FRAMEFIGHT

Rulebook

Version 1.16 · as of 15 November 2026

This document sums up how Framefight works today: how an arena runs, how voting and scoring work, how ranks, seasons and awards are earned, and what happens when someone breaks the rules.

How to read this. Everything without a remark is in place and running on the site. Points marked **“still open”** or **“not built yet”** have been discussed but not yet decided or implemented; they are collected in chapter 13.

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1 Principles

- **Only the picture wins.** Every photo gets the same chance to be shown. Names stay hidden while an arena runs.
- **Nothing can be bought.** No boosts, no paid advantages, no paid photo swap. You earn visibility only by voting yourself.
- **Every vote comes from a person.** The photographers themselves do the voting.
- **What you have earned stays.** A rank or a stage never drops. Only the season rings start again.
- **Relative measures.** Points and norms depend on shares of the field (for example the best 10 %), not on absolute numbers, so they stay equally hard however large the platform becomes.

2 The arena: rhythm and schedule

Rhythm

- From **Monday to Saturday** one arena starts every day at **18:00 Swiss time**. Sunday is the quiet day.
- Every arena runs for **exactly 7 days** and ends on the same weekday at 18:00.
- With every start slot filled, **6 arenas are always running**, and there is a final on six evenings a week.
- In the admin area the **agenda** shows the start slots of the coming three weeks. The aim: 6 running arenas and the next 8 slots planned.
- Arenas outside this grid are possible (1 to 14 days) but should remain the exception.

Schedule of a 7-day arena

Phase	When	What happens
Qualifying	From the start until 24 hours before the end (6 days)	Enter photos, vote in duels. Every photo has a rating that goes up or down with each duel.
Cut	24 hours before the end (18:00 the day before)	The best 32 photos by rating go into the knockout — 16, 8 or 4 in smaller fields. No new photos from now on.
Knockout	The last 24 hours	Photos meet in pairs, the top seed against the lowest. The draw is set like a tennis draw: the best photo of qualifying stands at the very top, the second best at the very bottom, so the best ones can only meet late. The places after qualifying stay hidden while the knockout runs, so nobody is biased; once the arena has ended they stand in brackets next to each photo in the bracket. The photo with more votes in its match goes through. With 32 photos: five rounds of just under 5 hours. Every round costs exposure, see chapter 5.
End	18:00	Final ranking, names become visible, winner and podium are told.

Arenas shorter than three days play the knockout in the last 12 hours.

3 Taking part

- **One photo per arena** and member. You can enter during the whole qualifying.
- **Entering early:** the next **four planned arenas** already take photos before they start. Such a photo waits; nobody sees it and no duel is played before the arena opens. Entering early brings no advantage and no disadvantage. Arenas planned further ahead open for photos once they are among the next four.

- The photo must be **your own** and measure at least **1,600 pixels** on the long side. From a phone, pictures from **1,100 pixels** are accepted with a warning: a low resolution looks less sharp in the duels and can cost places. Larger pictures are reduced to 3,000 pixels at most. Formats: JPG, PNG, WebP, HEIC.
- The photo must be **unpublished**: it may not be on your wall or in your gallery. That way nobody can recognise a photo.
- **Arena stock (private):** every member has a stock of pictures only they can see. It has nothing to do with the gallery, which is the member's public photo page. Arena pictures are kept there and entered with one click; a photo uploaded directly on the arena page is put into the arena stock as well.
- **The career of a picture:** a picture can be in **one arena at a time** and in at most **50 arenas** in its life. A picture that **wins an arena** is done: it moves to the gallery with everything it has won. So does a picture after its 50th arena. Until then it stays private; its owner can publish it at any time, after which it cannot enter arenas any more.
- **Records:** the page “Records” lists the public pictures with the most badges (one badge per stage reached, per arena).
- **Anonymity:** while the arena runs, nobody sees whose photo it is. Names appear only after the end.
- **Camera data** (camera, lens, exposure) is shown with the photo. **Location data (GPS) is always removed.**
- **Portrait format:** upright pictures are stored upright. In duels, in the knockout, in the standings and on the results page they are shown whole; only small preview tiles show a cut-out.
- Your followers' feeds and your own wall show “X entered the … Arena” — with the arena's cover, not with the photo.
- Every running or coming arena has a personal **invite link**. Whoever joins through it lands in that arena and follows the inviter.

Swapping the photo

- The photo you entered can be swapped **once per arena**.
- Only **during qualifying**; when the knockout starts, swapping is closed.
- The new photo **starts at zero**: rating 1000, no duels, no showings. Opponents who won or lost against the old photo keep their points.
- Swapping is free.

