Team Aretas

Competition planning checklist

Every job between booking a venue and opening next year's entries, in the order it needs doing, counted back in weeks from the day. Print it, tick it, and hand each line to a named person.

The weeks and numbers fit the example every Team Aretas resource uses, a one-day throwdown for **120 athletes on 8 lanes**. A bigger event needs more time at the start, not at the end.

By Steven Batchelor · Last updated 20 October 2026 · 7 min read

The short answer

- **Six months out, fix the four things everything else depends on:** the date, the venue, the format and the number of places.
- **Open entries four months out**, with the price, the categories, the waiver and the refund policy already decided.
- **Publish the heats two weeks out**, so athletes plan their day and you have time to fix what they tell you.

How to use it

Each section is one point on the countdown. Every line has a box to tick and a **Who** column, because a job with nobody's name on it is the job that gets done the night before. Most lines are the organiser's; the rest belong to the people you appoint along the way. The milestones:

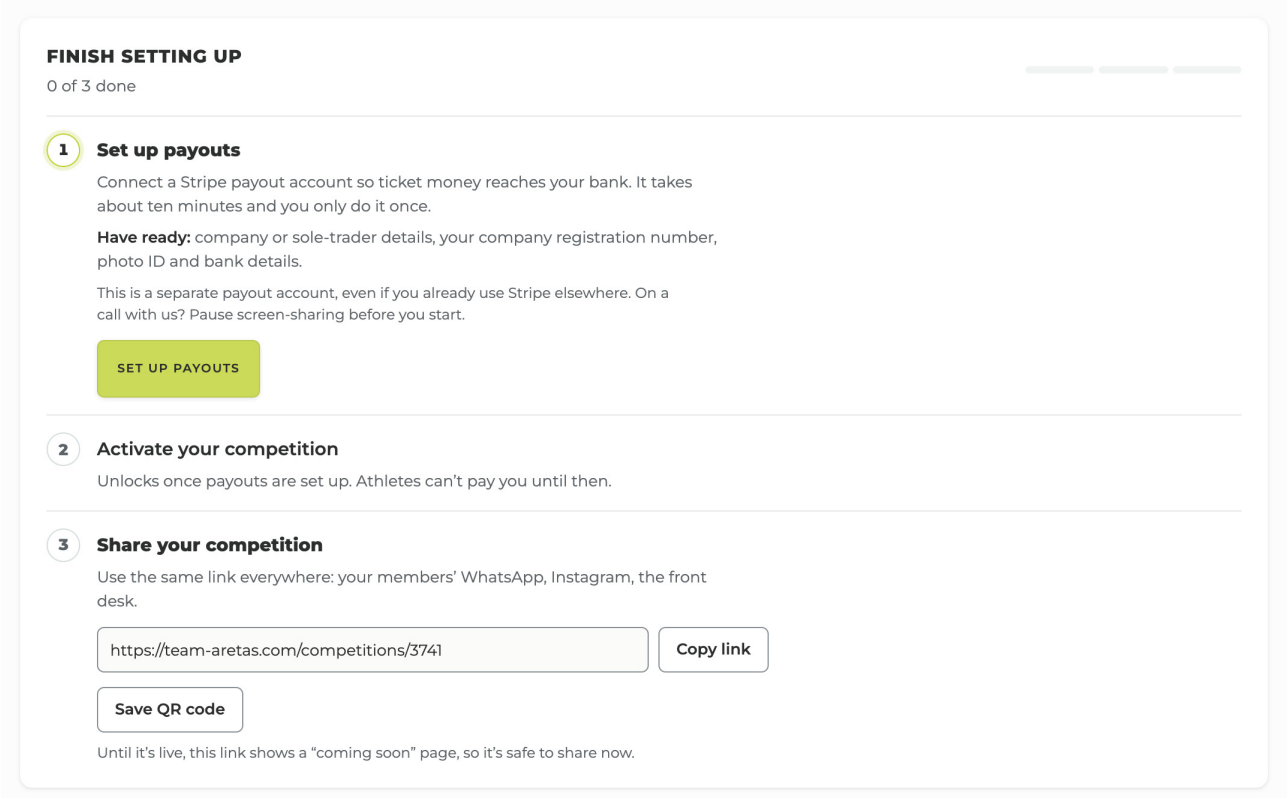
- **26 weeks:** date, venue, format and places fixed
- **16 weeks:** entries open
- **12 weeks:** workouts tested, staff and kit booked
- **8 weeks:** early bird ends, first workout released
- **4 weeks:** all workouts out, teams final
- **2 weeks:** entries close, heats published
- **0:** the day

26 weeks out

The four decisions every later line depends on:

