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THE FINALS Season 12 (PRIME TIME): Launch Date, Confirmed Features, Open Questions

THE FINALS' next season launches 20 October 2026 under the name PRIME TIME. Embark has confirmed a new Light playstyle, a new mode, a Sponsor replacement, a UI/HUD rework, reworks of Monaco, Seoul and Skyway Stadium and a destruction overhaul. Launch time, weapons, Battle Pass contents and the new mode's name remain unannounced.

13 min read · 14 sources

PRIME TIME | Respec Order | arena rework | destruction | roadmap | season 12 | sponsor system

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THE FINALS' next season, which Embark is calling **PRIME TIME** and which the community and wiki label Season 12, is set for **20 October 2026**. This report separates what Embark has officially confirmed from what fan sites, wikis and creators have added, and flags what is still unannounced as of 7 October 2026.

20 Oct 2026	3	70,000	3.01 / 5
Announced launch date	Classic arenas named for reworks	Respec Order 10.12 survey responses	Average Respec Order score (10.12)

Release date and current status

Embark set the date in “A New Chapter”, a post by Executive Producer Christian Aarsrud dated 18 September 2026. It says: “The next season arrives on October 20”[1]. The updated roadmap shows the same date under “Coming Next”[2]. On 1 October Embark revealed the name PRIME TIME and kept the 20 October launch[3].

Three details remain open:

- **Launch time.** No time of day was published in the sources checked.
- **Season 11 end.** Embark has not given an exact end time for Season 11. The fan-run wiki lists Season 12’s end as “TBA”[4].
- **Season number.** The 1 October reveal does not state a season number. The wiki and the thefinalsloadout tracker keep the “Season 12” label for continuity[3][4]. Players searching for either name will find the same update.

Some sites have circulated other dates, including 23 October. The sources checked do not support any date other than 20 October[3].

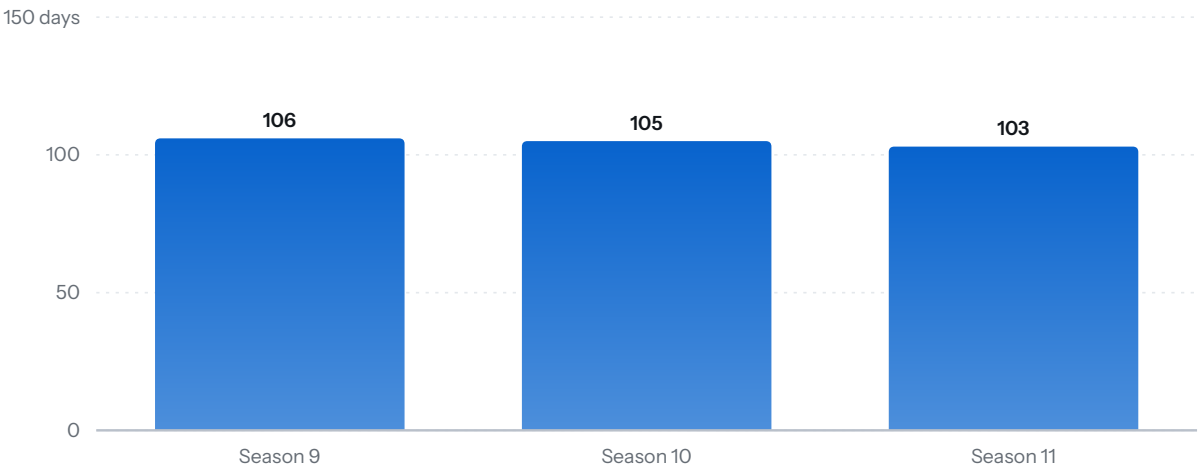
Season timeline and the Year 3 cadence

Season 12 is the fourth season of what Embark calls Year 3. The seasons below are taken from the wiki’s season list and the official roadmap[2][9]. Season 12’s date is announced, not yet live.