4 Voting

- You see **two photos without names** and pick the stronger one. The chosen one gets a green thumbs-up, the other a red thumbs-down.
- You never see **your own photo**, and you cannot vote in your own knockout match.
- In qualifying you see the same pair only once. In the knockout you have one vote per match.
- **Vote weight:** if you often vote the way the final result confirms, your vote counts more. The weight lies between 0.5 and 1.5; new members start at 1.

Protection against clicking through

- **Look time:** for the first 1.2 seconds both photos are locked.
- **Votes that come too fast do not count:** a vote less than 0.9 seconds after the pair was shown is not counted.
- **Pause:** whoever clicks almost instantly, or always picks the same side, in at least 16 of the last 20 votes (within 30 minutes) is paused from voting for 10 minutes, with an explanation.

These thresholds are a first setting and will be reviewed in operation.

Prophet: points for picking the winner

- **A score of its own for voters.** A pick is right when the picture you chose wins. Prophet points **count for the ranks**: from rank 2 on every rank asks for a number of them (chapter 7). They do not count for the season rings; Prophets have season and all-time tables of their own.
- **Qualifying:** a pick is right when your picture ends the arena better placed than the other one. **1 point**. Counted when the arena ends.
- **Knockout:** a pick is right when your picture wins the duel. **5 points** in the round of 32, **10** in the round of 16, **15** in the quarter-finals, **20** in the last four, **30** in the final. Counted when the round closes; duels decided by a forfeit or a disqualification give nothing.
- **Prophet of the Arena:** whoever collected the most Prophet points in one arena.
- **The Prophet** is a challenge trophy. It belongs to the voter with the most Prophet points of the **last 30 days** (at least 20). After every arena it is checked: a challenger takes it only with **10 % more points** than the holder.
- The profile shows the points and, from 50 picks on, the share of right picks. The page “Prophets” shows the ranking of the last 30 days and the line of all holders.
- When a knockout starts, everyone who entered the arena is told, and the holder and the strongest challenger learn how close the race is.

Test arenas and test players earn no Prophet points.

5 Exposure: the tank

How often your photo is shown to others depends on how much you vote yourself. It works like a tank, and **every arena has its own tank**:

- When you enter an arena, its tank starts with **10 showings**.
- Every vote you cast **in that arena** adds **2 showings** to its tank.
- Every time your photo is shown in a duel there uses **1 showing**.
- At **40** the tank counts as full. When it is **empty**, your photo in that arena is paused: it is shown to nobody until you vote there again.
- **Nothing left to judge:** if a member has judged every pair there is in an arena, the meter shows full and the photo is not paused; it counts again as soon as new duels are possible.
- Votes in one arena do not fill the tank of another. The start page shows one meter per arena you are in, and every arena card carries its own meter.
- There is **no fixed interval** (“every 8 hours”). How fast the tank drains depends on how many people are voting.

State	Shown on the start page	Meaning
Green	“All good”	Tank well filled, nothing to do.
Amber	“Running low”	Below a quarter, vote soon.
Red	“Paused — vote!”	Tank empty, the photo is out of the duels of that arena.

The tank in the knockout

- In the knockout all qualified photos are in their match; showings cost nothing there. Instead, **every knockout round costs 8 exposure**, taken when the round closes.
- Whoever then has **less than 8** in the tank **is out**, and the opponent goes through, whatever the votes say. If both have too little, the votes decide.
- A **full tank (40)** pays for all five rounds. That is 20 votes.
- You can fill the arena's tank **in advance, all week**. So only those who vote can win — but nobody has to be present on the day of the final.

- The panel “Where you stand” shows how many rounds your tank lasts. When the knockout starts, everyone in the field is told.

The cost is taken when the round is closed, that is on the first page view after the round has ended. Test players in test arenas are exempt.

6 Scoring

- **Rating:** every photo starts at 1000. A win raises the rating, a defeat lowers it; a win against a higher-rated photo counts more (Elo method). The voter's weight is included.
- **Knockout match:** the photo with the higher sum of weighted votes wins. On a tie the better-seeded photo goes through.
- **Final ranking:** place 1 is the winner of the final. Behind it, what counts is how far a photo got in the knockout, then the rating. All other photos follow by rating.
- **Standings during the arena:** there is no public ranking, so nobody votes with the crowd. Only the owner sees, in the panel “Where you stand”, their place, their duels and, in the knockout, the score of their own match. Vote counts in the bracket appear only when a round is over.
- **Winner's prize:** CHF 10 plus CHF 2.50 per 1,000 participants, at most CHF 60 per arena.
- **Celebration:** the winner and places 2 and 3 see a one-time window with confetti on their next visit; the winner gets fireworks as well.

