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The Official FIFA WORLD CUP Qatar2022™

Kids' Fact File

All set for kick-off!

Qatar is preparing to host the planet's biggest football extravaganza – the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. The 64-game competition kicks off on 21 November, with the curtain coming down on the tournament on 18 December. To help you limber up for this global football festival, we bring you the *FIFA World Cup 2022 Kids' Fact File*, which is packed full of everything you need to know about the tournament.

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◀ Defending champions France are considered among the favourites to triumph at Qatar 2022.

Welcome to the FIFA World Cup 2022

Qatar 2022 promises a plentiful supply of superstar talents, amazing goals, memorable matches and much more besides. The action is set to get under way in Group A on 21 November, as the world's leading national teams begin their quest to capture the most prestigious prize in global football. France are bidding to retain the crown they claimed at the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia. A host of other contenders, including Brazil, Argentina, Belgium, Germany, Spain and England, will also be vying for tournament glory.

After being awarded the FIFA World Cup 2022 hosting duties in 2010, Qatar has worked hard to make it a tournament to remember. The beautiful Gulf nation has built breathtaking new stadiums in five cities – the supporters in the stands and the millions watching back home will be treated to a spectacle, with legends including Lionel Messi, Harry Kane, Kylian Mbappé, Neymar and Kevin De Bruyne set to light up the 22nd edition of the FIFA World Cup.

Football fever

Every time the FIFA World Cup rolls around, the passion for the tournament reaches fever pitch. The first edition was held in Uruguay in 1930 and the hosts made home advantage count, overcoming Argentina in the final. Since then, only seven other countries have tasted FIFA World Cup glory. Which team do you think will lift the trophy this time round?

▶ Argentina's Lionel Messi is set to appear in his fifth FIFA World Cup at Qatar 2022.

Every FIFA World Cup final

2018	France 4-2 Croatia
2014	Germany 1-0 Argentina (AET)
2010	Spain 1-0 Netherlands (AET)
2006	Italy 1-1 France*
2002	Brazil 2-0 Germany
1998	France 3-0 Brazil
1994	Brazil 0-0 Italy**
1990	West Germany 1-0 Argentina
1986	Argentina 3-2 West Germany
1982	Italy 3-1 West Germany
1978	Argentina 3-1 Netherlands (AET)
1974	West Germany 2-1 Netherlands
1970	Brazil 4-1 Italy
1966	England 4-2 West Germany (AET)
1962	Brazil 3-1 Czechoslovakia
1958	Brazil 5-2 Sweden
1954	West Germany 3-2 Hungary
1950	Uruguay 2-1 Brazil***
1938	Italy 4-2 Hungary
1934	Italy 2-1 Czechoslovakia (AET)
1930	Uruguay 4-2 Argentina

* Italy won 5-3 on penalties.
** Brazil won 3-2 on penalties.
*** The winners were determined in the final round of games of the second group stage.
AET = after extra time

Qatar 2022 tournament format

On 21 November, the eyes of the world will be on Al Thumama Stadium, where Senegal and the Netherlands will contest the first game of the tournament. As hosts, Qatar qualified automatically for the finals and will feature in the day's second match against Ecuador. The other 31 countries booked their place after getting through a regional qualifying campaign, which for some teams started way back in June 2019.

Group games

The 32 teams have been drawn into eight groups of four. These are lettered from A to H. Four group games will be played on each day up until 2 December. Each team will meet all three opponents in their group. Following these matches, the teams that take the top two spots in their respective group will progress to the knockout stage.

It's a knockout!

The teams that reach the round of 16 face the pressure of knockout games. In this stage, group winners take on the runners-up from another group (see the match schedule on pages 62-63). If the scores are tied after normal time, the teams play 30 minutes of extra time. If that fails to break the deadlock, a penalty shoot-out will decide who goes through. The winners advance to the quarter-finals as they bid to reach the semi-finals and ultimately book their spot in the final, to be played on 18 December. The two beaten semi-finalists will contest the third-place play-off on 17 December.

▼ Germany celebrate winning their fourth World Cup title after beating Argentina 1-0 at Brazil 2014.

The ultimate prize

The national teams will battle it out across 64 games in a bid to get their hands on the FIFA World Cup Trophy. This iconic prize stands 36.8cm tall and weighs a little over 6kg. On 18 December, the winning captain will have the honour of lifting it first, sparking joyous celebrations with his team and fans!

Original trophy

The Jules Rimet Trophy was awarded to the countries that won the editions played between 1930 and 1970. When Brazil claimed the title for a third time in 1970, they were allowed to keep the trophy permanently. Sadly, it was stolen in 1983 and never seen again.

