1st Malta Open Chess960 Rapid Championship

15 November 2026

Tournament regulations

- Eligibility to play: Open to all players licensed with FIDE
- Eligibility for *Chess960 Malta Champion* title: players meeting all criteria per MCF Statute to play in the national championship – these are reproduced at the end of this document.
- Registration shall be through the form at https://forms.gle/Ap18uLSTArc8C9tZ7 by 15 November 2026 09:30 local time and in person at the venue prior to round 1 between 09:30 and 10:00. Due to logistical reasons, the number of entries is capped at the first 64 to register. Late entries shall be accepted up to before the pairings for the third round are published. By registering to participate in this tournament, players shall be agreeing to this protocol in its entirety.
- Pairing System: 5 rounds, FIDE Swiss Rules - FIDE (Dutch) System, subject to a minimum of 9 entries. Software used: Swiss-Manager.
- Scheduled play: Sunday 15 November 2026, first round starting at 10:00 local time.
- Venue: Malta Chess Federation premises at Skola Medja Prof. Edward de Bono, Kulleġġ San Injazju, Tal-Ħandaq, Ħal Qormi, Malta. 35° 52' 13.7568" N 14° 28' 17.6664" E https://maps.app.goo.gl/wmuLHxd8rxCsFDEt9
- Time control: 15 minutes per player for the entire game with an addition of 5 seconds per move starting from move one (**G/15m+5s**).
- Clocks: DGT 3000 with seconds showing from move 1.
- All games will be internationally rated with FIDE for the Rapid Rating List.
- Played under the FIDE's *Laws of Chess*, including *Guideline II. Chess 960 Rules* and *Appendix A. Rapid chess*; the *Competitive Rules of Play* will not apply unless otherwise announced before the first round. Refer to: FIDE Handbook FIDE Laws of Chess taking effect from 1 January 2023 (https://handbook.fide.com/chapter/E012023)
- General Regulations for Competitions, Tie-Break Regulations, and Ethics & Disciplinary Code shall all apply. The Malta Chess Federation's Code of Ethics shall also apply.

- Default time: **Zero**. A player who is absent without notifying the arbiter shall be considered as withdrawn (to have withdrawn), unless the absence is explained, with acceptable reasons, before the next pairing is published.
- Starting positions: All games started the same time will be played with the same starting position (with a new position being drawn for every subsequent round). All 960 positions are eligible, except for the default starting position (#518). Positions will not be repeated. Players will be able to view the next position three minutes prior to the start of their respective game and are allowed to self-analyse without engine use before the game begins.
- For the final tournament standings, participants shall be ranked in the order specified by the respective tie-break below, starting from the first specified tie-break and moving to the next in the list whenever a persisting tie cannot be broken. When the tie-break list is exhausted, any remaining tie should be broken by the drawing of lots.

  The tiebreaks shall be defined and applied in accordance with FIDE's Playoff and Tie-Break Regulations.

  a. Game points (win = 1 / draw = ½ / loss = 0)
  b. Direct Encounter **(DE)**
  c. Buchholz Cut-1 **(BH-C1)**
  d. Buchholz **(BH)**
  e. Number of Games Played with Black **(BPG)**
  f. Number of Games Won **(WON)**
- Entrance fee: €10 for all players; €5 for U16 and S65+
- Trophies for Top 3, in accordance with tiebreaks. Any prize-monies are split equally between tied players.
- Electronic devices:

  a. During a game, a player is forbidden to have any electronic device not specifically approved by the arbiter in the playing venue. Nevertheless, such devices may be stored in a player's bag, provided the device is completely switched off. This bag must be placed as agreed with the arbiter. Both players are forbidden to use this bag without permission of the arbiter.
  b. If it is evident that a player has such a device on their person in the playing venue, the player shall lose the game. The opponent shall win.
  c. The use of electronic devices is not permitted in the playing area except by the arbiters. This includes spectators and accompanying persons, who shall only be permitted to use their phones in the first 2 minutes to take photos.
  d. Special arrangements may be made for genuine cases such as doctors on-call.

- If a player has to stop taking part or needs to miss a certain round, they shall inform the arbiter so they are not paired (zero-point bye).
- Please keep the club clean. Do not use the paper bins inside the club; there are waste bins just outside the club.
- All participants are to provide valid email and phone contact details at registration.
- Chief Arbiter: IA Noel Grima
- Appeals may only be lodged within two minutes after the end of the last game of the round. The Appeals Committee shall be selected before the first round.
- The organiser reserves the right to resolve any unforeseen situations, ambiguities, or disputes not explicitly covered by these Regulations, provided that any such resolution is consistent with the sporting integrity and objectives of the competition.

Summary of eligibility criteria

Extract from the MCF Statute, Appendix 2

2. Only persons who are
(a) members of the Malta Chess Federation,
(b) registered and licensed as players with FIDE under the Maltese flag,
(c) are Maltese citizens (as defined in Cap. 188 of Maltese law) or who as at 1 January of that year had been ordinarily resident in Malta for a period of at least six years in the preceding eight calendar years can participate in the Open, Women's and Juniors' National chess championships of Malta.
Furthermore, persons who are members of the Malta Chess Federation, and who as at the start of that calendar year (a) were aged less than 14 years, and (b) had been ordinarily resident in Malta for an aggregate period of ***N minus 2*** years ("**minimum residency**") during the preceding ***N*** calendar years ("**lookback period**"), may also participate in the above National chess championships of Malta.
Where N is equal to half the person's youth/cadet age group (i.e. their age at the start of the year, rounded up to the next whole even integer), as follows:

Age group/s	Lookback period N (calendar years)	Minimum residency (years)
U20, U18, U16	8	6
U14	7	5
U12	6	4
U10	5	3
U8	4	2