



Brazil World Cup 2026 Squad: Neymar's Return Leads Ancelotti's Seleção to North America

Description

Carlo Ancelotti has named his **Brazil World Cup 2026 squad** and the 26-man selection has sent shockwaves through world football. Headlined by the comeback of Neymar, the continued brilliance of VinÍcius JÃnior and Raphinha, and a Premier League-heavy supporting cast, the SeleÃ§Ã£o arrive at the North American tournament as genuine contenders to end a 24-year wait for the *hexa*.

Brazil World Cup 2026 Squad: The Neymar Comeback

The defining headline from Ancelotti's announcement delivered at Rio de Janeiro's Museum of Tomorrow on 18 May was the inclusion of Neymar. The 34-year-old Santos striker, Brazil's all-time leading scorer with 79 international goals, has battled back from the ACL injury he suffered in October 2023 and worked his way back to form in the Brazilian Serie A.

"We evaluated Neymar throughout the year and noticed that recently he has been playing consistently and has improved his physical condition," Ancelotti explained at the announcement event. This will be Neymar's fourth World Cup appearance. If fit and in rhythm, he could be decisive in knockout rounds the stage where Brazil have historically needed moments of individual magic from their best player.

His inclusion is a gamble, but it is a calculated one. Ancelotti, who managed Neymar at PSG, knows exactly what he is getting. A fit Neymar changes games. An unfit Neymar drains resources. The hope is that Brazil's pre-tournament preparation has given him the minutes he needs to peak at exactly the right moment.



The Seleção in pre-tournament training at Granja Comary, Teresópolis. Source: CBF Confederação Brasileira de Futebol official website (cbf.com.br)

Vinicius, Raphinha and Brazil's Fearsome Attack

Even without Neymar, Brazil's forward line would be the envy of most nations. VinÍcius JÃnior (Real Madrid) is arguably the most dangerous wide forward in world football - his pace, directness, and composure in big moments make him Brazil's most important player. Alongside him, Raphinha (Barcelona) provides creativity, relentless pressing, and a decisive left foot that he used to spectacular effect throughout the club season.

At centre-forward, Ancelotti has genuine options. Matheus Cunha (Manchester United) brings physicality and directness; Endrick (Lyon) supplies youthful energy and clever movement; Gabriel Martinelli (Arsenal) and Igor Thiago (Brentford) add depth. Luiz Henrique (Zenit St Petersburg) and Rayan (Bournemouth) are among the more surprising inclusions, though both showed consistent form throughout South American qualifying.

The Spine: Alisson, Marquinhos, Casemiro, GuimarÃes

Brazil's strength lies not just in the attack. In goal, Alisson Becker (Liverpool) remains among the world's finest shot-stoppers - calm, commanding, and capable of match-saving moments under pressure.

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Marquinhos, PSG captain and the cornerstone of Brazil's defence at the 2026 World Cup. Source: Paris Saint-Germain official website (psg.fr)

Marquinhos (PSG) captains the defensive unit and brings the experience and composure of a decade at the top of European football. Gabriel Magalhães (Arsenal) offers physical presence alongside him. In midfield, Casemiro (Manchester United) provides the defensive anchor, reading danger before it develops. Bruno Guimarães (Newcastle United) is the engine of the side - dynamic, box-to-box, and increasingly one of the best central midfielders in world football. Lucas Paquetá (Flamengo) adds creativity in the more advanced central role.

Brazil's Group Stage and the Road to the Hexa

Brazil are placed in Group C and open their campaign on 13 June against Morocco at MetLife Stadium in New Jersey - a tricky opener against a physical, well-organised North African side. Haiti follow in Philadelphia on 19 June before a group finale against Scotland in Miami on 24 June.

The squad gathered at Granja Comary in Teresópolis on 27 May for their pre-tournament camp before a farewell friendly against Panama at the Maracanã on 31 May. They flew to the United States on 1 June with a final preparatory match against Egypt in Cleveland on 6 June.

The last time Brazil won the World Cup was 2002. Twenty-four years on, a new generation dreams of the *hexa* - a sixth world title. With Ancelotti's tactical acumen and a squad capable of beating anyone on their day, this could finally be Brazil's year.

For more on the 2026 World Cup, read our coverage of [Germany 4-0 Finland: Die Mannschaft Head To North America Ready To Conquer World Cup 2026](#), [South Korea World Cup 2026 Squad: Son Heung-min Leads Taegeuk Warriors](#) and visit our [Sports section](#).

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