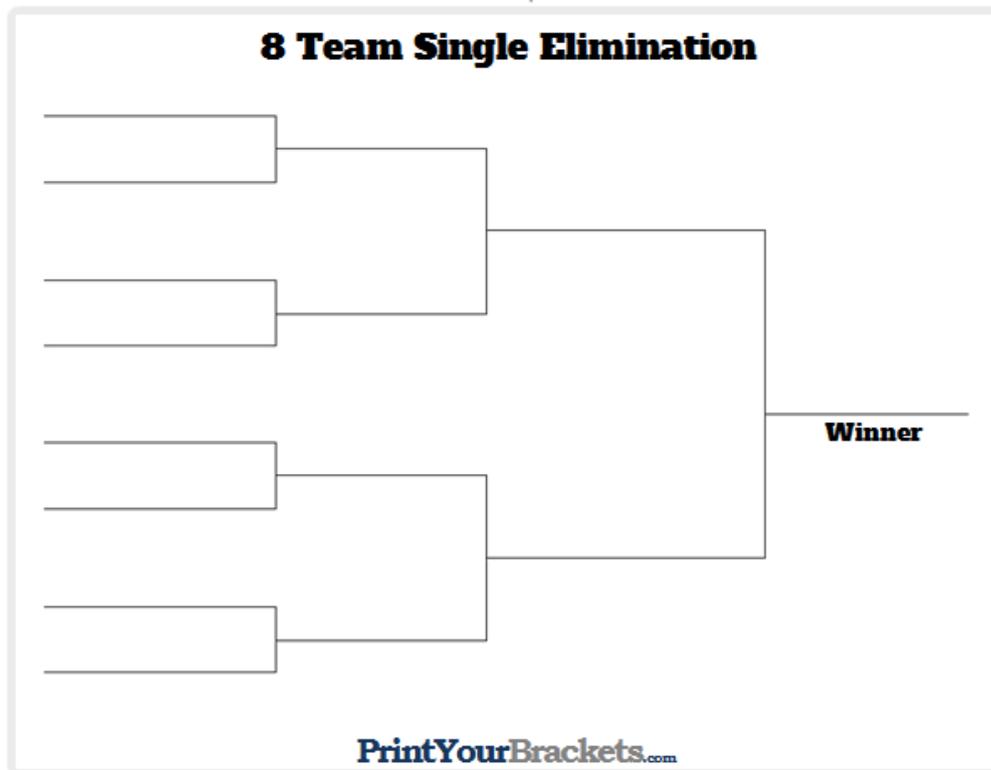


## It's a knockout

Compared to a melee where individuals are mixed up in every round a team competition has teams that stay together through a number of rounds. These can be Pairs or Triples. It's good because you can usually choose your partner so you'll pick someone you get on with who complements your skills and you'll play better than with a stranger.

So you choose a knockout competition. You need reasonable numbers here. With only 4 teams it's better to run a mini league and all have 3 games. With 6 teams you can play 3 matches and best 4 results go to semi-finals with 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> playing off for a wooden spoon. Once you get to 8 teams a KO works fine. 5 and 7 teams are problematic and need convoluted systems. If you don't like problematic competitions don't run them. Advertise your event and limit numbers to 8 teams. First come first served. Keep a reserve list in case of dropouts. Use your random draw mechanism to draw the games and it should run like clockwork.



This 8 team KO scoresheet is at <https://www.printyourbrackets.com/pdfbrackets/8-single-no-numbers.pdf> As well as this 8 team format they can provide many more. And for free. A great resource.

Knockouts also work well with 16 or 32 teams etc but a number outside this range means you have to do extra work. One way is to have a preliminary round to reduce the entries to the best 8 or 16 or 32 to fit the pattern. A preliminary round works by every team playing a game and the best 8 or 16 etc moving to the main competition. Even numbers of teams works nicely but with an odd number of teams it also brings in the concept of a bye whereby one team has no opposition but is credited with a win (usually 13-7) For example with 25 teams there are 13 games (including 1 team playing a bye) and the best 16 progress (the 13 winners and 3 best losers) with 9 going out. With 11 teams there are 6 games (including 1 team playing a bye) and the best 8 progress.

A 16 team competition has the right numbers and produces a main competition of 4 rounds and a consolation of 3 rounds. 4 teams play 2 games, 8 teams play 3 games and 4 teams play 4 games. Could fit in a long summer afternoon. A 32 team competition also works well but will probably need a whole day.

There's a unique solution for 12 teams whereby you play 6 matches then rank the teams in order. Top 4 move to semi-finals in the Gold KO, Next 4 to Silver KO and last 4 to Bronze KO. This can also work with 24 teams. These systems resemble a barrage format which is used to sort a large number of teams into different level competitions.

Big problem though with standard knockouts is that after one round half the teams are out and after two rounds 75% of the teams are no longer in with a shout. If people have set aside a day or an afternoon they were probably hoping for at least 3 games to get their money's worth and will understandably be unhappy at their early exit. But there is a way round this - run a double elimination style competition. Once the Preliminary round or first round is over those teams who are out move to another competition often called a Consolage or Consolante where a fresh draw is made and runs alongside the main competition. Those who don't make the cut play in a second competition. If you lose in the first round of both competitions your day is over. Players in this category can play a social game.

Another style is a modified rolling knockout. Your next round opponent is programmed in and all teams play the same number of games. A first round loser can't win this competition but could come 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is downloadable from a regional website which has many good examples of competition formats. It's 8 teams only but if you have 16 teams run 2 alongside each other with a final to finish it off.

<https://www.northernpetanque.co.uk/example%20paperwork/modified%20rolling%20knockout%20for%208%20teams.pdf>

### 8 TEAM ROLLING KNOCKOUT

			PLACINGS
1	WINNER OF GAME 1	WINNER OF GAME 5	1
	WINNER OF GAME 2	WINNER OF GAME 6	2
2	WINNER OF GAME 3	LOSER OF GAME 5	3
	WINNER OF GAME 4	LOSER OF GAME 6	4
3	LOSER OF GAME 1	WINNER OF GAME 7	5
	LOSER OF GAME 2	WINNER OF GAME 8	6
4	LOSER OF GAME 3	LOSER OF GAME 7	7
	LOSER OF GAME 4	LOSER OF GAME 8	8

So have a go but don't forget those who lose their first round. Find a way to give them a good afternoon's entertainment despite their disappointment at losing early. Knockouts with nice powers of 2 are easy to run. Odd numbers can be handled but it's far better to nudge people into evens or powers of 2.

Knock yourself out!