- 10 Dec 2025 — **Season 9**
  Point Break 8v8 mode, Fangwai City arena, Instant Replay 1.0
- 26 Mar 2026 — **Season 10**
  Starlight Hollow arena, Chimera-XB, Hover Pad, Shockwave Specialization
- 9 Jul 2026 — **Season 11**
  Melee rework, Galaxy Estates arena, Cashout Bot matches, Academy expansion
- 20 Oct 2026 — **Season 12 (PRIME TIME)**
  New Light playstyle and mode, Sponsor replacement, arena reworks, destruction overhaul

Each of the last three seasons ran for a similar length. Counting from the start dates in the roadmap, Season 9 ran 106 days, Season 10 105 days and Season 11 103 days, with Season 11 ending on the 20 October announced for Season 12[2][9]. The regular rhythm is therefore close to fifteen weeks.

Length of recent seasons



Computed by this desk from the start dates on the official roadmap. Season 11's end is taken as 20 Oct 2026, the date announced for Season 12.

Embark's own framing differs from the regular rhythm. Dot Esports reported the Year 3 roadmap on 9 July 2026, the first multi-season plan Embark had published. It noted that Creative Director Gustav Tilleby called Season 12 the biggest season yet, describing it as "getting closer to what THE FINALS was always meant to be"[8]. That is Embark's ambition, not a verified count of maps, weapons or modes.

In a May interview with Dot Esports, design director Matt Lowe described a yearly rhythm of three regular seasons and one larger release[8]. Season 12 is the larger release under that model, which explains the scale of the announcement. Both claims are statements of intent. Neither gives a feature count.

The official roadmap, feature by feature

Embark replaced its earlier roadmap themes with five headings in the September update[2][3]. The list below follows the official roadmap's wording.

New ways to play. A new Playstyle and a new Mode. The roadmap names the Playstyle as The Infiltrator (Light), with True Sight Specialization, Mimic Device and Translocator. The mode is listed as "New Mode" with no name[2].

The game show. A new Sponsor Journey, a full UI and HUD rework and reworked match presentation [2]. "A New Chapter" says the studio is "reworking how Contestants, teams and Arenas are introduced, as well as how the show looks, feels and unfolds while you're playing" [1].

Arenas. Reworks of classic arenas, brand-new lighting, updated buildings, materials and textures, clearer visual readability and per-arena Sponsor branding [2].

Destruction and dynamism. Gradual destruction and hinging, swinging suspended structures, blast waves, dynamic debris piles and dynamic smoke [2].

Gameplay and audio. Balance updates, performance improvements and a footsteps rework [2].

The roadmap also lists "Ongoing" work on balance updates, performance optimisation and anti-cheat [2]. Those are standing items, not Season 12 features.

The Infiltrator: the new Light playstyle

The Infiltrator is the only playstyle Embark has named. Its official video, "NEW LIGHT PLAYSTYLE | THE FINALS PRIME TIME", describes "A new Specialization. Two new Gadgets." and calls the Infiltrator "a new Light Playstyle coming with PRIME TIME on Oct. 20!" It says players will "Disguise, deceive, and outsmart your opponents" [7]. The roadmap's three items, True Sight, Mimic Device and Translocator, match that count: one Specialization and two Gadgets [2] [7].

The official text does not explain how each item works, what it costs, or how it is balanced. A Steam Community page for the game carries a line describing the Mimic Device as "prop hunting" and the Translocator as "position swapping" [7]. That wording comes from a community post rather than an official text, so it is treated here as unconfirmed.

Creator coverage posted the same day is speculation built on early gameplay. A creator video titled "Heavies can actually throw lights in Season 12" and a Reddit thread on props and the Light class are examples [7]. None of them is an official statement.

The Light archetype is also the one most affected by the Respec Order test described below. The Respec Order 3.0 notes raise Light health from 150 to 175 and slow Light running speed [5]. Read together, that suggests the Infiltrator will be built around a sturdier, slower Light, though Embark has not said so.

