

France World Cup 2026 Squad: MbappÃ© Leads as Deschamps Signs Off with His Final Chapter

Description

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Didier Deschamps has unveiled his 26-man France World Cup 2026 squad, naming Kylian MbappÃ© as captain for what will be the departing coachâ??s swansong tournament. Announced on 14 May live on French national television, the France World Cup 2026 squad confirms Les Bleusâ?? intent to challenge for a third world title when the tournament kicks off across North America on 11 June. FIFAâ??s world number one ranked side enter as genuine contenders.

France World Cup 2026 Squad: The Galaxy of Talent Deschamps Has Named

MbappÃ© leads a squad that, on paper, is one of the most talented at any World Cup in recent memory. The Real Madrid forward enters the tournament as Franceâ??s all-time record scorer, with 56 goals from 96 appearances, and carries the weight of a nationâ??s expectations on his shoulders. Alongside him, Deschamps has assembled a breathtaking forward line: Ballon dâ??Or holder Ousmane DembÃ©lÃ©, Bradley Barcola, Michael Olise, Marcus Thuram, DÃ©sirÃ© DouÃ©, Rayan Cherki, Maghnes Akliouche and Jean-Philippe Mateta â?? nine forwards competing for essentially three starting positions.



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The midfield is anchored by the seemingly indestructible Nâ??Golo KantÃ©, now with Al-Ittihad in the Saudi Pro League but no less vital to Deschampsâ?? system. AurÃ©lien TchouamÃ©ni, Adrien Rabiot and Warren ZaÃ¯re-Ã?mery provide energy and range alongside him, with Manu KonÃ© completing the

midfield options. Defensively, Arsenalâ??s William Saliba and Barcelonaâ??s Jules KoundÃ© anchor a back line featuring Ibrahima KonatÃ©, Dayot Upamecano, the Hernandez brothers Lucas and ThÃ©o, and Malo Gusto. Mike Maignan is the undisputed first choice in goal, supported by Brice Samba and Robin Risser.

The squad collectively carries 763 international caps â?? an average of over 29 per player â?? and contains four 2018 World Cup winners in Lucas Hernandez, Nâ??Golo KantÃ©, Ousmane DembÃ©lÃ© and MbappÃ© himself, as well as six Paris 2024 Olympic silver medallists. The experience and quality are undeniable. Eight Ligue 1 players, seven from the Premier League, four from Serie A and three from La Liga round out a cosmopolitan group.

Notable Omissions: Griezmann, Camavinga and Kolo Muani

The most consequential absence requires no announcement to explain. Antoine Griezmann â?? Franceâ??s all-time record scorer before MbappÃ© â?? retired from international football in September 2024 after Euro 2024, bringing down the curtain on a decade of service that included the 2018 World Cup triumph. His absence leaves a creative gap that Deschamps has not fully plugged. There is no natural second orchestrator to share the burden with MbappÃ©, and while the tactical answer of greater pace and width in wide areas looks exciting in theory, it remains to be proved at the decisive knockout moments.

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Real Madrid midfielder Eduardo Camavinga was the most surprising exclusion from an eligible pool. Deschamps was measured but candid: â??He had a difficult season â?? he played less, he also had injuries.â?• The 22-year-old managed just 23 starts across all competitions for Madrid in 2025-26, and Deschamps evidently did not see the game time as sufficient. Randal Kolo Muani, on loan at Tottenham following an unhappy stint in London, also missed the cut. Crystal Palaceâ??s Jean-Philippe Mateta â?? a Paris 2024 silver medallist â?? earns the striker spot in a direct swap, rewarding a consistent campaign with his first World Cup selection.



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Group I: Senegal, Iraq and Norway Await

France have been drawn into Group I and face three distinct tests. Senegal, powered by players from Europeâ??s top leagues, arrive at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford on 16 June as the most demanding group opponent. Iraq follow in Philadelphia on 22 June, and Norway â?? with Erling Haaland among their ranks â?? complete the group in Foxborough on 26 June. Franceâ??s base will be in Boston, Massachusetts, for the first phase of the tournament.

Before the squad departs, two warm-up matches will sharpen Deschampsâ?? preparations: Ivory Coast at Nantes on 4 June and Northern Ireland at the Decathlon Arena in Lille MÃ©tropole on 8 June. Both are on TF1 in France at 21h10.

This is Deschampsâ?? fourth and final World Cup as manager â?? he will step down after the tournament, ending a remarkable reign that began in 2012 and delivered the 2018 title and the 2022 final. Whether Les Bleus can complete the story with a third world crown remains to be seen, but the ingredients are all there. For France, the greatest challenge may simply be converting brilliance into silverware when it counts most. For more World Cup 2026 preview content, see our coverage of Brazil at World Cup 2026 and Portugal at World Cup 2026, and stay across all the latest in our Sports section.

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