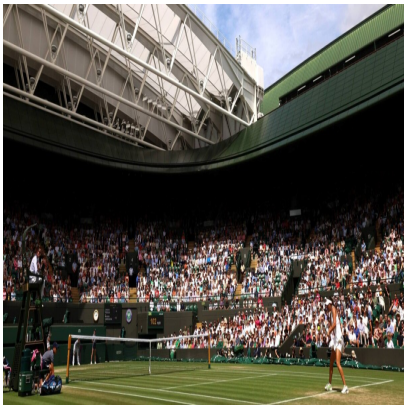


Wimbledon 2026 Preview: Sinner Defends As Zverev, Djokovic And Sabalenka Eye The Grass Court Throne

Description

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The grass is prepared. The queue is forming outside Gate 3. And with the draw set for 26 June, Wimbledon 2026 is almost upon us â?? the most storied Grand Slam of them all, running from 29 June to 12 July at the All England Club in south-west London.

This yearâ??s edition promises to be one of the most open in recent memory. The menâ??s draw has been blown wide open by Carlos Alcarazâ??s withdrawal through injury, removing the two-time defending champion before a ball has been struck. The womenâ??s field, meanwhile, remains as fiercely competitive as ever, with at least five players capable of lifting the Venus Rosewater Dish.



The iconic Centre Court at the All England Club â?? the spiritual home of tennis. Source: LTA official website (lta.org.uk)

Menâ??s Draw: Sinner Defends, But The Field Is Wide Open

Jannik Sinner enters Wimbledon 2026 as defending champion, having beaten Novak Djokovic in last yearâ??s final to claim his first title at the All England Club. The Italian world No.1 has been in superb form all season and will be the man to beat on the lawns of SW19.

The shadow over the menâ??s draw, however, is Alcarazâ??s absence. The Spaniard â?? who won Wimbledon in 2022 and 2023 â?? has withdrawn with an injury that kept him out of Roland Garros as well. His loss fundamentally alters the landscape: Wimbledon without Alcaraz is Wimbledon without one of its most thrilling storylines.



Jannik Sinner in action at Wimbledon 2025, where the Italian claimed his first title at the All England Club. Source: LTA official website (lta.org.uk)

Alexander Zverev will arrive from Paris with a Roland Garros title to his name â?? his first Grand Slam â?? and plenty of confidence. The question is whether his clay-court brilliance translates to grass, where his historically best result has been the fourth round. Wimbledonâ??s surface tends to reward

big servers and flat ball-strikers; Zverev has the serve but has never truly found his footing at SW19.

Novak Djokovic, at 39, remains the great enigma. The Serbian has won seven Wimbledon titles â?? equal with Pete Sampras, one behind Roger Federer. An eighth would place him alongside Federer in the all-time records; an eighth and a 24th Grand Slam overall would be one of sportâ??s most remarkable achievements. Djokovicâ??s movement has slowed, but on grass â?? where experience and guile count for as much as athleticism â?? he should never be discounted.

British eyes will be on **Jack Draper**, who has quietly established himself as one of the tourâ??s most improved players. The left-handerâ??s game is built for grass: a heavy serve, natural aggression and an ability to finish points at net. A deep run at Wimbledon â?? where the crowd will be ferociously behind him â?? feels not just possible but probable.

The wider menâ??s field includes Taylor Fritz (USA), Flavio Cobolli (Italy), Ben Shelton (USA) and Alex de Minaur (Australia), any of whom could challenge deep in the draw.

Womenâ??s Draw: Sabalenkaâ??s Grass Court Quest

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Iga Swiatek defends the womenâ??s title after her 2025 Wimbledon win â?? a result that added a grass-court Grand Slam to her already formidable clay-court legacy. But **Aryna Sabalenka**, the world No.1, will be the favourite for many.

Sabalenka has reached the Wimbledon semi-finals three times without winning it. Her powerful baseline game, enormous serve and improved movement on grass make her the most dangerous player in the field. After a dominant first half of 2026, this is her moment.



Aryna Sabalenka in action at Wimbledon 2025 â?? the Belarusian world No.1 is the favourite to claim the title in 2026. Source: LTA official website (lta.org.uk)

Elena Rybakina, the 2022 Wimbledon champion, brings arguably the most grass-friendly game in the womenâ??s draw â?? a flat, powerful serve that causes problems on any surface but is especially

potent on fast courts. The Kazakhstani, seeded in the top eight, is a genuine contender.

Watch too for **Mirra Andreeva**, who reached the Roland Garros final in 2026 â?? a breakthrough performance that announced the Russian teenager as a major force in the womenâ??s game. Coco Gauff, the 2023 US Open champion, and former Roland Garros finalists round out a field without a clear weak link.

British hopes rest with Emma Raducanu, Katie Boulter and Cameron Norrie (menâ??s), all of whom will feed off a home crowd roaring them on.

Key Storylines To Watch

Beyond the obvious title races, Wimbledon 2026 offers several compelling sub-plots. Can Sinner defend his title without the galvanising rivalry of Alcaraz pushing him to his limits? Will Zverev finally conquer grass, as he did clay at Roland Garros? And is Djokovic, at 39, truly capable of one more deep Wimbledon run?

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In the womenâ??s draw, the Sabalenka question looms large: she is the best player in the world and has the game for grass, yet Wimbledon has eluded her. At some point, that has to change.

The Road To Wimbledon: Grass Season Warm-Up

The grass-court season is already under way. The HSBC Championships at Queenâ??s Club â?? where Serena Williams recently returned for the womenâ??s invitational â?? serves as the traditional warm-up event for the menâ??s draw. Halle (Germany) and â??s-Hertogenbosch (Netherlands) also offer key grass-court preparation.

Qualifying at Wimbledon runs from 22â??25 June, with the main draw commencing on 29 June. The gentlemenâ??s and ladiesâ?? singles finals are scheduled for 11 and 12 July respectively.

Ones To Watch

If you are looking beyond the top seeds for a dark horse, keep an eye on Ben Shelton: the Americanâ??s enormous serve and willingness to attack at every opportunity make him dangerous on a fast surface. In the womenâ??s draw, Rybakina â?? often underseeded relative to her quality â?? could quietly reach the final without anyone paying close attention until it is too late.

Wimbledon 2026. The draw is on 26 June. The first serve on 29 June. And for the next fortnight after that, the world stops to watch.

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