Sponsors: the system being replaced

The announced change

The clearest structural change is to Sponsors. Embark's 9 July Season 11 launch notes said "the current Sponsor system and reward tracks will be replaced in Season 12", with more details promised

closer to launch [3]. Season 11 had already cut the Fans needed for each Sponsor's rewards by around 50% [3].

"A New Chapter" says the new approach should carry "identity, personality and purpose" rather than function as "a passive progression system" [1]. The post also says Sponsors should become "a core part of your experience as a Contestant" [1].

How the current system works

Until the replacement arrives, the existing system remains in force. A third-party Season 11 article describes it. Players earn Fans from actions across modes, including opening Vaults and completing Cashouts. Daily sponsor competitions on each map rank sponsors by average Fans earned per player, and the leading sponsor receives three points, second place two and third place one [12]. Players can change affiliation between sponsors, though loyalty tiers reward repeat returns [12]. This is a secondary description and should be checked against Embark's own documentation when it is published.

Sponsor Showdown is the current stopgap

Update 11.12.0, dated 1 October 2026, runs a "Sponsor Showdown" in which ENGIMO and COMETA compete "in a battle for fans" [6]. The same article describes the event as the closing confrontation between the two companies that have dominated Season 11 [12]. It is a Season 11 event and does not confirm how Season 12's system will work.

What the sources do not settle is what happens to rewards not earned before the change. The thefinalsloadout tracker notes that the announcement does not establish whether unearned rewards will become permanently unavailable [3]. Players who want specific rewards should treat the current tracks as time-limited until Embark says otherwise.

The game show: UI, HUD and presentation

Embark describes the game-show layer as its second major focus after destruction. The roadmap lists three related items: "Full UI and HUD rework", "Reworked Match Presentation" and a "New Sponsor Journey" [2]. "A New Chapter" adds that the studio is reworking "how Contestants, teams and Arenas are introduced" and the way the show "looks, feels and unfolds" [1].

The Season 11 notes already include "HUD Improvements" and a "Player Cards Per Contestant" feature, so the Season 12 HUD rework is a second, larger pass on the same area [2]. Embark has not published screenshots or a feature list for the new HUD in the sources checked. Presentation changes are described only at the level of intent. Anything more specific would be speculation.

Per-arena Sponsor branding links the presentation changes to the arena reworks. Each arena gets a sponsor identity, colour language and "character" [1] [3]. That means the arenas will show their sponsor on screen in a way that the current game does not.

Arena reworks: Monaco, Seoul and Skyway Stadium

On 1 October Embark released a video, “MAPS | THE FINALS PRIME TIME”, in which World Director Joakim Stigsson named **Monaco, Seoul and Skyway Stadium** as the first arenas to be reworked[3]. Changes described in that reveal include new spaces and landmarks, revised areas, clearer sightlines and new traversal options. Embark says it plans to explore changes to other maps in later seasons[3].

Three further details matter for players:

- **Sponsor identity.** Each arena gets its own sponsor, colours and character[1][3].
- **Lighting and colour.** Lighting and colour grading are revised, with updated props and materials[3][14].
- **Destruction assets.** The reworked arenas use the new destruction assets, covered in the next section[3].

The reveal does not announce a new arena. All three maps already exist. A community summary of the video describes “impactful changes like new landmarks and traversal options, not just small tweaks”[14]. That is a fan’s paraphrase, not an Embark statement.

Embark’s rationale is in “A New Chapter”. The studio says it has had “almost three years of watching you play, fight and destroy your way through our Arenas” and is applying those lessons “starting with the oldest ones”[1]. No before-and-after numbers for layout, sightlines or traversal have been published.

A reader comment in the roadmap thread suggested that Embark’s revisits would run “from Monaco S1 to Fortune Stadium S4”[10]. This is speculation. Embark has said only that other maps may follow in later seasons[3].

