

Women's World Cup

The Women's World Cup is an international football competition. It has been held every four years since it was officially **established** in 1991 and the competition sees national teams compete against each other for championship status.

Unofficial Beginnings



Despite the recent creation of the Women's World Cup, women's football has been attracting crowds of **spectators** and fans for over 100 years. Many popular women's football teams provided much-loved entertainment throughout the World Wars. However, in 1921, the Football Association announced that football as a sport was 'quite unsuitable for females'. They said that it 'ought not to be encouraged' and banned women from playing matches in the grounds of Football Association registered clubs.

This ban was finally lifted in 1971 and the first unofficial Women's World Cup was held in Mexico. This competition saw six national teams competing against each other in three groups. Although Mexico, Argentina, England, Denmark, France and Italy all competed for the prize, only the game between France and Denmark was officially recognised as an international women's football match. Even then, this recognition was only given after the match had already been completed.

Establishing the Women's World Cup

















Finally, in 1988, a **trial** women's football competition was hosted in China. Twelve international teams competed for the prize and, after a nail-biting penalty shootout to decide third place, the competition was deemed a huge success. The first official Women's World Cup was held in China three years later.

Held in Guangdong from 16th to 30th November 1991, the first official Women's World Cup saw twelve teams divided into three groups of four. The top two teams and the two best third-place finishers from the three groups advanced to the knockout round of eight teams. This eventually saw the United States beat Norway in front of a roaring crowd of 65,000 spectators.



Subsequent Competitions

Since 1991, there have been many Women's World Cup tournaments hosted around the world. Another competition has been scheduled for 2023.

1995		1999		2003		2007	
							
Held in Sweden	Won by Norway	Held in the USA	Won by the USA	Held in the USA	Won by Germany	Held in China	Won by Germany
2011		2015		2019		2023	
							
Held in Germany	Won by Japan	Held in Canada	Won by the USA	Held in France	Won by the USA	The competition will be held in Australia and New Zealand.	

Awards and Prizes

The ultimate prize awarded to the winning team at each Women's World Cup is a **prestigious** trophy. Made from bronze, gold, polished aluminium and granite, each trophy weighs 4.6kg and stands at 47cm tall. The design of the trophy is a spiral band which wraps around a football at the top. Beneath the base of the trophy, the name of the winner is **engraved**.

As well as a trophy awarded to the overall winner, there are six smaller prizes to be won at the Women's World Cup:

- the **Golden Ball** is awarded to the best player;
- the **Golden Boot** is awarded to the top goalscorer;
- the **Golden Glove** is awarded to the best goalkeeper;
- the **Best Young Player Award** is given to the best player under 21 years of age;
- the **Fair Play Award** is given to the team with the best record of playing fairly;
- the honour of being part of an **All-Star Team** is given to the best players from the tournament.



Glossary

engraved: To cut or carve something onto a hard surface.

established: Created or set up.

prestigious: Something which is respected and admired.

spectators: People who watch a show, game or event.

trial: A test of something.

