



# World Armwrestling Federation (WAF) Rules of Armwrestling Sitdown and Standing

*Originated Sept. 1994*

*Revised Oct. 28, 1995; April 1996;*

*August 1997; October 1998; Dec 2, 1999*

*November 2000; November 2001; November 2002;*

*November 2003 (no changes); December 2005; November 2006,  
October 2007; December 2008; September 2009, December 2010*

*January 2012*

## Tables of Contents

### Section 1 – Technical Rules

1.1	Teams .....	4
1.2	Number in a Team .....	4
1.3	Weight Classes .....	4
1.4	Weigh –ins .....	5
1.5	Age Groups .....	5
1.6	Team Points .....	5

### Section 2 – Equipment Specifications

2.1	Table .....	6
2.2	Table Top .....	6
2.3	Elbow Pads .....	6
2.4	Touch Pads .....	6
2.5	Placement .....	6
2.6	Touch Pads .....	6
2.7	Hand Peg .....	6
2.8	Seats .....	7
2.9	Material .....	7
2.10	Chalk Stand .....	7
2.11	Staging .....	7
2.12	Riser Platforms .....	7
2.13	Straps .....	7
2.14	Uniforms .....	7

### Section 3 – Referees

3.1	Director of Referees .....	8
3.2	Director of Referee Training .....	8
3.3	Competition Referee .....	8
3.4	Stand-up Style .....	8

### Section 4 – Protocol

4.1	Rules of the tournament .....	9
4.2	Drug Testing .....	9
4.3	Fines .....	9

# Tables of Contents (continued)

## Section 5 – Competition Rules

5.1	Double Elimination Seeding .....	10
5.2	General Guidelines .....	10
5.3	Setting-up / Start of Match .....	10

## Section 6 – Universal Words .....11

## Section 7 – Warnings .....11

## Section 8 – Fouls

8.1	Fouls .....	12
8.2	Referee Grip .....	12
8.3	Elbow Fouls .....	13
8.4	Slip outs .....	13
8.5	Straps .....	13

# Technical Rules

## Section 1

### 1.1 - Teams

Must be composed of Members of Country represented. If required, a team member or individual may have to produce any document demanded by WAF to establish proof of his/her nationality to so represent his/her Country. The term "team" for all intents and purpose, will mean all of the categories presented, both left and right arm, both female and male. A team trophy will be awarded, based only on total points accumulated for all categories in both genders. Teams can be broken down to determine points by gender, only to establish ranking of female and male teams from each country. Teams can be further broken down to left and right arm categories, again by gender to further establish rankings. Trophies will only be awarded in these categories if the host country wishes, but only with written permission from WAF.

### 1.2 – Number in a Team

Up to two competitors per Country in each right and left arm categories  
This includes Senior, Masters, Grand Masters, Disabled and Youth Divisions. (Grand Master points were added in 2000)

### 1.3 – Weight Classes

#### SENIOR RIGHT & LEFT ARM

**Men:** 0- 55kg, 60kg, 65kg, 70kg, 75kg, 80kg, 85kg, 90kg, 100kg, 110kg, & 110+ kg.

**Woman:** 0-50kg, 55kg, 60kg, 65kg, 70kg, 80kg, and 80+kg.

#### MASTER RIGHT & LEFT ARM – 40 years

**Men:** 0-70kg, 80kg, 90kg, 100kg, and 100+ kg.

**Women:** 0-60kg, 70kg, 80kg, and 80+kg.

#### GRAND MASTER RIGHT & LEFT ARM – 50 years

**Men:** 0-75 kg, 90kg, 100kg, and 100+ kg. (new in 2009)

#### DISABLED RIGHT & LEFT ARM

**Men:** 60 kg, 75 kg, 90 kg, 90+ kg  
**Boys:** 50 kg, 65 g, 80 kg, 80+ kg (new 2010)

**Women:** 0-60kg, 70kg, 80kg, and 80+kg  
**Girls:** 50 kg, 50+ kg (new 2010)

#### YOUTH RIGHT & LEFT ARM

**Boys:** 50 kg, 55 kg, 60 kg, 65 kg, 70 kg, 80 kg, +80 kg

**Girls:** 45 kg, 50 kg, 55 kg, 60 kg, 65 kg, 70 kg, +70 kg (new in 2009)

Many weight class changes took place in 2000. It was voted in 2002 with changes in 2005 to add disabled and youth classes