Destruction, smoke and audio

The destruction overhaul is the feature Embark describes at most length. “A New Chapter” explains that “parts of a structure can stay partly attached as they come apart; so floors sag, walls lean and buildings collapse in far more varied ways”[1]. Other changes described in the post:

- **Knock-on effects.** One event can trigger another, setting off chain reactions through the environment[1].
- **Responsive smoke.** Smoke “that now responds to forces and changes in the Arena”[1].
- **Heavier collapses.** Embark says it has “rebuilt a lot of what destruction is made of” so a collapse carries more “weight and noise”[1].
- **Readable cues.** Visual cues so players can “see what’s coming and have time to do something about it”[1].

The roadmap adds blast waves, dynamic debris piles and swinging suspended structures[2]. A community summary of the 1 October video calls the change “Destruction 2.0”, with “new materials and sounds”[14]. Embark’s own wording is “the most significant update destruction has had since launch”[1]. That is a developer claim, and no independent test has been published.

Audio is covered by one line on the roadmap: a “Footsteps rework”[2]. Neither “A New Chapter” nor the 1 October material adds detail. Creator videos are testing it, but no official specifics have been published.

Respec Order and the balance plan

What the test is for

Respec Order is an experiment in which Embark changes movement speed and health for the Light and Heavy archetypes and measures the result. The stated goals are team cohesion, since wide movement-speed differences “can cause teams to drift apart”, and easier weapon balance, since “extreme differences in health values” make weapons hard to balance at both ends[5].

What the earlier tests showed

In the 10.12 test, Embark received “approximately 70,000 survey responses, at a roughly 47% response rate”[5]. Key results:

- **Average score.** 3.01 out of 5, which Embark calls “fairly neutral” and up from 2.96 in the 10.3 test[5].
- **Polarisation.** Strong dislike was 25.72% of respondents and strong like 21.96%, so the average hides a split audience[5].
- **Team spread.** Separation between teammates fell by 1.7% to 2.9%, depending on team composition[5].
- **Composition win rates.** The gap between the best and worst squad compositions fell from 14.7% to 12%[5]. Embark does not name the test behind the 14.7% figure. This desk reads it as the earlier test, which is consistent with the post’s wording.

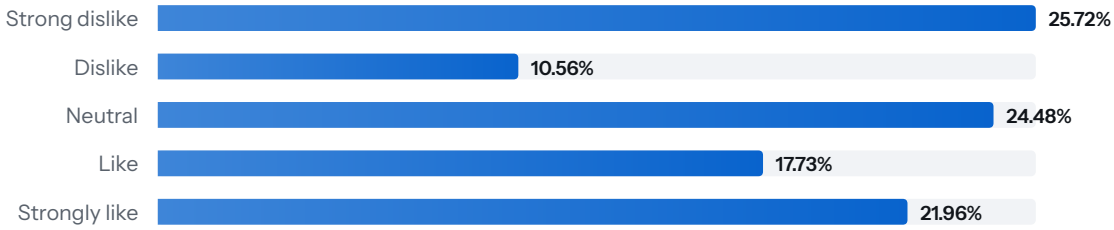
The versus block below sets the two tests side by side.

	Respec Order 10.3	VS	Respec Order 10.12
Average survey score (out of 5)	2.96	·	3.01
Best-to-worst composition win-rate spread	14.7%	·	12%

Source: Embark, Respec Order 3.0 post, 16 Sep 2026. The 14.7% figure is attributed to the earlier test by inference from the post’s wording.

The 10.12 survey distribution is shown below. The published percentages add up to 100.45%, which is most likely rounding. The source does not say so.

Respec Order 10.12 survey: how players rated the changes



Source: Embark, Respec Order 3.0 developer post, 16 Sep 2026. Published figures sum to 100.45%.

Embark's reading of the 10.12 win-rate data is that "Light-based compositions gained the most win rate, while Heavy-based compositions lost the most" [5]. That is the direction of the changes it later applied.

Respec Order 3.0, live in Cashout

Embark ran a third test, Respec Order 3.0, which Update 11.10 introduced on 17 September for "the next two weeks" [13]. The changes were live in Cashout mode only, from 11.10 through to the launch of 11.12 [5]. Some of the changes are listed below. Verdicts are this desk's reading of what each change does to the player, not the direction of the number.

