



JCC Maccabi Games Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are The JCC Maccabi Games®?

The JCC Maccabi Games are an international athletic competition for Jewish teenagers run much like the Olympics. Athletes compete against Jewish teens from all over the United States as well as delegations from Israel, Great Britain, Mexico, Canada, and more. The Games are played with a focus on “rachmanus” or sportsmanship with the intent to foster long-lasting friendships, memories and connection to Judaism and Israel.

This unique event is not only about being a part of the Jewish people; it comes with a mission—to make the world a better place and to make ourselves better people. We express these values or midot to help us remember the greater mission of the Games and Judaism. We emphasize Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), Kavod (respect), Rina (joy), Ga’ava (pride), Lev Tov (big hearted), and Amiut Yehudit (Jewish peoplehood). The Games also promote community involvement, and teamwork.

The Games are one of the largest Jewish teen events in the world; each summer over 3,000 Jewish teens participate. Over 100,000 teens have benefited from the JCC Maccabi Games since 1982.

Highlights include:

- Olympic-style sport competitions, including opening and closing ceremonies, and a tribute to the Munich 11
- Home hospitality with local Jewish host families
- JCC Cares community service projects
- Hangtime programming with Israeli schlichim
- Evening social events

JCC Maccabi Access is for athletes with cognitive and developmental disabilities who will be competing in their own tournament parallel to the Games athletes.

2. Who is eligible to participate in the JCC Maccabi Games?

a. Jewish teens between the ages of 12-16 as of July 31, 2024.

b. All athletes must be Jewish, which is defined as follows: One of the athlete’s parents is Jewish and the athlete is being raised Jewish or is a Jew by choice and is being raised Jewish. In the spirit of the Games, if the parent or child does not believe that they are Jewish on a year-round basis, then the child should not participate in JCC Maccabi. In the athlete online registration, there is a declaration that contains the eligibility requirements; both the athlete and his/her parent(s) must sign this declaration.

c. All athletes must have current medical insurance and up to date on all age-appropriate vaccines.

3. What sports are offered?

Baseball, Basketball, Bowling, Dance, Girls Volleyball, Flag Football, Soccer, Tennis, Swimming, Star Reporter

4. What is the athletic competition like?

The competitive level of the participants will vary. There are teens that are elite athletes and then those that are there for the experience, the level of play is very diverse. Some of the sports will have different divisions based on skill levels. Throughout the week, players can expect to play at least four games/matches before tournament play begins on Wednesday. Gold, silver, and bronze medals are awarded to the top three winners. Although it is competitive the JCC Maccabi Games emphasize the Rachmanus Rule, which is good sportsmanship and fair play. The experience is about more than just sports. It focuses on an all-around experience including friends, community service, social and educational activities.

5. What is a delegation?

Teens from across North American participate in JCC Maccabi representing their 'local' delegation. Typically, this is the delegation representing their home city/local JCC for example Team Atlanta, Team Philadelphia, Team Toronto etc. We are Team Austin.

6. What is a mixed team?

A mixed team is comprised of athletes from multiple delegations. This is common and happens when a delegation does not have enough athletes to field a full team. Being on a mixed team can be a great experience and foster lasting friendships with Jewish teens around the world!

7. How does community service play a role in JCC Maccabi?

Community Service is a key component to the JCC Maccabi Games experience. Each set of Games includes a JCC Cares project where athletes step away from competition and workshops for a part of their day and work to improve the local community, through activities like planting a community garden, bowling with adults with special needs, or doing art projects one-on-one with children from underserved communities.

8. How will my child get to and from the Games?

Parents will be responsible for bringing their teens to/ from the JCC where they will meet the Delegation Head and coaches who will accompany the delegation for the week. We will travel as a delegation by coach bus to Houston.



9. What does the fee include?

JCC Maccabi is an all-inclusive experience. Program fees include Games registration fees, transportation to and from the host community and during the Games, uniform, Team Austin swag, adult supervision and coaches, practices, meals, social events/team activities, and all other accommodations throughout the program.

10. Are there scholarships available?

Financial assistance is available on a first come first served basis and is not guaranteed. We recommend applying as early as possible!