## 1.4 – Weigh-ins

There is no clothing allowance, therefore weigh ins will be done in the nude if an athlete wishes to qualify for a certain weight class. (Weight has to register to zero, i.e: if 70kg class it will have to zero to 70.0kg). Without prejudice or bias, if an athlete has artificial limbs or limb, they must weigh in with them on if they wish to compete with them on.

- 1.4.1 There will be no dispute regarding procedure during weigh-ins. Weigh-ins will follow registration roster by numerical order, ie: first team to register with WAF General Secretary, will be the first team weighed and so on. The WAF will have the right to disallow entry to any country not meeting WAF requirements or which creates disorder.
- 1.4.2 All weigh-ins to be done on WAF approved scales. Weigh-in will be done no sooner than 24 to 30 hours before the first day of competition start time. All participating referee's are allowed to weigh-in with the Juniors & Masters before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of competition – (Changes in 1999 & 2002)
- 1.4.3 During weigh-in, an athlete may be accompanied by a team official of their own country.
- 1.4.4 More than one official weigh-in scale may be used
- 1.4.5 The Director of weigh-ins is the final authority on all weigh-in procedures.
- 1.4.6 A competitor may weigh-in to their normal weight or jump one weight class higher

## 1.5 – Age Groups, same for both Men and Woman

Please note: Age will be determined by calendar year

**Sub Junior** – 12 years and under  
**Junior** – 18 years and under  
**Senior** – any age above 18 years  
**Masters** – 40 and above  
**Grand Master** – 50 and above

Changes in 2008

- If so required by WAF, proof of age will have to be given by producing a bona fide passport or medical certificate
- If so required by WAF, proof of gender may be required under qualified medical supervision by WAF appointed physicians
- If so require by WAF, proof of disability will have to given by producing a bona fide disability card or medical certificate

## 1.6 – Team Points (change made by electronic Executive vote on March 14, 2012)

**1<sup>st</sup> – 10 points**      **2<sup>nd</sup> - 7 points**      **3<sup>rd</sup> - 5 points**      **4<sup>th</sup> – 4 points**  
**5<sup>th</sup> - 3 points**      **6<sup>th</sup> – 2 points**      **7<sup>th</sup> – 1 point**

- WAF Minor officials are responsible for team point tabulation and break down of rankings in all categories.
- Team points will be counted individually for Senior Classes, Master & Grand Master points, Junior points and Disabled points.

## Section 2 – Equipment Specifications

### 2.1 Table

Sit down: 28" from floor to top of table.

Stand-up: 40" from floor to top of table.

All other specifications are identical for both sit down and stand-up table tops.

### 2.2 Table top

36" across and 26" deep.

Legs will be 28" minimum inside leg and 18" minimum from leg to leg (New 2009)

### 2.3 Elbow Pads

7"x 7" square shape. 2" thick, made of heavy high quality foam material, covered with a vinyl/rexin type cover. The foam and covering can be attached to a 1/8" metal sheet, 7"x 7" with two threaded bolts 1/4" diameter x 1 3/4" long, welded to the bottom to be able and attach your elbow pads to the table top.

A line, either painted, upholstered or taped from hand grip to hand grip to establish center of the table will always be used at WAF tournaments.

### 2.4 Touch Pads

10" long x 4" high. Made of good quality touch pad (changed in 2008)

### 2.5 Placement

Elbow pads should be set 2" from their respective edge.

They should overlap each other by 1/2 to the right of center for a right arm table and overlap each other by 1/2 to the left of center for a left arm table. (changed in 2002)

### 2.6 Touch Pads

Should be on an angle, 5" out from the inside corner of the elbow pad to the inside corner of the pad and 1/2" from its respective edge measured to the outside corner of the pad. Running at an angle towards the hand peg it should measure 2 3/4" from the hand peg to the outside corner of the touch pad.