Respec Order 3.0 (Cashout only, 11.10 to 11.12)

6 buffs · **4** nerfs

Light 4

ITEM	STAT	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
Light archetype	Health	150	175	Buff +17%
Light archetype	Run forwards	5.5 m/s	5.1 m/s	Nerf
Sword	Base damage	71	65	Nerf −8.5%
Vanish Bomb	Cooldown	25 s	30 s	Nerf +2%

Medium 2

ITEM	STAT	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
Dual Blades	Cross Slash base damage	91	100	Buff +9.9%
CB-01 Repeater	Damage	84	88	Buff +4.8%

Heavy 3

ITEM	STAT	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
Heavy archetype	Health	350	325	Nerf −7.1%
Heavy archetype	Run forwards	3.8 m/s	4.25 m/s	Buff
MGL-32	Damage	83	97	Buff +17%

General 1

ITEM	STAT	BEFORE	AFTER	CHANGE
Frag Grenade	Damage	140	150	Buff +7.1%

Source: Embark, Respec Order 3.0 developer post, 16 Sep 2026. Comparisons are to main-game values. The full list is in the source.

The Light health increase and Heavy health reduction are the core of the test, and they pull in opposite directions. Light is made sturdier and slower, Heavy less durable and quicker. That matches Embark's stated aim of bringing the two archetypes' performance closer together[5].

KEY FINDING

The Respec Order decision is the only Season 12 balance question Embark has put a date on. It will be made by launch, and the outcome is open.

The decision point

Embark wants to decide "by the launch of Season 12" whether the health and movement changes should become permanent[5]. The survey question for this test changed to: "Should the health and movement changes of Respec Order be permanent?"[5]. The results have not been published. If the answer is yes, the changes would reach the core game. If no, the test ends. Embark has not said which outcome it expects.

What has not been announced

The official material is clear about what is missing. None of the following has been confirmed in the sources checked:

- **Launch time** on 20 October.
- **Season 11's exact end time.**
- **A season number** in the official PRIME TIME branding.
- **Named weapons.** No new weapon has been named.
- **Named gadgets** beyond the two that accompany the Infiltrator. The official video confirms the count, not the full set of names[2][7].

- **A new arena.** Only reworks of existing arenas have been confirmed [3].
- **The new mode's name and rules.** The roadmap says only "New Mode" [2].
- **Battle Pass contents and store items.** The wiki lists a new Battle Pass and a store update for Season 12, with no contents [4].
- **Pricing.** Nothing published.
- **The Sponsor replacement's rules.** Embark says it will be "more involved" but has not described the mechanics [1] [3].
- **Treatment of unearned Sponsor rewards** under the new system [3].
- **Respec Order's permanence.** Undecided [5].

> CAUTION
>
> Several claims circulating about Season 12 come from creators or reader comments, not Embark. These include the mechanics of the Infiltrator's items, Heavies throwing Lights, and the order in which older maps will be revisited. Treat them as unverified until the official patch notes arrive.

Community reaction and open questions

The response has been broadly positive about scope and sceptical about marketing and retention. A Reddit thread on the roadmap, titled "Season 12 Roadmap is here — October 20 is looking WILD", drew 947 votes and 319 comments, and its top post described the roadmap as "a lot more than I was expecting" [10]. A YouTube video by EUTOPIA, "THE FINALS Season 12 - October 20 Update Is Bigger Than the Roadmap Shows", argued that the update reflects changes built up over months [11]. Its comment section carried a common complaint: "New features alone don't magically attract new players" [11].

Some readers have raised a different concern. A commenter on the 11.12.0 thread asked what had happened to the promise that every third update would be a larger balance patch [14] [10]. That question is reader sentiment, not an Embark statement, and the sources do not show a published commitment on the matter.

These views are useful for gauging mood but are not evidence about the update. Official sources remain the basis for every claim in this report.

