

Luzhniki Refurbishment Will Take 3.5 Years

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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The stadium being prepared for one of its final sporting events this past summer, prior to closing for renovation. **Vladimir Filonov**

Refurbishing Moscow's Luzhniki Stadium, the venue for the 2018 World Cup final, will take three and a half years according to Moscow City Hall.

The hulking and iconic arena on the banks of the Moskva River closed after August's World Athletics Championships. Work is to start next year as the final design is still being finalized, authorities said in a statement at the end of last week.

After the work is completed in April 2017, the stadium will have a capacity of 81,000, up from 78,000 at present. The increase is less than FIFA had asked for, but football's world governing body settled for less after discussions with Moscow officials, who were worried about the potential 1.5 billion euro cost of a more extensive rebuild.

The refurbishment will include 300 places for disabled people.

Luzhniki's last major event in its current form was last month's World Athletics Championships, while the last football match played there was a league game in May.

The stadium hosted athletics at the 1980 Olympics and is best known in football circles for holding the 2008 Champions League final, when Manchester United beat Chelsea on penalties after extra time finished 1-1.

Luzhniki will host the opening match, a semifinal and the final. It will not be used for the 2017 Confederations Cup, which will be staged in new stadiums belonging to Zenit St. Petersburg, Spartak Moscow, the Kazan Arena and Sochi's Fisht Olympic Stadium.

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