If it's for a right arm table, these measurements should be made on the left side of the elbow pad and reversed if it's a left arm table.

### 2.7 Hand Pegs

Should be placed midway at 13" on each edge of the table, 1" in from the edge.

The peg itself should be 1" in diameter and 6" high from the table top.

### 2.8 Seats

They should be 18" square and 18" from floor surface to seat top surface. The front edge should be exactly in line with the table edge. The seat and table should be secured to a platform or floor.

## 2.9 Material

The best material to use is square tubing although tubular steel, flat iron or angle iron may be used, but not more than 2" in diameters or width. The table top and seat top are normally made of 3/4" thick plywood.

The table top and seat may have a thin sheet of foam, covered with vinyl/rexin type material to add a comfortable finished look. No plexi-glass or reflective tape is to be used on the table top or seats.

## 2.10 Chalk Stand

A stand suitable for chalk/rosin or stickum should be placed on either side of the table but at a suitable distance away so as not to bother referees or minor officials with the dust floating in the air or with competitors preparing for a match.

## 2.11 Staging

If raised staging is used, hosts are responsible for supplying or installing protective railing around the perimeter, to prevent competitors from accidentally falling off.

Stages should also be planned with the intent to keep non-participants away from the competition table and draw sheet table.

## 2.12 Riser Platforms

Riser platforms can be used by competitors who have a height disadvantage. Riser platforms can be used in combination with platform shoes or multiple platforms, to raise the competitor, to at least bring their waist to the table top. **Competitors can use a personal riser with prior permission of the Head Referee before the start of contest. (2000)**

For consistency and ease of handling reasons, riser platforms will be built of 1/2" thick plywood, 4" high x 36" wide x 32" deep. They will be notched at the top part, as to fit the table legs on each their respective side, to prevent them from slipping out during competition. Approximately 3" from the top, the notches, on either side will be located.

A hand slot will be cut in the center to facilitate the removal and installation of the riser platform.

## 2.13 Straps

When used, they will be of a standard 1" style with a plastic or metal buckle and not of velcro. The straps used by WAF will be 1" inch wide. **(2002)**

## 2.14 Uniforms

**2.14.1** All participants, including athletes and officials, must be familiar with and adhere to the WAF costume code. Each country must be identifiable and each competitor identifiable to its country.

**2.14.2** Only short sleeve or sleeveless shirts & sport pants (no jeans) allowed during competition. Very limited advertising is allowed on shirts only.

**2.14.3** Shoes are required as part of the uniform and to compete in the tournament.

**2.14.4** No competitor may compete out of uniform, no competitor may receive their award out of uniform. If a competitor comes on stage to compete out of uniform they will forfeit that bout. A country without uniform may request in writing before the start of the competition to the Executive Committee for a solution or leniency. **(2001)**

## Section 3 – Referees

### 3.1 Director of Referees

- 3.1.1 is responsible for referee assignments at and during WAF competition.
- 3.1.2 is responsible to supervise the referees during the competition and issue a performance report card at the end of the tournament to each participating referee.
- 3.1.3 is responsible to remove any referee that is deemed irresponsible or technically unfit to referee a WAF tournament.
- 3.1.4 is responsible to bring to the attention of the WAF executive, documented proof of a referee who is to be disciplined for unwarranted behavior or blatant misconduct.
- 3.1.5 is responsible to make certain referees conform to WAF referee dress code at WAF tournaments.
- 3.1.6 Every WAF Master Referee should have the chance to be a candidate for the position of WAF Head Referee (2008)

### 3.2 Director of Referee Training

- 3.2.1 is responsible to assure assigned referees are competent both physically and technical, to referee a WAF tournament.
- 3.2.2 is responsible to implement a short but comprehensive referee clinic with assigned referees prior to the competition.
- 3.2.3 is responsible to oversee a worldwide referee training program, implement the program and to keep current to any changes in rules