The deadline to apply is March 1, 2024. Applications will be reviewed in the order in which they are received. Any application sent after the deadline may still be reviewed but is subject to availability of funds.

Your child must be registered for the JCC Maccabi Games, and all fees due to date paid, for your application to be considered complete. Please email Janet Schreffler (Janet.Schreffler@shalomaustin.org) when your FACTS application is complete. Allow 2-3 weeks after the deadline to receive your determination. You will be notified by email when a determination has been reached.

To submit a confidential financial assistance application, please [click here](#). Select Camp and note Maccabi Games in the Comments section.

(You will see a notice to contact Shalom Austin before applying. If you have received this email, you may disregard the notice.)

11. What does registration entail?

Registration includes submitting the 2024 JCC Maccabi Interest Form and the 2024 JCC Maccabi Daxko registration. There is no deposit to register, and the first payment is due January 1. Payments are due on the first of each month, January – May. Each payment is non-refundable. Alternative payment plans can be set up with the approval of Athletic Director.

Additional registration steps are required at later dates including medical forms, and online registration, roommate requests etc.

12. Are there adult chaperones at JCC Maccabi?

Of course! There is a mandatory ratio of 1:8 adults to teens. Every athlete is assigned to a coach/chaperone whether they are on a team sport, individual sport, or a mixed team with a



coach from another delegation. Head coaches are all over 21 and have passed extensive background checks.

13. Where will my teen stay?

In **Houston**, the week of JCC Maccabi (Sunday-Friday), all teens will stay with a host family. Host families are Jewish homes that are part of their greater JCC communities. Host families are background checked, screened, and required to attend a mandatory orientation. Vaccines will be required for all members of a host family who will be age eligible to receive it. The home hospitality experience is an important part of the Games experience. We are very gracious to these host families as they serve as interim parents for the week transporting the teens to and from JCC Maccabi, provide breakfast, laundry, and give your teen an unforgettable home hospitality experience. Many teens will stay in touch with host families for years to come!

Teens can request specific homes that meet their needs such as dietary restrictions and pet allergies. Teens can also request a specific roommate. Participants may not arrange their own housing unless approved and discussed by their Delegation Head.

14. Can you tell me about security at JCC Maccabi?

Security is taken very seriously at the JCC Maccabi Games. Background checks are utilized for all adults involved and all participants, spectators, coaches, host families, volunteers, etc. are required to wear a credential to access any JCC Maccabi facility. The host community also works closely with local, state, and federal law enforcement to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

15. Our family keeps kosher and is observant – will my teen's needs be met at JCC Maccabi?

Yes, all food served at the JCC Maccabi Games is kosher and all activities will conclude prior to Shabbat. Delegations will return home on Friday with plenty of time before Shabbat.

16. Can I use my son or daughter's school or camp medical form for JCC Maccabi?

No. Maccabi Central will only accept the JCC Maccabi Medical Form.

17. What vaccines are required for athletes?

All athletes must be up to date on all vaccinations recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics in order to participate in the JCC Maccabi Games. Athletes will have to show proof of vaccinations in CampDoc. Required vaccinations are:

- Tetanus Booster (Tdap)
- Meningococcal (MenHibrix or Menactra or Menveo)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis A (HepA)



- Hepatitis B (HepB)
- Polio (IPV)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox)

18. What happens if there is a medical emergency?

In the case of a medical emergency, the Delegation Head will act as the participant's guardian and will communicate with the parents to get any treatment necessary. Information such as the parent/guardian's birth date and social security number is sometimes necessary to utilize insurance.

19. Can parents be spectators at the JCC Maccabi Games?

Yes! Parents, family members, and friends are welcome to attend the Games as spectators. A spectator pass gives access to the opening ceremony and sport events. No one will be admitted to a Games site who is not wearing an approved credential. To register as a spectator, you will use the same website as when registering your teen. Please note registration and fee deadlines, be aware of early bird prices.

While we encourage families to consider attending to support their teens, the athletes have programs and activities going on for the entirety of their time at the Games and thus only see visitor's courtside at sporting events. At no point during the week can spectators or parents remove the teens from the program or take them off-site for any reason.