Stages of a placement (for ranks and awards): Winner, Final Four, Knockout, Final Round (best 200), Second Round (best 10 %), Top 30 %, Top 50 %. For ranks, the stages from the Second Round upwards (also Final Round, Knockout, Final Four and Winner) count only in arenas with 1,000 or more participants; taking part, Top 30 % and Top 50 % always count. This limit does not apply to season points, awards or the ranking of an arena.

7 Ranks and stages

There are eleven ranks. For each one, all the listed conditions must be met, together with those of the ranks before. “Elo” here means the member's Elo Rating (see below). For the rank, the highest value ever reached counts. From rank 2 on, every rank also asks for **Prophet points**: the points a member earns for right picks when voting (see the section on the Prophet). They are booked when a round or an arena is counted. A good eye therefore counts for the rank just like good photos; the plain number of votes no longer does, except for the first rank.

No.	Rank	Conditions
1	Tai Chi Player	1 arena · 30 votes
2	Capoeirista	Elo 500 · 3 arenas · 300 Prophet points
3	Judoka	Elo 700 · 10 arenas · 1× Top 50 % · 1,500 Prophet points
4	Taekwondoin	Elo 900 · 3× Top 30 % · 5,000 Prophet points
5	Karateka	Elo 1100 · 1× Second Round · 10,000 Prophet points
6	Wing Chun Fighter	Elo 1300 · 3× Second Round · 10 duel wins in a row · 20,000 Prophet points
7	Ninja	Elo 1500 · 1× Final Round · 3 shuriken · 35,000 Prophet points
8	K-1 Fighter	Elo 1700 · Final Round in 3 different genres · 55,000 Prophet points
9	Nak Muay	Elo 1900 · 1× Knockout · 8× Final Round · 80,000 Prophet points
10	Shaolin Monk	Elo 2100 · 10× Knockout · 3× Final Four · member for 36 months · 130,000 Prophet points
11	Photo Sumo	Elo 2300 · 1 arena win, achieved after reaching rank 10

The Elo Rating of a photographer

- The Elo Rating **belongs to the member** and travels from arena to arena, like a chess rating from tournament to tournament. Every member **starts at 300**; nobody falls below 300.
- Inside an arena nothing changes: every photo starts with a photo rating of 1000, and the duels and the knockout decide the places (chapter 6).
- When an arena ends, every entrant gets a **performance number**: P = A + 600 × z. **z** says how much of the field the photo beat: the place becomes the share 1 − (place − 0.5) / entrants, and that share becomes a normal score, capped at ±2.6 (the middle of the field is 0, the best of 100 about +2.6). **A** is the strength of the field: 1300 + half of (the median Elo Rating of the experienced entrants − 1300). Experienced means at least 5 rated arenas; with fewer than 3 experienced entrants A is 1300.
- The rating then moves **one step toward the performance number**: new rating = old rating + α × (P − old rating), never below 300. α is 1 / (rated arenas so far + 10), but at least 0.05. So the start value of 300 weighs like ten arenas, the first arenas move the rating most, and later each arena moves it by a twentieth of the gap.
- **Counted** is every arena with at least 2 placed photos, however small. **Not counted:** an arena with a single photo, test arenas, and disqualified photos. If a photo is disqualified after an arena has ended, the ratings are worked out again from all results.
- The profile shows today's value, the change over the last seven days and the highest value reached. The all-time table on the Season page and the world place on the profile go by today's value.

Shuriken (rank 7) come from the “Dojo Challenges”, which are not built yet. Until then rank 7 cannot be reached; see chapter 13.

Three stages per rank

- **Stage I** carries the rank's name, e.g. “Ninja”: rank freshly reached.
- **Stage II “Master”:** at least 50 % of the way to the next rank.
- **Stage III “Elite”:** at least 75 % of the way, and all conditions of the next rank met but one.
- The first rank drops the word “Player” in its stages: Tai Chi Player, Tai Chi Master, Tai Chi Elite.
- The way is the average of all conditions of the next rank, each capped at 100 %.
- Special case Shaolin Monk: Master from 5, Elite from 8 Final Four appearances. Photo Sumo has no stages but the Sumo titles.
- On the badge, one to three white stripes show the stage.

Sumo titles (beyond Photo Sumo)

Title	Condition
Komusubi	1 arena win
Sekiwake	3 wins
Ozeki	6 wins, 1 of them a Grand Basho
Yokozuna	10 wins, 2 of them a Grand Basho

The Grand Basho (season final, four times a year) is not built yet.

