

ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors Grading Criteria for 2024

The purpose of this document is to set out the tournament grading structure to be applied to all ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors tournaments taking place from January 2023 and will impact on tournament grading for 2024. Advanced notice is being provided to National Associations and Tournament Organisers to allow for the criteria to be understood in advance of tournaments taking place.

Background & Context

In general, all ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors (WTTJ) tournaments retain the same week in the Calendar from one year to the next unless a week change is requested by the National Association and approved by the ITF. Each tournament 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. The ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors consists of the following grades:



Junior Grand Slams, Youth Olympics and WTT Juniors Finals award points as per the WTTJ Regulations.

Tournament numbers continue to increase from year to year to meet the growing global demand, increasing from 397 tournaments in 2015 to 791 tournaments in 2022. This grading criteria aims to provide a robust, fair, and balanced calendar of tournament opportunities to players on a national, regional, and global level.

Grading Criteria

The ITF Juniors Committee is responsible for the allocation of grades at all ITF World Tennis Tour Juniors tournaments. 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 to support the player pathway from national and regional tournaments as well as supporting the junior rankings.
- Nations are permitted to host up to five (5) J30 tournaments. Nations may apply to host more than five (5) J30 tournaments which will be subject to an ITF review, as outlined below.
- Save for exceptional circumstances, only one J300 or higher tournament per week in a region.
- Save for exceptional circumstances, a maximum of one (1) J300 tournament per nation.
- Save for exceptional circumstances, a maximum of two (2) J200 or higher graded tournaments shall take place in the same week and region, with a reasonable distance between venues.

New Tournaments

New tournaments start at J30. Applications for additional tournaments at J30 level will be reviewed as per the Grading review criteria below, as well as the following:

- Existing tournaments on the calendar in the tournament week(s) applied for;
- Draw occupancy of recent tournaments held in the nation. In most cases, it is expected that all qualifying and main draws achieve full draw occupancy before further tournaments are added.
- ITF ranked and national ranked player base in the host nation
- The demands of the sub-region and region.

In exceptional cases, a nation may apply for a new tournament to begin at J100 or J60 provided the nation has experience hosting ITF WTTJ events, and where the grade is deemed by the ITF to be beneficial to achieve a more optimal, balanced calendar for the nation and region.

Existing Tournament Upgrades

The Juniors department will proactively contact a National Association if an upgrade is applicable. This will be based on an assessment of the measures outlined below (Grading review criteria).

Existing Tournament Downgrades

Tournaments must meet minimum standards of player strength and tournament delivery relative to other tournaments of that grade in the same region. J500, J300, J200 will be compared globally.

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

Grading Review Timeline

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

- January to June tournament grades will be reviewed in July 2023. National Associations will be informed by August 2023 if an upgrade or downgrade is applicable.
- July to December tournament grades will be reviewed in December 2023. National Associations will be informed by January 2024 if an upgrade or downgrade is applicable.

Grading review criteria

Stage 1: Calendar Assessment

The ITF shall firstly consider the existing WTTJ 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 aim to provide an objective comparison amongst other tournaments by grade and region

(global for J500, J300, J200) to indicate whether a tournament is suitable for upgrade or downgrade.

Draw Size & Strength (Primary Measures)

1. **ITF Junior Ranking**– A calculation of the ranking points amongst those who competed in the main draw of the tournament. This includes an assessment of the total ranking points of players who participated, and an average number of ranking points of players who participated.
2. **ITF World Tennis Number (WTN)** – The WTNs of Main Draw participants may be reviewed to support the assessment of draw strength at a tournament.

Main draws must be full at the existing grade awarded, and qualifying draws must achieve a high occupancy level in order for a tournament to be considered for upgrade.

Existing J200 or better tournaments will be compared on a regional and global level, where they should be amongst the top 10% amongst tournaments within their current grade to be considered for upgrade. Exceptions may apply for existing J200 tournaments located in regions that are underrepresented.

J100, J60 and J30 tournaments will be compared amongst tournaments in their own region only (e.g. Asia).

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. **Administrative & Technical Responsibilities** - National Associations & Tournament Directors must complete all pre-tournament and post-tournament duties accurately and by the deadlines provided. This includes all administration duties, as well as adherence to the regulations and organisational requirements.
2. **Player Feedback Survey** - Following each ITF WTT Juniors 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.
3. **Tournament Supervisor Report** – The report must be completed on time and will be reviewed by the Juniors department to support the assessment. This supervisor report helps validate whether delivery standards were met.

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