### 3.3 Competition Referee

- 3.3.1 is responsible to wear proper WAF dress code for referees which is short sleeve black and white striped shirt, with stripes being 1" wide, black pants, socks and shoes. Individuals name and ranking may be printed on their back. Ranking to appear on right shoulder sleeves, 1" up from cuff.
- 3.3.2 The referee will not be allowed to wear a country flag on his/her shirt (2001)
- 3.3.3 is responsible to know WAF rules thoroughly and to make certain to attend WAF clinics prior to tournaments.
- 3.3.4 is responsible to conduct themselves in an unbiased and professional manner. Referees are not to congratulate individual competitors; they may congratulate both competitors on a match well done.
- 3.3.5 a qualified referee will be allowed to referee on day that they are not pulling. (2001)

### 3.4 Stand up style Referee - Two table top referees will be used:

- 3.4.1 The referee starting the match will be deemed Head referee of that particular match. Assistant referee will watch for elbow fouls at start of match and assist in assuring a fair start. After the match has started, the two referees will watch each their side for fouls or a pin.
- 3.4.2 Once a referee is set at a table, he/she cannot be removed, unless for lack of competence or technical knowledge.



## Section 4 – Protocols

### 4.1 Rules of the Tournament

- 4.1.1 The World Championships will always be hosted the last two weeks of September, this change will take effect in 2012. (2011)
- 4.1.2 Right and Left arm events will be held on separate days
- 4.1.3 Each weight class will be called to the stage when it comes to their turn to compete. They will be accounted for as per draw sheet. Then the matches will begin. A specified area will be secured for the pullers who's class is being run. The officials will send these pullers to this specified area; (2001)
- 4.1.4 Wrist wraps, straps, elbow bandages/supports or cups, protective wraps, rings or bangles are not permitted on arms. **\*An arm is defined as that portion of the body starting from the shoulder and continuing on and ending at the finger tips.**
- 4.1.5 Individuals (unless authorized by the Head referee at a table), may not approach a table to within 20 feet. Strict penalty may be enforced.
- 4.1.6 Points will be deducted from a country's team for breach of discipline or poor sportsmanship.
- 4.1.7 Poor sportsmanship will not be tolerated and it could lead up to and including being barred from the tournament.
- 4.1.8 No challenge matches allowed during or immediately proceeding the competition. No disruption of scheduled proceedings allowed.
- 4.1.9 There will be a \$50 charge to hear a protest. If the protest is UPHeld the \$50 is returned. If the protest is DENIED the \$50 is kept by WAF. (2001)

### 4.2 Drug Testing

Drug testing will be allowed in all World, International, Continental and National Championships, provided they are WAF sanctioned. Complainant will have to deposit required fees in U.S. dollars along with an official letter to be submitted to WAF chairman or standing committee on discipline.

### 4.3 Fines

- 4.3.1 Mobile phones that are switched on during competition or in Congress meetings will be charged a \$10 fine. The Host of the event will be given an exception. Air horns or any such loud instruments will not be allowed in the audience (2001)
- 4.3.2 Any unauthorized competitor or official who come on stage during the event will be charged a \$50 fine. (2001)
- 4.3.3 fee of \$50 will be charged to hear a protest, if your protest is up held the \$50 is returned to the country, if the protest is denied the country loses the \$50. The protest must happen before the next match is started on that table.
- 4.3.4 fine will be charged to competitors, coaches and spectators who use bad language towards the referee's. (2006)

1 <sup>st</sup> Offence	\$100	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offence	\$200
3 <sup>rd</sup> Offence	\$300	6 month suspension for any future offences	

## Section 5 – Competition Rules

### 5.1 Double Elimination Seeding

- 5.1.1 WAF championships will always be double elimination. All contestants must lose twice. No seeding prior to championships. Contestants are placed on draw sheet by luck of the draw. Team members from the same country will not be matched against each other on the first round if possible.

