

**FIRST** 2026  
**CHAMPIONSHIP**

**FIRST<sup>®</sup> LEGO<sup>®</sup> LEAGUE  
CHALLENGE ADDENDUM**

**4.8.26**

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## About FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge

### Overview

Teams of students ages 9-16 engage in research, problem-solving, coding and engineering – building and programming a LEGO® robot that navigates the missions of the UNEARTHED™ Robot Game. 160 teams will present their findings at the FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge World Festival located in **the Level 3 Ballroom**.

### UNEARTHED™ Challenge

In the 2025-2026 UNEARTHED™ challenge, FIRST® LEGO® League students uncovered the past to discover the future and identified and researched a problem related to the season theme. They also identified a mission strategy and designed, created, and coded a robot to complete missions during a 2.5-minute Robot Game.

## Awards and Ceremonies

**Date: Saturday, May 2, 12:45pm**

**Location: General Assembly, Level 3**

We encourage all teams to attend the Awards Ceremony – trophies will be presented, and we'll celebrate teams' accomplishments from the event. After the awards ceremony, teams will get to take a closer look at the Founders and Future Edition fields.

## Coaches' Meeting

**Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2:30 pm – 3:30 pm**

**Location: General Assembly, Level 3**

Make sure that at least one of your team's coaches is on-site and available to attend the Coaches' Meeting. This is your opportunity to hear about important procedures and timelines, and it gives you the opportunity to ask questions. Don't miss this important meeting!

Join us for an essential pre-event **Coach Webinar on April 14 at 8 pm** to get the latest updates and key details. This webinar will cover everything you need to know, including event expectations, venue details, judging, the robot game, and much more. Don't miss this chance to prepare your team for an unforgettable experience!

## Family Engagement Zone

**Date: Thursday, April 30 - Friday, May 1**

**Location: Pre-Function Area, Level 3**

Participate in LEGO® mural making, building challenges, and more from 10:00 am-4:00 pm. Adult supervision required. No food or drink is allowed in the Family Engagement Zone.

## FIRST® LEGO® League Future Edition Showcase

**Date: Saturday, May 2, 9:30-10:30 am**

**Location: General Assembly, Level 3**

Four teams from around the world will showcase the Future Edition experience. Watch teams play in matches and learn about their Projects while getting to see what Future Edition will look like. A recording of the showcase will be available on the *FIRST* LEGO League social media channels later in May for those who weren't in attendance.

## Judging

Each team will attend a single 30-minute judging session in a private judging room. During this session, teams will be evaluated in all judged areas: Innovation Project, Robot Design, and Core Values. Judges will use the *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge [Judging Rubrics](#).

### Judging Requirements:

- All team members must attend the judging session together. In addition to the team members, 2 adult coaches, up to 2 spectators, and 1 translator are permitted to attend the judging session.
- Presentations must be in English and must be facilitated live by the team. Fully pre-recorded video presentations are not permitted without a live component.
- Translators are welcomed and encouraged to assist teams that do not speak English with communicating with the judges during the question-and-answer portions of the judging session.
- All presentation materials brought into the judging room must be taken with the team when they leave. The team can refer to these materials as aids during their presentations, but judges will not have time to look at any materials after the team leaves.

### Judging Room Setup:

- The judging room will have a table for judges and two small tables for teams to set up their materials – otherwise,

- the space will be open. Chairs are available for up to 2 spectators and 2 adult coaches.
- Projectors and screens will not be provided in judging rooms. Teams will be required to provide all support equipment if they need to display a presentation (i.e., a PowerPoint Presentation on a laptop screen). A power source will not be provided in the judging room, so plan accordingly.
- Video recording of the judging session is allowed but must be done from the spectator seating area.
- The judges will be seated facing the entrance at a table with a device to submit rubric scores. Teams and spectators should not walk behind the judging table for any reason.

## Judging Session Flow:

The judging session will follow the [Judging Session Flow Chart](#) for a single 30-minute session. Teams should practice their presentations in advance to fit within the allotted time for each, as extra time may not be given.

Teams should bring all materials needed with them to the judging session. Teams may show any equipment (including the robot and attachments) and documentation with judges to help them complete the rubric.

If time permits, judges will try to observe a robot game match for all teams they saw during judging. They are there to cheer on and support the teams while they compete; their observations will not impact the teams' rubric scores.

## Awards:

The [FIRST LEGO League Awards](#) and allocation process will be used at World Festival, including all Required and Optional Awards.

There will be two additional awards at World Festival:

- Gracious Professionalism® Award** (teams will be nominated by the referees)
- Coopertition® Award** (teams will be nominated by Pit Admin, Pit volunteers, and Practice Table volunteers)

The Champion's Award will be determined by equally weighing team ranks in the four core areas (Core Values, Innovation Project, Robot Design, and Robot Performance) at 25% each. *Gracious Professionalism®* scores from each of the official Robot Game matches will contribute to a team's Core Values score and rank.

