

Germany World Cup 2026 Squad: Manuel Neuer Returns At 40 As Nagelsmann Names His 26

Description

default watermark

Julian Nagelsmann confirmed the **Germany World Cup 2026 squad** on 21 May â?? and the biggest headline came before a single outfield player was named. Manuel Neuer, 40 years old and seemingly retired from international football after Euro 2024, is back. Die Mannschaft head to North America with their legendary goalkeeper, two of the most exciting young midfielders in world football, and a genuine belief that a fifth World Cup title is within reach.

Germany World Cup 2026 Squad: Neuerâ??s Shock Return

Neuerâ??s recall is the story of Germanyâ??s summer. The Bayern Munich captain made his last appearance for Germany at Euro 2024 â?? a 2-1 quarter-final defeat to Spain in Stuttgart â?? before retiring from international duty. So when Nagelsmann named him as first-choice goalkeeper ahead of the man who had taken his spot, Hoffenheimâ??s Oliver Baumann, the football world was caught off guard.

â??Manuel is one of the best goalkeepers in the history of this game,â?• Nagelsmann said at the squad announcement event at the DFB Campus in Frankfurt. â??For an occasion like this, you want the very best. He earned this.â?•

The context matters: Marc-AndrÃ© ter Stegen, the original plan as first choice, remains sidelined. Baumann has been solid, but Neuerâ??s quality, presence, and ability to dominate his penalty area are deemed irreplaceable at a World Cup. At 40, the 2014 World Cup winner becomes only the second player in Germany history to appear at five World Cups, alongside Lothar MatthÃ¤us.



Bundestrainer Nagelsmann at the Germany World Cup 2026 squad announcement, DFB Campus Frankfurt. Source: DFB â?? Deutscher FuÃ?ball-Bund official website (dfb.de). Photo: Yuliia Perekopaiko/DFB

The Musialaâ??Wirtz Double Act

Beyond Neuerâ??s return, the squad is built around the thrilling midfield pairing of Jamal Musiala and Florian Wirtz â?? arguably the most exciting creative duo at the 2026 tournament.

Musiala (Bayern Munich), 23, spent much of the past season recovering from the horrific broken leg he suffered at the FIFA Club World Cup in July 2025. His return to fitness has been painstaking, but Nagelsmann has confirmed he is ready. At his best â?? as he showed at Euro 2024 â?? Musiala is

practically unplayable in tight spaces.

Wirtz (Liverpool) makes his World Cup debut after a spectacular first season at Anfield. The 22-year-old quickly became one of the Premier Leagueâ??s most sought-after midfielders, driving at defenders with his direct running and threading passes through the smallest of gaps. Together, Musiala and Wirtz give Germany an attacking midfield quality few other coaches can match.



Jamal Musiala, Germanyâ??s most gifted creative force and one of the tournamentâ??s most anticipated performers. Source: DFB â?? Deutscher FuÃ?ball-Bund official website (dfb.de)

Kimmich Captains, Havertz Leads the Line

Joshua Kimmich (Bayern Munich), 31, captains Germany for the first time at a senior tournament. A right-back of rare intelligence and passing range, Kimmich has been the most consistently excellent German player across four years of international football. His leadership, versatility, and ability to control tempo make him indispensable in Nagelsmannâ??s system.

Up front, Kai Havertz (Arsenal) leads the line for his second World Cup. Fresh from winning the Premier League and competing in the Champions League final with Arsenal, the 26-year-old arrives with confidence and form. His ability to link play, drift wide, and arrive late into areas provides Nagelsmann with tactical flexibility. Deniz Undav (Stuttgart) â?? 25 Bundesliga goals this season â?? provides a powerful alternative, while 18-year-old Bayern prodigy Lennart Karl is the tournamentâ??s most intriguing wildcard inclusion.

Germanyâ??s Group Stage and Tournament Ambitions

Germany are in Group E and face CuraÃ§ao in Houston on 14 June, Ivory Coast in Toronto on 20 June, and Ecuador in New Jersey on 25 June. The group looks navigable, though Ivory Coastâ??s speed and athleticism will present a genuine test. Germanyâ??s base camp is in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

default watermark

A final preparatory friendly against hosts USA in Chicago on 6 June â?? live on RTL â?? will serve as the last dress rehearsal before the tournament begins. After the heartbreak of Euro 2024â??s quarter-final exit on home soil, this German squad has something to prove. With Neuer in goal and Musiala and Wirtz at their peak, they have the tools to prove it emphatically.

For more World Cup 2026 squad guides, 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.

Date Created
03/06/2026
Author
jadeyeo