fails to participate in a scheduled fixture, the remaining two teams will play the fixture as scheduled. The absent team may join the server and begin playing at any time, but the fixture will not be restarted or extended to compensate for their late arrival.

If the absent team does not participate at any point during the fixture, it will finish with a Match Score of 0 and receive 0 League Points.

3.4.2. Mid-Season Withdrawal

If a team withdraws from the WCL after a season has begun, the remaining fixture schedule will not normally be restructured and a replacement team will not be introduced during the active season.

Any fixtures already completed by the withdrawing team remain valid and their results are retained.

Any remaining fixture involving the withdrawing team is cancelled. The other two teams scheduled to participate receive an Administrative Bye.

An Administrative Bye awards each affected team League Points equal to that team's average League Points earned per completed fixture during the season.

For example, a team that has earned 455 League Points across six completed fixtures has an average of:

455 ÷ 6 = 75.83 League Points.

Administrative Bye awards are always rounded down.

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The team would therefore receive 75 League Points for the cancelled fixture.

Where an Administrative Bye is awarded before the affected team has completed any fixtures, the League Point award will be calculated retrospectively using the team's first three completed fixtures of the season.

Administrative Byes ensure that teams do not lose a scoring opportunity solely because another team has withdrawn from the competition.

Cancelled fixtures are not rescheduled. Any map, faction or opponent assignment lost as a result of a team withdrawal is simply considered unfulfilled for that season, and the remaining schedule continues unchanged.

3.5. League Scoring

League standings are determined by the total number of League Points accumulated by each team throughout the season.

For every completed fixture, a team's final in-game Match Score is converted directly into League Points.

The team finishing in first place receives an additional 25 League Points as a victory bonus.

Therefore:

League Points earned = Final Match Score + 25 for the winning team

Teams finishing second or third receive no placement bonus.

For example, if a fixture concludes with:

- Team A — 100 Match Score
- Team B — 87 Match Score
- Team C — 64 Match Score

The League Points awarded are:

- Team A — **125 League Points**
- Team B — **87 League Points**
- Team C — **64 League Points**

The +25 victory bonus rewards teams for winning fixtures while ensuring that every point scored during a match remains relevant to the season standings. A team therefore retains an incentive to continue competing for points even where first place is no longer realistically attainable.

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A team disqualified from an individual fixture is recorded as finishing in third place with a Match Score of 0 and receives 0 League Points from that fixture.

Administrative Byes awarded under Section 3.4.2 count towards a team's season League Point total in the same manner as a completed fixture.

At the conclusion of the regular season, teams are ranked within their division according to their total accumulated League Points.

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4. Match Rules

Official WCL fixtures are played using a standardised competitive ruleset intended to preserve the normal structure and mechanics of *Wardogs* wherever reasonably possible.

4.1. Server Settings

Official WCL fixtures may be played on any Wardogs community server affiliated with the WCL, including servers operated by participating teams. This allows teams to make use of their own existing infrastructure without requiring the WCL to provide dedicated servers for every fixture.

To be eligible for official league play, an affiliated server must use the approved WCL competitive server configuration for the duration of the fixture.

The competitive server settings are:

- Tick Timer = 30 seconds
- Lock Overpopulated Teams = Off
- TBD

The complete configuration will be finalised and published before the beginning of the season following testing and discussion of available server settings, administrative tools and RCON functionality.

4.2. Map Rotation

Each WCL season uses a competitive rotation of four maps.

For the purposes of the WCL, different Control Zone configurations of the same geographical map are treated as separate maps.

Before the beginning of each season, the available map pool will be put to a vote among participating teams. Each team receives one representative vote, cast by its designated Team Leader or authorised representative. The four maps receiving the highest number of votes will form the competitive map rotation for that season.

The selected map rotation remains fixed for the duration of the season, unless a technical issue, game update or other exceptional circumstance renders a selected map unsuitable for competitive play.

As set out in Section 3.4, each team will play every selected map three times during the season, playing as each of the three available factions once on that map.

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4.3. Gameplay Restrictions

In accordance with the WCL's competitive philosophy, restrictions on normal gameplay mechanics and content are kept to an absolute minimum.

The WCL does not seek to rebalance Wardogs by prohibiting otherwise legitimate weapons, vehicles, equipment, strategies or game mechanics solely because they are considered particularly strong, difficult to counter or unpopular.

All standard game content and mechanics are permitted unless explicitly restricted.

Gameplay restrictions are reserved primarily for exploits, unintended mechanics or other behaviour that undermines competitive integrity.

Where an exploit or other problematic interaction is identified, League administration may prohibit or restrict its use and add it to the official list of Gameplay Restrictions.

This list may be amended where new exploits are discovered or where previously restricted issues are corrected by the developers.

Where reasonably possible, WCL rulings will distinguish between legitimate use of a game mechanic and deliberate exploitation of unintended behaviour.

4.3.1. Current Gameplay Restrictions

- None;
-

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5. Teams & Rosters

Teams participating in the Wardogs Competitive League are responsible for maintaining an eligible roster throughout the season and ensuring that they are able to fulfil their scheduled fixtures.

5.1. Team Eligibility

To participate in the WCL, a team must:

- Be capable of fielding a full 30-player roster for official fixtures;
- Maintain a roster consisting entirely of eligible WCL players;
- Designate a Team Leader or authorised representative responsible for communication with League administration;
- Be able to participate within the scheduling requirements established under Section 3.3;
- Agree to abide by the WCL rules and competitive regulations.

Teams are responsible for ensuring that sufficient players are available for their scheduled fixtures throughout the season.

Failure to maintain a sufficient roster does not automatically entitle a team to reschedule a fixture. A participating team may field a maximum of four substitute players from the Free Agent pool in any official fixture.

5.2. Player Eligibility

To participate in the WCL, a player must:

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Not have a VAC or game ban on their primary Steam account issued within the previous six months.
- Not have been subjected to any ban issued by Bulkhead Interactive in relation to Wardogs.

A player registered to one participating team, may not represent, substitute for, or otherwise compete on behalf of another WCL team unless they have formally left their previous team and become eligible to join another.

Players serving an active WCL suspension or ban are not eligible to participate in official fixtures for the duration of that sanction.

Players may not use an alternate Steam account to circumvent any eligibility restriction, suspension or ban.

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5.3. Free Agent

A Free Agent is an eligible WCL player who is not currently registered to a participating team. Free Agents may make themselves available to teams seeking additional players or temporary substitutes.

5.4. Joining the League

Teams may apply to join the Wardogs Competitive League between seasons.

To be accepted, a team must meet the requirements under Section 5.1, and all players submitted as part of its roster must meet the requirements under Section 5.2.

New teams must complete registration before the applicable season registration deadline.

Once a season has begun, new teams may not enter an active division or take over the position of a team that withdraws mid-season.

Where a team withdraws during an active season, its remaining fixtures are instead handled through the Administrative Bye system described in Section 3.4.

Teams accepted into the WCL will be assigned to an appropriate division before the beginning of the following season. The creation or removal of divisions may be necessary depending on the total number of participating teams.

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