The Peer Award and Coach/Mentor Awards are determined based on nominations that are reviewed by judges and Judge Advisors. Teams can submit a maximum of one Peer Award form (nominating another team) and one Coach/Mentor Award form (nominating any coach or mentor). Nomination forms will be available at Pit Administration and should be returned by 12:00 ET Friday for consideration.

## Load-in/Set up

**Date: Wednesday, April 29, 11:00 am – 3:30 pm**

**Location: General Assembly, Level 3**

- Teams will be asked to load-in by 3:30 pm and set up their team pit space by 4:30pm. The pit is where your team will spend most of its time. It is the area where you can showcase your team, relax between your scheduled events, practice with your robot, and most importantly, get to know other *FIRST LEGO League* teams from all over the world!
- Your team will be assigned to an 8-foot x 8-foot (2.4 meters x 2.4 meters) space which will be your home at the World Festival. Each space will have one standard-sized table and two chairs. Short pipes and drapes will frame the space on three sides, but any decorations you bring must be supported with a structure you bring or create. You may decorate it in a way to showcase your country, state, your Innovation Project, and/or your unique and fun team identity.

### **We encourage you to be creative, but please consider the following limitations and restrictions:**

- Decorate within your pit space. Also, consider 10 feet (3 meters) as a height limit. For safety reasons, your decorations must remain within this space. **10-foot x 10-foot tents are not allowed due to the size of the pit spaces.**
- You will have access to 1, 120-volt electrical outlet. We encourage you to bring an extension cord and a power strip for you to plug in multiple devices simultaneously.
- Please do NOT bring or use helium balloons or open flames. No team should cook or prepare food in the pit area.

## Load-out

**Date: Friday, May 1**

**Location: Grand Ballroom, Level 3**

We ask that all teams load-out and remove all items from their pits by 5:00 pm on Friday.

## Match Queuing

**Fifteen (15) minutes before their scheduled match, teams will “check-in” at the match check-in station in the Ballroom, located at the end of the Pits.**

- Teams should not proceed directly to the General Assembly room.
- It's important for the entire team to be present at the Ballroom check-in station by the Arrival Time. Teams will wait in the designated queuing area until escorted over in a group to the competition floor in the General Assembly room.
- Teams who are not present at the Ballroom queue station when the group leaves for their match will likely forfeit that match.
- Team "buttons". Each team member, each coach, and each match spectator - must be wearing a round Team Button to enter the queue and have access to the competition floor. All others wishing to observe the matches must do so via the main seating in the General Assembly room.

## Robot Game

Each team will be scheduled for six total Robot Game matches at World Festival: (3) practice matches on Thursday, and (3) official matches on Friday. All matches will be scored by referees and scores will be published on the Event Hub for teams to see. Only the score from each team's highest scoring official match on Friday will count toward awards.

### Match Timing:

Robot Game matches follow a strict schedule to ensure all teams compete in three practice matches and three official matches. Teams should practice all aspects of the match, from set up to removal of team equipment, to ensure matches begin on time.

Each match will follow the approximate timing below:

- 1 minute for teams to prepare for the equipment inspection
- 1-2 minutes to set up after inspection is complete (**IMPORTANT:** if the team takes longer than this, there is a chance that the match may start before they are ready)
- 2.5 minutes to play the match
- 1-2 minutes for scoring
- 1 minute to remove team equipment

Teams should arrive at the queuing area in the Team Pits at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled match. Queuers will then direct teams when to leave for the competition area.

### Match Scoring:

Two team members and one translator, if required, should review the team's score with the referee. Teams should decide which team members will review the score sheet prior to the start of the match. Once scoring is complete, teams should move off the fields promptly to allow the table to be reset for the next match.

### Robot Game Clarifications:

Referees will score teams according to the most recent version of the *Challenge Updates*. Teams are expected to understand all updates. Reminders will be shared in an email to teams, as well as at the Coaches Meeting on Wednesday.

If a team has questions about the Challenge Updates or wants to clarify how their specific approach to a mission might be scored, we strongly encourage them to email [flwff@firstinspires.org](mailto:flwff@firstinspires.org) to consult with the Head Referees before arriving in Houston.

### Team Areas & Storage at the Field:

World Festival has specific requirements for where teams may station their people and equipment during matches. These requirements are for safety and fairness due to the size of the Robot Competition Area and the number of teams competing at one time.

- All team members and at least one adult coach must be present at each official match. Team members who are not playing a technician role for a given match are still expected to attend and may stand in the designated team area.
- Each field will have a space marked on the floor that will be at least 66 sq. feet/6 sq. meters. Except for the four technicians; all team members, coaches with coach buttons, and spectators with spectator buttons must stay within the team area during the match. There will be a space marked near the end of the field for a team photographer (photographer must have a button).
- All team equipment must be stored in the two home areas or in the hands of the technicians at the table. Teams may not hand anything to the team members not at the table and nothing can be stored on the floor at any time (*Robot Game Rulebook Before the Match - Match Setup*).
- We recommend that teams bring a container or small cart to carry the robot and team equipment to the table. Once at the table, teams should unpack all necessary items from the container/cart and put them on the table. The container/cart must then be stored in the team area and cannot be used by the team during the match.