Group A

THE NETHERLANDS

Leading the Netherlands into a FIFA World Cup for the second time in his career, the experienced Louis van Gaal has plenty of stars to choose from, such as Virgil van Dijk and Georginio Wijnaldum, while Davy Klaassen was in top form in qualifying, chipping in with four goals and assists apiece. The Netherlands are likely to set up in a 4-3-3 system, with Wijnaldum, Steven Bergwijn and Klaassen almost certain to be tasked with supporting Memphis Depay in attack. Van Gaal's side will be itching to show what they are capable of on the world stage.

3

The Netherlands finished third at the 2014 FIFA World Cup, their last appearance at the finals.

TEAM GUIDE

Captain: Virgil van Dijk
Coach: Louis van Gaal
Route to Qatar: winners, UEFA Group G
Previous appearances: 10
Best finish: runners-up (2010, 1978, 1974)

Players to watch

Virgil van Dijk: imposing centre-back
Georginio Wijnaldum: goalscoring midfielder
Memphis Depay: prolific in front of goal

▲ Van Dijk has captained the Netherlands since 2018.

Georginio Wijnaldum netted 26 goals in his first 85 international appearances.

Group B

ENGLAND

Having reached the semi-finals of the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia and contested the UEFA EURO 2020 final, the *Three Lions* head to Qatar brimming with confidence. Coach Gareth Southgate prefers a 4-2-3-1 system, with Harry Kane spearheading the attack and the likes of Raheem Sterling, Jack Grealish and Mason Mount in support. Declan Rice has become a key player in the holding midfield role and with talented youngsters such as Jude Bellingham and Jadon Sancho in their ranks, England are sure to keep fans on the edge of their seats.

0

England did not lose any games in qualifying for Qatar. Their last defeat in a FIFA World Cup qualifier was in 2009.

TEAM GUIDE

Captain: Harry Kane
Coach: Gareth Southgate
Route to Qatar: winners, UEFA Group I
Previous appearances: 15
Best finish: winners (1966)

Players to watch

Harry Kane: lethal finisher
Jack Grealish: exciting playmaker
Harry Maguire: defensive leader

▲ Grealish scored his first England goal in the 5-0 FIFA World Cup qualifying win away to Andorra in October 2021.

Harry Kane first wore the captain's armband for the national side in June 2017.

FIFA World Cup player watch:
FORWARDS

LIONEL MESSI

Country: Argentina ◆ **Club:** Paris Saint-Germain
Date of birth: 24 June 1987

160 caps 81 goals

The sight of Argentina's legendary no. 10 slaloming his way past defenders with the ball glued to his feet before slotting home another glorious goal is one we have become used to over the past two decades. At 35, this could well be Lionel Messi's final shot at glory on the world stage. He scored the opening goal in Argentina's qualifying campaign, against Ecuador, before claiming the match ball in the 3-0 win over Bolivia. He also led from the front as *La Albiceleste* secured a goalless draw against Brazil to book their place in the tournament. Now it is time to sit back and enjoy Messi's magic!

6
Messi has netted six times at FIFA World Cups.

Am

ROMELU LUKAKU

Country: Belgium ◆ **Club:** Chelsea
Date of birth: 13 May 1993

101 caps 68 goals

As incredible as it may seem, Romelu Lukaku has indeed notched 68 goals in just over a century of appearances for Belgium. However, his goalscoring exploits are perhaps not all that surprising considering he has the likes of Kevin De Bruyne, Eden Hazard and Axel Witsel on hand to provide the ammunition. And when given a chance in the box, the powerful Chelsea hitman usually finds the back of the net. Lukaku struck five times in just four qualifying games and if he can beat his four-goal haul from Russia 2018, Belgium have a good chance of progressing to the latter stages in Qatar.

KYLIAN MBAPPÉ

Country: France ◆ **Club:** Paris Saint-Germain
Date of birth: 20 December 1998

54 caps 26 goals

Kylian Mbappé scored five times in six appearances to help France qualify for Qatar. But there is so much more to his game than goals. The striking sensation works incredibly hard in attacking areas, where he uses his electric pace and intricate footwork to pull defenders out of position and fashion goalscoring opportunities. Mbappé has already written his name into FIFA World Cup folklore following his performances in *Les Bleus*' run to glory in 2018. He is now a more accomplished forward and primed to make an even bigger impact. Let the show begin.

NEYMAR

Country: Brazil ◆ **Club:** Paris Saint-Germain
Date of birth: 5 February 1992

117 caps 71 goals

At Qatar 2022, Neymar is set to spearhead Brazil's attack for the third time at a FIFA World Cup. He was a pivotal figure for his country on the road to the tournament, having netted in qualifiers against Paraguay, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay and Chile, and will be itching to add to his six-goal tally on the world's biggest stage. As a leading light for one of the tournament's favourites, Neymar will be under pressure to deliver in Qatar. Fortunately, he has all the tools to handle big occasions and would even appear to thrive on the expectation levels.