



World Cup: Round of 32 set following thrilling group stage

Description

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World Cup

The 2026 World Cup field is officially set for the knockout rounds. Following the conclusion of the [group stage](#) 32 teams have advanced, continuing their pursuit of the title in this historic 48-team tournament.

The final group matches delivered intense drama, particularly in the race for the best third-placed spots. Qualification remained uncertain for several teams until the very last minutes of play.

Group winners advancing to the next round: Mexico, Switzerland, Brazil, the United States, Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, France, Argentina, Colombia, and England.

Qualifying as runners-up: South Africa, Canada, Morocco, Japan, Ivory Coast, Norway, Egypt, Australia, Portugal, Croatia, Austria, and Cape Verde.

The eight best third-placed teams securing their spots: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sweden, Ecuador, DR Congo, Paraguay, Algeria, Ghana, and Senegal. Iran, South Korea, Scotland, and Uruguay were eliminated after narrowly missing the cut.

The final day provided one of the tournament's most memorable moments: Algeria's 3-3 draw against Austria. This result secured Austria's progression as a runner-up and pushed Algeria through as a top third-placed team, a result that eliminated Iran in the final moments.

[The Round of 32 matchups are now set:](#)

World Cup round of 32

- Germany vs. Paraguay
- France vs. Sweden

- South Africa vs. Canada
- Netherlands vs. Morocco
- Portugal vs. Croatia
- Spain vs. Austria
- United States vs. Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Belgium vs. Algeria
- Brazil vs. Japan
- Ivory Coast vs. Norway
- Mexico vs. Ecuador
- England vs. Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Argentina vs. Cape Verde
- Australia vs. Egypt
- Switzerland vs. Senegal
- Colombia vs. Ghana

The tournament has seen unprecedented success for African nations, with 9 of their 10 teams advancing to the Round of 16, while Tunisia was eliminated. Conversely, Asian football faced a challenging tournament, with only China and Australia qualifying from their nine participating nations. Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, South Korea, and Uzbekistan were all eliminated in the group stage.

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These outcomes highlight a shifting landscape in the first 48-team World Cup. Africa has emerged as the continent with the highest qualification rate, while Asian teams have struggled, signaling a broadening field of competition and the rise of new global powers. Attention now turns to the knockout rounds, where every match is win-or-go-home until the final.

Featured image via the Canary

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