Done	Task	Who
	Fix the date, and check it against other events your athletes enter	Organiser
	Book the venue, with room for 8 lanes, a warm-up area and spectators	Organiser
	Choose the format: heats across workouts, or waves through one race	Organiser
	Set the number of places: 120 is 15 heats of 8 per workout	Organiser
	Choose the categories and cap each one in multiples of 8	Organiser
	Draft the budget: venue, kit hire, judges' food and T-shirts, first aid, insurance, medals or a photographer	Organiser
	Check what the venue's and your gym's insurance already covers, and only then get quotes for anything missing, including under-18s if you run a teens category	Organiser
	Create the competition and set up your payout account	Organiser

A competition is in draft until you activate it, so you can build it now and open entries later. Before it goes live, the dashboard lists what is left to do:



16 weeks out

Everything an athlete reads before paying has to be settled before entries open:

Done	Task	Who
	Set the price for each category, and the early bird price	Organiser
	Write the refund and withdrawal policy	Organiser
	Set a deadline for teams to change members	Organiser
	Write the waiver, and have it checked	Organiser
	Open entries and share the link everywhere at once	Organiser
	Start recruiting judges: 9 for the day, plus a second crew	Head judge
	Contact sponsors, with the date and the numbers you expect	Organiser

12 weeks out

The workouts decide the kit, and the kit decides the floor:

Done	Task	Who
	Write the workouts and test each one on athletes from every category	Organiser and head judge
	Check every time cap still fits its slot (14, 16 and 12 minutes)	Organiser
	Write the movement standards for each workout	Head judge
	List the equipment from the workouts, and book what you do not own	Organiser
	Book first aid for the whole day	Organiser
	Recruit the rest of the staff: marshal, floor crew, score desk, check-in, MC	Organiser

8 weeks out

Releasing the workouts one at a time gives athletes something to train for and something to share:

Done	Task	Who
	End the early bird on the date you promised	Organiser
	Release workout 1 with its standards, a video and a social media post	Organiser
	Confirm every judge by name and send them the standards	Head judge
	Confirm the kit hire and its delivery time	Organiser

4 weeks out

By now the field is mostly fixed and the schedule can be built around it:

Done	Task	Who
	Release workouts 2 and 3, each with its standards, a video and a social media post	Organiser
	Pass the team change deadline, and chase every team still short of members	Organiser
	Draft the heats, one category per heat, easiest first	Organiser
	Draw the floor plan: warm-up, holding pen, lanes, score desk, spectators, first aid	Organiser
	Order your medals and prizes, or confirm the ones your sponsors are giving, and when they will arrive	Organiser

2 weeks out

Athletes plan travel around their heat time, so publish it with time to spare:

Done	Task	Who
	Close entries	Organiser
	Publish the heats and tell every athlete their time	Organiser
	Write the run of show, minute by minute	Organiser
	Send the staff rota: who is where, and when	Organiser
	Prepare the judges' briefing from the movement standards	Head judge

The week of the event

The last week is for checking, not deciding:

Done	Task	Who
	Email athletes: doors at 08:00, check-in, heat times, parking, what to bring	Organiser
	Check the kit against the list: 24 wall balls, 18 barbells, 8 boxes, the rig	Floor crew
	Print score sheets, or test every device judges will score on	Score desk
	Confirm first aid, the venue access time and the insurance certificate	Organiser
	Check the clock and the music	MC

On the day

The day itself, from doors to the last heat:

Time	Task	Who
07:00	Kit out, lanes marked, clock and score desk set up	Floor crew
08:00	Doors and check-in open; judges' briefing	Check-in and head judge
08:30	First heat	Everyone
12:00 and 16:20	20-minute resets between workouts	Floor crew
19:40	Last heat finishes; check the final scores	Head judge
After the last heat	Awards, then pack down	Organiser

The week after

The week after is when next year's entries are won or lost:

Done	Task	Who
	Publish the final results	Organiser
	Thank athletes, judges and staff, with the results and the photos	Organiser
	Send an athlete survey of 8 to 10 questions	Organiser
	Send each sponsor a short report with the numbers	Organiser
	Hold a debrief with the head judge and the staff	Organiser
	Set next year's date and open the early bird while people are still talking about it	Organiser

Common mistakes

- **Opening entries before the refund policy is written.** The first athlete to ask for their money back sets your policy for you.
- **Publishing heats the week before.** Athletes have already booked travel around a guess, and the changes all arrive in the last week.
- **Releasing all the workouts at once.** Athletes have nothing to talk about for the next two months.
- **No owner on a job.** "Someone will print the score sheets" means nobody does.
- **Leaving the debrief for a month.** Nobody remembers what went wrong at 16:20 by then.

Run it on Team Aretas

Team Aretas keeps a competition in draft until you activate it, and the dashboard shows what is left before it goes live: payouts, activation and the link to share. Categories carry their own prices and caps, an early bird can be a discount code with a usage limit, and the team change deadline closes rosters for you. Workouts release on their dates, athletes see their heat time once you publish the heats, and check-in and scoring run on the day from the same place.

- How Team Aretas handles registration and payments
- How Team Aretas sets up categories
- How Team Aretas runs competition day