### 5.2 General Guidelines

- 5.2.1 Contestants for each weight class will be announced and they will come to the stage to be verified against the draw sheet.
- 5.2.2 Contestants' names will be called and they have 60 seconds to come to the table. Failure to appear in 60 seconds, they will be given a loss. They will approach the table, shake hands with their opponent, and then take a grip. (2000)
- 5.2.3 Anyone with long hair will have to have their hair restrained in some fashion. Head bands are permitted but not hats.
- 5.2.4 Referees are not there to use force or wrestle with you. A referee will lightly touch competitors hands to see that they are properly aligned, wrists straight and arm centered to the table top.
- 5.2.5 No breaks in contest during or between matches, unless there is equipment failure, draw sheet mistake or authorized by officials.
- 5.2.6 No competitor will be matched twice against the same opponent unless for place standing.
- 5.2.7 The referee's may give a disabled puller some allowances for his handicap. (2000)
- 5.2.8 You can only pin your opponent on the winning side of the table

### 5.3 Setting up / Start of Match

- 5.3.1 The grip is palm to palm, grip at thumb, thumb knuckle must be visible. Gripped hands should be level on a plain at the forefingers. Free hand will grip the hand peg provided at the table edge. This arm may or may not touch the table top. Finger nails should be trimmed so as not to injure your opponent. Stickum/rosin/chalk are permitted.
- 5.3.2 Back pressure to the extent that it pulls your opponents arm across the marked center of the table will not be allowed. This infraction will be deemed the same as a false start.
- 5.2.3 Shoulders will be kept square to the table. They may slope to either side before the start.
- 5.2.4 There will be a hand width between the shoulder and forearm of each competitor as well as between the chin and hand prior to the start.
- 5.3.1 The signal given by the Head Referee is "Ready...Go!" in an unspecified cadence. At the end of the match the referee will say "Stop" and indicate the winner by raising his arm towards him/her. All effort must be made by the referee that the competitors are aware the match is stopped.
- 5.3.2 A pin is when any part of the natural wristline to finger tips, touches or goes below the touch pad.

- 5.3.3 Competitor's legs can be wrapped around the table leg or braced against an opposite table leg prior to the start of the match, providing they are not interfering with their opponent. Feet can be off the ground during competition and legs can be moved in any fashion as long as they don't interfere with their opponent.
- 5.3.4 In the event of an injury during competition, the competitor's name will continue to be brought forward until he/she has fulfilled the two loss commitment. The match that a competitor was injured in will be regarded as a loss.
- 5.3.5 There is no time limit during an actual bout. However, if in the estimation of the Head Referee or a WAF authorized physician, that a competitor is deemed unfit to continue, the match will be stopped.

## Section 6 – Universal Worlds

- Each competitor should know the following words. (2001)

Ready Go	Knuckles	Elbow down	Wrist	Shoulders
Stop	Warning	Winner	Over	Referee Grip
Back	Thumb Down	Don't move	Center	Coincidental - 2006
Grip	Foul	Under	Strap	Dangerous Position (2007)

- The word SHOULDER will be used to describe a dangerous position (2001)

## Section 7 – Warnings

- 7.1 Any early movement with shoulders, arm, hand or fingers will be a **warning** unless competitors are in a referee's grip. Then it would be a foul.
- 7.2 If one competitor is causing a delay "locking up" the referee will give the offender a **warning**.
- 7.3 Letting go of the peg will result in a **warning** being called to the offender, without stopping the match. If an advantage is gained prior to re-gripping the peg, the match will be stopped and the offender will be given a **foul**. Contact with the peg must be above the table. One armed or one hand persons do not have to grip the peg.