8 Seasons and rings

- A **season** is a calendar quarter (starting 1 January, 1 April, 1 July, 1 October). An arena belongs to the season in which it ends.
- There are **five rings**: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, Champions. Everyone starts in Bronze.
- **At the end of a season** the best 30 % of the active members of each ring move up, the weakest 20 % move down. Whoever does not play at all in a season drops one ring (never below Bronze). Then everyone starts again at zero points.

- Whoever had points receives a **season band** for the profile, e.g. “2026 · Season 4 · Bronze Ring · place 3 of 240”.

Season points per arena

For	Points	Condition
Placement	up to 100, relative to the size of the field (the middle of the field is about 50)	always
Win	+100	arena with at least 2 photos
Final Four	+50	arena with at least 16 photos
Top 32	+25	arena with at least 128 photos

The **best 12 arenas** of a season count. Playing well beats playing a lot.

9 Awards

There are 33 awards in eight groups. Most have the tiers bronze, silver, gold and platinum; a tier once reached stays. You hold each award once: doing the same thing more often lifts it to the next tier. Every member can show three favourite medals on the profile. The “Awards” page has leaderboards, worldwide and by country.

Group	Award	For	Tiers
Community	Crowd	Followers on your profile	10 / 100 / 500 / 1,000
	Recruiter	People you invited who joined	1 / 5 / 10 / 25
	Talent Scout	Followed someone before they won an arena	1 / 3 / 10 / 25
	Explorer	Followed photographers from different countries	5 / 15 / 30
Voting	Voter	Votes cast	100 / 1,000 / 10,000 / 100,000
	Sharp Eye	Agreement with the final result in % (from 500 judged votes)	75 / 80 / 85 / 90
	On Fire	Days in a row with at least one vote	7 / 30 / 100 / 365
	Full Month	Months in which you voted in every arena that ended	1 / 3 / 6 / 12
	Prophet of the Arena	Best at picking the winners in an arena	1 / 3 / 10 / 25
	Final Judge	Voted in every round of a knockout	1 / 5 / 20 / 50
	Perfect Bracket	Picked every single duel of a knockout right	once (platinum)
Arena	First Step	Entered your first arena	1
	Climber	Placed in the best 10 %	1 / 5 / 10 / 25
	Knockout	Reached the knockout	1 / 5 / 10 / 25
	Final Four	Among the last four	1 / 3 / 10 / 25
	Champion	Won an arena	1 / 3 / 10 / 25
	Giant Killer	Beat a photo rated 100+ higher in the knockout	1 / 5 / 10 / 25

Group	Award	For	Tiers
	Comeback	Lower half after day 1, in the knockout at the end	1 / 3 / 5 / 10
	All-Rounder	Top 30 % in different genres	3 / 5 / 8 / 10
	Unstoppable	Duel wins in a row	10 / 25 / 50 / 100
Likes	Loved	Hearts on all your pictures	1,000 / 10,000 / 100,000 / 1 million
	Crowd Favourite	Hearts on a single picture	500 / 5,000 / 50,000 / 250,000
	Picture of the Week	Most-liked new picture of a week	1 / 5 / 10 / 25
	Conversation Starter	Comments from different people on one picture	25 / 100 / 500 / 2,000
Camera	Small Camera, Big Win	Reached the knockout with a phone photo	1 / 3 / 10
	Old Love	Top 30 % with a camera more than 10 years old	1 / 5 / 10
	Prime Time	Top 30 % with the same prime lens	10 / 25 / 50
Loyalty	Pioneer	One of the first 1,000 members	once (platinum)
	Beta Tester	Joined during the beta and voted or entered an arena	once (gold)
	Veteran	Years as a member	1 / 2 / 5 / 10
	Best in Country	Best of your country in an arena (from 3 entrants of that country)	1 / 5 / 10 / 25
Wall	Storyteller	Pictures posted on your wall	10 / 50 / 100 / 500
	Curator	Gallery filled with 12 pictures	once (silver)
Secret	Midnight Voter and two more	Revealed only when earned	once (gold)

Not evaluated yet (“Coming soon”): Comeback, Old Love and the two further secret awards.

- **Picture of the Week:** Every wall or gallery picture has exactly 7 days from its upload to collect hearts; later hearts do not count here. A week runs from Monday to Sunday (Swiss time). The winner of a week is the picture whose 7 days ended in that week and that got the most hearts from other members in its 7 days. It needs at least 5 hearts; with equal hearts both pictures win. A week is settled once, after it has ended; after that the winner does not change. A picture can win only once. The newest winner is shown on the home page.
- **Beta Tester:** test arenas count here, unlike for every other award (chapter 12).