## Practice Rounds

### Practice Tables:

- There are several practice tables set up for optional use by teams on Thursday & Friday in **Room 342ABDE**, Level 3.
- Teams can choose to utilize these practice tables by "signing up" for time slots on a first-come, first-served basis beginning on Thursday. Only badged team members/coaches will be able to sign up.
- Practice tables are monitored only for time; teams are expected to keep the tables and mission models in proper shape.
- Laptops/tablets/cables are allowed in the practice table area.
- Entry is restricted to badged team members, 2 coaches, and either 1 translator or 1 spectator. Additional visitors will be allowed based on available space.

### Practice Matches:

There are three scheduled practice matches on Thursday for each team in the **General Assembly**. While not required for score ranking, every team is highly encouraged to attend each of their practice matches.

These dress rehearsal practice matches are held on the actual competition tables. Matches are queued, inspected, timed, and scored by referees – just like the full competition will occur on Friday. At the end of the day, scores from practice matches are reset.

## Schedule

<b>Wednesday, April 29</b>			
11:00 AM	4:30 PM	<i>FIRST</i> LEGO League Pits Open	Grand Ballroom, Level 3
11:00 AM	3:00 PM	Challenge Team Check-in, Badging and Load-in	Grand Ballroom, Level 3
2:30 PM	3:30 PM	Challenge Team Coaches Meeting	General Assembly, Level 3

<b>Thursday, April 30</b>			
7:00 AM	5:00 PM	<i>FIRST</i> LEGO League Pits Open	Grand Ballroom, Level 3
7:30 AM	11:00 AM	Challenge Practice Tables Open (Sign-up at Tables)	342ABDE, Level 3
9:00 AM	4:45 PM	Challenge Team Judging Sessions	Level 3
9:00 AM	12:00 PM	Challenge Robot Practice Rounds	General Assembly, Level 3
10:00 AM	4:00 PM	Family Engagement Zone Activities Open	Grand Ballroom, Level 3
12:00 PM	4:30 PM	Challenge Practice Tables Open	342ABDE, Level 3

1:30 PM	4:45 PM	Challenge Robot Practice Rounds	General Assembly, Level 3
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<b>Friday, May 1</b>			
7:00 AM	4:30 PM	FIRST LEGO League Pits Open	Grand Ballroom, Level 3
7:30 AM	11:00 AM	Challenge Practice Tables Open (Sign-up at Tables)	342ABDE, Level 3
8:00 AM	12:45 PM	Challenge Team Judging Sessions	Level 3
8:00 AM	12:00 PM	Challenge Robot Game Rounds	General Assembly, Level 3
10:00 AM	4:00 PM	Family Engagement Zone Activities Open	Grand Ballroom, Level 3
1:00 PM	3:30 PM	Challenge Practice Tables Open	342ABDE, Level 3
12:30 PM	3:30 PM	Challenge Robot Game Rounds	General Assembly, Level 3
3:00 PM	5:00 PM	Team Load-Out	Grand Ballroom, Level 3

<b>Saturday, May 2</b>			
9:30 AM	10:30 PM	FIRST LEGO League Future Edition Showcase Event	General Assembly, Level 3
12:45 PM	1:30 PM	FIRST LEGO League Explore and Challenge Ceremony	General Assembly, Level 3
1:30 PM	3:00 PM	Challenge Awards Ceremony / 2026-2027 Game Reveal	General Assembly, Level 3

Visit the *FIRST*® Championship App, [website](#), or Pit Admin for a detailed schedule of events.

## Team Check-in

**Date: Wednesday, April 29, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm**

**Location: Grand Ballroom, Level 3**

Team check-in will take place in the Grand Ballroom, on level 3, starting at 11 am.

- Teams will pick up their pre-printed badges at the satellite badging station next to Pit Admin in the Grand Ballroom, which is open 11 am - 3 pm. The Main Contact listed on the registration should receive an email containing a bar code one week prior to the event. The Main Contact can scan the barcode in the email or search for their team-by-team number/name.
- Teams will also check-in at the Pit Admin desk to receive a team packet with detailed information about the event, including your individualized schedule.

An adult coach will need to check in on behalf of the team. The rest of the team may proceed to their pit and begin setting up. Please make sure that an adult always accompanies team members.

### Your team will receive the following at check-in:

**Team Buttons:** You will receive 10 team buttons (1 for each team member). Additionally, you will receive 2 coach buttons, 2 spectator buttons, and if you are traveling with a translator, you'll receive 1 translator button. Team buttons must always be visible. Coaches have full access to team-only areas. Up to 2 spectators may join the team in judging (the coaches and spectators may not switch out and must stay with the team for all three judging sessions), and 2 spectators may join the team to access the team-only area of the robot competition. The team pit area is not restricted and is open to the public.

**NOTE:** At least one adult coach is required to always supervise the team during the event.

**Schedule of Events:** Your team will be provided with information about the overall event, including a competition schedule.

## World Festival Team Number

Teams are assigned a special team number for the World Festival, which is different from the team number assigned in your country. The World Festival team number will be used throughout the event and on the event schedule. Teams will receive their World Festival team numbers about a week before the event.