

Tournament Organiser's Handbook 2024

Concise Edition

1. Introduction

This guide is designed to help both new and experienced tournament organizers run an ABSP-rated Scrabble tournament. It covers the essential steps, from planning to post-event reporting. For advice and support you can refer to the full length Tournament Organiser's Handbook (4.4 – 2015) <https://www.absp.org.uk/publications/toguide4.4.pdf>, join the Tournament Organisers (TO) Forum or consult ABSP members.

2. Steps for Organizing a Tournament

A. Selecting a Date and Venue

- Date: If possible start planning 8 months in advance. Coordinate with the ABSP Tournament Co-ordinator to avoid clashing with other events.
- Venue: Choose a venue that:
 - Has enough space for players, with accessible seating and facilities.
 - Provides adequate parking and disabled access.
 - Offers basic amenities such as catering options and power for equipment.
 - Confirm the booking details in writing

B. Budgeting

Create a simple budget that includes:

- Venue hire
- Tournament director and staff fees
- Refreshments
- Prizes and trophies: Prize money in the top division should not be more than other divisions once size of the division has been taken into account.
- Insurance
- ABSP Ratings Levy: £1 per player 2024 (please check for revisions after this date)

Ensure the budget covers all costs without a loss. This budget will help you set the right entry fee. The event must be at least £2 cheaper for ABSP members than non-members.

Record all income and expenses.

C. Staffing

Ensure you have enough people to manage the event:

- Tournament Director (TD): Manages the event and resolves issues. The TD should not play unless absolutely necessary. TD's are often paid.
- Computer Operator: Generates pairings and logs results. Handles challenges and score checking, especially for large events. This job may be done by the TD at smaller events
- Helpers: One helper per 40 players is recommended. They can assist with adjudication, registration and prizes. Seek help from club members or local volunteers for non-playing/non-paying roles.
- Emergency Contact details: ensure you have a list of emergency contacts for all tournament players prior to play beginning.

D. Equipment

You will need:

- Laptop: For managing the tournament, using software like "tsh."
- 1 Additional Device: Used as an adjudication station for players, a laptop or a tablet.
- Timers: Ask players to bring their own timers if possible.
- Printer: For printing fixtures and results.
- Score Sheets: Available from the ABSP or downloadable from the website.

<https://www.absp.org.uk/play/score4.pdf>

Use this form for players to record results for the TO:

<https://www.absp.org.uk/publications/abspresultsheet2011.pdf>

3. Running the Tournament

A. Games and Game Formats

Choose from the following formats:

- Swiss Pairing: Ideal for larger divisions (20-40 players).
- Round Robin: Suitable for smaller divisions where every player faces each other.

Typically, one-day events consist of 7-9 games.

- Reserve: To avoid odd numbers of players at the tournament (and thus avoid byes) have a player happy to step in or drop out as the needs of the day dictate. Also if you have an open division it may be useful to have someone who can play in either. This player is the 'floater'.

- Challenge rules: These can vary but as a general rule there are two choices - 5point penalty or free challenge. Some tournaments have 5pp for the top divisions and free challenge for other divisions.

B. Timetable

- Allow at least 10 minutes between games.
- For Swiss pairing, a timetable that allows 65 minutes for game 1 and 60 minutes per game thereafter (with a 30 min lunch break) is a reasonable schedule.
- Display the full timetable clearly and in multiple locations at the venue.

C. Catering

- Provide light refreshments (tea, coffee, biscuits).
- If lunch isn't provided, inform players to bring their own or suggest nearby options.

4. Post-Tournament Tasks

A. Results and Reporting

- Submit Results: Upload player results to the ABSP database immediately after the event. When you do this, you will be given the option to tell ABSP whether there is an incident report to follow. After your event, an invoice for the rating levy will be sent to you, please pay this promptly. The 2024 levy is £1 per player.

- Incident Report: Generally not needed but you should inform ABSP of any issues you experienced with any players or in the running of the tournament, e.g. latecomers, no-shows, any instances of poor behaviour, any unusual incidents where you had to apply the rules e.g. tile spillages.

- Write a Report: Submit a brief report, including divisional winners, to the ABSP for inclusion in their publications. This is optional but encouraged!

5. Useful Forms and Contacts

A. Tournament Ratings Approval Form

This is filled in and sent to Stewart Houten (ratings@absp-database.org) if you want your games to be rated at the ABSP. Copy the link into a web browser like Google Chrome and it will download the form automatically. Look for it in your download folder.

<https://absp.org.uk/publications/Example-Ratings-Approval-Form.doc>

B. Entry Form Template

This is filled in and sent to the Tournament Organiser by people who want to play.

Copy the link into a web browser like Google Chrome and it will download the form automatically. Look for it in your download folder.

<https://absp.org.uk/publications/Example-Tournament-Entry-Form.docx>

C. Useful Contacts

- Tournament Co-ordinator/ Ratings officer : ratings@absp-database.org Stewart Houten
- Webmaster: stewartbrodie49@gmail.com Stewart Brodie

Final Tips

1. Plan well in advance.
2. Budget carefully.
3. Ensure you have enough helpers and equipment.
4. Follow up promptly with results and reports after the event.