
FIFA Women's World Cup Competition Formats

2007 CHINA PR

- 16 finalists
- Hosts qualifying automatically although they may still participate in qualifying matches
- Four groups of four teams, with the first two from each group progressing to the quarter-finals
- Semi-finals
- Third-place play-off
- Final

2003 USA

- 16 finalists
- 15 teams qualifying by preliminary competition (99 participants for 2003), hosts qualifying automatically, although China PR participated in qualifying matches nonetheless**
- Four groups of four teams, with the first two from each group progressing to the quarter-finals
- Semi-finals
- Third-place play-off
- Final

1999 USA

- 16 finalists
- 15 teams qualifying by preliminary competition (81 participants for 1999), hosts qualifying automatically (in this instance USA did not play in the qualifying competition)
- Four groups of four teams, with the first two from each group progressing to the quarter-finals
- Semi-finals
- Third-place play-off
- Final

1995 SWEDEN

- 12 finalists
- 11 teams qualifying by preliminary competition (52 participants for 1995), hosts qualifying automatically, although Sweden participated in qualifying matches nonetheless
- Three groups of four teams, with the first two from each group, plus the two best in third place, progressing to the quarter-finals
- Semi-finals
- Third-place play-off
- Final

1991 CHINA PR

- 12 finalists
- 11 teams qualifying by preliminary competition (45 participants for 1991), hosts qualifying automatically, although China PR participated in qualifying matches nonetheless
- Three groups of four teams, with the first two from each group, plus the two best in third place, progressing to the quarter-finals
- Semi-finals
- Third-place play-off
- Final

** Ultimately proving their worth through the qualifiers in any case, special dispensation had been given to China PR, since they had been the intended hosts of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2003 until the SARS outbreak. By this point, USA had already earned their qualification through the preliminary matches.