Bottom line

- **The date is firm.** THE FINALS PRIME TIME launches on 20 October 2026. The launch time and the Season 11 end time have not been published [1] [2] [3].
- **Most features are named but not detailed.** The Infiltrator, Sponsor replacement, UI/HUD rework, arena reworks and destruction overhaul are confirmed. Weapons, Battle Pass contents, pricing and the new mode's name are not [2] [3].

- **Sponsor progress matters now.** The current Sponsor system is being replaced. Players who want specific rewards should earn them before launch. Embark has not confirmed whether unearned rewards will persist[3].
- **Respec Order will be decided at launch.** Its Light and Heavy changes are live in Cashout only, and the permanence decision is due by launch[5].
- **Watch three things before 20 October:** the launch time, the new mode's name and the Sponsor system's rules. Those are the largest gaps in what Embark has said so far.

<details>
<summary>Terms used in this document (6)</summary>

- **Cashout** — The core THE FINALS mode in which teams deposit cash boxes at stations to win.
- **Playstyle** — A build archetype built around a body type (Light, Medium or Heavy) and its gear. The Infiltrator is the first Light playstyle announced for Season 12.
- **PRIME TIME** — The name Embark has given the 20 October update. The wiki and third-party trackers still label it Season 12.
- **Respec Order** — Embark's ongoing test of movement speed and health values for the Light and Heavy archetypes, run in Cashout mode.
- **Specialization** — A passive or active ability a player equips as part of a build.
- **Sponsor** — The in-game corporate backer a player represents. Sponsors drive a progression track, with rewards earned through Fans.
</details>

SOURCES

1 A New Chapter — THE FINALS (Embark, 18 Sep 2026)
https://www.reachthefinals.com/patchnotes/a-new-chapter

2 Roadmap — THE FINALS
https://www.reachthefinals.com/roadmap

3 The Finals Season 12: Release Date, Roadmap & News (thefinalsloadout)
https://thefinalsloadout.com/season-12

4 Season 12 - THE FINALS Wiki
https://www.thefinals.wiki/wiki/Season_12

5 Respec Order 3.0 — THE FINALS (Embark, 16 Sep 2026)
https://www.reachthefinals.com/patchnotes/s11-respec-order-3

6 Update 11.12.0 — THE FINALS (1 Oct 2026)
https://www.reachthefinals.com/patchnotes/11-120

7 NEW LIGHT PLAYSTYLE | THE FINALS PRIME TIME (YouTube, official)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x4OZrRq0z1w

8 THE FINALS Year 3 roadmap: Melee rework, new onboarding, and the biggest Season yet (Dot Esports)
https://dotesports.com/the-finals/news/the-finals-year-3-roadmap

9 Seasons - THE FINALS Wiki
https://www.thefinals.wiki/wiki/Seasons

10 Season 12 Roadmap is here — October 20 is looking WILD (r/thefinals)
https://www.reddit.com/r/thefinals/comments/1wjufl0/season_12_roadmap_is_here_october_20_is_looking/

11 THE FINALS Season 12 - October 20 Update Is Bigger Than the Roadmap Shows (YouTube, EUTOPIA)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yK31mu9vnMs

12 The Arena Becomes a Corporate Battlefield as ENGIMO and COMETA Fight for Every Fan (IDC Games)
https://idcgames.com/en/the-finals/news/the-arena-becomes-a-corporate-battlefield-as-engimo-and-cometa-fight-for-every-fan-2026-10-02-07-50-14002

13 Update 11.10.0 — THE FINALS (17 Sep 2026)
https://www.reachthefinals.com/patchnotes/11-100

14 MAPS | THE FINALS PRIME TIME - Dev Update Summary (r/thefinals community summary)
https://www.reddit.com/r/thefinals/comments/1wv6k88/maps_the_finals_prime_time_dev_update_summary_map/

Researched and written with claude-haiku-5-5, from the sources listed above. Figures are as reported by those sources. Exported November 29, 2026 from https://intel.innerpulse.net/doc/the-finals-season-12-prime-time-launch-date-confirmed-features-open-questions, where the current version lives.