10 Community and privacy

- **Wall and gallery:** every member can post pictures with a short text and keep a gallery. Arena photos appear there once their picture is public (see chapter 3). The gallery can be sorted: newest, oldest, best results, most liked.
- **Feed:** shows, from the members you follow, new wall pictures, arena entries, arena results, rank-ups, awards, and new profile pictures and banners.
- **Likes and comments:** there is only the heart. Arena photos can be liked and commented on only after the arena has ended.

- **Settings:** quiet mode (no contact), who may follow and comment, whether you appear in search and whether your activity shows in other people's feeds.
- **Public** are your name, rank, awards, country, profile and published pictures. Your email address is never visible.
- **Names** cannot be changed, so results stay traceable.
- **Supporters:** members can help to pay for the servers. There are three badges (Supporter, Kung Fu Supporter, Super Supporter), for a one-time or a regular contribution. A badge runs for the time the contribution covers; afterwards the grey badge “Former Supporter” stays on the profile. Supporting changes nothing in the game: no exposure, no vote weight, no rank.
- **Language:** during the beta the site is in English only. Other languages are prepared and follow after the beta. This rulebook is also available in German.
- **Deleting your account:** any time, yourself, in the settings. Profile, pictures, comments, likes and personal data are removed at once. Finished arenas keep an anonymous entry without name or picture.

11 Fair play and moderation

What is not allowed

- Uploading photos that are not your own.
- Offensive, violent or sexual content.
- Harassment, hate, spam or advertising.
- Political or religious statements, election or campaign messages. Framefight is about photography only: wall posts, captions, comments and profile texts stay on photo topics. Documentary and reportage pictures are welcome; using a picture or its text to campaign is not.
- Clicking through the voting without looking at the photos (see chapter 4).

What is done about it

- **Reporting:** next to every picture, every comment, on every profile and below every duel there is a report link. Reports are confidential; the reported person never learns who reported. A person checks every report.
- **Removing:** comments and wall or gallery pictures can be deleted by admins.
- **Disqualifying:** an arena photo can be taken out of its arena. In a running arena it no longer appears and loses its knockout match; in a finished one it loses its place, everyone behind moves up, and if it was the winner, the runner-up becomes the winner. The owner is told the reason.
- **Suspending:** for 1, 7, 30 or 90 days or permanently, always with a reason. Suspended members cannot sign in and do not appear in search, leaderboards, feeds and duels. Nothing is deleted; after the suspension everything is back.
- Every moderation step is logged with date and admin.

Roles

	Owner	Admin
Plan arenas, suspend members, handle reports, disqualify photos	yes	yes
Create password links	yes, for everyone	yes, but not for owners or other admins
Give and take admin rights	yes	no
Can be suspended	no	only after the admin rights have been taken away

12 Test arenas

- Admins can start test arenas with 8 to 48 test players, let the test players vote and jump through the phases at the push of a button.
- Test arenas are visible to everyone and marked “Test”; real members can take part.
- **Nothing from a test arena counts** for ranks, awards, the season or the feed. The only exception is the award “Beta Tester”.
- One click removes all test arenas and test players again, including the photos entered there.

13 Open points

These points are **not** part of the rules in force. They have been discussed but not yet decided or built.

- **Tank in the knockout:** the strict variant (out with an empty tank) and the cost of 8 per round are set but not yet proven in operation. The milder variant (your own votes count half) remains an alternative.
- **Length of the knockout:** 24 hours are set. 48 hours remain an option if too few people vote in single rounds.
- **Length of an arena:** 7 days are set but not yet proven in operation.
- **Dojo Challenges and shuriken:** not built yet; rank 7 (Ninja) requires 3 shuriken.
- **Grand Basho:** the season final as an arena of its own is still missing; the titles Ozeki and Yokozuna require it.
- **Ring quotas and season points** (30 % up, 20 % down) are a first setting and have not been simulated over several years.
- **Thresholds against clicking through** (1.2 seconds, 16 of 20, 10 minutes), the size of the tank (40) and its start value per arena (10) will be reviewed in operation.
- **Arena norms from 1,000 participants:** as long as arenas are smaller, ranks from Karateka (rank 5) cannot be reached, and an arena win does not count towards Photo Sumo. A decision is needed for the start-up phase.
- **Automatic emails** (password reset, email confirmation) are prepared but not switched on yet.
- **Legal texts** (Privacy, Imprint) are drafts and should be checked before the public launch.