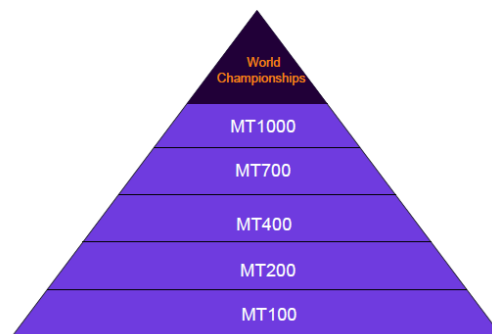


ITF World Tennis Masters Tour 2023 Grading Criteria

The purpose of this document is to set out the tournament grading structure to be applied to all tournaments on the 2023 ITF World Tennis Masters Tour. Please note, the ITF Seniors Tour will be re-named the ITF World Tennis Masters Tour from 1 August 2022 onwards, and all future references in this document will refer to the ITF World Tennis Masters Tour.

Background & Context

Each tournament on the ITF World Tennis Masters Tour is allocated a grade which recognises the strength and delivery standards of the tournament, and which corresponds to the value of ranking points on offer to participants. There are six (6) tournament grades. The entry level tournament grade is 100, followed by 200, 400, 700, 1000 and World Championships.



Grading Criteria

The ITF Seniors Committee are responsible for the allocation of grades at all ITF World Tennis Masters Tour. This grading criteria aims to provide a robust, fair, and balanced calendar of tournaments on a national, regional, and global level. The following grading principles apply to all tournaments:

Tournaments per Grade

- The tournament structure follows a pyramid approach. I.e., each nation and region should have more tournaments of a lower grade. This allows for entry level players – whom are the majority - to benefit from a more appropriate competition experience. This also supports the global rankings model whereby a limited volume of elite level of events make up the Tour.
- Tournaments awarded the MT1000 grade must not overlap event dates with the World Team & Individual Championships for the corresponding age group(s).
- MT700 grade tournaments must not overlap event dates with MT1000 grade tournaments in the same region, unless approved by the ITF and where in its discretion there is a sufficiently large distance between the two tournament locations.
- MT100 and MT200 grade tournaments may take place in the same nation and same tournament week where, in the ITF's discretion there is a reasonable distance between the two tournament locations, and if approved by the National Association and ITF.

New Tournaments

- New tournaments start at MT100
- Exceptionally, a nation may apply for a new tournament to begin at the MT200 or MT400 grade provided the nation and venue has suitable travel accessibility, has experience hosting ITF World Tennis Masters Tour events, and where the grade is deemed by the ITF to be beneficial to achieve a more optimal, balanced calendar for the nation and/or region. Nations applying for new tournaments at MT200 or MT400 will be subject to an assessment of the grading measures outlined in this document. Enquiries to start a new tournament at MT200 or MT400 must be received a minimum of six (6) months prior to the proposed tournament date.

Existing Tournament Upgrades

The ITF department will proactively contact a National Association if an upgrade is applicable, in line with the timelines and assessment of the measures outlined below. Therefore, National Associations are no longer requested to submit special upgrade requests for the consideration of the ITF.

Existing Tournament Downgrades

Tournaments must meet minimum standards of player strength and tournament delivery relative to other tournaments within their grade and region. MT700 and MT1000 will also be compared globally.

A tournament may be considered for downgrade if it scores amongst the lowest 10% in their grade and region based on an assessment of the draw strength, and tournament delivery measures. The ITF will communicate with National Associations directly where a downgrade is deemed appropriate.

Grading Review Timeline

Tournament grading will be reviewed by the ITF on two occasions each year:

- Tournaments taking place between January-May 2023 will be reviewed in July 2022. National Associations will be contacted by August 2022 if an upgrade or downgrade is applicable.
- Tournaments taking place between June-December 2023 will be reviewed in February 2023. National Associations will be contacted by March 2023 if an upgrade or downgrade is applicable.

In exceptional cases, the ITF may consider introducing new tournaments or upgrading existing tournaments taking place between September-December 2022.

Stage 1: Calendar Assessment

The ITF shall firstly consider the existing calendar. This shall include an assessment of the following:

- 1. Calendar Position** – The established tournament week and its position in the regional calendar. Consecutive tournaments of the same grade in the same location (venue and/or nation and/or sub region) will be considered favourably for the benefit of players.
- 2. National, Regional, and Global Pyramid** – The national, regional, and global pyramid will be considered for tournament upgrades or downgrades. As a principle, there should be more tournaments of a lower grade at a national, regional, and global level.

Stage 2: Assessment Measures

The following measures shall be reviewed to assess the draw strength of tournaments and the quality of tournament organisation & delivery. The measures provide an objective comparison amongst other tournaments by grade within the same region for MT100, MT200, and MT400 grades; and a comparison of global tournaments by grade for any existing or potential MT700 and MT1000 tournaments.

Draw Strength (Primary Measures)

1. **ITF Ranking**– A calculation of the ranking points amongst those who competed in the maindraw of the tournament in the previous two editions of the event. The ranking of players at the time of the event shall be used.
2. **ITF World Tennis Number (WTN)** – The WTN's of Main Draw participants at the time of the event shall be reviewed and compared. This will include an average WTN of main draw participants.

Existing 100, 200 and 400 level tournaments will be compared on a national and regional level, where they should be amongst the top 10% amongst tournaments within their current grade to be considered for upgrade. In exceptional cases, existing MT700 may be considered for upgrade to MT1000.

Tournament Organisation & Delivery (Secondary Measures)

Secondary measures will be reviewed in respect of the standard of organisation and delivery. A tournament must score favourably in each of these areas relative to other comparable tournaments:

1. **Player Feedback Survey** - Following each tournament, players are asked to provide feedback on their tournament experience. The results of this survey shall be used to understand the level of player satisfaction regarding the tournament delivery standards.
2. **Administrative & Technical Responsibilities** - National Associations & Tournament Directors must complete all pre-tournament and post-tournament duties accurately and on-time. This includes all administration duties, as well as adherence to the regulations and organisational requirements.

The Tournament Referee report must be completed on time and will be reviewed by the ITF to support the assessment. This Referee report confirms whether the minimum delivery standards were met, and if the tournament over delivered in any area.

Please contact masters@itftennis.com if you have any questions.