## Section 8 – Fouls

**Note:** *Two warnings will equal one foul.  
Two fouls, competitor will lose that particular match.*

### 8.1 Fouls

- 8.1.1 If competitors fail to come to the table in the 60 seconds allotted they will be given a loss. Their name will be dropped to its proper slot, the same as a loss in an actual bout. If they already have a loss they would drop out of the tournament for that particular weight class.
- 8.1.2 Competitor's shoulder must not cross the "centerline" between pegs during competition. This will be a **FOUL**.
- 8.1.3 Competitor cannot touch any part of their body such as chin, shoulder or head. A foul will be given (new in 2008)
- 8.1.4 Intentionally pushing of your own hand into an opponents shoulder will result in you getting a **FOUL**.
- 8.1.5 When a competitor starts to put themselves in a "dangerous position", the referee will caution the competitor loudly so that the competitor understands the caution. Referee will instruct the competitor to face their competitive arm, so as to keep the hand, arm and shoulder in a straight line. Competitors must never force their shoulder inwards, ahead of their arm or hand, towards the table. (2007)
- 8.1.6 Neutral position is from the starting position to 2/3 of the way down to the pad on the losing side of the table (new 2008)
- 8.1.7 30 second rest is permitted after a **FOUL**.
- 8.1.8 Foul language, poor sportsmanship or abuse towards an official will result in a **FOUL**. If it continues, competitor or official will be barred from the tournament.
- 8.1.9 Any foul given when a competitor is more than 2/3 of the way down to the pad is a loss (new 2008)

### 8.2 Referee Grip

- 8.2.1 Competitors have one minute to "Grip Up". If in that time, they have not gripped up, they will be given a "referee's grip". A referees' grip consists of the following procedure
- 8.2.2 Competitors' hands are placed palm to palm by the referee, the thumbs are pushed down by the referee, the fingers are wrapped by the referee, first one competitor, then the other. As they are wrapped referee asks competitor if he/she wants their thumb covered or not. Thumb knuckles will be showing, forefingers level, wrists straight and arms centered. Competitors are not to move from this set up.
- 8.2.3 Examples of movement are fingers re-gripping, back pressure, bending wrists, early start or elbow lifting off the pad.
- 8.2.4 Any movement by any competitor will result in a **foul** being given against the one that moves.

## 8.3 Elbow Fouls

- 8.3.1 A **foul** will be given when a competitor's elbow loses contact with the elbow pad. A competitor is considered to lose contact with the pad when
- 8.3.2 The elbow lifts vertically off the pad, no matter how insignificant, as long as there is clearance between the pad and the elbow. It is not considered an elbow **foul** if the elbow has lifted off the pad, but the competitor still has contact with the elbow pad with their triceps or their forearm.
- 8.3.3 An elbow **foul** will be called if the competitor is riding on their triceps or forearms and the elbow extends beyond any side of the elbow pad.
- 8.3.4 Any foul that occurs simultaneously with a foul by your opponent will be considered coincidental, the march will be stopped and restarted and no foul will be given. (2006)

## 8.4 Slip Outs

**The referee will call one foul for “causing a slip out” when:**

- 8.4.1 You lift your fingers off your opponent's hand prior to a slippage
- 8.4.2 You close your fingers as to make a fist inside your opponent's hand
- 8.4.3 You're in break wrist position and you pull your fingers inside your opponents hand, therefore you are unable to hold your grip.

## 8.5 Straps

- 8.5.1 Straps will be used when any match ends by way of a slip-out **not resulting in a foul**. A slip-out occurs when both competitors have lost complete contact with one another. The official must be certain of the circumstances preceding the actual slip out before calling a foul. If the official is uncertain as to who caused the slippage or it was caused by the actions of both competitors, then straps will be used and no foul will be given.
- 8.5.2 When straps are employed, the officials will ask competitors to place their elbows to the back of their respective elbow pads, place their hands palm to palm, fingers extended and thumbs up. Opposite hand will grip hand peg. In this position the strap can be quickly installed. Only the official can adjust the strap. Competitors may ask to loosen it or move it if it's uncomfortable. The strap cannot be lower than 1" below the natural wrist line.
- 8.5.3 After the strap is installed, competitors may take their grip and place their elbow to their choice of position.
- 8.5.4 If a competitor **intentionally** slips out during the match in a losing position (losing position is determined by being more than 2/3 rd of the way down to the pin pad), the competitor will lose that particular match. Any intentional slip is an automatic **FOUL**. (2007)

2002 – Removed mention of sit-down  
2003 – No rule changes made  
2009 – No rules changes made